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## *Editorial*

# Goodwill Gesture!

Undeniably, the spread of COVID-19 pandemic has thus far afflicted around 100 million people globally, with the toll crossing over two million; nevertheless, it is also equally acknowledged that strenuous efforts have been put in to deal with this pandemic responsibly, maturely and wisely in many parts of the globe, including India. Along with laying emphasis on observing precautionary measures like washing hands regularly, use of face-mask and maintaining social distancing, the scientific community worldwide has also been engaged in finding a vaccine to deal with the pandemic. With the efforts of the scientific community ripening into fruition in the wake of production of new vaccine to deal with the virus, prospects for containing the virus and then eliminating it have brightened. Undoubtedly, the scientists across the globe have tirelessly worked to develop the vaccine, the bulk of which is still at experimental stage in many parts and is not a guaranteed solution, the possibility of development of new strains of the virus emanating with the passage of time, as happened recently in the United Kingdom, have also not been ruled out.

With some countries like Russia, China along with some international pharmaceutical companies like Astra Zeneca and others having come out with the vaccine for the pandemic virus, there has been a mad race among the both developed and developing countries to get the vaccine for its populations. However, the dissemination of Russian and the Chinese vaccine is limited to a few countries, whereas the vaccine developed by Astra Zeneca company and Bharat Biotech along with Serum Institute of India has been in greater demand in the USA, Europe as well as in India. India has already embarked upon administering vaccine to its affected population and simultaneously has also launched the ambitious program of making available millions of doses of COVID-19 vaccine to its neighbouring countries like Bhutan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Myanmar and Seychelles as well. Astra Zeneca 's vaccine for COVID-19 is being manufactured by the Serum Institute of India, the world's largest producer of vaccines, and the Government of India has announced to provide free shipments of this vaccine to its neighbouring countries, with media reports indicating that some of these shipments have already begun to arrive in the Maldives, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal. According to some experts, India's move to make available vaccine is drawing praise from the neighbouring recipient countries, it is also seen as a move pushing back against China's dominating presence in South Asia region.

Apart from currently providing free shipments of vaccine to the Maldives, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal, India has also committed to provide such free shipments of the vaccine to Myanmar and Seychelles, a move that is being hailed by some experts as India's use of its strength as one of the world's biggest makers of generic medicines to 'build friendship.' Nepal is reported to have hailed the goodwill shown by the Government of India by providing the vaccine in grant, which is at the people's level because it is the public who are suffering the most from COVID-19. India's goodwill gesture of providing vaccine, as pointed by some experts, comes at a time when India's ties with Nepal have been strained over a territorial dispute and serious concern over China's expanding political and economic clout in Nepal. While China is awaiting Nepal's clearance to provide its Sinopharm shots, whereas Nepal has asked Beijing to submit more documents and information before approval is to be accorded. As per media reports, India's initial exports of vaccine were scheduled for Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia and Morocco, India also embarked on making large supplies to its neighbours as well. India's move of providing vaccine to its friendly countries is seen by many experts as an opportunity for earning long-term goodwill. There is need to carry forward this exercise meticulously for strengthening India's relations with not only its immediate neighbours but also with its extended neighbourhood, across the Indian Ocean.

Washington has termed India as a "true friend" and has applauded New Delhi for gifting COVID-19 vaccine to several countries. The US media has also lavished praise on India's support to the global community in the prevailing health crisis. A report in Washington Post described it as a reflection of one of India's unique strengths.

— BK

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# Indo-Oman Trade and Economic Relations

Dr. Abdul Vajid* & Prof. K.A. Goyal**

[*India and Oman have very close and deep bilateral relations since long. Oman has been an important pillar of India's West Asia policy. The two countries are closely linked in a multi-dimensional relationship. Outstanding contributions of Indians and people of Indian origin in Oman in enhancing these relations have been recognized by both countries. Bilateral trade and economic ties have shown some significant developments in the past few years. According to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs currently, there are approximately 4,100 Indian companies in Oman with an estimated investment above $7.5 billion. India is one of the top trading partners in Oman. For Oman, India was the third biggest import source and the third biggest non-oil export market. Bilateral trade between India and Oman has increased by 8.5% in 2019-20 to USD 5.93 billion over the previous year. While India's exports to Oman amounted to 2,26 billion USD, India's Oman imports amounted to 3.67 billion USD in 2019-2020. In this paper, an attempt has been made to analyze India's bilateral trade and economic relations with Oman. Data for last 10 years from 2011 to 2020 have been collected and analyzed*.]

India understands the importance of Oman and has established strong bilateral relations with the country during the last few decades. Bilateral relations include political, diplomatic, commercial and strategic ties with Oman, which is emerging as one of the priority countries in India's political and diplomatic outreach to the Gulf. In June 2014, Yusuf bin Alawi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Oman, became the first foreign official to call the Prime Minister after he took office. Minister of Foreign Affairs Sushma Swaraj visited Oman in February 2015, followed by a visit to Muscat by the then Minister of Indian Defense Manohar Parrikar in May 2016.

India is one of the top trading partners in Oman. In FY 2018-19, Oman was India's 39th largest commercial partner and the 36th largest worldwide export market. In 2018, India was the third-largest source of its imports (after UAE and China) and the third biggest market (after UAE and Saudi Arabia) for non-oil exports. India represented around 4.40% of the total imports of Oman and 10.21% of the 2018 non-oil exports of Oman. In 2018, India imported 6.90% of Oman's total oil exports.

Prime Minister Modi visited Oman in February 2018 tofurtherestablish bilateral ties. He had a meeting with Sultan Qaboos. The two leaders discussed several important bilateral, regional,and international issues of mutual interest. Improving trade relations through trade and investment and strengthening of security ties to counter mutual threats from terrorism and extremism and that emerged as the most important issue during the meeting. India and Oman also agreed to work together in the area of maritime security.

**Review of Literature**

Shaalan and Handy (1991) argued that the growth rate of public expenditure over the past three decades is closely followed by oil export growth rates, in Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, but not in Kuwait. For Al-Youšif (1997), the interaction between exports and economic growth in several oil-producing countries (such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, and Oman) from 1973-1993 was investigated, and he used a model of aggregate production function which included production, labor, capital, exports, government expenditure, and trade conditions. The reciprocal dumping model has conducted some empirical tests suggesting that the gravity equation may not be fully explained by its specialization and differentiated commodity models.

Metwally (2000) applied the co-integration model by using the technique of maximum likelihood to evaluate the long-term relationship of oil expenditure and government expenditure between 1974 and 1996 in the Gulf Council Countries (GCC). The model results show that there was a long-term relationship between

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two variables in all but Kuwait. Feenstra, Markusen, and Rose (2001) demonstrated reciprocal dumping by assessing the effect of the home market on differentiated and homogeneous goods in separate serious equations. The effect on domestic markets showed a relation in the assessment of gravity for differentiated goods but showed the opposite of homogenous goods. The authors show that this result corresponds to the theoretical predictions of mutual dumping in homogeneous markets.

In addition to the basic gravity equation, trade relations' studies using the gravity model also attempted to assess the effects of various variables. The price and exchange rate variables showed a relationship in the gravitational model that represents a substantial amount of variance not explained by the fundamental gravitational equation. The impact of price levels varies according to the relationship examined, according to empirical results at the price level. For example, if exports are to be examined, a relatively high importer price rate would be expected to enhance trade with that country. Anderson and van Wincoop (2003) use a non-linear equation system to account for the endogenous change from trade liberalization to these price terms. A simpler method is to use a log-linearization first order of this equation system.

Varghese, John, and Qatroopi (2015) investigated the interaction of bilateral trade between India and Oman. The authors applied the gravity model of trade testing the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable and to know the determinants of Indo-Oman bilateral trade. 18 years GDP and export data starting from 1996 to 2014 were taken for analysis. Authors concluded that Oman's export is a function of Oman's GDP.

**Objectives of the Study**

- To analyze India's economic relations with Oman
- To know about trade composition between India and Oman

**Indo-Oman Trade: An Analysis**

Table 1 shows that the export trade of India with Oman was just USD 1082.24 million in 2011, which now in 2020 has reached USD 2261.81 million with a CAGR of 7.65%. On the other hand, the import of India from Oman has decreased. In 2011 USD 4002.07 million of goods were imported from Oman but in 2020 it amounted to USD 3669.33 Million, thus we can see the major downfall in import trade. Total trade between India and Oman was around USD 6 billion with a CAGR of 2.42%.

**Table 1. India's Trade with Oman (Million USD)**

| S.No. | Year | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | EXPORT | 1082.24 | 1322.13 | 2599.49 | 2812.27 | 2379.44 | 2,190.96 | 2,728.30 | 2,439.46 | 2,246.31 | 2,261.81 |
| 2 | %Growth | | 22.17 | 96.61 | 8.19 | -15.39 | -7.92 | 24.53 | -10.59 | -7.92 | 0.69 |
| 3 | IMPORT | 4002.07 | 3345.94 | 2009.72 | 2951.18 | 1752.24 | 1,674.71 | 1,290.50 | 4,264.29 | 2,759.00 | 3,669.33 |
| 4 | %Growth | | -16.39 | -39.94 | 46.85 | -40.63 | -4.42 | -22.94 | 230.44 | -35.3 | 33 |
| 5 | TOTAL TRADE | 5084.31 | 4668.07 | 4609.21 | 5763.45 | 4131.68 | 3,865.67 | 4,018.79 | 6,703.76 | 5,005.30 | 5,931.14 |
| 6 | Trade Balance | -2919.83 | -2023.81 | 589.77 | -138.91 | 627.2 | 516.25 | 1437.8 | -1824.83 | -512.69 | -1407.52 |

Source: Compiled from Director General of Commerce and Intelligence, Kolkata

**Major Trade Items between India and Oman**

India's main items of export to Oman for the last ten years are depicted in Table 2. Mineral Fuels (27), especially High-Speed Diesel (27101930), and other petroleum products like Tar, Light Diesel, etc. are the major items in this category. In the cereal (10) category, rice is the biggest exporting item to Oman by India. A significant amount of Meat (02), Organic Chemical (29), Apparel both knitted and non-knitted (61 and 61), Ceramic Powder (69) are also being exported by India to Oman. Furthermore, some items' export to Oman have increased in recent years like Nuclear Reactor (84), Electric Machinery (85), vehicle other than railway (87), and ships and floating structure (89).

**Table 2. Major Commodities export to Oman from India (Million USD)**

| HSN | Commodity | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 02 | Meat and Edible Meat Offal | 32.05 | 48.57 | 43.01 | 47.49 | 42.54 | 45.65 | 40.55 | 47.17 | 45.45 | 41.67 |
| 10 | Cereals | 17.38 | 72.08 | 154.75 | 172.53 | 172.54 | 133.70 | 101.97 | 126.61 | 137.32 | 106.16 |
| 27 | Mineral Fuels/Oil | 389.01 | 267.98 | 1548.21 | 1286.66 | 935.91 | 1017.73 | 1262.58 | 1014.39 | 535.97 | 495.72 |
| 29 | Organic Chemicals | 10.88 | 11.61 | 19.01 | 16.42 | 13.47 | 23.76 | 46.21 | 61.72 | 57.57 | 67.78 |
| 61 | Apparel Knitted | 1.60 | 4.38 | 6.78 | 50.21 | 17.01 | 14.70 | 14.52 | 29.64 | 42.77 | 29.73 |
| 62 | Apparel Non-Knitted | 9.88 | 9.82 | 12.86 | 90.58 | 21.36 | 23.32 | 26.52 | 26.02 | 47.75 | 63.02 |
| 69 | Ceramic Powder | 4.32 | 5.31 | 5.82 | 19.84 | 20.92 | 38.83 | 59.83 | 54.69 | 58.19 | 59.95 |
| 72 | Iron Steel | 42.14 | 71.18 | 78.60 | 45.48 | 52.17 | 31.94 | 54.71 | 76.66 | 84.31 | 114.15 |
| 73 | Article of Iron and Steel | 66.40 | 54.95 | 111.48 | 84.52 | 69.56 | 118.34 | 126.74 | 186.75 | 77.67 | 120.52 |
| 84 | Nuclear Reactor, Boiler | 109.47 | 73.34 | 120.88 | 194.80 | 147.37 | 168.45 | 133.16 | 145.87 | 176.22 | 204.40 |
| 85 | Electrical Machinery | 85.76 | 95.17 | 100.41 | 110.07 | 111.55 | 112.94 | 108.81 | 113.79 | 138.70 | 120.41 |
| 87 | Vehicles other than Railway | 12.13 | 27.46 | 54.66 | 49.53 | 69.97 | 50.66 | 52.10 | 43.20 | 36.37 | 56.91 |
| 89 | Ships and Boat | 22.04 | 267.19 | 7.01 | 158.29 | 352.45 | 0.03 | 228.43 | 2.47 | 276.46 | 236.54 |

Source: Compiled from Director General of Commerce and Intelligence, Kolkata

Import from Oman by India includes mainly Oil (27), Organic Chemicals (29), Fertilisers (31), Plastic (39) and Aluminum (76). Fertilisers (31) import from Oman has increased in last few years. It was just USD 348.78 million in 2011, which now has reached to USD 693.93 million. Moreover, import of items like Salt and Sulphar (25), Organic Chemicals (29), and Plastic (39) also increased in last couple of years. Heavy downfall has been reported in import of items from Oman; like Mineral fuel (27) and Aluminum (76). In 2011 Mineral fuels (27) import from Oman was USD 3293.14 Million, which has now shrunken to USD 1838.78 Million in 2020. Import of Aluminum (76) also plummeted to USD 39.39 Million in 2020 from USD 91.87 Million in 2011.

Table 3. Major Commodities import from Oman to India (Million USD)

| HSN | Commodity | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25 | Salt, Sulphar | 61.58 | 74.73 | 93.95 | 99.67 | 119.32 | 109.55 | 107.51 | 125.47 | 132.57 | 127.07 |
| 26 | Ores, Slag Ash | 25.96 | 46.43 | 35.34 | 28.50 | 60.99 | 132.23 | 11.53 | 32.39 | 21.87 | 2.74 |
| 27 | Mineral Fuels/Oil | 3293.14 | 2083.84 | 507.88 | 1514.11 | 732.51 | 584.67 | 390.56 | 2880.79 | 1685.15 | 1838.78 |
| 29 | Organic Chemicals | 82.28 | 215.15 | 425.48 | 383.73 | 236.67 | 30.25 | 100.91 | 137.16 | 11.23 | 387.04 |
| 31 | Fertilisers | 348.78 | 356.20 | 346.56 | 451.35 | 267.10 | 372.06 | 371.01 | 468.99 | 394.80 | 693.93 |
| 39 | Plastic | 19.02 | 18.61 | 22.57 | 28.03 | 32.48 | 21.79 | 32.76 | 55.75 | 38.02 | 36.72 |
| 68 | Articleof Stone, Plaster, Cement | 9.10 | 20.04 | 38.73 | 41.85 | 61.22 | 70.44 | 50.12 | 42.04 | 34.30 | 24.85 |
| 76 | Aluminum | 91.87 | 76.92 | 153.71 | 152.44 | 131.26 | 87.81 | 163.14 | 79.49 | 49.09 | 39.39 |

Source: Compiled from Director General of Commerce and Intelligence, Kolkata

Oman Ministry of Commerce and Industry reports that there are 4,100 Indian businesses in Oman with investments estimated at more than USD 7.5 billion. The OIJIF is a 50-50 joint venture between Oman's State Bank of India (SGRF) and Oman's State General Reserve Fund (SGRF). It was established in July 2010 to put resources in India as a special purpose vehicle (SPV). OIJIF started functioning in 2011 with the inception of a US$ 100 million seed capital contribution which came to a full extent from seven Indian organizations from broad areas (for example Solar Industries, ING Vysya Bank, HBL Power Systems, Indus Teqsite, GSP Crop Science, NCDEX and SSIPL).

As the DIPP information shows, the combined influx of FDI from Oman during April-2000 to March 2019

amounts to US$502 million. The Oman Oil Company, an organisation of the Omani public sector, has 26% stake in Bharat-Oman Refineries Limited (BORL), which is claiming and operating Bina Refinery, India's largest oil and gas processing facility.

Oman-India Fertilizer Company (OMIFCO) is the US$969 million joint venture between IFFCO and Oman Oil Company (half stake) (25% stake) and KRIBHCO (25% share) of India. The plant can produce 1,750 tonnes of anhydrous ammonia each day from two ammonia plants and 2,530 tonnes daily from two urea plants. The Indian Government concluded a Urea Off Take Agreement (UOTA) with OMIFCO to lift its urea production in its entirety. Under an agreed Gas Supply Agreement (legitimate up to 2025) OMIFCO is supplied as feedstock by the Omani Ministry of Oil and Gas for lower market costs. Indian firms have invested in Oman for various industries such as iron and steel, concrete, cement, fabric, cable, automotive, etc., including Indian companies that make up the largest foreign investment in Sohar with over US$2 billion expected from the Indian companies from Larsen and Toubro, Jindal Shadeed Iron and Steel, Indsil Ferrochrome, Metkore Alloys and Industries, Moon Iron and Moons Industries.

The Indian companies in Salalah are in an assembly such as TVS Chennai's Dunes Oman LLC (car), Oswal Group's Saltic FZCO (chemicals), Hind aluminum (cable), Kailash Group preparation units, Nagarjuna Fertilizer Plant, Future Bio organics, Deepak Nitrate, Petiva Sugar Processing Plant and so forth. Similarly, L&T, Jindal, EPIL, Shapoorji Pallonji, Shriram, Aditya Birla Group, Nagarjuna Construction Company, Simplex, KEC International, and so on are some of the leading Indian organizations operating in Oman.

**Indian Diaspora in Oman**

Between India and Oman, there are close cultural relations. Due to thousands of centuries of ancient - people exchanges, the presence of the large Indian community in Oman, and the geographical vicinity, Omanis are aware of the situation in Spain. Oman's Foreign Minister opened the first-ever 'India Festival in Oman,' organized by the Embassy with the support of the Indian Culture Ministry during November 2016-March 2017.

There are about 8,00,000 Indians in Oman, about 6,66,000 of whom are professionals and workers. Thousands of Indians are working as doctors, engineers, chartered accountants, teachers, lecturers, nurses, managers, etc. Twenty Indian schools meet the educational needs of over 46,000 Indian children who offer catering for CBSE. The Indian community of Oman is organized under the Indian Social Club Oman, with branches in Muscat, Salalah, Sur, and Sohar. In these clubs, there are several subgroups called linguistic wings, which meet cultural and social needs.

**Recent developments in India-Oman Relationship**

The Ninth Meeting of the India-Oman Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) was held on the virtual platform on 20 October 2020. Both parties have re-examined recent developments in commercial and investment ties and confirmed their commitment to developing bilateral trade between them over the session and to encourage businesses to invest in each other to realize the extent of the untapped trade and economic potential of each other.

Both parties have agreed to cooperate in agriculture & food security, standards & metrology, tourism, IT, health and pharmaceutics, MSME, space, renewable energies, culture, mining, and higher education. They reviewed the progress in the prospective Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of mining, standards and metrology, financial intelligence, cultural exchange, and information technology and agreed to conclude it expeditiously. Both Parties also agreed to speed up their internal procedures for signing and ratification of the Protocol amending the Indian/ Oman Double Taxation Agreement and the conclusion of the Indian and Oman Bilateral Investment Treaty.

Indian officials have highlighted recent government initiatives to improve business ease and boost domestic production in India, including production incentives in various industries, and have invited Omani Sovereign Wealth Funds and private businesses to invest in India.

**Conclusion**

Both India and Oman need each other. The current partnership is primarily based on oil and diaspora, but it needs to focus on a lot more areas. After analyzing the trade relationship between India and Oman, it can be concluded that there is a huge potential for both countries to take this economic relationship to the next level. Many mutual areas of concern can also be addressed by boosting trade relations, as trade is the first step towards each relationship in today's geopolitics.

Oman is one of the most important nations in the expanded neighborhood of India with its strategic

location at the mouth of the Persian Gulf. Oman has formalized defense relations with India as the first Gulf nation. India and Oman are collaborating on several projects, such as the Iran-Oman-India gas pipeline and the Duqm port agreement. It can be said that the relationship between India and Oman will further improve, which is a good sign for both countries and the region.

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# India-Bangladesh Trade Ties: Beacon for Asian Peace

Dr. Manoj Gupta*

[*All eyes in Asia were on India and Bangladesh in December, 2020, to see if the two South Asian neighbours would succeed in disallowing political differences from clouding their trade relations. What exactly did one of the biggest leadership summits across the pandemic world in 2020, the Narendra Modi-Sheikh Hasina virtual summit, achieve bilaterally and for South Asia?]*

India and Bangladesh are more than neighbours in the sense that they have an umbilical relationship that has not deterred either from pursuing their individual, political and economic goals to strictly suit their domestic priorities. The same goes for their bilateral trade too which has survived several tensions in the last few decades, particularly cross-border infiltration into India, the highly profitable informal border trade, the issue of terrorism raising its head in the neighbourhood and the latest, the interest being shown by China to influence the smaller countries in South Asia in a bid to "control" India.

This paper updates on the bilateral trade relationship as exemplified by the December 17, 2020 round of bilateral agreements between the two countries using most recent data. It locates the latest agreements in the context of the ever-looming tensions in the region and particularly the informal border trade that still lingers and will be an issue both sides would closely examine in the near future.

**Economic Context**

The India-Bangladesh bilateral trade crossed US$10 billion in 2018–19. Compare this with bilateral trade that stood at US$6.6 billion in 2013–14 with India's exports at US$6.1 billion and imports from Bangladesh at US$462 million, representing more than double the value of US$2.7 billion five years ago. The figures would be far more if there were no informal trade which itself runs into billions of dollars. Given the close association between the two countries, there is much more to the bilateral relationship than trade.

Both countries have made signal progress to augment bilateral ties since 2011. That year, they resolved the border demarcation disputes at Tin Bigha Corridor. Their armies the same year took part in Sampriti-II (Unity-II), a joint military exercise at Sylhet. The following year, Bangladesh permitted India's ONGC to ferry heavy machinery, turbines and cargo through Ashuganj for Tripura's Palatana power project. In 2013, India agreed to export 500 MW of power daily to Bangladesh for the next 35 years. Both sides have a joint venture for a coal-fired power plant at Rampal.

In 2014, the then foreign affairs minister, the late Sushma Swaraj, went to Bangladesh on her first official trip overseas. She signed far-reaching agreements: Easing of visa regime, proposing a special economic zone for Bangladesh and key agreements in the transportation sector.

The next year came the famous Land Boundary Agreement that was passed by Indian Parliament as

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its 100th constitutional amendment. It put an end to all border disputes between the two countries.

The same year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi went to Dhaka, signing a whopping 22 agreements. A US$2 billion line of credit was extended to Bangladesh, and US$5 billion worth of investments pledged. Reliance Power agreed to invest US$3 billion to set up a 3,000 MW LNG-based power plant (which is the single largest foreign investment ever made in Bangladesh). Adani Power agreed to set up a 1600 MW coal-fired power plant at a cost of US$1.5 billion. There were agreements also on maritime safety co-operation and curbing fake Indian currency.

The 130-km long Bangladesh-India Friendship pipeline to supply four lakh metric tonnes of diesel to Bangladesh was inaugurated in 2018. Bangladesh, in turn, agreed the same year to allow India to use the Chittagong and Mongla sea ports for transporting goods to and from its land-locked north-eastern states.

Last year, Bangladesh approved a revised trade deal with India under which the two nations would be able to use each other's land and water routes for sending goods to a third country, removing a long-standing barrier in regional trade.

**Post-Covid-19 Bilateral Business**

On December 17, 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina had a virtual summit where key agreements were signed. Their meeting came as both sides are fighting Covid-19 and are trying to resurrect their weakened economies. It is also contextualised by China eyeing Bangladesh as a prominent dept-trap candidate and to get close to her in order to rankle India.

***They witnessed the signing of the following***

- Framework of Understanding on Cooperation in the Hydrocarbon Sector
- MoU regarding Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of High Impact Community Development Projects through Local Bodies and other Public Sector Institutions
- Protocol on Transboundary Elephant Conservation
- MoU for Supply of Equipment & Improvement of Garbage/Solid Waste Disposal Ground at Lamchori Area for Barishal City Corporation
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Agriculture
- MoU between Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Museum, Dhaka, Bangladesh and the National Museum, New Delhi, India
- Terms of Reference of India-Bangladesh CEO's Forum

The Hindustan Times reported that the agreement on hydrocarbons will help streamline investments, technology transfers and joint studies and promote hydrocarbon connectivity. The two countries agreed to strengthen sub-regional energy cooperation, especially with Nepal and Bhutan, and speed up work on the 130-km India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline. Both leaders directed officials to speedily conclude a joint study on a bilateral comprehensive economic partnership agreement.

The two leaders virtually inaugurated the revived rail link, which was snapped during the 1965 war with Pakistan and will connect Assam to Bangladesh via West Bengal, launched a stamp on Bangabandhu Mujibur Rahman, and inaugurated a digital exhibition of Rahman and Mahatma Gandhi focusing on their contributions to the independence movements of the two countries.

**Ideological Context of Future Bilateral Relationship**

The Modi-Hasina virtual set the tone for building up on the bilateral relationship despite the geo-political challenges both sides face in Asia. The joint statement of both leaders focuses on future target areas: trade, bilateral growth, health, connectivity, water resources, power and energy. For the purpose of this paper, the statement's political and international focus is not discussed.

Both Prime Ministers emphasized on addressing issues of non-tariff barriers and trade facilitation including port restrictions, procedural bottlenecks and quarantine restrictions so that both countries can take full advantage of SAFTA flexibility. The Bangladesh side requested that as India's export of essential commodities to Bangladesh are an important factor influencing their domestic market, any amendments in export-import policy of the Government of India may be conveyed in advance. The Indian side took note of this request.

Recognizing the immense potential of bilateral economic and commercial ties, both Prime Ministers directed the officials to expeditiously conclude the

ongoing joint study on the prospects of entering into a bilateral Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

The two leaders took stock of the ongoing bilateral connectivity measures and welcomed the recent initiatives including the signing of the second addendum to the Protocol on Inland Water Transit and Trade (PIWTT), trial run of trans-shipment of Indian goods from Kolkata to Agartala via Chattogram and operationalization of Sonamura-Daudkandi Protocol route under the PIWTT.

Both the leaders agreed to expeditiously operationalise trans-shipment of Indian goods through Chattogram and Mongla Ports.

The Bangladesh Prime Minister expressed keen interest in the ongoing India Myanmar Thailand trilateral highway project and sought support of India for enabling Bangladesh to connect with this project with a view to enhance connectivity between the regions of South and South East Asia. India reiterated its request to the Government of Bangladesh of having at least one Land Port with minimal negative list between the neighbouring states of India and Bangladesh.

Prime Minister Hasina highlighted the need for early signing of interim agreement for sharing of the Teesta waters, as agreed upon by both the governments in 2011. Prime Minister Modi reiterated India's commitment and continued efforts of the Government of India in that regard. They also underscored the need for early conclusion of Framework of Interim Agreement on sharing of waters of six joint rivers, namely, Manu, Muhuri, Khowai, Gumti, Dharla and Dudhkumar.

Both sides welcomed the signing of the Framework of Understanding on Cooperation in the Hydrocarbon Sector which would further augment energy linkages by streamlining investments, technology transfer, joint studies, training and promoting hydrocarbon connectivity. It was also agreed to enhance cooperation in energy efficiency and clean energy, including in biofuels.

Modi described Bangladesh as a "major pillar of our 'Neighbourhood First' policy and said: "It's a fact that this year has been challenging due to the global pandemic. But it is a matter of gratification that India and Bangladesh had good cooperation in this difficult time. Whether it be medicines or medical equipment, or working with health professionals. We are also having good cooperation in the field of vaccine. We will also take special care of your needs in this regard.

Prime Minister Hasina agreed: "I believe both our countries can move up the global and regional value chains by further integrating our economies taking advantage of available synergies…we happily recognise the growing mutual dependency of the economies of Bangladesh and India. A good number of Indian nationals are employed in the manufacturing and service sector of Bangladesh and are remittance earners for India. On the other hand, India receives its highest number of tourists and medical patients from Bangladesh."

**Background: First Trade Agreement**

The December 17 virtual meeting shows how far both sides have come since Bangladesh was born in 1971. A look back at the past reveals that there exist certain issues that still need to be tackled. The initial trade agreement between the two neighbours was appropriately about border trade. Even before the birth of Bangladesh, the peoples of both countries along the border shared resources, customs, cultures, language and naturally, trade. Das, Samir (2013) recall: "The first Indo-Bangladesh trade agreement viz., 'Trade Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of the 'Peoples of Bangladesh' signed in March, 1972 provides for border trade for the people within the 16-kilometer belt of the border between West Bengal, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram on one hand and Bangladesh on the other."

It is unthinkable in this modern day how a lot of bilateral trade data depended on the border trade. Very few references exist today about what transpired then. Rather, Gupta (2014) gives a vivid description of those times which, even if a bit lengthy, is interesting: "The Indo-Bangladesh trade treaty has provided for 'border trade' between the two countries, whereby permits would be issued to people living on either side of the border. Persons holding such permits would be allowed to carry across the border personal consumption goods in specified quantities and money up to a value of Rs 100 only once a day in each direction or any two specified days of a week and only through some specified routes. As 95 per cent of the population of Bangladesh lives in non-urban centres, almost the entire population along the border

would be in a position to take advantage of the provisions. However, in view of the stringent limits placed on the quantum of goods and cash that could be taken across the border, traders would find it difficult to operate.

In all probability, goods thus traded will travel beyond the 16-km limit even though people residing only within the 'belt' are permitted to carry on the border trade. Moreover, in the present unsettled conditions in Bangladesh and the inadequate administrative machinery, the government would find it difficult to delimit the border trade to people living in the 16-km limit."

**Border Trade and Informal Trade**

At what point of time 'border trade' became 'informal trade' is a subject for academic discussion. The fact, however, remains that despite ups and downs in political relations between India and Bangladesh, the 'informal trade', as border trade came to be known after stricter border rules and the establishment of formal trade agreements, continued to flourish and influence bilateral data.

A World Bank contribution, Bangladesh Development Series, in 2006, examined the 'informal trade' in great detail. "Ever since Bangladesh's independence there has been a substantial informal unrecorded trade across the India-Bangladesh land borders, and a number of studies both in Bangladesh and in India have dealt with different aspects of it. Much of this trade is quasi legal and is best characterized as "informal" rather than illegal, because there is wide participation by local people in the border areas, the trade generally bypasses Customs posts, and because – as S.K. Chaudhuri's classic study noted — "the field operators generally operate in liaison with the anti-smuggling enforcement agencies".

Informal trade of this kind usually involving large numbers of local people individually transporting small quantities-often just as head loads or by bicycle rickshaw-and in Bangladesh is sometimes called "bootleg" smuggling. At the other extreme there is trade which goes in larger quantities-mostly by truck-through the formal legal Customs and other channels, but which involves explicitly illegal practices such as under-invoicing, misclassification and bribery of Customs and other officials, and which in Bangladesh is sometimes called "technical" smuggling."

What ailed bilateral trade was it was highly bureaucratic. It was a laborious exercise, trying to get an export or an import permit, pay the myriad taxes, grease palms across the way and the unbending rigidity of the border customs. As a result, the formal trade agreements did little to discourage the 'informal trade'. Pohit and Taneja (2000) said that the Indo-Bangladesh trade is characterised by a plethora of regulations, absence of information transparency, the bureaucratic approach of public agents, infrastructure bottlenecks in transportation, communication, and the rent seeking activities of public servants.

"All these factors translate into additional costs for traders prompting them to go in for informal trade. The problems faced by the Bangladesh traders are in the area of licensing, refunds and custom dealing, whereas the Indian traders face more problems with banks and transportation. Institutional factors are responsible for encouraging informal trade between India and Bangladesh. In informal trade, payment is realized quickly.

There is no paperwork or procedural delay. Besides, the transportation costs are also lower. Interestingly, trade policy barriers like tariffs and quantitative restrictions are not factors that lead to informal trade. However, people do resort to informal trade because they do not know much about trade rules due to lack of education."

A. Islam (2019) focuses on 'informal trade', asserting that it alone characterised much of the bilateral trade till recently. He quotes Kashyap (2014) reporting that the informal exports from India to Bangladesh were about USD 4 billion, which is of about similar magnitude of the volume of formal trade. This could be possible only because as Islam (2019) explains, "such informal trade occurs through various border areas without official channels (smuggling) and some even through official channels but through such corrupt practices (such as under invoicing of imports with official knowledge but occurs through bribery)".

Taneja (2001) found that Bangladesh has large trade deficit even in the informal trade sector beyond the rising trade deficit of the country in the official (formal) trade sector. Pursell (2007) also examined Bangladesh-India trade focusing on illegal trade between the two countries, especially in the context of sugar industry trade. IBCCI (2016) mentions that the size of the informal trade could be as large as the formal trade and the direction of this trade being

mostly dominated by trade flowing from India to Bangladesh, but not the other way around. On the basis of these studies, A. Islam (2019) asserts that "as such, it can be argued that Bangladesh may have sizeable trade deficit with India in the area of informal trade as well".

**Skewed Size and Competition**

The second issue that tagged the bilateral trade arena was the question of skewed competition. Look at the size of India, look at the size of Bangladesh; can proportionality of resources and a level playing ever be achieved? In his pioneering paper, A. Islam (2019) uses empirical data to arrive at three major conclusions which have thrown fresh light on the bilateral trade complications. One, as the author says, "due to its advantage over resource endowments better resource varieties, higher education and skill level of labour force, better technology, better institutions and infrastructure, bigger internal market with greater size of the economy, India is found to dominate Bangladesh in the context of global trade and global markets".

Two, he refers to the flip side quoting Basu and Datta (2007a): "However, at the same time, given some similarity in resource endowments with both countries having abundant low-wage labour supply, both countries seem to have comparative advantage in similar labour-intensive products, both countries seem to have greater degree of trade competitiveness than trade complementarities, resulting in both countries competing in similar products in global markets." In Islam's opinion," that creates a problem for a smaller country like Bangladesh to compete against India which has a more diversified basket of export goods".

His third conclusion is: "India is also found to dominate strongly in terms of bilateral trade at the aggregate level with stronger trade position vis-à-vis Bangladesh, resulting in a large and persistent trade deficit for Bangladesh against India."

**Conclusion**

Economic and border security agreements between India and Bangladesh may get inter-linked shortly to make the complex international border a safe and peaceful region. That effort itself would tackle the question of 'informal trade' once and for all. Both sides now appear to further strengthen their relationship not just for economic development but to establish a precedent on good neighbourly relations in Asia. That will be the strongest message both sides can issue. To achieve this end, they have shown maturity not to be swayed by irritants. It may be recalled how the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected in October, 2020 that Bangladesh will edge out India in terms of per capita GDP in 2020.

International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its World Economic Outlook for October, projected that India is going to fall behind Bangladesh in terms of per capita GDP in 2020. The Fund claimed Bangladesh's per capita GDP may expand by four per cent to $1888. In contrast, it claimed that India's per capita GDP is expected to slump 10.5 per cent to $1,877, which is the lowest in the last four years.

The prediction needed to be understood in the correct economic context. The pandemic has impacted India more than it did Bangladesh and naturally, New Delhi has a tougher task in getting back to a normal situation. Also, in 2019, India's GDP in purchasing parity terms (PPP) was 11 times more that of Bangladesh while population was eight times more.

Data specialists pointed out that "in purchasing power parity (PPP) terms, India's per capita GDP in 2020 is estimated by IMF at $6,284 as compared to $5,139 for Bangladesh" which on top of it all carries the burden of spending twice what it rakes in as annual revenue.

Economic growth of Bangladesh actually helps India as that eases its financial burden as the larger bilateral partner. In any case, these "irritants" appear no longer to hamper the trade tries both sides are intent on cementing further.

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**THIRD CONCEPT** *welcomes your valuable comments on articles published in each issue. Suggestion to further improve quality and get-up of your favourite magazine, which has a record of uninterrupted publication since 1987, are also solicited.*

# Chinese Presence in South Asia: Impact & Challenges

Reetika Sharma*

[*China significantly changed its position in South Asia and termed as major stake holder. The expanding policy of China towards South Asia has played a significant role to increase the political and economic growth in the South Asian region. Since the end of the Cold War, China has rapidly been increasing its economic capacity from the natural resources after investing in the small neighbouring countries. It has changed the level of its influence and interest within the South Asian region. The main purpose of China is to expand its limits towards South Asia by executing bilateral agreements in the field of trade and development, which includes political and significant development in trade. Further, the paper sheds light on the impact of China's increasing economy and military influence within the South Asia region and also to conduct a transitory assessment of Chinese military security relations with neighbouring countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives, and Nepal. Further, this paper focuses on the issues of 'China's strategic Interests', maintaining peace, bilateral relations, development, progress, global security issue and preventive measure of global crime. The paper again discusses the existing challenges and possible benefits to increase progressive relationship between China and South Asia*.]

The South Asian region is highly ethnically, culturally, traditionally and linguistically inter-connected with each other. It is home to one fourth of the world's population. General perception is that South Asia is considered as the economically weaker region in the world. Mostly, the South Asian countries rely heavily on developed nations for their export destinations; China got the benefit of the same and became the main exporter for the said region.

China, while raising its influence diplomatically to the South Asian region, including other developed countries, has started playing a key role in the international institutions after increasing its geopolitical influence in and around the world. The object of China is to compete with the Western countries in different fields of trade and security. In recent years, China strategically came up with new face by developing its influence internationally as a global leader. For example, China while posing itself as the global leader has effectively participated to resolve the international issues of global economy, terrorism, international security and crime.

In other sense, China is showing its capability to act as a global leader and trying to draw its influence over South Asian countries. Flagrantly, China is inheriting the perceptible characteristics of military, state's economy, technological development and rapid population growth in the country and for the said reasons China is known as Asian Dragon. The ambition of China is to work hard with national dedication to lead China towards success.

**Ideology of China Towards South Asia**

The perspective of China is to step towards the South Asian region that would be free from the influence of external hegemonic powers like the U.S, which, belonging to the third category of states opposes China's rise to world power status and builds alliances in Asia to encircle China. China cultivates relations with the like-minded countries like Pakistan. According to the Chinese, the countries which belong to China's periphery are in favour of China's interest with numerous actors for maintaining the regional order and recognise China as a strategic power and balancer. As far as economic content of its security thinking is concerned, China is seeking to develop and maintain cooperation with South Asian countries in the fields of trade, investment and technology.

China desires a peaceful and stable South Asia that would be conducive to the smooth conduct of its economic interaction with the region. China seeks to promote regional peace and stability by not only maintaining friendly relationship with the like-minded countries, but also by developing friendly and cooperative relations through dialogue and consultations with countries with which China has problematic relations. This policy particularly relates to India, which belongs to the second category of states in China's periphery. (People's Daily,2003)

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China wants the South Asian region free from the influence of external hegemonic powers. China's crucial goal of modernisation with a more economic content of national strength and national security thus requires access to world markets, advanced technology, capital investment and managerial know-how. The strategy of China is to raise the domestic development and stability in the neighbouring regions and to establish and maintain the new security order based on principles of peaceful co-existence.

China is continuously collaborating with the neighbouring countries that fall within its periphery and anyhow with the other countries, promptly to safeguard its interests and promote its trade in and around the Asia-Pacific region. China is strategically expanding its geopolitical and geographical influence over the South Asian region with significant implications for the region's most fragile states.

**Key Elements of China's Policy**

The key elements of Chinese policy have much importance for peace and security in South Asia region. The geostrategic policy of China is to increase its influence over the South Asian region and to dispense the influence of other countries like India. China strategically has executed bilateral agreements with the small neighbouring countries and invested in the said countries in trade, infrastructural structural developments and border line roads connecting the Chinese region only for its trade activity to achieve the goal of its long-term investment and trade by indebting the smaller South Asian countries. The policy of the China is to develop its stability and peace at the cost of the other countries.

China is one of the aspirants to increase its political relationship and geo-economic engagement with the South Asia region only to become a global power and important stakeholder for the smaller South Asian countries. China has shown its influence and impact on most of the four South Asian countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal. This clearly shows the intent of China's engagement within South Asia, which is shaped by a few strategic interests and ideologies. The Chinese are competing with India for their external economic expansion and resources and the principal expansion of geo-strategic and geo-political approach of China leads to estrangement of its relations with India. (Samaranayake,2014) Prudently, the international peace building community understands China's interests and impact within South Asia's fragile states in order to adapt each country's own responses to this changing context.

For the last few years, China is conducting bilateral agreements and cooperation with South Asian countries to expand its limits in all the fields that include economy, communication, energy, security cooperation to promote its trade and develop its strategy in the region. The object of China is to increase its trade and energy corridor throughout the region which it can easily access. China understands that the Ocean is the only pathway to transit its trade with the South Asian region and other neighbouring countries. Though by strategically and diplomatic way, China extended its influence over the Indian region also. China wants to seek its great presence in the Indian Ocean region to protect the sea lines of communication over which the economy of the China depends.

***China's Interests in South Asia***

**China and Pakistan**

China has shown its great concern in Pakistan. It is an eye-opener fact that China is fulfilling its needs at the cost of other countries like Pakistan by indebting them for giving the infrastructural loans, interest free economic aid by implementing the different bilateral agreements to compete its neighbourhood countries. The main reason behind the strategy of China is to maintain its foothold in the Indian Ocean also. The investment of China in Gwadar port, apart from this, recently, China launched the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), oil and gas pipelines, road and railways, infrastructural developments in Pakistan through China are certain examples which pave the ground for China to develop its relation with Pakistan. (Niazi, 2015) The other project of Belt Road Initiative (BRI) is strategically undertaken by China to make the inter-connection with the trade-linked countries for its trade and communication.

**China and Afghanistan**

In Afghanistan, China is day-by-day increasing its influence to promote peace and prosperity in the region to access the country as a gateway to Central Asia, Middle East and Europe. The prime object of China is to create long-term stability in the South Asian region like Afghanistan objectively to allow

making investments in number of projects like railways, highways, and electricity, telecom equipment and water projects in the country. The efforts of China to create the "mountain brigade" a strong move only to defend the Chinese and Afghani border was a movement which was mostly appreciated by the military of the Afghanistan in 2017. Though through Silk Road Economic Belt, China has made huge investment in Afghanistan for various multilateral projects much more than the expectations of the state only for its geostrategic foray to get the pathway for its trade through shortest route by Afghanistan to Middle East, Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea.

Still China is the largest trading partner of Afghanistan but on the other side, there is also a matter of concern for China, as it is worried about the strong linkages between the Uighurs of Xinjiang region of China and the Taliban leadership in Afghanistan. The prime object of China is to prevent the conflict like situation in Xinjiang region of western China which borders Afghanistan.

**China and Sri Lanka**

The diplomatic relations of China with Sri Lanka aim at developing its trade strategically through Indian Ocean by adopting the policy of "Strings of Pearls" being the beneficiary of the South Asian region for its trade and infrastructural investments. Finally, on Sri Lanka, the Chinese focus mainly on developing the island and likely currying influence there for future geostrategic aspirations. (Abi-Habib, 2018) In the 2019 official meeting held between both the countries, both sides expressed their interests in making progress with Belt Road Initiative (BRI) projects.

**China and Nepal**

Nepal is another country, where China has increased its influence politically and diplomatically. China strategically entered into the geo-political affairs of Nepal, which is a small, landlocked country and has invested by making arrangement for energy supplies and executing the Nepalese access to Chinese ports by signing the treaties. Later, China provided $32.3mn worth grant to the Nepal Army and built an armed police force training academy at the value of $350 million. (Jaiswal,2014) Both sides have objectively opted for the pathway of Connectivity Network by constructing highways, railway tracks and communications infrastructures. (Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs,2019)

**China and Bangladesh**

The foreign policy of China towards South Asia in general overlaps with the ideologies and intentions of the foreign policy of Bangladesh. The approach of foreign policy of China is to make investments in small South Asian countries, and Bangladesh is one of the live examples, wherein China has invested tremendously. Both the countries are emerged as the largest development partners in the form of trade and investment, which became one of the most important aspects of the bilateral relations. The terms and conditions of China's assistance to Bangladesh appear to be modest and soft with hardly any evidence of high-headedness from the Chinese part. The outcome of both the countries is discernible in their commitment to strengthen the existing bilateral relations with particular emphasis on economic development. (Santhanam and Kondapalli,2004).

Apart from all these, another front where both China and Bangladesh have revealed their attentiveness is to expand their defence cooperation, especially in the areas of 'Defence Industry and Trade', training, equipment and technology, and also the mutual visits of naval ships of both the countries. Bangladesh is getting the aid and help from China to procure arms and ammunition for its military. (Grossman,2020)

**China and Bhutan**

Bhutan is a peace-loving and self-developed country without any diplomatic relations with other neighbouring countries like China and has less interaction with other South Asian countries as well. The border talks between the Vice-President of China and the Foreign Minister of Bhutan held in China in 2016 proved instrumental in discussing many issues along with this round of border talks such as the issue of border dispute between both the countries and issues of cooperation in various fields. Later, during the visit of the Chinese Ambassador and his reported meeting with the Bhutanese Prime Minister, both sides emphasised to work together for resolving the border disputes amicably, by giving reference to the China-India dispute that occurred in 2017 in Doklam region. (Xinhua, 2019).

**China and Maldives**

Maldives proves a yardstick for China to counter India by initiating its Belt Road Initiative policy to increase its influence. The President of Maldives in the year 2017 signed a free trade agreement with China. Many bilateral agreements and projects were discussed by the Foreign Minister of China, in support of BRI, and those were also appreciated in Maldives. The bilateral agreements that were discussed in the meeting further act as a "bond of friendship" between China and Maldives. On the other side, it is also a fact that the purpose of developmental plan of China in Maldives is only for its geostrategic foray.

**China's South Asian Strategy & India**

The affinity and estrangement between China and India are the main factors affecting the Chinese engagement in South Asia, which in turn is an incredible reason of fragility within the smaller countries of South Asia. In recent years, the relations between China and India got tense because of pursuit of expansionist policies by China towards the South Asian region. Both the countries also have tried to explore the prospects of expanding their respective spheres of influence in the South Asian region. Recent intrusions of the Chinese army in Ladakh region of India have proved instrumental in creating tensions along the Sino-Indian border, which is widely perceived as major security threat to this part of the South Asian region.

On the other hand, the trade between both the countries depends upon each other for their economic growth, but it can be secured only by adopting the policy of maintaining peace and prosperity in the region. These border tensions that have developed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) can be overcome only through the bilateral dialogues. Although, the external hegemonic powers have little influence with either country, they should examine, how their own actions affect China–India rivalry, support confidence-building measures between the two powers, and seek to draw both into multilateral engagement on peace and security. Preventive measures are needed to be adopted by both the countries to secure the interest of each other without giving any setback to the political and democratic affairs of the countries. These types of initiatives can be helpful for both India and China to build mutual trust and help promote regional peace and security.

The long and urbane history of boundary tensions between China and India is well known and it is often touted as the leading reason of creating the problems within the region. It is an undisputed fact that both India and China are willing to resolve the disputes amicably without any interferences of the external forces (Tapan Kumar, 2020). Overall, on the regional front, India is continuously facing economic challenges from China. As China is growing fast in its trade and investment, which overshadows India by increasing its involvement in South Asia.

Further, the initiatives of CPEC and BRI develop an apprehension in the mind of India for the projects undertaken in the disputed territories between India and Pakistan. Regarding BRI, India is one of China's few neighbouring states that has outrightly and publicly rejected participation, much to the chagrin of Chinese leaders. On the other side, China is continuously expanding its limits in the Gwadar port, Hambantota port etc., while reflecting its presence in the Indian Ocean and in the bottom line also by continuously making an effort to cover the regional economic ports of the South Asian region.

In South Asia, China is one of the fastest growing nations and a major stakeholder in the region, which is trying to develop long-term relations by increasing its influence to maintain its economic engagement with others. The extra hegemonic powers appreciate the opportunities that Chinese investment can provide in contexts such as Nepal, Afghanistan or Pakistan, where deep poverty and lack of economic opportunities fuel conflicts. All other intra-regional and extra-regional players in international arena seek to promote an international peace-building agenda, which should engage with the Chinese policy-making community to make the criteria of conflict-sensitive investments in China's own interests. The Chinese widely take part in different fields of resolving global issues, which require promoting new policies to understand the conflict-sensitive approaches of new aspirants.

China's non-interference policy and unconditional aid enables it to maintain strong bilateral relations with third countries through periods of political upheaval, regardless of the regime in place. This approach can severely undermine international pressure for South Asia's regimes to respect normative commitments, as seen in Sri Lanka. The 'International Peace

Building Community' has also played a vital role to dispel the narrative generated and promoted in disputed states and taken the preventive measures to secure the interest of the region. The prime object of China is to fortify the ability of other states by giving direct support to promote strong and active regimes throughout South Asia. Stakeholders are putting their eyes over the policies of the Chinese community in peace building affairs for addressing the issues of socio-economic, sustainable peace and stability in the manner as has been set forth through dialogues.

However, given that the Chinese state employs a repressive, top-down approach to stability at home, little change can be expected in this area. As China's rising power reshapes the context for international peace building, Western spectators must seek to better understand China's interests, the nature of its engagement and opportunities for influence. China is generally reluctant to share information or collaborate with Western powers, especially in Asia, where its strategic interests are at stake. China is actively putting its efforts to promote peace, security and development by presenting itself as a responsible global power.

It is the hard-spoken fact that China's interests in South Asia are to maintain peace and stability, avoiding military confrontation and war, improving relations with all countries in all areas, including political, economic and cultural exchanges, with none aiming against a third country. Overall, the most important is the economic development for the betterment of all nations.

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# Rediscovery of Non-Alignment

Dr. Anilkumar B. Halu**

*[There is again a fresh discussion in India on the concept of Non-Alignment to which owes the remarkable contribution of few scholars who have recently produced a document known as "Nonalignment 2.0: A Foreign and Strategic Policy for India in the Twenty First Century." This document presents a new perspective of today's global dynamics which is characterised by Unipolarity as against Bipolarity emerged immediately after the Second World War with the US occupying on top the world scenario as the first and the sole hyper power due to its awesome military and corporate power running in tune with the fast over sweeping wave of globalisation and liberalisation. It also outlines a comprehensive overview of the prevailing and future challenges and also available opportunities to India which together contextualise the backdrop against which the on- going debate on India's foreign policy must go on.]*

Although the doctrine of Nonalignment and based upon it the Non Aligned Movement has been declared as irrelevant or having lost its sheen particularly due to hectic and well-focussed decades long efforts of the US and its many so called very promising ex-Secretaries of State like John Foster Dulles, Henry Kissinger or Condoleezza Rice etc. and also because of economic and security imperatives and constraints of the poor and developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America commonly known as Third World, yet it still very well survives and will continue to be so. Because an idea reflecting the essence of universal moral values cannot be eliminated as being an integral part of nature which has its own logic and raison d'etre and its own arrangement which are all beyond the capacities of human power.

Despite this fact, the history of mankind speaks just otherwise. In the field of international relations, powerful nations, since times immemorial, have always violated the basic principles of international social behaviour in order to protect their national interests, however selfish or narrow they might have been. Two World Wars, several other wars, revolutions or internecine struggles are the dark facts of world history before us. It was at the end of the second-World War in 1945 when the correlation of world forces caused to emerge a new doctrine of international behaviour through the wisdom of unparalleled Indian Leader Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru which came to be known as Non-alignment. It was the age of emerging bipolarity and consequent rise of Cold War in the then coming four decades. And within few years, other leaders like Tito, Nasser and Sukarno also joined Nehru to give a concrete shape and structure to this doctrine in the form of Non-Aligned Movement which accomplished much glitter and charisma during this period.

As history advances context do change. The post-second World War had been a context of Cold War between two Super Powers- USA and the erstwhile USSR, when the later was considered as an evil empire and as the enemy of the West, its cultures and values. To counter this empire and its ideology of Marxism, the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan like aggressive foreign policy postures were formulated by Washington with the sole purpose to contain the expansion of the then USSR. But with the disintegration of the erstwhile USSR and the end of Cold War during the late eighties of the last century, the doctrine as well as the Movement gradually lost the significance and were projected as irrelevant.

Further, the collapse of the hitherto existing Cold War global system led to emerge and consolidate a hegemonic system characterised by single ideal and one ideology, one market, and one idea of good life in all over the world which altogether caused the US to emerge as the archetypal universal role model as having accomplished the sole idea and ideal of *good life* as Aristotle wrote in ancient Greece. The merit and talent of global standards in almost all fields of knowledge and human endeavour are divided between those with the "green card" and others aspiring to possess it; and those outside the contests are creating their caricatured hybrid versions with fusions of American lifestyle in malls, fast foods, music, films, literature and also architecture.

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The post- 9/11 scenario has changed the context where radical Islam is a new enemy of the US with Samuel Huntington's formulation as the "Clash of Civilisations" finding renewed resonance in popular discourse. It has further accentuated certain features of US foreign policy already in evidence since the past two decades and has also given rise to new and disturbing military doctrines that pose a grave threat to the global peace and security of the particularly to the Third World. It is in this sense that the US has emerged since the emergence of Cold War as the dominant economic and military power at its beginning to the level of a powerful hegemon at its end; and the global system has evolved from 3the rigidly bipolar, to the loose bipolar, briefly to the multipolar during the thaw of the of the confidence-building phase, and finally to the hierarchical global system of the Mortan-Kaplan model, but with the US as the hegemonic power in the Gramscian sense.

The concept of hegemony, rooted in the social sciences, and within the framework of sovereign states, when extrapolated to the domain of International Relations, mercifully still without a legitimate global sovereign, involves some creative imagination. It is reflecting better insights, although within such limitations, into the US' status with the post-cold war global system, and the structure of the system itself, rather than simply as a dominant power within a unipolar system. It has been the dominant player in most of the post- cold war instruments of global order, like the Bretton Woods institutions of the World Bank/International Monetary Fund, and now the post –Uruguay World Trade Organisation, the International Atomic Energy Agency. And with its veto powers in the United Nations Security Council enabling it to pursue its unilateral diplomacy, including declaration of war, when necessary- as in case of the second Iraq War- or collectively with the other G-8 countries, as in Afghanistan or the first Iraq war, it certainly remains the global system's dominant military and economic power.

It is undoubtedly more powerful after the collapse of the Soviet Union as its only super power rival. But it is the seductive charms of its life styles as the global role model that has catapulted the US to the status of global hegemonic power, distinguishing it from the other G-8 countries which are also influenced by its business ethics and life styles. All these have inflicted a deadly blow on the countervailing power of various regional arrangements and also of nation states system. Indeed, the underlying thrust of the US's grand strategy set in motion in the early years of the first Clinton administration, has been to prevent the emergence of global rivals and that still holds today and is, in fact, a skilful extension of the continuing imperialistic, interventionist and hegemonistic policy since the second World War.

As a consequence of all these facts, the losers, particularly, are those poor, least developed or developing countries clubbed as the Third World, afflicted with famines, civil wars, recurrent natural calamities and also including some so-called "failed states" as the "new international protectorates". For them, the post- Cold War global system has not been a cause of unmitigated celebrations, despite its structural inequality. For most of the states, particularly the non-aligned ones, had managed to diversify their dependence among various components of the two power blocs to incrementally widen their policy options. But these were eliminated by the succeeding hegemonic global system paving way for political instability, class struggle, social revivalism, economic deprivation and steep rise in human misery etc. and also rise in global terrorism and Islamic fundamentalism. Together they represent the global fault line in the new "clash of civilisations" after the "end of ideologies."

Against this backdrop, to find out the probable options as regards rediscovering the concept of non- alignment is worth pursuing not only for sake of the Third World but also for the well-being, peace and security of the entire World. Being identified with the universal moral values, this doctrine can only determine the natural course of public policy formulations within states and can also properly regulate the course of inter-state relations. It can further rediscover its identity in the present phase of globalisation as the conscience of the system in the sense that the NAM in its heydays boldly and honestly represented the wishes and aspirations of the disadvantaged sections of the world community and was characterised as the *largest global movement of humanity upon earth* by an ex-Indian PM Late Smt. Indira Gandhi.

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# Labour Laws and IT Industry: A Critical Analysis

Sidhya B. Dash* & Prof. (Dr.) M. S. Dash**

*[The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sector of India is a billion-dollar industry which is contributing immensely to the national GDP of the nation. The Information Technology sector has grown exponentially in the last two decades of post economic liberalization period. As per the NAASCOM data, Information technology sector is growing at the rate of 7.7 percent and it will reach 10 percent by the end of 2025. Some of the notable IT companies of India are Wipro, Infosys, TCS, Capgemini, and HCL. Every year lakhs of students from different engineering colleges get hired by these companies through campus placements. Majority of the workforce of the Information Technology sector are young and technically skilled. The Information Technology sector is perceived to be a high-paid sector and full of skilled staffs. It is considered to be free from employee union interference. The employment relations perceived to be more flexible from the perspective of flexible employment contracts and HR policies. The employment relationship is going through a phase of transition and it has changed drastically because of Liberalization, Globalization and Privatization. The present paper is focused on the analysis of the employment problems and the law's position with respect to that.]*

The Information Technology (IT) sector in India is considered to be a sector which recruits the highest number of young computer science engineers through campus interview from engineering colleges. The hiring pattern followed in the Information Technology sector is mainly divided in two categories the first category is called as "campus hiring" wherein all the big software companies' recruit' fresher final year engineering students from campus. The second category is called as "lateral entry" hiring. This hiring practice is followed to fill up the senior positions of the company. The Information Technology sector compensation offering to employees is considered to be decent and high compared to other Industry.

The Information Technology sector is driven by knowledge and skills and it is for this reason that Indian software engineers are in high demand in the developed countries. The Information Technology sector has been flourishing all these years because of the government patronage.[1] This sector is governed by all the existing labour laws of the land. This sector is regulated and governed by State Shops & Commercial Establishment Act. Globalization and the rapid growth of IT sector have significantly impacted the employment relationship. Like other industry the employees of the IT sector are facing challenges in employment.

The IT sector in India, by and large, is free from Trade Union intervention. So, the employees cannot exercise collective bargaining in negotiating their rights. IT employment in India is governed by several labour laws, passed both by State and Central Governments. However, some of the states like Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra have exempted IT sector form their purview.[2]

The recent COVID-19 upsurge has severely impacted the industries including the Information Technology Sector in a great way. Amid this uncertainty in the business environment, Information Technology sector has started to lay off employees from their projects. Companies like IBM and Cognizant are in the process of laying off thousands of employees to reconcile their business interests[3]. Under this uncertainty of job employment, it is imperative to know the legal protection of employees against the employer who are terminating the employees at convenience. The present paper is focused on the analysis of the employees' problems working in the IT Industry and the standing of the Law on the various facets of those problems faced by the employees.

## Problems of Employees Working in IT Industry

### *Employment Contract*

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The employment contracts in the Information Technology Sector have provision of Non-Compete and Non-Solicitation clauses which restrict an employee to join a similar industry after leaving the employment of similar nature. Similarly, the Non-Solicitation clause restricts the employers to take employees with them for employment which are known to them. These are restrictive covenants which are incorporated in the employer contracts with narrow definition which helps to protect the interest of the employer.[4]

"Employers use to incorporate restrictive covenants in the agreement to protect their confidential information and to protect their business interest. But any kind of restrictive covenant falling under the scope of section 27 of the Contract Act, then the agreement is considered to be restraint of trade".[5] Sometimes execution of strict employment bonds restricts the right of employees to break the employment contract before the agreed time period.

***Illegal Termination/ Lay Off***

The human resources policies and practices of the Information Technology are more development-oriented and flexible in nature. The average talent pool in the Information Technology sector ranges from 20 years to 30 years of age. The hiring pattern in this Industry is fully dependent on skills and competency. The employees in the IT industry are hired for different ongoing and prospective projects. When the projects get over and new projects were not there in the pipeline, then employees get fired from their job "There is no standard process followed to terminate an employee in India. An employee may be terminated according to the individual labour contract between the employer and employee, if the contract defines a process of termination. Employers should be aware, however, that labour laws supersede the provisions of labour contracts- any termination policy or clause outlined in a contract should be checked against the law by a professional."[6]

There seems to be a misconception that Information Technology sector is free from Labour and Employment laws but in practical terms they are covered under all the existing labour and employment laws of the state[7]. Software Industry in Bangalore has requested the State government to relax the clause of working hours mentioned in the State Shops & Establishment Act. Flexi working hours will help the companies to cope up with the competition with other companies[8]. This severely impacts the employee's social security. The Information Technology sector in India is free from union's interference to a large extent. However, the recent cases of lay off from industry have given the opportunity to the affected employees to form employee unions.

***Occupational Stress & Harassment at Workplace***

"A study on professional stress, depression and alcohol use among Indian software professionals, observes that the software employees are professionally stressed and are at 10 times higher risk of developing depression and also significantly increase the incidence of psychiatric disorder."[9] Employees in IT companies develop health problems because of physical and mental stress at work place[10]. Stress is high in software industry because of their nature of work targets, achievements, night shifts, over-work load.[11] The employees are working more than the prescribed working hours but without any overtime compensation[12].

"Many Indian Software companies face sex scandals; however, a few have come to public notice. According to study of Annual Reports of 46 Nifty companies by the Economic Times in September 2015, almost 38 out of 50 Nifty companies have 415 sexual harassment cases against them"[13]. In IT industry sexual harassment cases are often unreported[14]. Vani Kola, Managing Director of kalaari capital wrote in his blog that sexual harassment cases are not reported because "This is understandable, as we lack the confidence in the organization to handle such issues comprehensively, and fear of retaliation."[15]

Indian companies reported 14 % more cases of sexual harassment in financial year 2019 in comparison to previous year data[16]. "Techie drags IT companies to court over long working hours and bad leave policy"[17]. The increase in employer's demands and the ambitions of the employees are the main causes of employment stress.

**Legal Analysis**

The labour protection laws in India are enacted for the protection of the employees from employer against all kind of exploitation. These laws are enacted specific to the requirement of employees in a particular setup like Factories Act of 1948, Industrial Dispute Act of 1947, Shops & Commercial

Establishment Act etc. There is no law specific to the Information Technology sector which is meant to protect the employees of the Information Technology industry. In various instances the courts of India have attracted all the provisions of the existing labour laws (IDA ACT 1947, FACTORIES ACT 1948) in deciding employment disputes of IT industries.

The Information Technology industry is new and in a stage of constant growth. So, it is important to find the standing of laws and judiciary on the identified problems of employees like employment contract, illegal termination and occupational stress and harassment at workplace.

The Contract of Employment between the employee and the employer in the Information Technology industry is not binding by any regulations. However, the principle of the contract has to be in line with the Indian Contract Act of 1927. The employees of IT industry have to abide by the restrictive covenants like "Non-Competitive" and "Non-Solicitation agreements. These agreements restrict an individual to join similar kind of industry after leaving the present employer and restricted to take his colleagues as employees of his new place of work.

The Article 19 of the Constitution of India has guaranteed all the citizens the Right to practice any profession, trade or business[18]. In determining the bargaining power of the employer and employee, the honourable courts have relied on the terms of the contract to be reasonable for each of the parties. The Apex court in the case of Niranjan Shankar Golikari Vs. Century Spinning & Mfg. Co. Ltd., illustrated the test to determine the validity of the restrictive covenants in reference to the provisions of the Indian Contract Act of 1947[19].In the case of Kumar Apurva vs. Value First Digital Media Pvt. Ltd., Hon'ble Supreme Court of India have restricted the employee to carry any activity which goes against the interest of the employer[20]. In the Percept D' Mark (India) Pvt. Ltd. vs. Zaheer Khan & Anr. case the Hon'ble Apex Court held that "a restrictive covenant beyond the terms of the contract is void and not enforceable". The court also held that "the doctrine of restraint of trade does not apply during the continuance of the contract of employment and it applies only when the contract comes to an end."[21].

The Industrial Dispute Act of 1947 has provisions against illegal termination. Some of the important provisions with respect to the problem of Illegal Termination of employees from job are as follows;

Section 2(oo) of the IDA Act, 1947 says "retrenchment means the termination by the employer of the service of a work man for any reason whatsoever, otherwise than as a punishment inflicted by way of disciplinary action but does not include (a) voluntary retirement of workman (b) retirement of the workman on reaching the age of superannuation if the contract of employment between the employer and the workman concerned contains a stipulation in that behalf or.[22]."

Section 25(F) of the IDA Act, 1947 has laid down the provision to be followed before retrenchment "any workman with continuous service for not less than one year has to be give one month's of notice the reasons of retrenchment and payment of wages equivalent to fifteen days average pay is applicable in lieu of that notice period".

Section25 (G) of the IDA, 1947 act has laid down the procedure of retrenchment, which says "any specific category of workman if needed to be retrenched in the absence of any agreement, in that case the employer should retrench the last person employed in that category otherwise to record if any other category of employee is retrenched".

The Shops & Commercial Act also laid down various provisions with respect to termination, like an employer cannot terminate an employee who has worked more than three months in an establishment without serving 30 days' notice period except in cases of misconduct. The provisions of Shop & Commercial Establishment Act are differently enacted by states as per their requirement. The Information Technology sector is covered under Shops & Commercial Establishment Act. There is no specific law designed for the protection of employees against lay off and governance of the employees of the Information Technology Sector.

It is important to find the judicial approach to the problems of employees working in the Information Technology sector.[23] In India Information Technology sector is mostly regulated by Shops & Commercial Establishment Act which varies from state to state. But in some of the employment disputes the

employees have contested in the courts as "Workmen". Section2 (S) of the Industrial Dispute Act of 1947 defines "a workman as any person (including an apprentice) employed in any industry to do any manual, unskilled, Skilled, technical, operational, clerical or supervisory work, for hire or reward, terms of employment be express or implied and included any such person who has been discharged, dismissed or retrenched in connection with, or as a consequence of dispute"[24]. The definition also excludes employees holding administrative and supervisory responsibility and drawing wages more than rupees 6500 per month.

The existing labour laws in India are designed specific to industries, factories, mines, plantation and establishment. The Apex court in India has given landmark judgment on "illegal termination" from job, like in the matter of *M. Rajan Issac Vs. The Chairman & Managing Director*, the Hon'ble held that the grounds of termination may be objective and due process of law has to be followed before termination of employee[25]. In the case of *A. N. Shukul vs. Philips India & Others* the Hon'ble court held that, the employer has a right to terminate the employment contract for business plans if it is part of the terms mentioned in the employment contract[26].

In the case of *Jayantibhai Roojibhai Patel Vs. Municipal Corporation, Narkhed & Ors*, the Hon'ble court held that any employee being unlawfully terminated is entitled to get back wages[27]. In the case of *K Ramesha vs. HCL Technologies* the labour court had given relief to the employee as per the provisions of the Industrial Dispute Act of 1947 and ordered for here reinstatement with full wages[28]. In the case of *Intertek India Pvt Ltd Vs. Priyanka Mohan* the Hon'ble Delhi High Court laid down that a suit for illegal termination of person in private service is maintainable[29].

The exploitation at workplace cases have increased over the years in the IT industry because of its extended working hours. The harassment cases include sexual harassment case, bullying, extended working hours and less compensation. The employees are succumbing to work related stress and business targets which has significantly affected their health. In *the Visakha Vs State of Rajasthan* the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India has laid down clear guidelines on the protection of women against sexual harassment.

In the case of *Praveen Pradhan vs. State of Uttaranchal & Others,* the Hon'ble High Court of Uttaranchal observes that "under the pretext of administrative control and discipline a senior is not entitled to humiliate a junior staff inhumanely."[30].

In the case of Madan *Mohan Singh vs. State of Gujrat & Ors*. the Hon'ble court held that if the prosecution will be allowed with all the cases biased in nature, it would be difficult for the superior official to work and the court quashed the proceeding against the superior official[31]. In the case of *Dr. Prasad Pannian Vs. Central University of Kerala* the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala held that "The very concept of sexual harassment in a workplace against a woman should start from an express or implied sexual advance, sexual undertone or unwelcoming behaviour which has a sexual tone behind it without which provision of Act 2013 will not apply"[32].

In a landmark judgment the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India observed that "Sexual harassment at workplace is an affront to the fundamental rights of a women to equality under Article14 and 15 and her right to live with dignity under Article 21 of the Constitution of India as well as her right to practice any profession or to carry out any occupation, trade or business"[33]. The Indian Penal Code, 1860 under Section 354 & 509 has laid down provision to protect women from sexual harassment. Section 354 "deals with the case of assault or criminal force to women with intent to outrage her modesty. Sec. 509 of the India Penal Code, 1860 "deals with gestures or act intent to insult the modesty of women"[34].

**Conclusion**

The changing nature of employment relationship in the Information technology is in transition and keeping the mammoth size of the workforce working in the IT Sector, it's highly imperative for the law makers to enact a law which can largely cater to the interest of the employees of the IT sector. The Information Technology Industry is significantly contributing to the GDP of the nation. The growth is possible because of the skilled manpower working in the IT sector and it is necessary that their employment rights have to be protected by the legislature and Judiciary. The harmony of employment relationship can be achieved when both the interests of the employer and employees are served with proper magnitude.

The government has brought in four labour codes by merging old codes governing the Industry, Factories and Establishments. These new Labour Codes are named as the Code of Social Security, 2020; The Industrial Relations Code, 2020; The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Condition Code, 2020 and The Code on Social Security, 2020. These codes are passed by both the houses of the Parliament and got the Presidential accent to be a Law. It's an optimistic move from the Government to bring clarity in the governance of the employment relationship. The time will tell how these reforms are going to yield better results for the industrial employment relations.

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# CSR in Health Sector and Community Development

Dhavaleshwar, C. U.* & Dr. S. R. Mane**

*[Present paper is an effort to know the health facilities guaranteed by the corporates as a part of their CSR activities. Health is the important component of community development; hence health sector is the most priority area of concern for corporates. Various pandemics and prolong illnesses warned the human society to be conscience about their health. Therefore, corporates are providing facilities to promote health under the CSR activities. Present study covers entire Karnataka consisting of various socio-economic demography in respect to getting health services by eight selected corporates. Descriptive research design and purposive sampling technique are used for this selection of sample. Study reveals that most of the companies are providing healthcare services and community members are happy with the service provided.]*

Companies Act suggests the corporates to invest in health under the corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities. Sharma and Kiran (2012)1 have opined in their research article on "Corporate Social Responsibility Initiatives of Major Companies of India with Focus on Health, Education and Environment", that corporate social responsibility is emerging as a new research field in management. Health seeking behaviour is increasing among the developing countries so these moves lead both public and corporate sectors to invest more. General health and fitness are becoming favourable with the people and there is also a growing interest in them about yoga, meditation, regular walking and gym practices. Presently; however, corporates are focusing on basic health and public health activities under CSR.

### *Methodology*

### *Objectives*

1. To study the socio-demographic profile of respondents
2. To examine the Corporates' effort towards health sector

### *Tools and Methods of Data Collection*

The researcher has used the self-prepared structured questionnaire to collect data and tools were validated through statistical analysis. Paper is designed on the basis of both primary and secondary data. The primary data were collected with structured questionnaire after pretesting of tools. The data collection exercise was done by conducting face-to-face interviews of the respondents by maintaining confidentiality of the respondent.

### *Sampling Method and Universe and Sampling Structure*

Non-probability sampling method was adopted and among all of the methods, Purposive Sampling methods were found suitable as per objective of the study. Karnataka was selected as a universe of the study. Karnataka is divided in to four revenue divisions i.e., Bengaluru, Mysuru, Belagavi and Kalburgi. For the study purpose researcher selected two (02) MNCs from each division, (i.e., 4*2= 08) and from each MNC's 50 sample drawn purposively for the convenience of the study; therefore, total 400 samples were interviewed for this purpose. So, for this study the sample size that was considered stood at 400.

### Data Analysis

### *Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents*

### Age Group

The age group of the respondents is an important factor for the study to see if, with increasing age or different age groups are having different awareness level and understanding about the role of CSR intervention in their community. Four class intervals have been considered with class difference of 10 years each, i.e., below 28 years, 29-38 years, 39-48 years and above 49 years. The first category of below 28 years consisted of 69 respondents, i.e., 17.3 per cent respondents. The second category of 29-38 years consisted of 129 respondents, i.e., 32.3per cent, third category of 39-48 years consisted of 122 respondents i.e., 30.5 per cent and fourth category of above 49 years consisted of 80 respondents i.e., 20 per cent of the respondent sample. From the above, it can be summarized as 80 per cent of the respondents are above age of 28 years.

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**Table no 1: Age wise Demographic Distribution**

| Sl no | Age Group (in Years) | % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Below 28 | 17.3 | 69 |
| 2 | 29 to 38 | 32.3 | 129 |
| 3 | 39 to 48 | 30.5 | 122 |
| 4 | 49 and above | 20 | 80 |
| | Total | 100 | 400 |

Gender Composition:

The next demographic factor considered for the study is the gender of the respondents. This was done with an objective to find if there were any differences in the awareness and understanding of male and female respondents. Among 400 respondents 302 males, i.e., 75.5per cent were males and 98 were female i.e., 24.5per cent, which further indicates that 3/4th of the respondents were male respondents whereas 1/ 4th were female respondents due to the fact that higher number of males was actively associated with CSR activities in the community than female respondents.

***Table 2: Gender wise Demographic Distribution***

| Sl no | Sex | % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Male | 75.5 | 302 |
| 2 | Female | 24.5 | 98 |
| Total | | 100 | 400 |

**Caste Identities**

**Table No 3: Caste wise Demographic Distribution**

| Sl no | Caste | % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | General | 17.5 | 70 |
| 2 | Other Backward Caste (OBC) | 50.8 | 203 |
| 3 | Scheduled Caste (SC) | 15.3 | 61 |
| 4 | Scheduled Tribe (ST) | 16.5 | 66 |
| | Total | 100 | 400 |

While analyzing the caste dynamics among the respondents participated in this study gives a vivid picture. Half of the respondents i.e., 50.8 per cent of the sample i.e., 203 respondents were from OBC followed by 17.5per cent i.e., 70 from General category, 16.5 per cent i.e., 66 from Scheduled Tribe community and 61 i.e., 15.3 per cent of the sample respondent were from Scheduled Caste. This indicates that higher number of OBC population has participated in this study other than any caste category.

**Income and Occupation**

Among 400 respondents, 176 respondents were earning between 2-3 lakhs (44per cent), which is highest among all the groups of respondents followed by 149 respondents which are having earning between 1-2 lakh, 34 people were earning between 3-4 lakhs (8.5 per cent) and 33 respondents were earning either or equal to one lakh i.e., 8.3 per cent, whereas marginal number of respondents were earning more than 4 lakhs.

**Table no 4: Income Level wise Demographic Distribution**

| Sl no | Income Level | % | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | dH to1 Lakh | 8.3 | 33 |
| 2 | 1 - 2 Lakh | 37.3 | 149 |
| 3 | 2-3 Lakhs | 44.0 | 176 |
| 4 | 3-4 Lakhs | 8.5 | 34 |
| 5 | 4-5 Lakhs | 1.3 | 5 |
| 6 | e+ 5 Lakhs | 0.8 | 3 |
| | Total | 100 | 400 |

**Healthcare & Fitness**

The Report of the International Bioethics Committee of UNESCO (2010)2 on Social Responsibility and Health has addressed this idea of social responsibility in the framework of healthcare delivery proposing a new standard in hospital governance. The scope of this responsible behavior necessitates hospitals and other healthcare organizations to accomplish its social and market goals, based on law and general ethical standards. The report proposed that social responsibility should be considered a moral obligation to create organizational value. The originality and the significance of this report is that it openly broadens the concept of social responsibility, applying it not only to the private sector but also to the public sector and governments in order to fulfill the full recognition and deliverance of healthcare as a right to everyone based on universal ethical principles. In healthcare, CSR means that there is an ethical obligation that requires hospitals and other organizations to do something beneficial to health- related issues such as delivering quality healthcare to everyone who is titled to it.

Healthcare services include the prevention from disease, preventive checkups, improvement of health, diagnosis of diseases and treatment of illness, injury and other physical and mental impairments in people. A healthcare service promotes the healthy

environment in the surroundings and enables the healthy society.3 Maintaining health also includes the fitness exercise such as Gym/exercising facilities, Yoga and Meditation facilities which encourage the sound mind. For sound health there is necessity of sound mind.

**Table no :5. Healthcare Services availed with the assistance of CSR Implementing Organization**

| Sl no | Healthcare Services Provided by Organization | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Free Check-up and Provision of Medicines | % | 96.5 |
| | | Total | 386 |
| 2 | Ambulance Services | % | 72.5 |
| | | Total | 290 |
| 3 | Blood Bank Service | % | 57.8 |
| | | Total | 231 |
| 4 | Immunization programmes | % | 51.3 |
| | | Total | 205 |
| 5 | Pathological lab | % | 8 |
| | | Total | 32 |
| 6 | X Ray Service | % | 37.5 |
| | | Total | 150 |
| 7 | Health Check-up Camps | % | 58.3 |
| | | Total | 233 |
| 8 | Preventive Medicines | % | 75 |
| | | Total | 300 |
| 9 | **Fitness Activity** | | |
| 10 | Gym/Exercise Facility | % | 98.5 |
| | | Total | 394 |
| 11 | Yoga and Meditation centre/ Programmes | % | 100 |
| | | Total | 400 |
| 12 | Sports and Recreational | % | 98.5 |
| | | Total | 394 |

Study indicated that free health and medical camps, preventive medicines, Ambulance services, immunization programmes for fragile and chronic diseases such as (Hepatitis B & C, BCG, Polio etc.) pathological lab facilities, blood banks, X-Ray facilities are being covered under healthcare services in CSR initiatives. Apart from this, organisations are also providing the facility of fitness centers (Gym, yoga and meditation programme and sports activities).

In the category of healthcare services more than 96per cent of the community members have availed free health checkup and got medicines as required through the assistance of CSR implementing organization which is the highest among the healthcare services, whereas more than 70 per cent respondents have availed the ambulance services and three-fourth of the respondents got preventive medicines after due diagnosis. More than half of the respondents availed the healthcare facilities such as Blood Bank, Immunization and Health camps.

Less than 10 per cent people have availed the pathological lab facility which indicates that only very few of the project/programmes are covering the diagnosis facility which is the least in the category whereas X-ray facilities availed by only 37.5 per cent of the respondent. It is quite evident that organisations are less emphasized on diagnostic test and X-ray facilities; they are much more concentrated on assisting in the general health checkup and providing general medicines.

In the category of fitness services, almost all have availed the fitness services except a few which are marginal in size. Study also indicated that all have attended the Yoga/ Meditation programmes which were organized regularly by organisations and under the CSR initiatives organisations have also created the Gym facilities and sports facilities for promoting the healthy and fit society. It also envisages the lines of PM in his address on "Healthy India and Fit India".

**Conclusion**

The budget allocation for health services under CSR by Corporates is increasing considerably, but as far as the quality of service and areas and specialization under health services are concerned, the public opinion is not in favor of corporate. Most of activities are carried out only for name sake and traditional health services like; free check-up and provision of medicines, Ambulance Services, free health check-up camps and yoga/ meditation classes are running. Special health care services not concentrating and health services for life threatening diseases and expensive health services are not provided by the corporate. Therefore, corporate need to provide quality and specialized health services to all the stakeholders and only such services can lead to integrated community development.

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# Development of Women Education in India

Dr. Dipak Pathak*

*[Women education in India has also been a key anxiety of both the government as well as civil society, so the educated women can play a very important task in the development of the country. Education is landmark of women empowerment because it enables them to respond to the challenges, to tackle their customary role and change their life. So, we cannot ignore the importance of education in case of women empowerment in India, which is hovering to fetching superpower, a developed country by 2020. The growth of women's education in rural areas is very slow. This clearly means that still huge womenfolk of our nation are illiterate, the weak, backward and oppressed. Education of women is the most commanding instrument of change of position in the social order. Education also brings a decline in inequalities and functions as a means of civilizing their status within the family. To provide the education to everyone, EFA (Education for All) programme was launched in 2002 by the Government of India after its 86th Constitutional Amendment; it made free and compulsory education from 6-14 years of age as a fundamental right to every Indian child. But position of female education is not improving according to unwavering factor for women. This paper examines the trends in women education, the investments on education and infrastructural support in India.]*

Women constitute almost half of the population of the world. Education for women is the best way to improve the health, nutrition and economic status of a household that constitutes a micro unit of a nation's economy. In this context, it can be argued that lack of woman education can be an impediment to the country's economic development. In India, women achieve far less education that of men. As per the Census report 2001, the literacy rate of women is 54.16 per cent and that of men is 65.38 per cent.

There has been a sincere effort to improve the education attainment of women by both government and voluntary organizations. The changes in the policies and infrastructural supports on primary, secondary and higher education reflect the initiatives of the Government of India towards women education. This paper examines the trends in women education, the investments on education and infrastructural supports in India.

The study reveals that there had been significant progress in the performance of women education from female literacy levels and its change over time. It was also observed that the gaps between rural and urban female literacy rates are narrowing down. It was pragmatic that rural poverty acts as a drive factor for women's education slightly than as a barrier to women's education. The significant influence of urbanization on women's education implied that urbanization had been playing a beneficial role in the attainment of women's education in India. At the same time, the drop-out rate had a negative effect on women's education. It revealed that reduction of girl's drop-out rates is necessary for achieving women's education.

**Women Education in India**

It is very important to know the historical background, if we are to make a study of status of women in India. It is not easy to find answers for questions like when did women start losing their status or who was responsible for this situation. The position that women occupied in the medieval and later the colonial period is of utmost importance. Women were never put-on high pedestal in the Shastras.

**Women Education in Ancient Period**

It cannot be clearly stated whether equal rights between men and women prevailed or not during the Vedic period. But available sources show that liberal attitudes and practices pertaining to women did exist. Women were actively involved in religious and social matters. They had some freedom to choose their partner in marriage and a widow was permitted to remarry. As India started taking steps towards civilization, social discrimination increased. Jainism and Buddhism emerged as potent religious reform movements. According to Buddha, women's spiritual

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capacities were equal to men. "Buddhism began as a religion that treated women as equal to men in their capacity for personal spiritual development."1 "The universal prejudices against women, who are said to be weak-minded, fickle, treacherous and impure are shared by the Jains and expressed in several passages of the canon and in the form of maxims."

The high status that women enjoyed during early Vedic period gradually started deteriorating in the late Vedic period. Lineage began to be traced in the male line and sons were the sole heirs to family property. As the economic and social status of sons began to rise, the position of women saw a steep decline.

The position of women reached an all-time low during the age of the Dharma Shastras. It is during this age that codes of conduct prescribing behaviour norms for women were evolved. This period saw the exclusion of women from both economic and religious spheres. During the period of Dharma Shastra, child marriage was encouraged and widow marriage was looked down upon. The birth of girl child was considered as an ill omen and many parents went to the extent of killing the female infants. The practice of Sati became quite wide spread because of the ill treatment meted out to widows.

**Women Education in Medieval Period**

The condition of women in society deteriorated more during the medieval period with the entrance of Muslims. At this point of time several evil practices like child-marriage, sati, and female infanticide were practiced largely. 'Purdah' system was started. These women were also forced to practice 'Zenana'. Rajput women of Rajasthan practiced 'Jauhar'. Polygamy was common in Hindu Kshatriyas. At the same time many women excelled in arts, literature, and music. Women were also rulers in the medieval period. Some of the great women rulers were Razia Sultana, the only woman monarch to rule the throne of Delhi. The Gond queen Durgavati ruled for 15 long years, before she lost the battle to Asaf Ali emperor Akbar's general. Chand Bibi also fought the Mughals in the 1590s. Nur Jahan is still considered as the most effective ruler.

In spite of all these successful women the condition of poor Indian women was the same. At this time, girls were married at a very tender age. Sati was also practiced where women were forced to jump in the burning funeral of their dead husband. Devdasi tradition was common in southern India where girls were married to deity or trees. The Bhakti movement tried to restore women's position. Mirabai was the most popular Bhakti movement figure. In this period, education for women was not common at every level, only few girls of rich and famous families could achieve the basic and religious education.

## Women Education after Independence

Women's education got a fillip after the country got independence in 1947 and the government has taken various measures to provide education to all Indian women. As a result, women's literacy rate has grown over the three decades and the growth of female literacy has in fact been higher than that of male literacy rate. While in 1971. only 22% of Indian women were literate, by the end of 2001, 54.16% female were literate. The growth of female literacy rate is 14.87% as compared to 11.72 % of that of male literacy rate. The Constitution of India guarantees the right to equality to all Indian women without discrimination. The literacy rate before independence was 2.6% and it rose in 1961 to 15.3% and 50% by the year 2001. And now, according to the 2011 Census, the male literacy rate is 82.14 while female literacy rate is 65.46.

**Women Education in Modern Period**

Kerala and Mizoram are the only states in India that have achieved universal female literacy rates. The improvement in social and economic status of women is said to be one of the reasons for literacy. In cities the literacy rate is almost equal between girls and boys in the country; however, the rate in rural areas continues to be less than the boys. 40% of the centers under NFE, non-formal education programs are set apart for women.

According to statistics of women education in India, today 0.3 million NFE centers have primary education to 0.12 million girls out of 7.42 million children. However, in tribal areas there is not much of a gender bias as compared to all other castes. Tribal community statistics show lower male ratio in spite of much low income, literacy, education and other facilities. Several efforts are being made towards women education and empowerment. The government is taking steps to increase the rate of women education and employment.

**Women Empowerment through Education**

Women empowerment is a global issue and discussion on women's political rights is at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide. The concept of women empowerment was introduced at the international women conference at NAROIBI in 1985. Education is a milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to respond to

the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. So, we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment India is poised to becoming superpower, a developed country by 2020. The year 2020 is fast approaching; it is just 13 year away. This can become reality only when the women of this nation become empowered.

India presently accounts for the largest number of illiterates in the world. Literacy rate in India has risen sharply from 18.3% in 1951 to 64.8% in 2001 in which enrolment of women in education has also risen sharply from 7% to 54.16%. Despite the importance of women education, unfortunately only 39% of women are literate among 64% of the men. Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, plan and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres.

**Barriers to Women Education**

In spite of certain outstanding examples of individual achievements, and a definite improvement in their general condition over the years, it remains true that Indian women still constitute a large body of under - privileged citizens. Women, of course, do not form a homogenous group in class or caste terms. Nevertheless, they face distinctive problems that call for special attention. The Backward Classes Commission set up by the Government of India in 1953 classified women of India as a backward group requiring special attention. The Ministry of Education clubs girls with Scheduled Castes and Tribes as the three most backward groups in education. The educational, economic, political and social backwardness of women makes them the largest group hindering the process of social change.

It is inevitable that when this 'backward' group has the major responsibility of bringing up future generations, the advancement of society cannot be rapid or take any significant form of development. In the report of the committee appointed by the National Council for Women's Education it was emphatically stated that what was needed to convert the equality of women from de jure to de facto status was widespread education for girls and women and a re-education of men and women to accept new and scientific attitudes towards each other and to themselves.

A changing society and a developing economy cannot make any headway if education, which is one of the important agents affecting the norms of morality and culture, remains in the hands of traditionalists who subscribe to a fragmented view of the country's and the world's heritage. The differences between the positions of men and women in the society will not lessen; leave alone disappear, as long as there are differences between the education levels of men and women. Inadequate education or no education is the most important factor contributing to the backwardness of our masses, especially women.

**Present Position of Women Education in India**

In spite of the forceful intervention by a bastion of female privilege, feminist critics, constitutional guarantees, protecting laws and sincere efforts by the state governments and central government through various schemes and programmes over the last 62 years and above all, the United Nations' enormous pressure with regard to the uplift of the plight of women in terms of education is still in the state of an enigma in India for several reasons. The 2011 Census report indicates that literacy among women is only 65.46 percent. It is virtually disheartening to observe that the literacy rate of women in India is even much lower to national average i.e., 74.04. The growth of women's education in rural areas is very slow.

This obviously means that still large womenfolk of our country are illiterate, the weak, backward and exploited. Moreover, education is also not available to all equally. Gender inequality is reinforced in education which is proved by the fact that the literacy rate for the women is only 65.46% against 82.14% of men as per 2011 Census.

According to the Table I the pre-Independence time literacy rate for women had a very poor spurt in comparison to literacy rate of men. This is witnessed from the fact that literacy rate of women has risen from 0.7 % to 7.3 % whereas the literacy rate of men has risen from 9.8 % to 24.9 % during these four decades. During the post- independence period literacy rates have shown a substantial increase in general. However, the literacy rate of male has almost tripled over the period e.g., 25% in 1951 and 76 % in 2001. Surprisingly, the female literacy rate has increased at a faster pace than the male literacy during the decade 1981 -2001. The growth is almost 6 times e.g., 7.9 % in 1951 and 54 % in 2001.

**Conclusion**

It is concluded from the above that there have been intensive efforts to encourage girls to attend schools, which would pilot to higher literacy in future. The study also exposed that there are numerous

infrastructural barriers to women education in India. The study calls for focused approach towards escalating women-centered educational communications so as to reduce the women drop-out rates and to improve female literacy levels in India. According to the Country Report of the Government of India, education of girls is the most powerful tool of change of position in society. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family.

To encourage the education of women at all levels and for dilution of gender bias in providing knowledge and education, there is need to establish more schools, colleges and universities even exclusively for women in the state. To bring more girls, especially from marginalized families of BPL, in mainstream education, the government is providing a package of concessions in the form of providing free books, uniform, boarding and lodging, clothing for the hostelers, mid-day meals, scholarships, free circles and so on.

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# Traditional Tribal Healing Practices in India in COVID-19 situation


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*[Since its onset the battle for COVID-19 appears like a war-zone, with frontline workers battling out the invisible enemy like warriors in the battlefield. Nonetheless, going further away from the mainstream approach, the tribal society's epidemiological framework presents a rather relatively subtle approach. Thus, rather than chaotic counter measures, they deal with subtlety by taking early on preventive methods which is noteworthy. Such measures have long been part of their commitment and spiritual connection to nature and community wellbeing, which is also central to their resilience for their survival and cultural continuity especially during epidemics. The involvement of community knowledge in mitigating epidemics, COVID-19 in the current context, is remarkable.]*


Yet, in the medical world, tribal therapies and practices are viewed as primitive and unsustainable as opposed to the biomedical approach to health and preventive measures. This paper posed the need to revisit the traditional health practices and take cues from community in preventive measures of health by the involvement of community and their knowledge. From the Primary Healthcare approach, the containment of diseases at early stage forms crucial part. In this light, this paper presents the need to revisit the current healthcare services and the strength of traditional health practices which early on has taken preventive methods which falls in line with the Primary Healthcare approach.


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Alongside, the paper also stresses on the significance of community participation in owning their health issues and working to resolve them in tandem with their cultural and traditional health knowledge. With the prevailing COVID-19 situation, and the efforts taken to mitigate the spread and its effects, there is a crucial need to recognize the role of traditional healing practices and strengthen the primary level of healthcare along with community participation.

## Situating traditional healers in Primary Healthcare approach

The Alma Ata Declaration (WHO, 1978) provides that Primary Health Care (PHC) addresses the main health problems in the community, providing promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative

services accordingly. In order to address the inequities in access to health care and inequalities in health status, the declaration focused on strategies for Health for All (HFA). Herein, it identifies the role of the community health workers, including traditional practitioners where applicable, who will function best if they reside in the community they serve. It further stated,

Traditional medical practitioners and birth attendants are found in most societies. They are often part of the local community, culture and traditions, and continue to have high social standing in many places, exerting considerable influence on local health practices. With the support of the formal health system, these indigenous practitioners can become important allies in organizing efforts to improve the health of the community. Some communities may select them as community health workers. It is therefore well worth while exploring the possibilities of engaging them in primary health care and of training them accordingly (Alma Ata, WHO 1978).

A gap identified in the dominant health system was the hegemony of medical professionals and bio-medicine continued to be considered supreme as the only source of legitimate knowledge (Ritu et.al., 2019). This may be illustrated in the study by Grisel (2019) where she accounts the suppression of native spirituality and showed how medical experts and government officials impose a biomedical order among the Indian Americans. The role played by medicine men among the Native American was totally discredited. She discussed further saying,

Accordingly, the medical experts were to secularize native people through modern medicine that also required suppressing their spirituality. In 1883, the Bureau of Indian Affairs issued a set of laws known as the Indian Religious Crime Codes, which prohibited the Native American ceremonial activity and authorized Indian agents to stop dances, feasts, and medicine men, even to the point of jail time if caught. While these laws meant to suppress Native spiritual acts, they also suppressed Native peoples' health systems by targeting "medicine men" for engaging in their spiritual practices. However, the system introduced was full of neglect leaving no proper alternatives for the natives (ibid).

Furthermore, PHC approach also recognized community participation as the process by which individuals and families assume responsibility for their own health and welfare and for those of the community, and develop the capacity to contribute to their and the community's development. The community who knows its own situation better is motivated to solve common problems by appraising the situation, weighting the various possibilities and estimate what its contribution can be (Alma Ata, WHO 1978). However, the linkage in the healthcare practices with the community and the local traditional health services is found muddled which needs more consideration for efficient accessible available health care services during COVID-19 situation.

This paper thus intends to understand the cultural aspect of public health measures especially in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic by taking into account the various indigenous practices of preventive measures against the pandemic. Primary as well as secondary sources such as interviews, newspapers, and other written materials were used to gather cases of indigenous preventive measures in combating COVID-19.

**Cases of traditional approach to COVID-19 in tribal pockets of India**

For better understanding of tribal approach in regard to preventive measures, evidences or cases may be drawn from various tribal pockets in the country. While the notion of lockdown or quarantine sounds novel concept, many tribal societies have long history of practice since time immemorial. Lockdown and quarantine had been their approach in mitigating the outbreak of epidemics. Traditional healers perform rituals and prayers to pacify tribal deities and spiritual healing therapies which are again evident during the COVID-19 situation.

***Evidences from Arunachal Pradesh***

Tribal communities in Arunachal Pradesh revived indigenous lockdown rituals to contain the spread of COVID-19. Karmakar1 reported on tribal groups in Arunachal Pradesh who had implemented their own customary rituals which are equivalent to a lockdown. He accounted how among the Galo tribe, the *Ali-*

*Ternam* (*Ali* means epidemic and *Ternam* meaning forestall) ritual to ward off an epidemic has been part of their culture. It is the Galo equivalent of lockdown imposed by consensus for forty-eight hours whenever an epidemic strike. The ritual was last performed almost four decades ago when a water-borne disease had affected many members of the community. This time it was imposed on account of COVID-19 spread. The *Bos* or deputy priests would perform the *Ali-Ternam* under the guidance of a *Nyibo* (shaman). The ritual ended with the community leaders sealing five major entry points of the district during the initial COVID-19 situation in the state.

Similarly, the Adi community inhabiting East Siang and Lower Dibang Valley districts too performed a similar ritual called *Motor* or *Pator* system. This is a customary self-restriction, where the locals locked down several villages by erecting barricades to prevent the entry of outsiders. No person was allowed to enter or leave the villages. Also, in districts such as Papum Pare and East Kameng, the dominant Nyishi community observed *Arrue* involving self-quarantine. Rituals such as *Kyasang-Ratar* and *Merii* are performed for preventing the entry of an epidemic to a village.

***Bastar, Chhattisgarh***

Likewise, Sen2 accounted how in Bastar, indigenous faith healers in Bastar function as traditional health practitioners and urging people not to be intimidated by social distancing caveats since isolation and self-reliance have been part of the tribal culture for millennia. She reported on their practices where the healers tapped into tribal knowledge to churn out immunity-boosting remedies from natural things like fruits, and seeds, by using shamans as their spiritual guides. Sen stated how these eco-friendly concoctions can compensate for the vast structural inequalities in public healthcare access across India. The traditional healers played a crucial role in sensitising the people and remaining vigilant during COVID-19 situation.

***Kukis in Manipur***

A case study of indigenous lockdown rituals among the Kukis in Northeast India can provide more insight. It is interesting to note that among the tribal Kukis in Manipur, community preventive measure known as *khojeh* used to be observed to prevent epidemics like cholera, diarrhoea or other diseases which break out from the neighbouring areas. Every traditional Kuki village administration had a *kho thempu* (village priest) who performs the *Aikam* ritual to ward off the spread of diseases or during outbreak of epidemics. The details of *Aikam* ritual may vary from village to village in the traditional Kuki society, however the underlying common principle was to ward off epidemics and maintained lockdown to contain diseases.3 So essentially, it was executed for prevention and containment of communicable diseases. During such period, the village-maintained lockdown and abstained from all regular daily activities.

Collective accountability of the community was expected and upheld during such calamity. No outsiders were permitted to enter the village nor can anyone go out during this period. For passers-by or travelers, an alternative temporary road would be built outside of the village boundary to evade stepping into the village. Accordingly, the community collectively adhered to community quarantine to evade the spread of the communicable diseases. There was no specific time period for the lockdown and was based on the severity of the disease and days taken to contain the disease.

Gangte (1993) accounts when this ritual was performed in the village, it was strictly observed that no visitors were allowed to enter the village nor were the villagers allowed to go out of the village for two to seven days depending on the severity of the disease. Besides, *theokhai* was also used as a symbol to signal the presence of a sick member in the family. Twigs were hung at the entrance gate or doorpost of the house, which could be easily spotted by guests or visitors. They then received the message that the house was under *je-chan* or quarantine period. The whole family refrained from socializing with outsiders during such period. *Aikam* practice gradually began to disappear with the onset of Christianity, albeit it was still practiced in some places even after following Christianity.

**Conclusion**

As evident from the discussed cases, the idea of lockdown and maintaining quarantine rules religiously is ingrained in the society in many of the tribal societies. As concluded by Lewis Moorman who led

a team of specialists from the American Medical Association on a fact-finding tour among the Navajo and Hopi, reported that although the efficacy of the medicine man's way of employing a few herbs and singing, dancing and drumming the evil spirits away is questioned, it is important to acknowledge the constant presence of the medicine man and his untiring ceremonial devotions for days and nights which have a profound psychological influence (cited in DeJong 2008).

The availability of healthcare providers is vital for efficient health care services. Reviving traditional health care practices needs to be addressed to combat the unavailability of primary healthcare services and shortage of health care providers at many grassroots levels. As emphasized by Ritu et.al. (2019) the focus is not to romanticize these systems, but should push the scientific community to devise suitable ways to understand and validate these systems and integrate them at the level of knowledge and practice. Angel& Thoits (1987) emphasised that the influence of cultural aspects on the processes of symptom recognition, labelling, help-seeking and the structure of health systems is immense. Culture thus influences the people's decision on the interpretation as well as their way of acting on the symptoms (ibid). Hence the need to consider the cultural background is extremely called for in public health measures (Napier et al., 2014).

Böhret (2018) stressed on the vital importance of culture which must be acknowledged in understanding people, health behavior as well as public health measures particularly in responding to epidemics and mitigating measures, In the vast structural inequalities in public healthcare services across the country, the significance of traditional healthcare practices becomes all the more significant.

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# Feminine Psyche in the Novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni

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[*The Indian American writer Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni shows her literary knowledge in the genres of Indian English literature, namely poetry, short stories and novels. All her publications inevitably show her to be the crusader of women's liberation and their rights. She embarks on women's psychic equilibrium; in many of her literary works, her emotional balance, her subjugation of survival, social taboo, and women's glass ceiling are well articulated in discrepant genres. Noticeably, the novels of Divakaruni edify a broader arena for study under the glass ceiling of cultural practices and social structure on the psychic stability of Indian women and their subservient existence. The emphasis on feminine virtues is instilled habitually through the psychologic grooming of mental chastity in many Indian girl children through their societal structure disseminated in the forms of modern individual family and conventional joint families where three to four generations live happily in one home. Divakaruni's fiction explicitly projects the glass ceiling of Indian women whose psyche is chiseled to be chaste and their anxiety and struggle to merge in a multicultural foreign land renouncing their identity and uniqueness. Through the fictions of Divakaruni, the mental balance of Indian women especially when they live in a foreign land, their psychic obstinacy at their critical situations, their psychological priorities and their capacity of willing sacrifice when they are engulfed in love for someone are precociously observed in this article. Precisely, this research article aspires to explore the glass ceiling of Indian women studied through the lens of feminine psychic perspectives as deciphered from the chosen novels of Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni.*]

Chithra Banerjee Divakaruni is an acclaimed Indian American litterateur brimming with passion for English literature that has kindled her to explore into the genres of poetry, short stories and novels. Her philanthropic dynamism gets satisfied through MAITRI, a nonprofit organization co-founded by her to help South Asian and South Asian American women to fight against the domestic vulnerabilities to which they turn to be an inescapable prey. The experience and satisfaction that she obtained from helping the subservient immigrant women through MAITRI perhaps gets edified in her literature. She has been a source of encouragement to those Afghani women refugees from dysfunctional familial background. Divakaruni's sparing of her quality time in MAITRI and Chinmaya Mission has been the underpinning source of the vitality displayed by the women characters of her novels.

Her novels *The Mistress of Spices (1997), Sister of my Heart (1999), The Vine of Desire (2002), Queen of Dreams (2004), The Palace of Illusions: A Novel (2008), One Amazing Thing (2010), Oleander Girl (2013), Before We Visit the Goddess (2016) and The Forest Enchantments (2019)* revolve around women protagonists of stern characteristics. However, these women protagonists make serendipitous compromises to their persistent practices due to their penchant desire for cross cultural life style. This leads to their emotional yielding at demanding situations.

Many of the poignant situations of women depicted in the novels of Divakaruni showcase the predicaments of women that crop up due to their paradoxical practices as a result of their psychic pull to venture into an enthralling world of desires. The cultural menace to which the immigrant women get exposed to is well delineated by Divakaruni in her novels like *The Mistress of Spices (1997), Sister of my Heart (1999)* and *The Vine of Desire (2002)*.

Divakaruni 's women characters are generally tossed between their individual psychic drive for practicing cultural fidelity and fickle frailty as observed from their abominable transgressions. Tilottama of *The Mistress of Spices (1997)* sways between her deep

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sense of duty consciousness and her sudden infatuation for Raven, the American. She cloisters herself under the feminine glass ceiling called righteous performance of duties assigned to as the Mistress of Spices. She is entitled to love only the spices and is prevented from using those spices for her personal cause. Her service has to be a noble deed in protecting people of discrepant culture and races by administering the appropriate spices of magical value to cure the corresponding diseases.

The prevalent use of magic realism actually creates an avenue to explore the psychological conflicts of Tilottama when torn between her weird role of being the Mistress of Spices and her worldly desires of a woman. Her cascading premonition about Haroun's assault; the teenage boy's fierce acquaintance with a barbaric peer group; Raven's adulterous indulgence with an American girl customer of her Spice Bazaar; besides, the old man's granddaughter's impudence and obstinacy in expressing her wish to marry a man of her choice actually strengthen the glass ceiling of her decorum and duties. Tilottama assumes to be confined in her glass ceiling of feminine values instilled in her since her childhood. Any breach in the set of traditions she has been practicing for years will doom her destiny.

Nayan Tara, the tender girl cheerfully assumes the role of the Mistress of Spices under the name Tilotamma who solely runs a magical Spice Bazaar that serves a panacea to the physical and psychological predicaments of people living in America. Tilottama shown as the woman of impeccable virtues and uncompromising cultural practices is stampeded by the instigating instances that she beholds in her Spice Bazaar. America, the land of dreams, turns to be the vulnerable challenge for the sustenance of her feminine virtues that safeguard her chastity against her capricious sensuousness.

Primarily, she becomes a prey to the situations and circumstances through her sense of vision that traps her attention into the fetters of tempting incidents that happen in front of her Spice Bazaar. What her sight witnesses are not analyzed or not validated by her discretion instead those instances serve a stimulus to her sensuousness which of course overrules her determination and willpower. Tilottama says, "I too sigh my pleasure. When I lie down, from every direction the city will pulse its pain and fever and impatient love into me. All night if I wish I can live it, the ordinary life I gave up for the spices, through the thoughts that roll into me." (TMS 60). At this point, Divakaruni states, "Tilo whose life is so calm so controlled so always same, is it not fine as wine, this taste of moral sorrow, and mortal hope." (TMS 60).

Even though she oscillates to help Raven when he gets hit in front of her Spice Bazaar, Tilottama abides by the rules of staying in house of her Spice Bazaar and calls for some people to bring Raven inside for getting his injuries dressed. Tilottama mumbles to herself that "*A Mistress must carve her own wanting out of her chest, must fill the hollow left behind with the needs of those she serves*." (TMS 69). The flaw in the psychic determination of Tilottama gradually weakens due to the incessant impact of multicultural impact of the land called America which unquestionably admits its people to lead a life of virtue-free desires irrespective of the genders.

The virtues that Tilottama inherited from the divine land called India gets eclipsed by the intoxication of multi-cultural modernism. As she becomes infected by the American dream, her Indian virtues and divinity fades away. She gradually pelts stones on her own glass ceiling of Indian tradition by violating the rules preached to her in her homeland. Her penchant desire for Raven leads her to reach the extent of suffering the loss of her boon to cure all the maladies of people through administering of her magical spices in proper proportions.

In *Mistress of Spices (1997)*, Tilottama tells Raven, the American, "You have loved me for the colour of my skin, the accent of my speaking, the quaintness of my customs which promised you the magic you no longer found in women of your own land. In your yearning you have made me into that which I am not." She also agrees to him, "I do not blame you too much. Perhaps, I have done the same with you." Moreover, Tilo further explores "But how can the soil of misconception nurture the seedling of love?" (TMS 290). This intention of Tilottama projects her as a forerunner of multicultural feminism.

Tilottama who is confined in the fetters of culture and tradition as shown through the symbolic magic realistic dimension, prays for her pleasure and decides to change her priorities to worldly ecstasy. Her audacity to breach the rules and to become an

iconoclast to please her sensuous pleasures depicts not only her frailty and compromise for her yearning but also as a voice of multi-cultural feminist who goes to the level of expressing "I do not blame you too much. Perhaps, I have done the same with you." However, she also gets a realization "But how can the soil of misconception nurture the seedling of love?" (TMS 290).

"One of the significant themes of modern literature is the depiction of cross-cultural crisis, a subject which has assumed a great significance in the present world of globalization." (Bharathi 103). Factually stating, the inevitable multicultural attractions in the immigrant women make them drift with their jocund multicultural friends in America. The psychic dilemma of Asian immigrant women is exquisitely highlighted by Divakaruni through symbolic representations of Spices and their irretrievable values if lost." Chitra Banerjee believes that cross-cultural understanding should go beyond the towers of academia and thus she deals with the crisis of consciousness successfully." (Bharathi 104).

The cultural thrive for Tilottama's motherland and the feminine values invested in her act as a safeguard in the beginning of the novel when she converses with her American and Afro-American and Asian American clients. Raven as the name signifies plays a game of havoc in life of Tilottama. The willing sacrifice of Tilottama to set herself on fire in *The Mistress of Spices (1997)* is determined by her deviation from her penance and not incidental like her love for Raven, the American. Tilottama's transgression from the vows she has taken to lead a selfless chaste life is shattered after the intervention of Raven in her life.

It is here Tilottama stands an embodiment of a mislead woman in a multi-cultural land bearing the impact of multicultural feminism. Similar yielding of emotions can be observed in Anju's anxiety to assist Sudha even during the critical trimester of her pregnancy in *Sister of my Heart (1999)*.

Anju and Sudha in *Sister of my Heart (1999)* lack a stable sense of personal and cultural identity. Anju baffles her husband by her unleashed love and care for Sudha even at the loss of her own babe in a C section. The psychic dilemma of Asian immigrant women is exquisitely highlighted by Divakaruni through symbolic representations for the cultural thrive for one's motherland. At many instances Divakaruni reasons out patriarchal hegemony of Indian culture as the infectious factor that curtails the freedom of women besides, confining them in a glass ceiling. Divakaruni's genuine compassion for subservient women deceiving chauvinistic society of multicultural land is seen through the characters of Anju and Sudha in *Sister of my Heart (1999)*. The strong hold of Indian culture and tradition, custom and practices of Indian women living abroad is sketched with an undercurrent of intersectional and multi-cultural feministic perspectives of Divakaruni in *Sister of my Heart (1999)*.

The emotional binding of the *Sister of my Heart (1999)* in an alien land of dreams and vices set an appropriate equilibrium between the yielding tendencies of women in lack of crookedness. The innate innocence of womanhood is explicitly delineated by Divakaruni in the novels, *The Mistress of Spices (1997)* and *Sister of my Heart (1999)*.

The intense emotion of Sudha about the environment in which she survives flows into the subsequent lines of *Sister of my Heart (1999)*. Sudha expresses that she doesn't even have the freedom to read the letters of Anju expect trying them secretively inside the bathrooms. Sudha says,

*"When I am alone in the kitchen, I take the letter from my blouse, where I have kept it all night, drop it into unun. As it warps into ash, I wonder how Anju gets rid of my letters. Not that she has much cause to. My letters are as wholesome and bland as the milk-and mashed rice that is fed to babies. Because I, Sudha, who was for so long the keeper of secrets, no longer have secrets worth sharing. This life I have built over the cinders of my passion and my pain, this life where I have redefined happiness as usefulness – how blameless it has been, how unremarkable. Until today."* (SMH 201).

In the above quoted voice of Sudha, the longing for an impeccable sovereignty of a married woman in the house of a mother-in-law apparently exemplifies her glass ceiling seen through her abominable fetters of a daughter-in-law under the banner of customs and practices. The typical dowry system and expectations of a mother-in-law gets emphasized when Sudha unveils the experience of her mother-in law as a new bride. She says,

*"…. when my mother-in-law was a new bride in the house, and Aunt tarini –just a girl herself –had wrinkled up her nose and said, 'Oh my, is this the jewellery your father gave you for your wedding? Why, even our maid servants were better things!' My mother-in-law did not come from a rich family – her father had been forced to mortgage his house to raise her dowry – Aunt Tarini's insult had lodged deeply inside her, festering." (SMH 201).*

The noteworthy snobbery of the society and a typical mother-in-law attitude in looking down at a daughter-in-law with a nagging introspection showcases the demand for intra-sectional and intersectional emancipation of women. As the women are considered to be the meekest of meek, they are subjected to silently brood over many destructive instances that trample down their wishes, emotions and freedom in a familial hierarchy of the Indian society. Anju becomes the voice of intersectional feminism when she states, "I'm too stunned to speak. I know about the abortions of girl babies.

Every once in a while, there is a story about it in India West. And last month 60 minutes had featured the abortion clinics that have sprung up all over India, now that amino tests are so easily available. I'd been outraged as I watched the rows of beds lined up against a dirty wall, the women lying on them with their faces turned away." (SMH 260).

On the other hand, "Sudha's flight to America is a slow but steady immersion into the mainstream American culture." (Bharathi, 107). In fact, Sudha becomes an escapist of her Indian destiny. She prepares herself to immerse into multicultural ambience show traces of multicultural feminism. The candid truth about the characters of Divakaruni namely, Anju and Sudha is their unquenchable thirst for identity and quest for dreams. The intense navigation into their identity and feminine virtues is observed at several instances jotted down by Divakaruni in *Sister of my Heart (1999)*.

Holistically, stating Divakaruni's Tilottama, Anju and Sudha are apparently chasing their dreams by hanging between their instilled feminine virtues and desires to merge into their dreams. Through the delineation of Tilottama, Anju and Sudha the readers could perhaps witness the voice of immigrant feminism. Divakaruni explicitly highlights how the rigid dogmatic brought up of Indian women acts as the prime reason for their enigmatic swinging of decision-making capacity in alien land. From these inferences it is observed that Divakaruni's women characters become a magic wand in her hands to project intersectional and multicultural feministic yearning of glass ceiled girls at tender age who bloom into womanhood at later stage.

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# The Role of Women in Women's Movement in India

Ashwini L Gaddad*

Women participate in large number in various movements along with other groups. But this does not amount to a women's movement. A women's movement exists only when gender oppression, specific to this group is called into question. It implies a struggle to transform social relation of power which oppresses women. Feminism, the conscious political movement of women, has been the principle contender in the struggle for the reorganization of sexual difference and division of labour and poses its protest in terms of women's perceptions of themselves.

However, within these women's movements, there has been considerable amount of debate on the questions of women's position in class society, women's contribution in terms of wage work and unwaged work, towards the process of capitalist accumulation, the specific nature of women's exploitation, and the resultant strategies for women's movement. And, yet, they all repudiate the 'male domination' and the 'subordination' and 'oppression' of women and aim to provide justice to them. The exponents of justice for women point out that the subordination of women is not fundamentally a matter of irrational differentiation based upon sex but more because of male supremacy under which gender differences are made relevant to the distribution of benefits to the systematic disadvantage of women.[1]

The women's movement in India is a rich and vibrant movement which has taken different forms in different parts of the country. Urvashi Butalia[2] contends that the absence of a single cohesive movement, rather than being a source of weakness, may be one of the strengths of the movement. Although scattered and fragmented, it is a strong and plural movement.

It is important to recognize that for a country of India's magnitude, change in male-female relations and the kinds of issues the women's movement is focusing on will not come easy. For every step the movement takes forward, there will be a possible backlash, a possible regression. And it is this that makes for the contradictions, this that makes it possible for there to be women who can aspire to, and attain, the highest political office in the country, and for women to continue to have to confront patriarchy within the home, in the workplace, throughout their lives. As activists never tire of repeating, out of the deepest repression is born the greatest resistance.[3]

The 19th century saw the birth of a new consciousness that looked at women's rights. The first campaign against purdah, women's health, literacy and other subjects were all launched at this time. It was led by a mixture of prominent women leaders such as Annie Besant, Margaret Cousin, Kamladevi Chattopadhay, Sarojini Naidu, Pandita Ramabai and also male leaders including Rammohan Roy and Jyotiba Phule.[4]

**Women and Political Parties**

Fifty years ago when India became independent, it was widely acknowledged that the battle for freedom had been fought as much by women as by men. One of the methods M K Gandhi chose to undermine the authority of the British was for Indians to defy the law which made it illegal for them to make salt. At the time, salt-making was a monopoly and earned considerable revenues for the British. Gandhi began his campaign by going on a march – the salt march – through many villages, leading finally to the sea, where he and others broke the law by making salt. No woman had been included by Gandhi in his chosen number of marchers. But nationalist women protested, and they forced him to allow them to participate.[5]

During the 18 years that India had a woman as Prime Minister the country also saw increasing incidents of violence and discrimination against women. This is no different from any other time: a casual visitor to any Indian city – for example Mumbai – will see hundreds of women, young and old, working in all kinds of professions: doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, scientists... and yet newspapers in India are full of stories of violent incidents against women, of rape, sexual harassment, sometimes even murder. But to have a woman in the highest office of the State and to simultaneously have extreme violence

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against women are merely the two ends of the scale. As always, a more complex reality lies in between[6].

On one hand, on this backdrop associations for women emerged early in the 20th century, still initiated by men. Clubs, groups and associations provided training grounds and access to education for women, but did still also impose traditional gender roles and values. When women tried to define their own values and questioned the traditional view on gender the shortcomings of these associations became clear. Three important national women's movements emerged from these local associations; Women's Indian Association (WIA) in 1917, the National Council of Indian Women (NCIW) in 1925 and the All-India Women's Conference (AIWC) in 1927. The two first, WIA and NCIW, were not successfull in their efforts and claim for representing all Indian women. They were both elitist organizations with limited class and caste representation and had also limited geographical impact, but they still played a significant role due to their contacts through family relations and social interaction within the upper classes and casts. The latter of the organizations, however, had more success in representing women nationwide through its alliance with the Indian National Congress. The campaign for the Child Marriage Bill strengthened, consolidated and brought consensus to the women's movement. Women were increasingly being involved in politics, but primarily as tokens with little real influence.[7]

During the national movement, some Communist sympathizers wanted the AIWC to transform itself from an elite organization to a massed-based one. They felt constrained by the scope and functioning of the organization. They, therefore, formed new organization NFIW in 1954. The NFIW projects a different view about women's role in Indian society. It claims that the specific oppression of women is only one aspect of a more comprehensive oppressive structure, supported by a system of unequal property rights. So it aims at transforming those social relations of power which oppress not only women but other social groups.

While recognizing the relevance of social welfare activities, the NFIW feels that it is necessary to organize women on political issues along with other groups. This is evident in its commitment to alleviate conditions of other oppressed groups like working class, peasants and tribals. Besides, it has taken up innumerable individual cases of women who have been victims of rape and police tyranny. The NFIW was also active along with other women organizations in the Anti-Price rise movement between 1972 and 1974.

**Women and Trade Union**

The problems of mobilizing women through political parties are that, issues specific to the group get submerged in the concern for large issues. The views of political parties are further reflected in their attitude towards women's participation in trade unions.

As mentioned earlier workers in the Indian manufacturing sector can be broadly divided into two categories, such as organized and unorganized. The census of 1981 showed that of the 63.6 million women employed, 94% are employed in the unorganized sector. Only 6% of the female force is in the organized sector. The unorganized sector is the greatest employer of women. It is an area where there is a flagrant violation of the laws; unions have failed to cover wage earners outside the factory sector in a significant way.

The participation of women in the political and productive sphere is therefore, severely limited. The problem of top-down organization is that it taps and organizes the force of women to feed its own machinery but does not make it a permanent movement. It would not be wrong to assert that women have in the main, been drawn into work which is low paid, often includes personal service elements, and in general, lacks authority.

**Women's quotas in legislative bodies in India**

The Committee of the Status of Women stated in its report from 1974 that seats should be reserved for women in municipalities, and proposed that panchayats[8] should include women to secure a minimum percentage of female participation. The Committee also suggested that all-women panchayats should be set up. This was a response to the fact that Indian women had had very little representation in institutional politics since independence. The issue of representation did not emerge from the women's movements and the debate on reservation was equally strong outside of the movement as within, but it was still welcomed warmly by several women's movements.

Women's participation in local governance, in the Panchayat Raj had already been debated in since 1957. The debate round the reservation in the Panchayat Raj has not been strong. The first solution to the demand was to include women, who were interested in working for children and other women,

in the panchayats. This followed neatly the traditional patriarchal patterns of the society and posed little treat to men, and men's position. A breakthrough came in 1983 when women were granted 25% of the seats in local councils by law in Karnataka, a state in southern India. In 1993 this was adopted nationally when the Constitution Act 1992 (73rd Amendment) and The Constitution Act 1992 (74th Amendment) were passed, relating reservations for women to panchayats and municipalities. One-third of seats in all panchayats and municipalities nationwide, as well as one-third of the position of being chairpersons in the bodies, were reserved for women.

**Unfulfilled promises**

By the 1960s it was clear that many of the promises of Independence were still unfulfilled. It was thus that the 1960s and 1970s saw a spate of movements in which women took part: campaigns against rising prices, movements for land rights, peasant movements. Women from different parts of the country came together to form groups both inside and outside political parties. Everywhere, in the different movements that were sweeping the country, women participated in large numbers. Everywhere, their participation resulted in transforming the movements from within.

Worried at this increase in political activity, Indira Gandhi's government declared a State of Emergency in 1975, putting a stop to all democratic political activity. Activists, both young and old, women and men, were forced to go underground or to stop all political work. It was only when the Emergency was lifted, some 18 months later that overground political activity resumed. It was around this time that many of the contemporary women's groups began to get formed, with their members often being women with a history of involvement in other political movements.

**Challenges for Women**

The reality is somewhat different. While the participation of urban, middle class women is undeniable, it is not they who make up the backbone of the movement, or of the many, different campaigns that are generally seen as comprising the movement. The anti-alcohol agitation in Andhra Pradesh and similar campaigns in other parts of India were started and sustained by poor, low-caste, often working-class women. The movement to protect the environment was begun by poor women in a village called Reni in the northern hill regions of India, and only after that did it spread to other parts of the country. There are any numbers of such examples.

One of the biggest challenges women have had to face in recent years is the growing influence of the religious right in India. Right-wing groups have built much of their support on the involvement of women: offering to help them with domestic problems, enabling them to enter the public space in a limited way, and all the while ensuring that the overall ideology within which they operate remains firmly patriarchal. For activists too, this has posed major problems. It has forced them to confront the fact that they cannot assume solidarity as women that cuts across class, religion, caste, ethnic difference. And yet, they must hold fast to such an assumption if they are to work with women: for how, as an activist, do you deal with a woman who takes part in a violent right wing demonstration

**Gender Equity Issues in India**

Gender discrimination continues to be an enormous problem within Indian society. Traditional patriarchal norms have relegated women to secondary status within the household and workplace. This drastically affects women's health, financial status, education, and political involvement. Women are commonly married young, quickly become mothers, and are then burdened by stringent domestic and financial responsibilities. They are frequently malnourished since women typically are the last member of a household to eat and the last to receive medical attention. Additionally, only 54 percent of Indian women are literate as compared to 76 percent of men. Women receive little schooling, and suffer from unfair and biased inheritance and divorce laws. These laws prevent women from accumulating substantial financial assets, making it difficult for women to establish their own security and autonomy.

**Conclusion**

To conclude the feminist movements in India are becoming quite strong and are having an impact on the socio-economic and political bearing of the state. They are in the forefront and forceful instruments to highlight the injustices which are inflicted on Indian women. The women's movement in India today is a rich and vibrant movement, which has spread to various parts of the country. It is often said that there is no one single cohesive movement in the country, but a number of fragmented campaigns. Activists see this as one of the strengths of the movement which takes different forms in different parts. While the movement may be scattered all over India, they feel it is nonetheless a strong and plural force. There has always been a connection between

the West and India. During the 1920s-30s, the language of the contemporary Indian woman was very similar to her European and American counterparts. The women's movement had a very strong Maoist influence. Some of these Maoist groups were Naxalite affiliates. The Maoist- Dalit movement also made its presence felt in a big way. The women's and social reform movements of the late-19th and early-20th century were all development-focuses, they dealt with women's health and education, eradication of purdah, dowry and sati, working conditions, and by the early-20th century also included political rights such as to franchise and representation.

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# Leadership Behaviour of College Principals


Dr Dipankar Talukdar*



[*The present study was undertaken to see the Leadership behaviour of college principals of Assam. The study aims to explore the Leadership behaviour of male and female college principals. For this15 colleges were taken as sample of the study. Descriptive Survey method was applied. The study revealed that there is significant difference in Leadership behaviour of college principals*.]


The development of any country depends mostly on education. Progress of any country is possible only when its citizens are dynamic, resourceful, enterprising. Higher education is an important part of national development. Educational Administration is concerned with the management of institution, where human beings as well as physical resources are brought together for attaining educational objectives.

Among all the educational institutions, college plays an important role in the development of the quality education. Principal is the soul of the entire institution. Principal is a teacher and a leader of the leaders. Principal is responsible for planning, organizing, staffing, supervising, directing, coordinating, reporting, budgeting etc. In brief, Principal must have well developed personality. His personal reputation and the success of his endeavour depends mostly upon the relations that he maintains with his staff, students their parents and community

Leadership behaviour means the leadership act of a particular person who happens to be the administrator at the time and also the leadership act initiated by group members. Kumari. N. (1998-99) maintained in his thesis that Leadership leader i.e. The Principal is one who portrays clearly the relationship between himself and his staff members and establishes well defined pattern of organizational channels of communication and ways of getting jobs done but whose behaviour reflects friendship, trust, respect, warmth of relationship between himself and his staff.

**Objectives of the study**

1. To study the Leadership behaviour of college principals
2. To study the Leadership behaviour of college principals in relation to age


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3. To study the Leadership behaviour of male and female college principals

**Hypotheses**

Ho1 There is no significant difference of Leadership behaviour of college principal.

Ho2 There is no significant difference in Leadership behaviour of college principal in relation to their age.

Ho3 There is no significant difference in Leadership behaviour in relation to gender

**Geographical area of the study**

Kamrup Metropolitan district is one of the prominent districts of Assam where capital city Guwahati is located. There are 28 affiliated general degree colleges of Kamrup (M) district.

**Research Design**

**Methodology**

The researcher applied Descriptive Survey method for the investigation.

**Population and Sample**

The population of the present study includes all the 28 affiliated general degree colleges of Kamrup Metro District of Assam. The investigator has taken 15 colleges as sample of the study.

**Sampling Technique**

For selection of adequate sample for the investigation, the investigator used purposive sampling technique.

Tool

The following tool was used for collection of relevant data in the present study.

- Administrative Behaviour Scale (ABS) by Dr. Hassen Taj. The scale was constructed mainly for secondary school principals. But the investigator has slightly modified the scale and applied it for college principals.

**Statistical techniques employed**

i) chi -square, ii) t- test, iii) Simple percentage technique

**Analysis and Interpretation**

**Objective no. 1**

***To study the Leadership behaviour of college principals***

Ho1 There is no significant difference of Leadership behaviour of college principal.

In order to study the Leadership behaviour of college principals, the investigator collected the data with the help of Leadership Behaviour Scale by Dr. Haseen Taj and categorized into three groups: high, average, and low. The investigator used simple percentage technique. The description of Leadership behaviour of college principal is tabulated in the following from the above table, it has been found that 37% of the total sample collected from the group of college principals has high Leadership behaviour. The investigator found that 53% college principals have average Leadership behaviour. Above table shows that 20% principals have low Leadership behaviour.

**Objective no.2**

***To study the Leadership behaviour of college principal in relation to age***

Ho2 There is no significant difference in Leadership behaviour of college principal in relation to age.

In order to study the Leadership behaviour of college principal in relation to age, the investigator categorized age of principals into three groups 45-49, 50-54, 55-60 and collected the data and analysed it with the help of chi-square technique.

The computed value of chi- square i.e., 6.126 is much less than critical value at .01 and.0 5 level of significance. Hence, it is not significant. Consequently, null hypothesis is accepted. So, it is said that there is no significant difference in Leadership behaviour of college principals in relation to age.

**Objective no.3**

***To study the Leadership behaviour of male and female college principals***

H03 There is no significant difference in Leadership behaviour of male and female college principals

In order to study the Leadership behaviour of male and female college principals, mean and SD were calculated. For studying the significance of the mean difference of male and female principals regarding Leadership behaviour 't' test was applied and 't' value of Leadership behaviour of male and female principals are calculated.

As per analysis from the it is found that Mean score of male principals regarding Leadership behaviour is 0.75 with .077 pooled SD and mean value of female principals is 0.58 with 0.77 pooled SD. The investigator found that critical value of "t" with 18 degrees of freedom at .01 and .05 level of significance is 2.10 and 2.88 respectively. The computed value of "t" is 0.5 which is quite smaller than critical value 2.10 and 2.88. From the above data it can be conducted that calculated value is not significant at both levels Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. It means there is no significant difference in Leadership behaviour of male and female college principals.

**Findings of the study**

1. The study reveals that Leadership behaviour of college principals is different. It means there is a significance difference in Leadership behaviour of college principals.
2. In the present study, it was found that there exists no significant difference of Leadership behaviour between principals in respect to their age.
3. The study revealed that age group of the principal is not a factor in administration.
4. The result of the study revealed that there is no significant gender-wise difference in Leadership behaviour of principals at .01 and .05 level of significance.
5. Gender has no effect on the Leadership behaviour of principals.

**Conclusion**

Leadership behaviour of an administrator is a complex phenomenon which is largely situational and which affect the quality of education. Effective leadership quality of principal is also important for directing group behaviour and supervising members of the organization to achieve organizational goals and objectives. In the situation obtaining the affiliated colleges the principal acts as the leader. The college principal is in a leadership role where he can be instrumental on releasing the human potential of the institution. Through his decisions, planning, discussion with teachers, parents, peoples and others, he plays a significant part in maintaining a desirable learning environment in a college system. The present study helps in understanding the importance of Leadership quality and its relation with the age and gender of the principals.

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# Growth of Literacy and Gender Gap in India

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*[The economic development depends upon the human capacity to use the natural resources and the ultimate goal of economic development is to increase human well-being. So, it is important to increase the proportion of educated class in the society. But the developing and the most poverty-stricken regions in the world, are still lagging behind in general literacy and in female literacy. India is one of them. Literacy rate in India is lower than the global average, most developed countries and even some developing countries too. Moreover, there is a huge disparity between the literacy of men and women in India. The present paper examines the growth in literacy during each census in India. Besides that, the gender gap in literacy has also been studied. The researchers have also observed the literacy and gender gap of various states of India with reference to 2001 and 2011 censuses.]*

Literacy is one of the most essential indicators of the quality in a country's human capital. It is an important key for social and economic progress in any country. Education promotes development is a proven fact, and female literacy is considered a key instrument in women empowerment and higher social development too. But the developing countries, especially the South Asian countries, which are the most poverty-stricken region in the world, are still lagging behind in general literacy and in female literacy. India which is the largest democracy, second largest in terms of population and the third largest economy (in purchasing power parity) in the world, shows a moderate level of literacy. According to UNDP (2015) data, higher literacy rates show lower poverty ratio among developing countries.

**Research Problem**

Population is a human resource. Human resources stand for both means and the end. The economic development depends upon the human capacity to use the natural resources. Moreover, the ultimate goal of economic development is to increase human well-being. Economic development is not possible without the participation of the human resources. The contribution of human capital is considered important in accelerating the process of development. From this point of view, it is considered important to increase the proportion of educated class in the society.

India has made significant progress in improving literacy rate over the years and literacy rate increased manifold. However, the literacy rate in India is lower than the global average (86%), most developed countries and some developing countries too. Moreover, there is a huge disparity between the literacy of men and women in India. Gender gap in literacy can be a matter of concern.

It is difficult to digest that the land of Vedas is one of the countries with the highest illiteracy levels and also wide gender gap in literacy. Literacy of women is vital issue not only on ground of social justice but also because it can accelerate social transformation. Education leads to greater control over their lives and choices. Therefore, in present paper, a picture of literacy and gender gap in literacy has been obtained from the first census of India. Also, the status of gender gap in all the states of the county has been examined, according to 2001 and 2011 censuses.

**Objectives of the Study**

The present research paper has been prepared keeping in mind the following objectives:

1. To analyze the progress of literacy in India
2. To examine the gender gap prevailing in the country with reference to literacy
3. To examine the gender gap in literacy prevailing in the different states of India based on 2001 and 2011 censuses

**Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses have been formed while pursuing this study

1. There is no significant difference between male and female literacy in India as per 1881 to 2011 censuses
2. There is no significant difference between the literacy of women and men in the various states of India as per 2001 and 2011 census

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**Research Methodology**

The present paper has been prepared by using secondary data. Secondary data means data which are already available i.e., they refer to the data which has already been collected and analysed by someone else. Secondary data may either be published data or unpublished data. The most reliable sources have been used for this. The statistical data have been properly tabulated. Hypothesis testing has also been done by appropriate statistical tool (t-test). On that basis conclusions have been drawn.

**Progress in Literacy Rate and Gender Gap in India**

As per Census, a person aged seven and above who can both read and write with understanding in any one language, is treated as literate. A person, who can only read but cannot write, is not literate. In the Censuses prior to 1991, children below 5 years of age were treated as illiterates. It was decided at 1991 Census that all children in the age group 0-6, would be treated as illiterate by definition and the population aged seven years and above only would be classified as literate or illiterate. The same criterion has been retained in the Censuses of 2001 and 2011. Thus, the definition of literacy is very ordinary or light standard in India. Even by this light standard definition, the literacy rate in India is very low. Table no-1 shows the progress of literacy in India.

**Table-1**

**Literacy Rate in India (1881-2011) in Percentage**

| Sr. No | Census year Male | Literacy (in %) | | | Gender Gap | Growth in | | Male L iteracy is more compared to female in times) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male | Female | Combined | | Male Literacy | Male Literacy | |
| 1 | 1872 | - | - | 3.25 | | - | - | - |
| 2 | 1881 | 8.1 | 0.35 | 4.32 | 7.75 | - | - | 23.14 |
| 3 | 1891 | 8.44 | 0.42 | 4.62 | 8.02 | 0.34 | 0.07 | 20.10 |
| 4 | 1901 | 9.8 | 0.6 | 5.4 | 9.2 | 1.36 | 0.18 | 16.33 |
| 5 | 1911 | 10.6 | 1 | 5.9 | 9.6 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 10.60 |
| 6 | 1921 | 12.2 | 1.8 | 7.2 | 10.4 | 1.6 | 0.8 | 6.78 |
| 7 | 1931 | 15.6 | 2.9 | 9.5 | 12.7 | 3.4 | 1.1 | 5.38 |
| 8 | 1941 | 24.9 | 7.3 | 16.1 | 17.6 | 9.3 | 4.4 | 3.41 |
| 9 | 1951 | 27.16 | 8.86 | 18.33 | 18.3 | 2.26 | 1.56 | 3.07 |
| 10 | 1961 | 40.4 | 15.35 | 28.3 | 25.05 | 13.24 | 6.49 | 2.63 |
| 11 | 1971 | 45.96 | 21.97 | 34.45 | 23.99 | 5.56 | 6.62 | 2.09 |
| 12 | 1981 | 56.38 | 29.76 | 43.57 | 26.62 | 10.42 | 7.79 | 1.89 |
| 13 | 1991 | 64.13 | 39.29 | 52.21 | 24.84 | 7.75 | 9.53 | 1.63 |
| 14 | 2001 | 75.26 | 53.67 | 64.83 | 21.59 | 11.13 | 14.38 | 1.40 |
| 15 | 2011 | 82.14 | 65.46 | 74.04 | 16.68 | 6.88 | 11.79 | 1.25 |

Source: Different census reports

Table no. 1 shows the detail of male, female and combined literacy of India from 1872 to 2011 censuses, gender gap in literacy in every census, increased in male and female literacy, how many times male literacy is higher than that of female. Based on the given table some of the following important facts can be deducted.

It is observed from the table that, at the time of the first census in 1881, India's literacy rate was only 4.32% and women's literacy was only 0.35%. Hence, the literacy gap between men and women was 23.14%.

In the first 70 years, starting from the first census, India's literacy rate has increased by only 14.01% that shows a very low rate of literacy growth. Female literacy was only 8.86 percent in 1951, which clearly indicates that more than 90 percent of women were illiterate at the time of independence.

The Country's literacy has increased significantly after independence. It has reached to 74.04% in 2011. It is four times more than it was before. The

female literacy has also increased from 8.86 percent to 65.46 percent between 1951-2011. It is more than 7 times.

India has made progress in improving literacy rate over the years and literacy rate increased manifold. However, the literacy rate is lower than the global average (86%), most developed countries and some developing countries too.

The other important aspect is that every census since 1881 had indicated rising literacy in the country, but the population growth had been so high that the absolute number of illiterate people rose with every decade. The 2001-2011 decade is the second census period after (1991-2001 census period) when the absolute number of Indian illiterate population declined. It indicates that the literacy growth rate in now outstripping the populating growth rate. Large variations in literacy exist even between contiguous states. While there are a few states at the top and bottom, most states are just above or below the national average.

**Gender Gap in Literacy in Indian States**

In 2011, the literacy rate of women in India was 53.67%. The men's literacy rate was higher than this even in 1991. It indicates that women are more than two decades behind men in terms of literacy. In 1971, the literacy rate of men was more than double that of women. This gap widens as one goes back to the previous censuses.

A study of the 2001 and 2011 censuses data in India shows that in every Indian state, female literacy is lower than that of men. In addition, a study of 130-year statistics from 1881 to 2011 shows that during each census, the literacy of men was higher than that of women. However, the study of statistical facts also brings to mind the fact that the gap between male and female literacy has been declining since 1981. In this reference 2011 census also provide a positive indication that growth in female literacy rates (11.8%) was substantially higher than in male literacy rates (6.9%) in the 2001-2011 decadal period, which means the gender literacy gap appears to be narrowing. Table no-1 shows the detail of literacy of Indian states in 2001 and 2011.

**Table -2**

**Literacy and Gender Gap in Indian States (2001 & 2011 Census)**

| Sr. | Name of State | 2001 | | | 2011 | | Gender Gap | | | % Declain in |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | 2001 | 2011 | Gender Gap |
| 1 | Andhra Pradesh | 70.3 | 50.4 | 60.5 | 74.9 | 59.1 | 67.0 | 19.9 | 15.8 | 20.9 |
| 2 | Arunachal Pradesh | 63.8 | 43.5 | 54.3 | 72.6 | 57.7 | 65.4 | 20.3 | 14.9 | 26.8 |
| 3 | Assam | 71.3 | 54.6 | 63.3 | 77.8 | 66.3 | 72.2 | 16.7 | 11.5 | 30.5 |
| 4 | Bihar | 59.7 | 33.1 | 47.0 | 71.2 | 51.5 | 61.8 | 26.6 | 19.7 | 25.8 |
| 5 | Chhattisgarh | 77.4 | 51.9 | 64.7 | 80.3 | 60.2 | 70.3 | 25.5 | 20.1 | 21.5 |
| 6 | Goa | 88.4 | 75.4 | 82.0 | 92.6 | 84.7 | 88.7 | 13.0 | 7.9 | 38.8 |
| 7 | Gujarat | 80.5 | 58.6 | 70.0 | 85.8 | 69.7 | 78.0 | 21.9 | 16.1 | 26.6 |
| 8 | Haryana | 78.5 | 45.7 | 67.9 | 84.1 | 65.9 | 75.6 | 32.8 | 18.2 | 44.7 |
| 9 | Himachal Pradesh | 85.4 | 67.4 | 76.5 | 89.5 | 75.9 | 82.8 | 18.0 | 13.6 | 24.1 |
| 10 | J&J | 66.6 | 43.0 | 55.5 | 76.8 | 56.4 | 67.2 | 23.6 | 20.4 | 13.9 |
| 11 | Jharkhand | 67.3 | 38.9 | 53.6 | 76.8 | 55.4 | 66.4 | 28.4 | 21.4 | 24.7 |
| 12 | Karnataka | 76.1 | 56.9 | 66.6 | 82.5 | 68.1 | 75.4 | 19.2 | 14.4 | 25.2 |
| 13 | Kerala | 94.2 | 87.9 | 90.9 | 96.1 | 92.1 | 94.0 | 6.3 | 4.0 | 36.3 |
| 14 | Madya Pradesh | 76.1 | 50.3 | 63.7 | 78.7 | 59.2 | 69.3 | 25.8 | 19.5 | 24.4 |
| 15 | Maharashtra | 86.0 | 67.0 | 76.9 | 88.4 | 75.9 | 82.3 | 19.0 | 12.5 | 34.0 |
| 16 | Manipur | 80.3 | 60.5 | 70.5 | 83.6 | 70.3 | 76.9 | 19.8 | 13.3 | 32.8 |
| 17 | Meghalaya | 65.4 | 59.6 | 62.6 | 76.0 | 72.9 | 74.4 | 5.8 | 3.1 | 47.3 |
| 18 | Mizoram | 90.7 | 86.8 | 88.8 | 93.3 | 89.3 | 91.3 | 3.9 | 4.0 | -2.8 |
| 19 | Nagaland | 71.2 | 61.5 | 66.6 | 82.8 | 76.1 | 79.6 | 9.7 | 6.7 | 31.6 |
| 20 | Orissa | 75.4 | 50.5 | 63.1 | 81.6 | 64.0 | 72.9 | 24.9 | 17.6 | 29.2 |
| 21 | Punjab | 75.2 | 63.4 | 69.7 | 80.4 | 70.7 | 75.8 | 11.8 | 9.7 | 18.2 |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 22 | Rajasthan | 75.7 | 43.9 | 60.4 | 79.2 | 52.1 | 66.1 | 31.8 | 27.1 | 15.0 |
| 23 | Sikkim | 76.0 | 60.4 | 68.8 | 86.6 | 75.6 | 81.4 | 15.6 | 11.0 | 30.0 |
| 24 | Tamil Nadu | 82.4 | 64.4 | 73.5 | 86.8 | 73.4 | 80.1 | 18.0 | 13.4 | 25.9 |
| 25 | Tripura | 81.0 | 64.9 | 73.2 | 91.5 | 82.7 | 87.2 | 16.1 | 8.8 | 45.4 |
| 26 | Uttar Pradesh 68.8 | 42.2 | 56.3 | 77.3 | 57.2 | 67.7 | 26.6 | 20.1 | 24.4 | |
| 27 | Uttarakhand | 83.3 | 59.6 | 71.6 | 87.4 | 70.0 | 78.8 | 23.7 | 17.4 | 26.4 |
| 28 | West Bengal | 77.0 | 59.6 | 68.6 | 81.7 | 70.5 | 76.3 | 17.4 | 11.2 | 36.0 |
| | Union Territories | | | | | | | | | |
| 29 | Andaman and Nicobar Islands | 86.3 | 75.2 | 81.3 | 90.3 | 82.4 | 86.6 | 11.1 | 7.9 | 29.3 |
| 30 | Chandigarh 86.1 | 76.5 | 81.9 | 90.0 | 81.2 | 86.0 | 9.6 | 8.8 | 9.0 | |
| 31 | Dadar and Nagar Haveli | 73.3 | 43.0 | 60.0 | 85.2 | 64.3 | 76.2 | 30.3 | 20.9 | 31.2 |
| 32 | Daman and Diu | 88.4 | 70.4 | 81.1 | 91.5 | 79.5 | 87.1 | 18.0 | 12.0 | 33.5 |
| 33 | Delhi | 87.3 | 74.7 | 81.7 | 90.9 | 80.8 | 86.2 | 12.6 | 10.1 | 19.3 |
| 34 | Lakshadweep | 92.5 | 80.5 | 86.7 | 95.6 | 87.9 | 91.8 | 12.0 | 7.7 | 36.9 |
| 35 | Pondicherry | 88.6 | 73.9 | 81.2 | 91.3 | 80.7 | 85.8 | 14.7 | 10.6 | 28.1 |
| 36 | India | 75.3 | 53.7 | 64.8 | 80.9 | 64.6 | 73.0 | 21.6 | 16.3 | 24.7 |

Source: Office of Registrar General, India.

Table no-2 shows the details of literacy percentage of Indian states as per 2001 and 2011 census. This table also shows the total literacy as well as male and female literacy rate separately. Further, it reflects the Gender Gap in literacy and percentage decline in Gender Gap in last two censuses.

1. Among all the states of India, the highest literacy rate is 94.0 % in Kerala and the lowest literacy rate is 61.8% in Bihar, as per 2011 census.
2. From the study of 2001 and 2011 census, it is observed that in all the states of the country, the literacy rate of women is lower than that of men. The lowest female literacy rate is 51.5 per cent in Bihar and the highest female literacy is 92.1 per cent in Kerala. The highest gender gap in literacy is 27.1 percent in Rajasthan and the lowest is 4.0 percent in Kerala and Mizoram. The gender gap in literacy has decreased in all the states (except Mizoram) during 2001-2011. The highest improvement in the gender gap during this period was in Tripura at 45.4 percent.
3. According to the 2001 census, a comparative study of male and female literacy yielded a table value (‘t’ Tab) 2.012895567 and a calculation value (‘t’Cal) 10.24420377 in the ‘t’ test. The calculated value (‘t’Cal) is greater than the table value (‘t’ Tab). Thus, it can be said that there is a significant difference between the literacy of men and women in different states of the country.
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**Some Major Findings**

1. Literacy has increased in India, especially after independence. Yet it is even lower than the global average as well as all developed countries and some developing countries too.
2. In India, female literacy rate is lower than male, according to all censuses and 2001 and 2011 data, female literacy rate is lower than male in all the states of the country.
3. There is a significant difference in female and male literacy in India. However, over the period of time this gender gap in literacy is narrowing.

**Conclusion**

Gender gap in literacy is a hindrance in almost every developing country. While India has made every effort to ensure sex disparity in literacy is brought down as overall literacy levels increase year after year, to be

reported every time a census is concocted, there are several aspects which demand attention till today.

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# Spiritual Intelligence and Mental Health Among School Teachers

Neha Perween*

[*Today spiritual intelligence has become an important part of our lives. Spiritual intelligence gives us a right path to achieve success. Mental health is also important because it affects our ability to cope, adapt, and solve problems. Teachers are regarded as role models in society, their mental health plays as a mentor to prevent issues and problems. The present study aims to investigate the impact of religion and gender on spiritual intelligence and mental health among government high school teachers. The sample consisted of 120 school teachers selected by stratified random sampling from different schools located in Ranchi town. The stratification was based on two groups of gender (Male and Female) and religion (Hindu and Muslim). In total, there were four sample sub - groups based on 2 x 2 factorial design and for each sample sub-group, 30 cases were selected randomly. Spiritual Intelligence Scale by Santosh Dhar and Upinder Dhar, (2010) was applied to measure the level of spiritual intelligence. Jagadish and Srivastava, (1983) was used to find out the level of mental health among the teachers' sample. ANOVA and t-test were used to analyse the data by SPSS. The results indicated that there was no significant impact of gender and religion on spiritual intelligence. In term of mental health there was no significant impact of religion and significant impact of gender of the teacher's sample. Mean scores revealed that male teachers have better mental health as compared to female teachers*.]

In our life spiritual intelligence is connected with all aspects and action. With spiritual intelligence we generate inner power in the form of peace, happiness, love, compassion, integrity and wisdom. Spiritual intelligence gives satisfaction in life. Spiritual intelligence gives us right path of life. Wigglesworth et al., (2012) defines spiritual intelligence as 'the ability to behave with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the situation.'

Spiritual intelligence affects every aspect of life personal as well as professional. In every one's life teachers play a very valuable and important role. Students are not going to school only for learn a chapter, they also learn behaviour, skills, stress management, work life balance and many more. Students mostly spend their time in school with their teachers. Teachers play a role not only as educators, they also act many different roles in students' life. A spiritual intelligent teacher teaches to students with integrity and honesty. Their positive act leads to building a good personality of students. Emotional, logical, social and spiritual aspect of teachers have profound influence on the development of children. Spiritually intelligent teachers can encourage the development of students and do their job honestly.

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Mental health is important at every aspects of life, from childhood to adulthood. Mental health expresses cognitive, behavioural, and emotional well-being. All activity is connected with our mental health. A good mental health gives peace, satisfaction, encouragement, motivation, and happiness —— A better life. It's always one of the most important areas where focus is necessary for all. A mentally healthy person leave life very well. Mental health issues of teachers are important because they directly affect classroom outcomes today students' needs Confident and committed teacher with a sound balance of a healthy mind and a healthy body.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO): "Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Kushwaha, (2014) conducted a study on 300 teachers in B.Ed., Colleges of Jhansi district to analyse their Spiritual Intelligence in relation to gender, caste and socio-economic status. Results shows that the there is no significant difference between male and female teachers.

Gupta, (2012) conducted a study on spiritual intelligence and emotional intelligence with self - efficacy and self-regulation, and found male students were better as compared to female students in spiritual intelligence, self-efficacy and self-regulation with significant difference whereas Jeloudar et al. (2011) analysed the level of spiritual intelligence of 203 government secondary schools in Malaysia. Findings showed that there was a significant difference between male and female teachers.

Seedat et al., (2009) suggested that women had more anxiety and mood disorders than men, and men had more externalizing and substance disorders than women. Taak, (1999) conducted a study on factors influencing mental health on a sample of 300 students of Ludhiana district. No significant difference found between mental health of boys and girls whereas (Garg, 2000) conducted a study on mental health in relation to neuroticism of B.Ed. trainees and reported that there is no significant difference between boys' and girls' trainees.

**Objectives of the study**

1. To study the impact of gender and religion on spiritual intelligence of teacher sample.
2. To study the impact of gender and religion on mental health of teacher's sample.

**Hypotheses of the study**

1. There may be significant impact of gender on spiritual intelligence.
2. There may be significant impact of religion on spiritual intelligence.
3. There may be significant impact of gender on mental health.
4. There may be significant impact of religion on mental health.

**Methodology**

***Sample***

The sample of present study was consisted of 120 high school teachers selected by stratified random sampling from different government schools in Ranchi town. In total there were 4 sample sub-groups based on 2x2 factorial design and for each sample sub-group, 30 cases were selected randomly.

***The criteria of the stratification were: -***

1. Gender – 2 (Male and Female) 2. Religion- 2 (Hindu and Muslim)

***Research design***

**Table –1:**

| Religion | Hindu | | Muslim | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| Total | | 60 | 60 | |
| G. Total | 120 | | | |

***Tools used in the study***

***Spiritual Intelligence Scale***

Spiritual Intelligence Scale by Santosh Dhar and Upinder Dhar, (2010) will be used in the study. This scale has 53 items measuring spiritual intelligence on 5-point Likert Scale.

***Mental Health Inventory***

Mental health inventory was developed by Jagadish and Srivastava, (1983) to measures the mental health of the individual. This scale consists of 56 statements on 4-point scale. The score range is between 56-224.The reliability and validity of this test are respectively 0.73 and 054.

**Results & Analysis**

Table-2: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the impact of gender and religion on spiritual intelligence

**Spiritual intelligence**

| Sources of Variations | Sum of Square | df | Mean Square | F Value | Level of Singifi.. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Main EffectsA. Gender | 218.7 | 1 | 218.7 | 0.52 | NS |
| B. Religion | 168.03 | 1 | 168.03 | 0.39 | NS |
| Interaction Effects A X B | 38.53 | 1 | 38.53 | 0.92 | NS |
| Within (Error) | 421.12 | 116 | 421.12 | | |

NS: Not Significant

*** Significant at 0.01 level*

The result of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) shown in above table summarized as follows:

**Main Effects**

- The F value of gender is 0.52, which is found statistically not significant. It indicates that male and female teachers did not differ significantly on mental health.
- The F value of religion is 039, which is found statistically not significant. It shows that Hindu and Muslim teachers did not differ significantly on mental health.

**Interaction Effects**

- The F value of A x B (Gender and Religion) factors is 0.92, which is found statistically

  not significant. It indicates that gender and religion jointly did not affect on spiritual intelligence. Above result are shows that hypothesis

(i) There may be significant impact of gender on spiritual intelligence. Hypothesis has not proved.

(ii) There may be significant impact of religion on spiritual intelligence. Hypothesis has not proved

Table-3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the impact of gender and religion on Mental Health:

**Mental Health**

| Sources of Variations | Sum of Square | df | Mean Square | F Value | Level of |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Main Effects | | | | | |
| A. Gender | 1353.4 | 1 | 1353.4 | 6.03 | SIG |
| B. Religion | 350.2 | 1 | 350.2 | 1.56 | NS |
| Interaction Effects A X B | 20.08 | 1 | 20.08 | 0.08 | NS |
| Within (Error) | 25998.3 | 116 | 224.12 | | |

NS: Not Significant

*** Significant at 0.01 level*

**Main Effects**

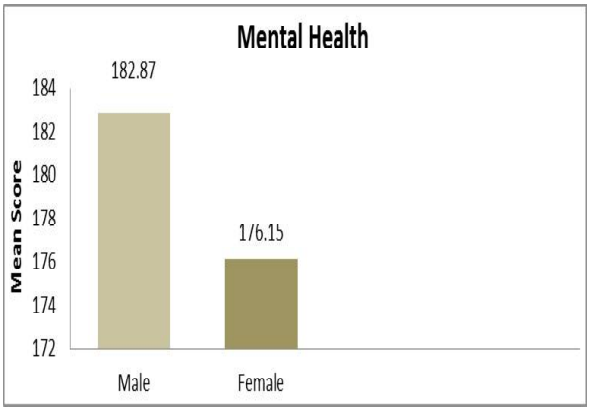
- The F value of gender is 6.03, which is found statistically significant. It indicates that Male and Female teachers were differ significantly on Mental health. reason may be family pressure, work load, work environment and many things. Women have to face lots of difficulties.
- The F value of religion 1.56 is, which is found statistically not significant. It shows that Hindu and Muslim teachers significantly not differ on mental health.

**Interaction Effect**

The F value of A x B (Gender and Religion) factors is 0.08, which is found statistically not significant. It indicates that gender and religion jointly did not affect mental health of the sample. Above results show that hypothesis (iii) There may be significant impact of gender on mental health' is significant. Hypothesis has proved. (iv) There may be significant impact of religion on mental health is not significant Hypothesis has not proved.

**Table 4: Comparison between male and female on mental health**

| Group | N | Mean | SD | t-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 60 | 182.87 | 15.9 | 2.46 |
| Female | 60 | 176.15 | 13.9 | |



Above (table-4) and figure (figure-1) indicates that

- There is significant difference between male and female group is found 2.46, which is significant at .01 level.
- Mean scores of males are significantly higher than female teachers on mental health.

Above result proved the hypothesis (ii) There may be significant impact of gender on mental health.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

It was concluded from the above analysis that there has been no significant impact of religion and gender on spiritual intelligence. In the context of mental health there was no significant effect of religion and significant effect of gender of the teacher's sample. Mean scores revealed that male teachers have better mental health as compared to female teachers. Reason may be female play different roles in her life. All ready he has lots of responsibilities in their home face lots of difficulties they maintain personal as well as professional life.

**Educational Implications of the Study**

As per the requirement of the modern era in the competitive academic world, some innovative program is needed for the innovation in our education system. Government and educational officials should organise some innovative programmes with special preference to spiritual intelligence and mental health time to time for the development in the internal soul of the teachers that will give positive result in the field of education.

- Value based strategies orientation programme related to Spiritual Intelligence and mental health may be included in service programme.
- A similar study can be conducted among the primary, secondary and college teachers in different places.
- Conduct workshops and classes in this regard in order to improve.

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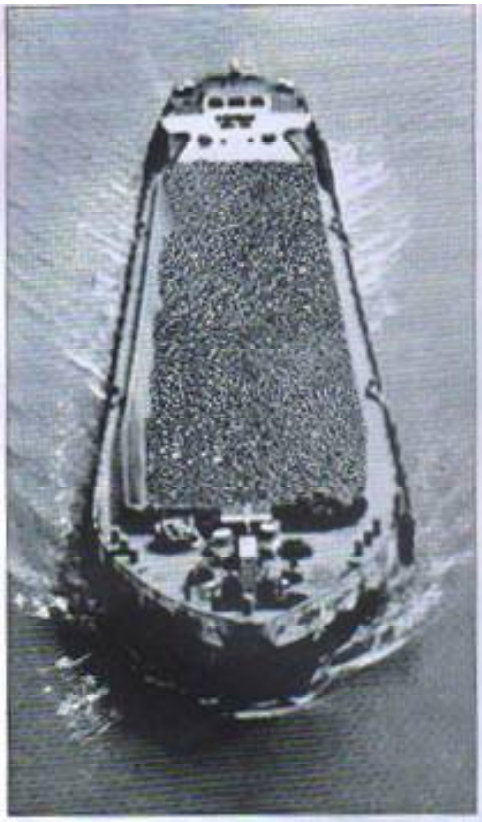

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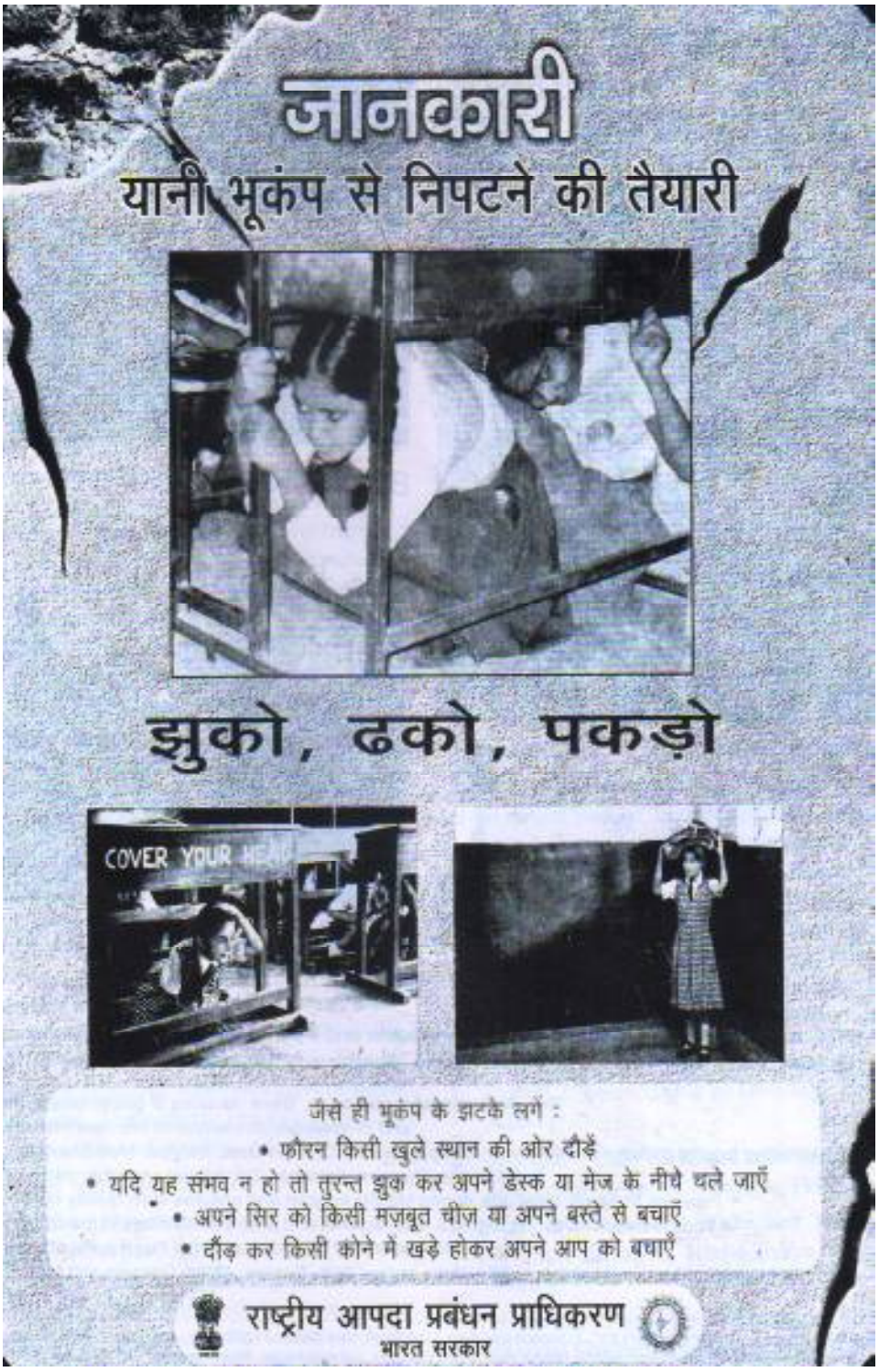
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