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Department of Public Administration, Arts Block-III

Panjab University, Chandigarh - 160014

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Editorial

B.S.Ghuman* and Sudhir Kumar**

Re-orienting Education: Knowledge For Empowerment and Freedom

Knowledge is a new found source of growth. Institutions of higher learning play pivotal role in generation, dissemination and application of knowledge. The growing role of education has also been recognized in the Indian economic policy. For example, the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-12) has accorded top priority to education and it has been designated as an educational plan. The Eleventh Five Year Plan enunciates, “The role of education in facilitating social and economic progress is well recognized..... Improvements in education are not only expected to enhance efficiency but also augment the overall quality of life. The Eleventh Five Year Plan places the highest priority on education as a central instrument for achieving rapid and inclusive growth”

Notwithstanding high priority assigned to education, the access, quality and relevance of higher education need relook. In India, access to higher education is abysmally low. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher education is only 12 percent against the world average of 23.2 percent. Access to higher education is as high as 73 percent in USA, 60 percent in Canada and 48 percent in Japan. Thus, India has to cover a long distance to reach the benchmarks of access to higher education attained in the developed world. The low access to higher education is accompanied by glaring inequalities on account of gender, caste, rural and urban areas. A perusal of the existing inequalities in higher education across caste reveals that the GER for general population is 16.60 percent which is three times that of Scheduled Tribes (6.33 percent) and Scheduled Castes (6.30 percent) and two times that of Other Backward Classes (8.50 percent). The access to higher education also shows variations across location with GER for rural sector being 7.76 % and urban sector being 27.20%. The variations across gender are also visible with GER being low for female at 11% as compared to that of male at 15.25%. The class variations are also found with GER for poor being 2.4% and for non-poor being 12.91%.

Quality is another challenge to higher education. Though Indian higher education has islands of excellence but mediocrity predominates among many of the institutions. In a number of institutions parameters of quality are not in place. Relevance of education is also a casualty as most of the products fail to get suitable jobs. For example, according to a survey conducted by National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM) employability of professional courses is around 25 percent and only 10 percent of college graduates are employable in India. Similarly in a number of cases research outputs also fail to get absorbed either by the market or society. In this backdrop along with having an aggression strategy for expansion of higher education, equally powerful strategy should be steered for making education all inclusive, improving its quality and relevance. It is good quality education which can help in reaping the full advantage of demographic

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dividends improving the relevance of education and finally enabling the Indian economy to thrive on the basis of knowledge.

Literature also has good reservoir advocating the power of knowledge. Simultaneously literature expresses serious concerns towards undermining the real strength of knowledge against the backdrop of globalization.

Decolonizing Education: Perspectives and Possibilities

The socio-cultural impact of constructions of knowledge such as “knowledge- society”, “knowledge-industry”, “right to education” and “globalization of knowledge” can best be summed up in the prophetic words of T.S.Eliot, one of the greatest modern British poets :-

All our knowledge brings us nearer to our ignorance,
Where is the Life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?
(‘Choruses From the Rock’)¹

Eliot rightly laments the loss of wisdom in the modern knowledge- systems that continue to perpetuate the utilitarian doctrines of education that reduce the students to mere empty vessels for the storage of loads of information and facts and enslave them to a kind of success-mania at the cost of their ethical growth. This is why, Eliot, the poet-thinker, minces no words in tearing apart the façade of modern education that inculcates in the minds of young students the utilitarian vision of economic success and individualism at all costs through its institutional mechanisms of exclusion and inclusion and aims at producing students whose primary goal is to attain maximum wealth and success in life without any concern for ethical values and character-building. One may as well compare the present-day education system, prevailing in India, with the fictional representation of Gradgrindery, that is, Gradgrind’s school/academy for producing new economic citizens in the nineteenth century England in Charles Dickens’s *Hard Times* (1854). The semiotic resemblance between the description of Gradgrind’s classroom in Dickens’s novel and the opening scene of an IIT classroom in Amir Khan’s famous 2009-film- *Three Idiots* (which criticized the craze for dull and derivative technological education in society) underlines the urgent need to rethink and re-orient the very idea of education in the present day India :-

“Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else... This is the principle on which I bring up these children” who are nothing but “little vessels... ready to have imperial gallons of facts poured into them until they were full to the brim.”²

The primary objective of the managers of modern education is to ‘sow’ (or plant), to borrow Dickens’s Biblical metaphor, only information - or fact- based education in the minds of the young students in

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1. T.S.Eliot, *Selected Poems*, London, Faber and Faber, 1952 (First published 1948),p. 105. Further cited as CFTR with page numbers in parentheses.
 2. Charles Dickens, *Hard Times*, New Delhi, Rupa & Co. 2010, pp.15-16. First published 1854.

order to 'reap' and 'garner' the short-term material gains as well as long-term moral losses. Ironically, Dickens highlights how the contemporary utilitarian or 'globalized' system of education in India ignores the ethical/moral/dharmik dimension of life and lays great emphasis on "facts" and cut-throat competition only. The moral bankruptcy of modernity as exhibited in its education systems attracts the ire of both Dickens and Eliot who unerringly lay bare in their literary representations the hollowness of the claims of "freedom" and "empowerment" announcing the arrival of modern education. It is at this difficult juncture that we have to confront the question – "Can modern education, in its present form, address the civilizational crises staring at the face of humanity in the form of growing hatred, spectacles of dehumanizing co-existence of hunger and mindless consumerism, exploitation of the poor and the weak, corruption, injustice, caste and communal violence, terrorism, violation of human rights, global warming and dangers of planetary destruction caused by human greed for commercial profits etc.?" If the primary objective of modern education system in India remains the production and supply of the skilled workers/technocrats/managers/bureaucrats to meet the emerging challenges of the so-called globalized economy without empowering them morally, can the dehumanization of the much-sought-after "demographic dividend" be far behind?

It will not be out of order here to briefly mention some of the deep concerns of the contemporary planners of education in India about the loss of the ethical or moral centre in the modern (or postmodern?) education and its sinister implications for all of us. The Report of the UGC sponsored Curriculum Development Committee on Education(March, 2001) is a searing indictment of the dangers of growing techno-modernization of education and continuing implementation and improvisation of Macaulay's vision of cultural imperialism in the post-independence India. It aptly reminds us:-

Historically British imperialism supplanted the then prevailing system of indigenous education in India. While the educational system established by the British did make substantial progress in science and technology, it engendered alienation from the inner spiritual strength and development, which were the cherished aims of our ancient educational cultural heritage....It can hardly be denied that much of the present day education, in terms of structure and content, is a reflection of the colonial legacy and the westernized mindset. In our zeal to preserve the British system, we have de-emphasized even the worthwhile in our indigenous system. Indian experiments and the achievements rooted in our native soil should now be given their legitimate place in educational curricula³.

The prevailing education system, contrary to the ethical vision of Indian education, will result in "freedom" of Indian students from the ethically enabling Indian educational heritage and their consequent "empowerment" as westernized and culturally uprooted Indians devoted to new gods of consumerism. Alerting us about the grave dangers of the harnessing of the contemporary education for the making of the postmodern human, the CDC Report on Education categorically stated:-

During the last four decades, mankind has moved from the modern era to the postmodern era. The typical postmodern individual is very much unlike his counterpart of the modern era. The postmodern man is committed to the pursuit of the images and symbols; for this he is ready to disregard the established structures of society....Haunted by his alienation from his traditional social milieu and fearful of what lies hidden in the womb of future, the postmodern man has chosen to pursue instant

3. Report of the UGC Curriculum Development Committee (March 2001) on Education available at http://www.ugc.ac.in/policy/edu/cdc_edu2.pdf- accessed on 27 June 2012(4.40 p.m.) pp.2-5. Hereafter cited in the text as CDC with page numbers in parentheses.

gratification of his desires. ... This has led to decline of idealism and erosion of altruism as values of life.(p.2)

One may justifiably ask the framers of curricula in sciences, social sciences and humanities in Indian universities about the absence of the visions and contributions of such eminent cultural-educational thinkers and experimentalists as Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, Pandita Ramabai, Jiddoo Krishnamurthy, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Phule, Dr.Bhimrao Ambedkar, to name only a few. One sincerely wishes that all the policy makers of modern education in India should read UGC sponsored CDC Report on Education in order to give an ethical and creative orientation to education system in India. True education leads a student towards freedom from ignorance and want and helps her/him to attain ethical/ spiritual empowerment which includes economic empowerment also.

The objective of education, in its essence, is and will continue to be inseparably related to the question of true freedom and empowerment of humankind. Needless to say, efforts to ensure “freedom” and “empowerment” through education in the context of Indian civilization invariably point to the process of making available the opportunities of social, political, economic, cultural and spiritual empowerment to all human beings. Only then, empowerment through education may lead to “freedom or mukti” in its true sense. It is interesting to notice how, in Indian discourses of education, from the Vedic times to the present, education has always been associated with material as well as spiritual development of the people ensuring welfare of all or sarvodaya. For example, this is how the ancient sages impart the post-instructions (*dikshant*) to the students:-

Speak the truth. Practice righteousness. Make no mistake about study....There should be no inadvertence about truth. There should be no deviation from righteous activity. There should be no mistake about protection of yourself. Do not neglect propitious activities. Do not be careless about learning and teaching.... Let your mother be a goddess unto you. Let your father be a god unto you. Let your teacher be a god unto you. Let your guest be a god unto you. The works (actions) that are not blameworthy are to be resorted to, not the others. Those actions of ours that are commendable are to be followed by you, not the others.... An offering (gift or charity) should be made with honour; the offering should not be made with dishonor. The offering should be made according to one's prosperity. The offering should be made with modesty. The offering should be made with awe. The offering should be made in a friendly way.... This is the instruction.... All this is to be done thus. And (all this) must be done thus.⁴(*Taittiriya Upanishad*)

The universal, eternal and practical significance of Indian vision of education as represented in the preceding example from *Taittiriya Upanisad* cannot be denied. This holistic Indian vision of education places due emphasis on “action”, “performance” and actual practice of values such as righteousness (dharma), truth (satya), non-violence (ahimsa), compassion (karuna), simplicity, austerity, valour, devotion to study (swadhyaya), charity etc., which should be reflected through one's character, rather than through mere academic and ritualistic recitation and remembrance of values. This is how the so called secular and the sacred (which are inseparable in the Indian context) are simultaneously addressed in the Indian vision of education. True education in consonance with Indian wisdom-traditions, not only enables a student to cope with and fulfill her/his economic needs central to

4. *Taittiriya Upanishad With the Commentary of Shankaracharya*, (Trans. Swami Sanmbhirananda), Calcutta, Advaita Ashrama, 1995.Ch.I.xi.1-4, pp.47-50. Hereafter cited in the text as TU with page numbers in parentheses.

human existence but also moulds her/his character through ethical nourishment. This is why Tagore condemned the modern intellectuals for their mindless mimicry of the west in the educational institutions:- “If the whole world grows at last into an exaggerated West, then, such an illimitable parody of the modern age will die, crushed beneath its own absurdity”⁵

A University, according to Tagore is a place “where we can work together in a common pursuit of truth, share together our common heritage, and realize that artists in all parts of the world have created forms of beauty, scientists discovered secrets of the universe, philosophers solved the problems of existence, saints made the truth of the spiritual world organic in their lives, not merely for some particular race to which they belonged, but for all mankind”(AEU, pp.172-73). True education, thus, helps the students understand the fundamental unity (not uniformity) and oneness of humankind. The highest goal of education, according to Tagore, is “to help us to realize the inner principle of the unity of all knowledge and all the activities of our social and spiritual being (AEU, p.199).” Needless to say, there is an inevitable civilizational connect between education and culture which shows how and how far an education-system reflects or refracts the moral values characterizing a particular culture and society. One can, therefore, justifiably affirm that the location of education and culture in the local and the national cultural contexts does provide our young students a vantage ground to successfully, and more importantly still, ethically and humanely tackle the challenges of the global power-structures.

Unfortunately, while making the curricula of different courses to be offered at the graduate/post-graduate levels in humanities and social sciences in Indian Universities, the Indian academics tend to ignore or exclude the already available Indian discourses on such important co-ordinates of knowledge as justice, human rights, caste, gender, culture, modernity, tradition, nation, subjectivity, language, literary theory, aesthetics, colonialism, neocolonialism, eco-consciousness etc., and stuff the course-modules with the hegemonic Euro-Americo-centric discourses and thereby academically as well as ethically disabling the millions of Indian students regularly.

For example, in the framing of various course-modules of the so-called “culture- (or cultural) studies” at the post-graduate level in Indian Universities, it is, on the one hand, considered politically correct, and therefore, fashionable, to exclude or ignore the discourses of Indian culture-critics/thinkers (e.g. Jotiba Phule, Tagore, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Gandhi, Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Ambedkar, Dr Rammanohar Lohia, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pandita Ramabai, Agyeya, Nirmal Verma, Jiddoo Krishnamurthy, U.R.Ananthamurthy, Muktibodh, Hajariprasad Dwivedi, Ashis Nandy, Ramchandra Guha, Vandana Shiva, and others, whereas, on the other hand, it is uncritically accepted as a sure sign of scholarly prudence to offer Euro-centric discourses of such culture-critics as T.S.Eliot, Stuart Hall (Jamaica-born British culture - critic), Raymond Williams (British-Welsh culture-critic), Louis Althusser, Foucault, Derrida, Walter Benjamin, Eric Hobsbawm, Clifford Geertz and others in the courses of Cultural Studies, and thereby letting prevail almost an epidemic of cultural amnesia among the students who, driven by this kind of systematic indoctrination, would erroneously believe that there were/are no Indian thinkers/critics worthy of study so far as the idea of “culture” is considered!! What a travesty of “education” this is!! That’s why, the course-modules of different courses of humanities and social-sciences should be made in such a manner to establish a samvad or dialogue between the knowledge-traditions of India and the rest of the world. Similarly, it will be an instance of pure and simple hypocrisy if Indian academics go on preaching “opposition” to all

5. ‘An Eastern University’ in *Creative Unity*, Madras, Macmillan, 1988, p.175. Cited in the text as AEU with page numbers in parentheses.

forms of western hegemony whereas they either practice or are in alliance with “western hegemony” themselves while framing the course-modules for Indian students.

We hope that the managers of education in India would re-orient education in order to inculcate in young minds the principle of unity of all knowledge and all the activities of our social and spiritual being leading to swaraj or true freedom and sarvodaya or welfare of all. To borrow again from Eliot, one can say that there is much “ to cast down, much to build, much to restore (*CFTR*,p.112)” in the field of education in India at present.

The present issue of *Panjab University Research Journal (Arts)*, marked by an obvious thematic diversity, is a discursive and critical omnibus that includes research papers on such important issues as challenges before higher education in India in the changing cultural and economic contexts (Professor R.C Sobti et al and Professor M.R.Khurana), critique of colonial discourse (Mahameed Mohammed), cultural studies (Rajesh Jaiswal), critical examination of the representation of power relations underlying “home”, “marriage” and “identity” (Manjeet Rathi), growing awareness of corporate social responsibility (Roopinder Oberoi), re-assessment of the performance of Indian Microfinance Institutions (Puran Singh and Karamjeet Singh), business ethics and human values (Gagandeep and Deepak Sharma), balance between sustainability and supply of electric supply systems (Nisha Bhargava) understanding the role of khap panchayats (Sunil Devi and Shaveta Begra), violation of women’s human rights (Satinder Kaur), and significance of technology in the management of police (Jaswinder Kaur and Namit Kumar), a historicist perspective on mughal wazirs and their contribution to financial and infrastructural development (Gauri Sharma) and so on and so forth. We express our gratitude to all the contributors to this issue of *PURJA*.

We are grateful to Professor R.C.Sobti and Professor M.R.Khurana who contributed their valuable papers to this issue of *PURJA*. Our sincere thanks are also due to Shri Gurbachan Singh, the office in-charge who worked tirelessly to put the material together in the final shape for publication. We also express our gratitude to Shri Jatinder Moudgil, Manager, Panjab University Press, for his professional guidance, keen interest and painstaking efforts that made the publication of the present issue of the Journal possible.

Transforming Higher Education System : Strategic Orientations

R.C.Sobti*
Sanjiv Sharma**
Nandita***

A. Introduction :

Education has widely been recognized as a tool for enhancing productivity and human capital development which are pivotal for the economic prosperity of a country. Higher education has largely been considered a public good that can benefit both society as a whole and individuals at large by opening new vistas of growth and social mobility. India has one of the fastest growing higher education systems in the world, a growth financed in the pursuit for becoming a knowledge economy. To optimally utilize the true potential of education, there is a need to reorient and reform entire system so as to develop a dynamic system of interconnected institutions, persons, and policies. A partner approach by universities can propel technological and economic development of the country for the global markets and at the same time create global values among the students.

The competitiveness of economies is increasingly dependent on the availability of a qualified and entrepreneurial workforce. Higher education policy makers have to take into account the complexities at the work place brought about by the rapid technological changes, and the growing demand for skills development. Higher Education system has to offer an increasingly diversified range of skills in response to development needs and at the same time address issues of access, equity and quality. The creation of a reservoir of specialists and technically skilled talent, who can succeed in an increasingly competitive boundaryless environment, requires harmonized efforts at all levels. Modern age higher education is a launching pad and has a critical role in empowering people by providing them knowledge, skills and tools to achieve their full potential. Sources of competitive advantage for higher learning institutions are easy access, partnerships with corporations, customized curriculum, flexible delivery, and use of technology. Universities continue to serve as primary engines for discovery and research that can lead to innovation, with the chief support of the government (Blustein et. Al., 1999). This needs to be appreciated and maintained, even strengthened. However, Universities are increasingly engaged in commercializing their principal product, i.e. knowledge, and firms are interested in using this resource in order to raise their economic returns. Two emerging frames are of setting up Universities for entrepreneurship and of backward integration by industries with educational institutions to offset the mismatch between training and manpower needs. Creating an environment that promoted collaboration and innovation will bring higher investment in education which will have significant long-term productivity gains.

B. Drivers of Change

It has been realized that the knowledge economies require skilled workforce with adaptable skill to deal with rapid technological changes. Universities provide both, a highly skilled

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workforce, and research results that industry may choose to commercialize and bring to market. Disparity in resources and outputs of institutions of higher education in developed and developing nations has been pointed out in recent literature. Higher Education in developed countries has been receiving adequate resources to deliver quality education, ensuring spread and to maintain high academic standards. The dominant political consensus in most of the developed economies is that the public sector should remain the principal provider of education, and public private partnership schemes can be valuable, provide that they pay careful attention to socioeconomic, rural-urban, and regional equity. Many developing countries have embarked upon reforming their educational administration and the key elements of these reforms are : expanding access; addressing the geographical distribution of access; improving quality; and encouraging competition in the provision of higher education. This had led to reorientation of style of operations of existing public sector institutions of higher learning.

Another shift has been the realization that students and communities must make at least some contribution towards spread of education in order to promote feelings of ownership and public interest in the operation of these institutions. The importance of partnerships and the value of community participation can vary but this discernible trend is bound to have far reaching impact on governance structures of institutions of higher learning. There has been an exponential increase in the demand for access to higher education and the government has been challenged to fund the increase in the cost. In most developing countries, there is a growing commercial interest in providing knowledge solutions by a variety of providers who are changing the terrain of the education sector. However onset of liberalizing education platform could lead to dangers which may include inferior quality and exploitation of customers who are poorly informed. Moreover, both basic and applied researches are necessary for knowledge economies. Private solution providers have inherent bend towards economic considerations while choosing courses, location and target audience. The boundaries between public and private higher education institutions are getting blurred, as more resources from private equity are being used to finance growth of education than the government financial commitments.

Increase in demand for higher education, coupled with its rising costs, have witnessed the public sector as either unwilling or unable to accommodate that demand, both in developed and developing countries. Promoting private higher education has triggered issues at both the institutional and individual levels, like mismatch between profit motive and quality assurance in private universities & colleges. However, there need to be regulatory mechanisms to ensure that students acquire a base of core skills through such investments and these institutions are not plagued by inadequate faculty, lack of resources and facilities, outdated curricula and traditional ways of teaching and learning. New yardsticks of performance measurement and accountability can be though through community participation in governance and collaborating for facilities shared. Jerusalem (2007) opined that with economic growth, the demand for talent will be far greater than the available talent pool and as the industry continues to grow, demand will outstrip the viable labor supply. This will intensify competition among firms to hire best talent available. Academic institutions need to actively extend training and educational efforts beyond their four walls so as to harness this potential, by developing competencies to deliver cost-effective and responsive education.

It has been observed that among the clientele also there is a shift in expectancy from higher education system. As merit, knowledge, skill and personal performance matter more in the workplace, students have started demanding more from higher education institutions, especially since they now have to pay increasingly more. Rapid pace of technology makes skills obsolete at greater pace

hence the need to integrate technological knowledge and skill in education and training. As, adaptation, adoption, and generation of knowledge increases alongwith changing requirements of society, existing institutions of higher education do not have sufficient capacity to respond. This problem is further aggravated due to public spending not keeping pace, leading to fewer funds for the University. At the same time, the intense competition for the grants for research projects and infrastructural facility up gradation from agencies like UGC, AICTE, ICMR, CSIR, DBT etc. is a case in point. The bureaucratic hurdles in funding by government agencies dishearten avid researchers whose work could have been facilitated by direct communication with private research funding agencies. Hence, there is a need for public-private partnerships.

C. Reconstructing Education through Collaborative Approach: Synchronizing Needs

The challenge for higher education is to provide learning environments that stimulate independence, creativity and an entrepreneurial approach for harnessing knowledge. Higher education, till recent past has been mainly publicly funded and administered. However, unmet demands and the inevitable expansion of student population at tertiary level have compelled many countries to allow private sector to fill the supply gap, this has lead to the rapid expansion of the private higher education sector. Acceleration of technological development requires new methods of knowledge exchange between universities and industry so as to capitalize on the societal and economic benefits. To compete at global level a country's human resource has to be sufficiently educated, trained and equipped with highly relevant skills. Private education services sector by increasing private consumption and investments as well as expanding education exports have turned higher education sector into an export industry. There are pressures to play an enhanced role in contributing to the international competitiveness of economies and at the same time contribute more substantially to local economic and social development through a process of commercialization of research. India with its strength in technical education needs to reap this source of export earnings.

The emerging knowledge society is reshaping higher education. In the present scenario it becomes pertinent for Institutions of higher learning to respond to changing needs successfully as the role of the higher education in developing a skilled and flexible workforce community cannot be undermined. Industry, has, by far, not been involved in taking sustainable financial, technical and operational risks in the education sector. The enterprises could help universities to reshape curricula, governance structures or contribute to funding. Industry-institute partnerships at national and regional levels need to be initiated to clearly defined national and industry demands for technology innovation. There is a need to enhance proactive dialogue with industry and the professionals and thereby create a trusting and supportive environment within which mutually beneficial interaction can be progressed.

Industry benefits from accessing expertise, gaining access to students as potential employees, leveraging internal research capabilities, and gaining a competitive advantage in research through partnerships with educational institutions. The need of the hour is to understand how to improve the relevance of curriculum and real world work experience for university students. Local small firms and entrepreneurs and their associations, local communities and associated non-government organizations (NGOs) and alumni need to be associated with drafting curriculum, teaching-learning pedagogies. This will provide space to move from government-regulated framework to a market-oriented system which in turn will create opportunities for partnership arrangements and incentives. To become more relevant, higher education has to be both global and local. Global

because, it is embedded in global knowledge networks and similar standards of a specific region through its impact on the local economy, its contribution to the regional labor force and the connections it has with local businesses and communities. It therefore can serve as a bridge between regional and global knowledge, a partnership network of companies with institutions which offer certain benefits and facilitate exploration of opportunities that lead to lasting relationship.

The changing dynamics of globalization and liberalization of economy represent significant challenges for not only institutions but also business enterprises. It is not the size of the business, but talent (harnessed to the fullest) that is the only differentiator for success. Thus, improving quality of instruction and output by strengthening physical and human resources at all levels of the education system, stressing qualitative investments which had been neglected in past can provide reservoir of talent for enterprises to flourish. Interventions by providing platform for showcasing best practices, latest technological advancements and their implementation and impact on the industry can enhance educational institutions' net worth. Educational institutes which possess vast intellectual resources base, particularly those with strong research and development cells can help solve intricate industrial problems through R&D. It requires providing adequate financial and/or in-kind support for specific research activities of interest to the industry partners through sponsored research.

Industry expectations are better understood through continuous interaction with Education sector while Industries are heavily oriented towards raising competitiveness. The role of the business enterprises need to be collaborative and oriented to provide avenues for undertaking joint industrial projects, contact research or technology transfer initiatives. Determinants and level of business interest in co-operating with universities, the responsiveness of higher education, and the effectiveness of bridging institutions and mechanisms hold the key to meaningful industry-institute partnership. Organizations also need to contribute through involvement in activities such as assisting student projects, guest lectures, service on thesis committees, and service on advisory boards, devoting employee time and knowledge, enabling access to industry-owned equipment, materials, facilities and specialized resources besides liberal financial donations. Such measures are likely to transform the internal mentality in institutions, towards an entrepreneurial approach which may manifest in developing a continuing education system which could allow the students to link theory with practice, thereby enhancing his employability quotient. As a result of the global economic transformation, many universities are changing their attitudes toward economic development. Faculty and staff are more frequently involved with the private sector in new forms of collaboration and enterprise including facilities sharing, multi-party joint ventures, new commercial ventures, and new generations of research parks and incubation parks. Universities need to be willing to collaborate and look at how they can help serve the public. Engagement with the wider community must become more firmly embedded in the mission of higher education institutions so that mutual benefit is derived from the shared expertise and experiences. Educational institutes study how best technologies can be optimized to achieve productivity. This challenge can be met by developing the appropriate curricula, training programs and resources for their students so that they are equipped with skills. Meeting this industry demand can gradually evolve into a close partnership. There has been a wide variety of interactions practiced among industries and institutes which includes problem solving, curriculum development, study visits, scholarships, and apprenticeship training and incubation centers. Accreditation agencies should include representatives from learners as well as of business and society at large. By well designed interaction industrial houses can help in turning research into real solutions, produce entrepreneurial opportunities, provide avenues for innovation and technological transfer, say by creation and spin off companies.

Global partnerships for development are part of the millennium goals and in order for them to work ; close cooperation is required in management of educational institutions, content development and deliverance etc. This also requires monitoring of institutions for their societal contributions. Internal quality assurance (QA) and external accreditation systems for institutions of higher learning should pay more attention to the social and economic relevance of learning programmes. Even producing a joint degree program or some similar activity intended to benefit both local development, though training, and academic development at the partner institutions implementation of educational policies which simultaneously improve both efficiency and equality are absolutely fundamental for the future of education. Ushering in of new ethos through University-Industry cooperation would lead to better appreciation and cooperation of public and private researchers in sharing their research work and contribute to building enhanced trust and personal networks. Hence, public-private partnership needs to be regarded as a natural progression of relationship from interaction elevated to structural partnership.

Strategies for Gaining Symbiotic Advantages

Partnerships that effectively employ technology can be a great asset in the learning process to support diversified needs. Customized training program development, content knowledge, access to subject matter experts and cutting edge products / processes / technology are gains to be reaped by industry. Credibility/reputation of partnering organizations, practical application of theoretical concepts, real life work experience and problem solving skills will help partnering corporations to remain competitive in a global economy. Beckmann et al (2010) argues that changes imposed in the name of efficiency are leading to the increasing production of uncritical thinkers compliant to the needs of the market, where people are treated a mere human capital prepared for jobs and where there are increasingly fewer spaces for providing/allowing for the provision of broad/based learning and critical awareness.

In a more competitive global marketplace, some corporations have reached the conclusion that they could no longer maintain the significant capital investment required to build and operate laboratory facilities. As a result, these companies conduct less research and focus primarily on development and the identification of incremental changes to existing products. Enterprises, which on one hand is playing the role of the engine of any economy and at the same time is the main consumer of knowledge. The enterprises create such a high need for new and much diversified and often targeted knowledge that it was impossible for the universities to meet such tailor-made requirements.

Technology-driven networking allows institutions not focused on research to collaborate and vie for international projects. Institutions need to identify desirable attributes of partnering with industry and undertake periodic analysis of extent of success in such ventures. The difference in perception is the prime reason for many of these partnerships not fructifying into success stories. Institutions aim at general development of students so as to provide them a wide range of opportunities and choices while industries look for technicians and employees with specific skills who will fit directly into the system. Researchers have a tendency to focus on a narrow scientific area, whereas industry looks for comprehensive solutions to business problems. Relative differences in perspectives of education and industry create bottlenecks. This seemingly obvious inconsistency in their respective purposes stem from university officials' lack of understanding of how companies operate, differing time horizons of the two organizations, the difficulties in negotiating and maintaining a collaborative effort, and a possible negative impact on the mission. Other challenges can be the changing role and norms of universities, real or apparent conflict of interest on the part of academicians

and universities involved in industry-academic relationships, reduced trust of universities, dwindling governmental support, and greater dependence on industry funding to sustain the academic research effort (Blumenthal,1994).

Institutions of higher education are under increasing pressure to be more efficient and to do more with fewer resources. There is fierce competition for students. Many universities are opening new institutions or branch campuses abroad, franchising educational programmes etc. In response to continuing and intensifying pressure to find their own resources, institutions of higher education frequently engage in highly problematic and often unethical partnership with businesses, thereby transforming themselves into and being run like businesses themselves (Fairweather 1988). A mixed system of government and private institutions will not only reduce the financial burden on public resources but it will also improve the productivity and quality of public education, as government institutions compete with private ones. This form of privatization occurs through a more evolutionary shift in the balance of types of institution. Thus, the number and size of government institutions might be held constant, but the number and size of parallel private institutions might be permitted or encouraged to increase.

Industry – higher education partnerships must allow each organization to retain its own core competencies, governing structure, and mission, while expanding the knowledge and capabilities of each organization. There are varying factors in each partnership, which may include their purpose, formation structure, and organizational benefits and challenges. Industry clusters need to identify possibilities of upgrading existing national, and regional centers/centers of excellence to provide quality tertiary level training with the view to improving the conditions for conducting scientific and technological innovations. Institutions must continue to carry out their goals to facilitate learning, preserve a protected zone for students and nourish individual care to address the needs of the learners. The enterprise, on the other hand, must work within the framework of industrial practices and norms with production, efficiency and profitability as the basic premise of day-to-day operations. Well-established industry-institute interaction, job fairs, placement activities and similar career orientation programs can lead to systematic recruitment of the right people for the right job, thereby aiding skills matching that is highly required.

Prime motivation for educational institution to interact with industry emerges from potential benefit of getting relevant exposures to real industry problems, engaging into intellectually challenging research for professional achievements, augmenting professional income sources and obtaining support from research and development infrastructures/equipment. Other partnership benefits derived have included: addressing the current and future skill needs of employers, developing career pathways for low-skilled workers, encouraging innovation, gaining additional research expertise, and enhancing economic development activities. On similar lines, industries seek to step up efforts to linkage with academic or vocational institutions for gaining access to well-trained students and faculty, exposure to applied research, academic and management approach by teachers and institutes thereby gaining new ideas for product innovations. Development funds in the form of scholarships, stipends, insurance and even sponsorships by the industry encourage students to continue embarking on study and training programs. Collaboration, discussion and decision-making processes produce mutual agreements and understanding of the real conditions in the work place.

However, developing symbiotic partnership faces many impediments. Major difficulties include cultural differences, lack of communication, a change in strategy, and differing objectives and goals. With more focus on industry by encouraging employment oriented education rather than a

broad-based critical pedagogy, could have detrimental consequences. As the degree could become the product of a market interaction rather than creativity and critical abilities. The drive toward performance improvement and industry orientation places enormous pressure on teachers and staff. The quality and consistency of teaching and learning standards are real concerns for the industry with wide variation in quality. The inability to effectively monitor and enforce quality standards by regulatory agencies has aggravated the situation in many developing countries. Inconsistencies remain in standards or requirements across public and private institutions, and there are limited mechanisms for helping consumers make quality comparisons; raising the profile, branding of educational services and improving quality standards across all types of institutions.

Another impediment in providing value added services to the industry is the lack of connection between primary and secondary schools and the university, in spite of the potential of universities as being knowledge hub. The poor quality of students entering the university system severely limits their capacities of meaningful value addition. The situation is aggravated by shortage of good quality teachers. Considerable improvement in teachers' working and economic status over last few years has not necessarily resulted in an improvement in their efficiency. Joint industry and cross-institutional thrust in partnerships is credible mechanism to maximize the networking possibilities.

D. Strategies for Harnessing the Potential of Education Partnership

- 1) As companies become more dependent on high-skilled workers and access to cutting-edge knowledge, their decisions on where to locate facilities often include consideration of access to higher educational institutes; and for this these need to adopt marketing strategies. Institutions should seek to provide research services to the region so as to be socially relevant, topical and financially viable.
- 2) Higher education institutions need to be encouraged to be more entrepreneurial in teaching and research. Research funding can be increasingly allocated to specific projects through competitive processes rather than as block grants to higher education and research institutions. The majority of current funding pattern can be termed supply-side funding (funds provided directly to institutions) and is provided regardless of the quality of the institution. The challenge with such funding schemes is that there is very little incentive for them to reduce their costs or raise their quality. It requires introduction of more performance-based criteria (including applicability of research for innovation) in the allocation of institutional funding.
- 3) Many higher education institutions can offer support that ranges from data collection, analysis and provision to direct strategic assistance to regional initiatives and local business challenges faced by organizations in immediate vicinity. Universities need to reach out to SMEs by addressing their concerns and setting up knowledge transfer offices. Continuous interactions are needed on ways to optimize and expand existing and new industry relationships in a truly sustainable, scalable and efficient manner that offers added value to all stakeholders including students, companies, educational institution and society at large.
- 4) Institutions need to convince the trade associations that knowledge exchange offers broader canvas than technology transfer. It ensues meaningful interactions across the spectrum of university resources and included the use of university facilities, entrepreneurship programs, research parks, individual faculty members and departments, as well as the countless

opportunities to participate in expert panels, lectures, courses and conversations where knowledge exchange takes place both formally and informally cultivating entrepreneurial skills. University administration has to strive to give their students an intellectually challenging academic experience by treating them as customers. Universities should develop policies for the professional management of intellectual property. Doing so will help them meet several aspects of their mission, for example to generate socio-economic benefits for society and to attract the best students and researchers.

- 5) Institutions need to adopt managerial perspective and use marketing tools to continuously monitor needs and aspirations of its various stakeholders, be it students, industry, government, NGOs, society by benchmarking against the best practices. Such demand-driven and business-like methods (responsiveness to customer needs, attention to effective management and administration of the institution, etc.) could make educational institutions more functional and responsive to the contemporary requirements. Outsourcing of ancillary services through private sector involvement (e.g. cleaning, catering and security, fee deposits, student loans, and managing etc.) could help university administration to focus on developing and sustaining core competencies in education.
- 6) Overall level of contact, interaction and mobility between the industry and institution remains relatively less. Pertinent that the relationship is formalized and enhanced opportunities and incentives are offered for researchers to have flexibility in moving between academia, industry, and government. Exchanging personnel increases mutual understanding of organizational missions, abilities, and constraints as well as builds trust between partners, a prerequisite for formalized partnerships. Kennedy (2003) advanced the concept of ‘deliberative partnerships’ as one way to reconstruct university governance in a positive way for the future. Increased co-operation creates more trust and understanding environment of mutual respect and admiration. Thus creating an environment within which opportunities could be identified and process of engagement formalized will provide a more coherent framework for knowledge transfer. Such a relationship need to be managed on perpetual basis.
- 7) Industry should create a knowledge capital funds, akin to venture capital, which could provide opportunities for credit, access to technology, vocational and management training, and extensive consulting facilities. Internships, research mobility programmes and collaborative project, which allow students to work with or within a company, alone or in interdisciplinary groups and collaborative project work between universities and industry could be funded from this fund. Participation of competing companies in such a consortium fund would ensure knowledge generated is available to each of them, thereby spreading diffusion of the research results. Establishing incubation centers in institutions of higher learning which allows for the shared access to infrastructures, practices, venture capitals and market information could lead to development of a commercial product.
- 8) Accountability, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness, responsiveness and forward vision are the golden standards of good governance of educational institutions. This requires changing funding arrangements and incentive structures which are perceived to be discouraging or sometimes hostile to industry-institute partnership. The organizational arrangements and incentive mechanism that ensures industry participation will lead to strategic research orientation in pursuit of excellence in research which can benefit the industry. The development of an

entrepreneurial culture at universities requires profound changes in university governance and leadership. The advent of market economies has required enterprises to pay more attention to profits, and in many instances reduced their willingness to contribute towards financial health of institutions.

- 9) A holistic planning framework is needed of human resource development in the country based on principles of effectiveness, efficiency, equity and relevance so as to ensure all inclusive growth. This will entail maximizing equal opportunities and reducing the gaps at all levels of education. In order for university research to be more responsive to innovation-driven demand for scientific and technological knowledge, the funding system should encourage more research public-private partnerships. Approaches for reinforcement of linkages between sub-sectors (i.e. primary/non formal literacy, secondary/technical, higher education) are required eliminate gaps and ensure optimum utilization of resources in education sector. Shifting sectoral balance without re-designing existing institutions by ensuring delivery of quality education at all levels through a comprehensive, logical and integrated approach will enhance quality of social capital. This can be achieved by rewarding expertise, transparency in planning and implementation, providing access to improved teacher training programmes, continuous up gradation of curriculum etc.
- 10) Mechanisms to involve industry representatives in formulating the curriculum and teaching and learning systems open productive platforms for industry-institute interaction to select a partner include: flexibility and responsiveness in building a partnership; complementary needs and goals; intellectual property ownership rights; financial and non-financial measures; infrastructure to support the partnership; a shared mindset relating to customer service, innovation , and continuous improvement; and a commitment to ongoing communication.
- 11) Due to scarcity of funds, arrangements in which the public and private sectors amalgamate resources with the sole aim of improving and increasing the provision of public services need to be encouraged. Private education sector needs to be encouraged so as to play the role of catalysts for industry transformation so as to develop India as an international higher education brand.

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Indian Higher Education System in an Era of Global Uncertainties: Challenges and Strategies

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Abstract

Though the Indian higher education sector has recorded a remarkable growth during the post- independence era, yet achieving desirable levels in consonance with the emerging socio-economic realities on this count will involve far- reaching supplementation of the ongoing efforts. Indeed, at present this seems one of the few things on which there is disagreement. There are however, disagreements among academics and policy analysts regarding the best way to promote appropriate policy change for tackling the emerging challenges, and the implications this has for Indian policymaking in the evolving socio-economic set-up. In addition, besides the entry of foreign universities, resource crunch constraining the further expansion of this sector and, in particular, the low quality turnout and falling standards in the indigenous public sector institutions of higher learning, there are several other institutional challenges in devising and successfully implementing policies at the national level which will successfully promote the higher education sector in India in tune with its emerging needs on a sustainable basis in the twenty-first century. This paper attempts to argue emphatically that a proper understanding of the emerging socio-economic realities at the grassroots level offers a way forward in respect of what otherwise seems a very uphill task in respect of this sector in the coming decades of the twenty-first century India

Introduction

Globalization that we are presently in is a highly contentious issue¹ both in theory and practice. It becomes manifest from the fact that while its staunch adherents often untiringly focus on the unbound opportunities and outcomes that are claimed to accompany it; its most fierce critics, on the other hand, scarcely lose any chance of dubbing it as a catastrophe that, in particular, seems to spell doom for the disadvantaged and the deprived segments of the society in a wide variety of manifestations.² Although it is observed to hold true anywhere and everywhere, it is reported to be particularly so in the context of developing economies such as ours. In spite of this, however, the fact of globalization is real at the moment, and, we are, to our liking or otherwise, an integral part of it.

In the meanwhile, it is not impertinent to mention that the speed and the extent of the shock transmission are the most distinctive features of the ongoing phase of globalization.³ The emergence and functioning of the cross-country production networks in recent years have significantly deepened

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the economic inter-dependency across countries, and a shock that occurs in any part of the world can get itself transmitted swiftly and extensively to the rest of the world, depending upon its degree of inter-connectedness with the same. What this underscores is that if expansion of the volume of world trade and production is an important positive outcome of this intertwined global economic system, so is its negative outcome that results from the corresponding sudden contraction. It is possibly for these reasons that it is frequently observed in some well-meaning academic quarters that globalization is full of uncertainties and challenges attendant to these in that at a time when we feel at the top of the world in ways more than one, we may unexpectedly face a downswing, and likewise, when the global community is feeling the all pervasive gloom in ample measure, we may suddenly find ourselves moving along the trajectory of an upswing.⁴

Historically speaking, one has reasons to believe that cyclical oscillations and innovations have been the major economic forces that seemed to have dynamically shaped the path of development of the capitalist economies over the period of time.⁵ The rise of capital through investment enshrines innovation in profit and power, which, in turn, determines the course and amplitude of these oscillations and the crises attendant to them. Such happenings continue to be a part and parcel of the modern capitalist economic growth, and are also expected to occur and recur even in the foreseeable future. To meet such eventualities, higher education propelled strategic interventions by transformative mechanisms are expected to continue to work as a public policy path to realize what has come to be known as sustained economic development.⁶ To put the record straight, in the emerging scenario of global uncertainties, education in general and the higher education in particular seems to be at the centre-stage as the primary driver of economic growth, particularly in the wake of the emergence of human capital-driven growth scenario⁷ in more recent times. It is being growingly emphasized that the individuals as well as the countries, enjoying a sort of comparative edge and positioning themselves strategically against their competitors due to such an edge in the matter of human capital stock and its augmentation over time, are bound to experience a more rapid and sustained economic growth in comparison to their not-so-lucky compatriots on this count. Such an emphasis on human capital (more precisely on higher education) is not altogether unfounded or unjustified either primarily because it has come to be viewed as the perennial source of production, transmission and dissemination of knowledge including Research and Development (R&D) that, *inter alia*, encompasses in its fold inventions and innovations.⁸ Viewed from this perspective, higher education is credited to trigger fundamental alterations in the methods of production, in management as also in organizations. It is not out of context to observe that although innovations, *inter alia*, imply the introduction of new products and the exploitation of new markets or sources of raw materials or change in organizational set up, yet for all intents and purposes, these all become pronouncedly discernible in terms of the introduction of new products, which, in turn, lend an extra dimension to growth and indeed make it extremely difficult, if not virtually impossible, to measure the increase in satisfactions due to consumers' spending their growing incomes over the period of time.⁹

It is not out of context to observe here that economic growth has, in more recent times, come to be identified with the introduction of the entirely new products and the continual improvement of existing ones rather than merely a quantitative increase in the physical volumes of output of homogeneous commodities. The application of new techniques of production or of more scientific management, may lead to voluminous increase in output, but the introduction of new products is credited to transform the whole of human life in a manner that economic growth seems to be too inadequate a term to comprehend or describe it adequately and appropriately.¹⁰ Such an asymmetrical pattern of distribution of gains has been discernible in these countries primarily because higher education has, by and large, been construed as an item of luxury which the people at the lower rung

of the socio-economic ladder can ill afford due to their having only meagre livelihoods.¹¹ Again, most of such gains have, for most of the time in the past, remained largely male-centric because of the prevalence of gender biases in developing economies such as ours on an extensive scale. As against this, thanks to the introduction of various policy initiatives by the governments over time, this skewed pattern of distribution has now tended to melt, *albeit slowly*.¹² As observed earlier, higher education, implying a revolution in the quality of education, contributes appreciably in a long wave of upswing in economic activity. Likewise, it also helps in averting or in even arresting a long-term general downswing in economic activity. What we wish to assert is that higher education not only makes economic growth and progress possible, but also transforms the whole nature, character and attributes of the growth process itself in an important way. This universal truth seems to have earned a worldwide recognition. It is mainly on account of the fact that the new ideas of the innovators, when applied commercially on an extensive scale, generally lead to a burst of investment activity, which leads to a boom in economic activity in an economy through the combined interaction of the multiplier and the accelerator.¹³ Since higher education is the mainspring of innovations, there exists key inter-relationships between growth, innovations and higher education.¹⁴ The vast body of literature seeks to elucidate many of the complexities and challenges involved in the context of growth, innovations and higher education (including knowledge production and its spillovers, financing, etc.).

The recent experience shows that human capital formation in the form of improvement in the quality of the working population is capable of effecting significant improvements in terms of economic prospects and welfare for the masses by impacting the pace and pattern of overall transformation of an economy in several possible manifestations.¹⁵ It is possibly due to this very fact that there has currently appeared a surge of interest in issues pertaining to the theme of education in general and that of higher education in particular. To be more precise, there now exists a fairly large body of literature on the theme of higher education that seeks to touch upon its socio-cultural-political and more particularly its economic aspects. The following factors, we feel, underlie the appearance of such a surge:-

In the first instance, it is not impertinent to observe that even though a large body of literature on economic growth in the yore years seemed to focus almost exclusively on investment in tangible capital asset like buildings, capital equipment and machinery and infrastructural facilities such as transportation, power, etc., the role of higher education in the generation of innovations, augmentation of capital accumulation (both physical and human) as also in fostering and acceleration of economic growth has, in contrast, come to be emphasized, *albeit* more explicitly only in more recent times. For instance, in the Indian context, it is being growingly maintained that the contribution of our higher education system in the coming decades of the 21st century will be critically dependent on its impact on the multi-faceted well-being of the masses, in becoming harbinger of the process of social modernization through widening of their mental horizons and more importantly on the way it impacts improvement of efficiency and productivity of our resources and propels new inventions and innovations for making the growth process sustainable. It is possibly owing to such reasons that higher education has, of late, come to be perceived by economists as an investment in human capital.¹⁶ It is not impertinent to mention in the meantime that investments in human capital assume two different forms. While the first form involves individuals investing in their education (including expenditure incurred in respect of on-the-job training, retraining and skill formation); the second, on the other hand, involves expenditures made towards healthcare, medical facilities, etc. It is equally important to note in passing that the idea of on-the-job training as an investment in human capital has come to be advocated by some internationally renowned academicians.¹⁷ It is possibly following

the revival of faith in human capital theory in more recent times¹⁸ that higher education is being increasingly looked upon as the creator of a knowledge - based economy. As a consequence, progressively growing emphasis has come to be laid on Research and Development component of human capital as a very powerful agent of growth. The empirical studies¹⁹ conducted in regard to the relationship between productivity and education in agriculture showed that the relatively more educated farmers seemed to reap higher productivity gains in comparison to their less educated and illiterate brethren in a changing modernized environment than in a static traditional one. It has come to be widely recognized that education makes farm people (both males and females) health conscious. It leads to an improvement in the physical working capacity of the individuals. Besides, farmers' education also improves their access to resources and their use. As a result of this, while the more educated farmers reap higher productivity gains at their individual level, the overall productivity level of the economy also gets substantially enhanced. Moreover, the available observatory evidence suggests that as the process of economic modernization gets underway, the economic importance of farm land experiences a decline while that of human capital, skill- formation, knowledge, etc. registers an increase. How accumulated human knowledge and skill impact economic growth can be judged by taking into account the experience of the economies of Germany and Japan that were enormously devastated by the Second World War. The recorded evidence suggests that it was virtually within a very short span spreading over just a decade or so that the said two war-torn countries succeeded amazingly in rebuilding their respective economies. What this underlines is that the accumulated human capital and knowledge makes the potential process of physical renewal remarkably faster. In support of this contention, it has come to be argued that if the accumulated knowledge and skill of these economies could somehow had been destroyed, then the process of rebuilding would have possibly taken centuries in the absence of import of similar knowledge and skill from abroad.²⁰ In such a case, the whole history of scientific and technology discovery and learning would have had to be repeated. This conspicuously suggests as to how investment in the education and training of human beings over the centuries has culminated into a situation in which the accumulated human capital stock has emerged to be our most valuable productive resource. It can, therefore, be safely maintained that human knowledge helps in overcoming the most destructive devastation. What, nonetheless, matters the most in this regard is that the investment in human knowledge and skills yields the most optimal returns in any underway process of economic growth. However, for this to happen, the process of investment in people, in the first instance, must ensure that each new generation is imparted the appropriate parts of the knowledge accumulated previously by the past generations.²¹ Nonetheless, it should not be taken to mean that all accumulated knowledge in the past is relevant to contemporary living, and the effectiveness of the educational system depends upon the success with which the teaching fraternity decides the relevance of particular pieces of knowledge to modern living or/and are able to teach them. Again, it is also utterly presumptuous to believe that anybody can accumulate all the knowledge that exists presently or at any moment of time. In this regard, what needs to be emphasized unequivocally is that some degree of specialization, though certainly not complete specialization, is essential, and, even in the case of their special subjects, the students must acquire the competence to know the sources of relevant knowledge rather than attempting to hold it all in their minds. Furthermore, as compared to locating the source of relevant knowledge and its acquisition, the issue of its application is of far greater importance. Learning to learn thus becomes another important element in education for economic growth.²² What this necessarily implies is that those acquiring knowledge must also need to learn the way of applying it efficiently for the purpose of operating the existing machinery purposefully and managing the existing factories, offices and organizations in the best possible ways. In addition, they must also concurrently learn the art of improving the efficiency of the various component parts of the economy. It is widely believed that such learning is expected to lead to rapid technical progress in the use of

machinery and the organization of work. Besides, there is no dearth of evidence that indicates that an efficient management in the present times lies much more in the application of logical work than in the application of capital equipment and machinery to material resources.

It is now widely acknowledged that an effective educational system always teaches each new generation to see how existing new processes and production methods work to improve the efficiency and efficacy of the organization in business, government and the social services. In other words, what we wish to emphasize is that education must help innovators to see how to apply existing knowledge in new ways.²³ In addition, education's contribution towards economic growth can be gauged not from the fact of people's learning merely how to apply old ideas in new ways; but also from their becoming encouraged to develop entirely new ideas, products and processes on a continuing basis. This apart, an important point that deserves to be underlined is that while education is capable of providing the potential innovators and investors with the technical and social understanding as required by them for understanding the nuances of the various socio-economic realities prevailing at the grassroots level as also the economically gainful opportunities that such realities presently throw open for them; it, nonetheless, does not, except by vague hints and clues, show where new ideas, new products and new processes necessarily are, and how can these be developed and introduced. In such a situation, all education at best does is to give innovators the best possible knowledge and understanding of the world as it is, and as such, encourages them to use energy, initiative and imagination in changing it for them and for the society as a whole.²⁴ Meanwhile, paradoxically enough, even though higher education is of utmost importance in ways more than one, the prevailing reality at the grass-roots level is that neither the individuals, nor families nor even the governments look at investment in higher education as an important form of investment in economic growth. In addition, even from the viewpoint of rational economic decision-making, there exist enormous difficulties in the matter of calculation of benefits and costs. In spite of this, however, it is worth investing in higher education if the sum of discounted flow of benefits attendant to higher education during one's working span exceed the corresponding sum of costs. Theoretically speaking, one can continue to invest more and more in higher education until the return at the margin is just equal to the return from other investment elsewhere in the economy. This holds true of individuals as also of public expenditures incurred or to be incurred on higher education. The only thing that needs not to be glossed over is that such mechanisms are required to be devised in which it is possible to make a rational calculation of the costs and benefits of investment in education. What this necessarily implies is that a decision to spend money on education, regardless of who does so, is an investment decision in just the same way as it is in the case of an entrepreneur involved in building or buying a new machine. To put the record straight, higher education and training as instruments of technical progress are central to the process of acceleration in economic growth. By implication, if an economy aims to move onto a higher path of economic growth in the times to come in a human capital driven scenario, it must plan its investment in higher education accordingly. There is no denial to the fact that while imparting some minimum education to everyone may appear to be justified and reasonable from the viewpoint of its universalization, but looking at higher education from a purely economic perspective, developing economies need to explore alternate ways of increasing both its scale and effectiveness.²⁵ This, in itself, is a mammoth task in the direction of fostering rapid economic growth that economies such as ours are desperately seeking to achieve at the moment.

Second, the observed positive correlation between the improvements in population quality and educational attainment emphatically suggests that investing in education is capable of enhancing

the economic prospects and welfare for the poor. Viewed from such a perspective, expenditure incurred on educational attainment and improvement needs to be considered as an item of investment rather than that of consumption as had previously been the case.²⁶ It is not irrelevant to observe that as an item of investment, higher education seems to have transformed itself in that it has, in more recent times, come to be viewed as an important form of saving that is importantly contributing towards the accumulation of human capital (i.e. education, research and development, knowledge, on-the-job training, etc.) which, in turn, contributes appreciably to the pace and pattern of growth of aggregate output.²⁷ To put it pithily, what it means is that greater educational attainment enables a country to move onto a higher trajectory of growth in that it transforms it from a producer and exporter of less to more skill- and capital- intensive commodities. This contention finds credence in the commonly held view that providing mass education in general and higher education in particular would raise the overall production potential of the workforce, which, in turn, would not only contribute towards acceleration of the overall growth process of the economy, but also would create positive spill-overs for the economy as a whole. It is possibly due to this very fact that an educated workforce is viewed to be relatively much better-off in comparison to its less educated counterpart in terms of being able to absorb state-of-the-art technology. From such a standpoint, education can be considered both as a direct input to production as also a means of learning the production process itself, and as such, improving it necessarily implies realizing larger amount of output from the given level of input (s). This viewpoint gains further support from the fact that out of the two countries operating at equal economic distance behind the technological leader, the one with a higher levels of education would learn the leader's technology much faster and would also catch-up to the leader's income level faster than its counterpart which relatively trails behind on this count. It is sometimes argued that the development gap between the economically advanced and the backward countries owes itself, *among other things*, to the significant differences in the primary, secondary and tertiary enrolment rates, levels of illiteracy and human capital formation.²⁸ What, nevertheless, needs to be pointed out in particular in this regard is that the emergence and persistence of this gap as also the differences in the explanatory variables underlying it, have several deleterious effects for the ongoing process of economic growth and development in the economically laggard countries. For instance, it is contended in some academic quarters that low levels of education and skill make the development of new industries and the process of absorption of the sophisticated modern technology relatively more difficult primarily because the low levels of education make people relatively less adaptable and less amenable to change. In addition, it also hampers the ability to manage and administer enterprises and organizations at different levels.²⁹ In this regard, it is emphatically maintained that while it is not so clear if the machines will see the need for literate people, the highly educated workers would, on the other hand, certainly tend to become relatively more conscious about the need for getting improved machines than those with low or no education levels.³⁰ It can, therefore, be argued that higher education needs to accorded greater priority over farms, factories and other forms of capital development. This contention has tended to gain further ground so much so that even the World Bank now readily admits that until the recent past, its neglect of expenditure on education, including other social expenditure, in its lending policies was on its part a great lapse with serious repercussions for the economically deprived countries of the world economy.³¹

An important corollary that follows from the afore-mentioned argument and deserves serious consideration is that there exists a strong positive correlation between levels of human capital formation and growth performance across countries. In view of this, the relative under-provision of higher education facilities and opportunities in many less developed countries need to be tackled appropriately on priority basis to enable these countries experience an accelerated economic development over the period of time. These countries, accordingly, need to look carefully at the

nature and allocation of higher education provision in relation to their respective growing needs and aspirations. Moreover, in view of the fact that higher education is reported to revolutionize the mind through the inculcation of the new ideas, knowledge and skills, development, it is argued, must take place in the first instance in the minds of the people.³² And education and more particularly higher education, without doubt, is a great instrument in this regard in that it broadens the vision, the mental horizon and also urges people to excel or outperform others. It raises the efficiency and productivity of those who experience it. One should, nevertheless, not become completely oblivious of the fact that higher education is not only capable of perpetuating social and economic inequalities, but also of imparting values, attitudes and aspirations that are not conducive to the envisaged process of overall development of an economy. For instance, too much emphasis on higher education to the neglect of lower level education, might lead to distortions and imbalances and eventually culminate into a lopsided situation characterized by a colossal waste of human resources in the form of unemployed and /or underemployed graduates and postgraduates. For instance, in India, it is a commonplace to come across this lot quite appreciably. Likewise, the various policy initiatives as have been discernible in India in the aftermath of the ongoing process of economic reforms since 1991 in respect of higher education do not seem to augur well for the country's posterity primarily because such measures, in the opinion of several well-meaning observers and analysts of the prevailing grassroots level reality, propose to create a still sharper dichotomous higher education structure in the country. Given this backdrop, one has reasons to maintain that it is the pace and pattern of the growth and distribution of higher education facilities which, together with vocational skills and growing managerial capabilities, is going to be one of the most critical determinants of the overall social rate of return of an economy (such as ours) aspiring to accelerate its economic growth on an enduring basis.

Third, it is frequently observed that while the least skilled workers in the initial stage of their entry into the labour market overwhelmingly face the economically unattractive options; their accessibility to economically more gainful employment options improves significantly consequent upon the subsequent upgrading of their educational attainment over time. This is suggestive of the fact that the education level of the workforce enables it to migrate elsewhere and explore economically more remunerative employment options. The available evidence on the migration of highly educated and skilled workforce signals towards 'brain gain' in the case of in-migrating regions/countries and 'brain drain' for those involved in out-migration.³³ It is argued that prospect of migrating to regions/countries which offer a comparatively higher economic reward for highly educated and skilled migrants could amply stimulate the formation of human capital, such that the net effect of migration becomes a 'brain gain' even for those who remain behind. There is plethora of empirical evidence in respect of a cross-section of developing economies that seems to point toward a positive effect of migration on gross human capital formation³⁴, which, in turn, seems to be of considerable significance in making an economy move onto a higher trajectory of socio-economic modernization. In view of this, it can be argued that the process of migration of workforce, its level of education and economic development are importantly intertwined with each other. Viewed in the context of such an interrelationship, the available empirical evidence consistently suggests that higher education is a major factor in determining the probability of migration. It is now widely maintained that all else being equal, the more educated that a person is, the more likely he or she is likely to migrate. What this implies is that the workers possessing greater ability will tend to have disproportionately greater stocks of human capital due to their education level, higher probability of migration and hence earnings than their not-so-lucky compatriots. An important plausible reasoning that underlies the positive relationship between education level and migration is that people, *inter alia*, are observed to be more mobile after completing higher education that involves lengthy investments in human capital than those who

remain bereft of such an advantage. For this reason perhaps that migration is reported to be even more pronounced for workers with higher education who enter regional, national and even international markets. The studies conducted in respect of United States economy do indicate in ample measure that the level of higher education is a major predictor of the probability of one's migration.³⁵

Fourth, empirical investigations made in respect of the afore-mentioned economy also amply demonstrate that in spite of greater involvedness in the measurement of the contribution of resources devoted to research, education, etc. than those allocated to capital formation in the usual sense of the term, yet, assuming a linear homogenous production function and a neutral technical change not impacting the rate of substitution between labour and capital, a decomposition of the sources of growth revealed that labour and capital together accounted for just 12.5 per cent of the growth and the residue (overwhelmingly as much as about 87.5 per cent of the increase in labour productivity, measured in terms of per man hour terms) between 1909-49 period could be attributed to the technical change.³⁶ These findings have been confirmed by yet another study pertaining to the said economy for the period between 1909-29 and 1929-57 in that it was noted that the expenditures made on education accounted for roughly 23.0 per cent and 42.0 per cent of the growth rate in per person employed income respectively.³⁷ Furthermore, improved education of the labour force was observed to contribute as much as 21.0 per cent towards growth as against a relatively lower contribution of about 17.0 per cent coming from increased capital- labour ratio. These findings further corroborate and strengthen the above-mentioned view that higher education did contribute positively and greatly to the overall material affluence of the United States economy, particularly after the earlier period of physical capital increase.³⁸

Fifth, notwithstanding the conflicting evidence on the inter-relationship between rate of return and level of education for a while, the pay-offs from investments made in human capital have been observed to be considerably higher than those associated with physical capital. From a purely economic viewpoint, therefore, it is quite reasonable to argue that investment in higher education seems to make a significant contribution to the growth rate of output in developing economies.³⁹ Furthermore, even though individuals belonging to the higher echelons of the society find their way into economically more rewarding jobs in comparison to their counterparts at the lower rung of the socio-economic ladder⁴⁰ due to the socio-economic- politico and bureaucratic clout they enjoy, the fact that the rate of return changes and improves over time cannot be denied, and, as such, the possibility of emergence of a clear-cut pattern in respect of inter-relationship between improvement of skill and changes in rates of return over time cannot be ruled out altogether.⁴¹

And finally, higher education is reported to contribute towards the process of economic development in yet another way as well. Empirical evidence suggests that about-one half to two-third of the variations in personal earnings can be attributed to the inclusion of on- the- job training investment in human capital.⁴²

It can be safely argued that it is possibly in view of the growing importance of human capital that the attainment of improved higher education levels has, in more recent times, become one of the primary objectives of development and changes discernible to this effect have come to be considered as the dominant yardsticks for measuring it. Objectively speaking, higher education now seems to be the key for creating, adapting and spreading highly useful knowledge for effecting improvements in the quality of life as also for ensuring the social and economic advancement of human resources on a lasting basis. It is possibly due to this very reason that development, *inter*

alia, aims at adequate provision of higher education and views this objective as an important end in itself. In addition, the ever-growing importance of higher education is also suggestive of the fact that it is now considered essential for a satisfying and rewarding career and viewed as an important hub of the broader notion of expanded human capabilities which, in turn, seek to impact significantly the ability of a developing economy to absorb modern technology and to develop its capacity for self-sustaining growth and development. Moreover, being an important component of growth and development both in terms of an input and an output, it assumes critical significance in the process of economic development.⁴³ It is owing to such considerations perhaps that the quality of education in general and that of higher education in particular is now being growingly emphasized as the ultimate driver of economic growth in the twenty-first century.

The present paper draws upon individual as well as official sources of information. It is basically analytical in character and its remainder unwraps itself as follows. In Section II, we briefly describe the quantitative expansion of higher education in India together with its characteristic features. Section III attempts to look at the higher education in India after the onset of the process of 1991 economic reforms. While section IV seeks to describe the major areas of concern confronting the higher education sector in India; an attempt has been made in Section V to look at the various reining-in measures in this regard. And finally, Section VI concludes with a set of policy recommendations for strengthening the Indian higher education system to make it more innovative for realizing the sustained economic growth in an era marked by global uncertainties.

SECTION-II

Higher Education in India: Its Characteristic Features

The previous section suggests that there are myriad reasons for the Indian higher education system to emerge as an important area of inquiry. In particular, it was noted to be central to the ushering-in of the process of socio-economic modernization of an economy such as ours. Broadly speaking, the higher education sector in India comprises general, technical, and management components. Furthermore, a widely acknowledged fact of the education sector in India has been that it has witnessed an historically unprecedented growth in the matter of extension of learning at various layers, including higher education⁴⁴ as a sector and its afore-mentioned components during the post-independence decades. The plethora of studies undertaken to assess the performance of higher education sector in India signals towards several distinctive features and peculiarities associated with this sector and its correlates. This section attempts to capture some such features and peculiarities.

First, the higher education sector in India has experienced a remarkable quantitative expansion during the post-independence decades. The information pertaining to decadal pattern of growth of all types of colleges, universities (including deemed universities) and enrolment of students as given in Table 1, read together with other collateral information available, is a bold pointer to this fact. The Table shows that at the time of inception of the process of economic planning in India in 1950-51, there were just 578 (370 colleges for imparting general and 208 colleges for professional education) colleges. By August 2011, this number seems to have grown to 31324 colleges. Again, the number of universities which was noted to be just 17 on the eve of independence,⁴⁵ and 27 in 1950-51 has mushroomed to 611 as on August, 2011. It is quite natural therefore that the number of students has also recorded phenomenal growth. The latest available statistics in this regard reveal that the students' enrolment in higher education in India has increased impressively from 0.1 million at the time of

independence to 0.26 million in 1950-51 only to rise further to 8.40 million in 2000-01 and to 11.61 million in 2006-07.⁴⁶ Another important development which needs to be underscored in particular is that the enrolment of female students in higher education has risen to 4.70 million⁴⁷ which accounts for about 40.55 per cent of the total student strength in this component of education in 2006-07. Besides, students enrolment under Open and Distance Education System has also been remarkably impressive during the period under reference.⁴⁸ This suggests that Indian higher education system has radically grown, expanded and risen to become one of the largest in the world with huge potentialities to set fresh trends and horizons.⁴⁹

In addition, in view of the recognition that technical education(including management education) is one of the most effective ways to create skilled manpower required for purposes of socio-economic transformation of our economy, the past couple of decades have witnessed a magnificent expansion of this component of higher education in the country. The available evidence suggests that in addition to five renowned national Institutes of Technology(popularly known as IITs) located at Mumbai, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Chennai and New Delhi, there were as many as about 1349 approved engineering colleges at the degree level, and as many as 1030 institutes offering Master of Computer Application(MCA) Programme.⁵⁰ In addition to these institutions, there are quite a number of Regional Engineering Colleges and a number of other centers for specialized courses such as architecture, mining and metallurgy, industrial engineering and forge and foundry. What scarcely needs to be overemphasized is that the number of each of these categories of institutions has increased further over the period of time. These institutions, it is particularly important to mention, are involved in providing facilities for under- graduate and post- graduate courses and also for research in engineering and technology. Again, in addition to

TABLE 1: The Decadal Pattern of Growth of Recognised Higher Educational Institutions in India: 1950-51 to 2007-08.

Year	Colleges(no.)	Universities including Deemed Universities(no.)	Students Enrolled (no. in mns.)
1950-51	750	30	0.26
1960-61	1537	49	0.65
1970-71	3604	93	1.95
1980-81	4722	123	2.75
1990-91	7121	177	4.43
2000-01	10252	254	8.40
2011-12	31324*	611*	11.61#

Note: * includes general(Arts, Science and Commerce) and professional education colleges including Engineering, Technology and Architecture, Medical and Teacher Training Colleges. The figures pertain to August, 2011.
pertain to the year 2006-07.

Source : (i) Government of India, *Economic Survey for Various Years*”, Ministry of Finance, Economic Division, New Delhi.
(ii) Government of India, “*Selected Educational Statistics for Various Years*”, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi.

the six internationally acclaimed centers of excellence in the imparting of management education which are popularly known as IIMs (Indian Institutes of Management) and are located at Ahmedabad in Gujarat, Bangalore in Karnataka, Calcutta in West Bengal, Indore in Madhya Pradesh, Kozhikode in Kerala and Lucknow in Uttar Pradesh, the number of approved management institutions imparting management education in the country is reported to have swelled to about 990.⁵¹ Besides, several institutions in the university sector are involved in offering full-time, part-time, as well as correspondence courses in both general and functional areas of management. These institutions of higher learning are, it needs to be noted in particular, involved in assisting thousands of private and public sector enterprises in meeting their requirements for technical and managerial manpower through a wide variety of their programmes. What we wish to emphasize here unambiguously is that in absolute terms, the number of higher education institutions involved in the production, transmission and dissemination of general, technical, management and medical knowledge including those engaged in the generation of inventions and innovations in India has increased rapidly in the post-independence decades. This testifies to a widely held perception that phenomenal expansion of institutions of higher learning in all probability is the prime driver of the country's growth in the emerging set up. Nonetheless, this remarkable growth should not be construed to mean that the quality of higher education has also improved in the country alongside. Rather, the rising concerns about the quality of higher education are suggestive of the fact that alongside its rapid quantitative expansion, the quality of higher education in India has witnessed significant deterioration.

Second, alongside the scintillating performance of the higher education sector in India in terms of massive increase in the number of institutions of higher learning and students enrolled in them in the post-independence era, it has remained throughout mainly public funded. It is nonetheless important to mention that even though the public expenditure on higher education in the country has recorded a substantial increase over the period of time in absolute terms, it is said to be inadequate in view of the competing demands of the various sectors of the economy and excessive dependence on the government to this effect on the one hand, and, emerging needs of the national and global economies, on the other. Besides, since institutions of higher learning have not made worthwhile efforts to raise funds at their own, their financial position is reported to have experienced considerable deterioration over the period of time. An important point that deserves to be mentioned here is that public expenditure on higher education in India is noted to be among the lowest, lower than even countries like China and Kenya. This is in spite of the fact that the government has remained the major provider of funds for the growth of this sector throughout the pre-reform post-independence period and continues to do so even now. Furthermore, even in terms of proportion of total resources devoted to higher education, the developed countries like the United States of America and Australia are much ahead of us in comparative terms.⁵² It is for these reasons perhaps that the entry of private sector in the higher education sector in the wake of the ongoing process of economic reforms since 1991 has been growingly viewed in policymaking circles as some sort of relief for the public sector. In addition, it has also come to be maintained that with India being an economy with limited avenues for capital accumulation owing to low levels of income and rising aspirations in the emerging global milieu, state funded higher education provides the safest method of privatizing public resources. At the other end of the spectrum, it has also come to be observed in some well-meaning quarters that the remarkable quantitative expansion of this sector together with dominant position of the government has dented its efficiency and efficacy importantly over the period of time.

Third, although important gender disparities continue to still persist in the matter of higher education in India, yet the significantly improving ratio of female to male higher education enrolment

rates during the post-independence decades is a bold pointer to the waning trend on this count. As a sequel to lessening of these gender disparities, once yawning gap between male and female higher education in India has tended to narrow down in terms of time. From the viewpoint of gender equality at the level of higher education, this certainly signifies a notable positive development, particularly in view of the prevalent belief that education of the mother and children's physical and intellectual well-being are positively correlated. Since a more equitable distribution of higher education across population groups is considered to be of critical importance for economic development in the coming decades of the 21st century, the emerging trends on this count, therefore, seem to auger well for the posterity of India. In spite of this however, the large within- country variations in gender disparity across states in respect of higher education in India continues to be a matter of enormous concern.

Fourth, the post-independence experience bears ample testimony that the demand for higher education in India has remained largely urban-centric for most of the time. The burgeoning urban middle class has witnessed an impressive growth in the post- independence era in general and since the beginning of the 1970s in particular. This class has emerged as the major demander of the higher education in India owing to appreciable rise in its income levels over the period of time. By implication, what we wish to emphasize is that higher education in India has tended to be associated with various kinds of discrimination that seem to have mainly emerged due to inadequate endowments of the resources required to access and succeed in this particular area. Higher education has remained by and large biased against the poor, particularly against the socially and economically disadvantaged segments of our society.

Fifth, both intra- and inter- regional differences in the distribution of higher education in India continue to be conspicuously present. It is not unimportant to observe that most of the educational institutions of higher learning in India have remained largely located in the urban areas which accommodated only about 27.8 per cent of our population in 2011. The overwhelmingly high concentration of such institutions in urban areas has possibly been due to the lack of adequate infra-structural facilities in the rural areas the provision of which involves voluminous financial implications. In view of this, the progress in expanding higher education in the rural areas is likely to remain snail-paced for quite some time in the future even though some regions of the country have, in more times, begun to witness the reversal in regard to the earlier considerations of locating these institutes.

Sixth, in recognition of the fact that the level, pace and pattern of socio- economic modernization of an economy such as ours are intimately linked with the quality of higher education, apex regulators such as the University Grants Commission(the UGC) and the All India Council for Technical Education(the AICTE) have been set up through the University Grants Commission Act, 1956 and the All India Council for Technical Education Act, 1987 respectively. It scarcely needs any overemphasis that the primary objective underlying their setting up has, *among other things*, been to monitor and regulate the functioning of the higher education sector in the country for purposes of ensuring its orderly growth. These institutions have, *inter alia*, been entrusted with the responsibility of designing quality improvement programme for teachers engaged in higher education, undertaking continuing education programmes, providing impetus for expanding infra-structural facilities in the emerging areas, undertaking the periodic review of the curriculum and evolving its model brand, and above all to work out the subject content of the various programmes to ensure that they are upto date and effectively in tune with the growing needs of our economy aspiring to grow faster. To put it pithily, these institutions have been set up to design appropriate reforms overtime in the problem areas concerning the higher education in the country. It may not be out of context to observe here

that even though these apex institutions have played an important role in impacting the higher education sector in India in the post- independence era, their working in more recent times, nevertheless, has drawn a flak from certain quarters. For instance, it is alleged that some unscrupulous persons get nominated to various panels constituted by these apex bodies partly due to their connections with the senior officials of these bodies and partly due to the existence of mutual-admiration groups of people, particularly the teachers recommending each other's name.

And finally, in view of the fact that higher education in India has come to be considered as elitist in nature, it is quite reasonable to expect that the number of aspirants of higher education will experience a rapid rise in the times to come. Furthermore, higher education in India is considered to be a creator and a promoter of an intellectual harbinger involved in the task of thinking on behalf of the society and preparing the present generation to meet the future challenges.

The foregoing discussion suggests that the post-independence higher education system in India has been characterized by several distinctive features and peculiarities such as its rapid quantitative expansion, persistence of inter- and intra- regional and gender disparities in spite of their narrowing down, heavy dependence on public sector and consequent heavy state regulation, its continued being urban-centric catering largely to the needs of the elite middle class in spite of institutions' getting located in rural areas, its seeking to cater to the requirements of the ongoing process of socio-economic modernization, and deteriorating quality in spite of the apex regulators being in place to this effect.

SECTION -III

India's Higher Education Sector in the Era of Economic Reforms

An overview of some characteristic features and peculiarities of the growth of Indian higher education sector in the preceding section boldly points, *among other things*, towards the multiplicity of the number of institutions and teachers, improvement in enrolment ratio, etc. over the post- independence decades. Thanks to its remarkable expansion that the country is now importantly placed in respect of its higher education sector. It has come to be observed that the enviable past expansion of the higher education sector in the country, coupled with the ongoing efforts to this effect, seems to throw up enormous economic opportunities for our economy and its people in the emerging scenario and the tendency on this count is likely to catch-up in the times to come. It scarcely needs an overemphasis to observe that these opportunities assume tremendous significance not only from the viewpoint of individuals or households, but also from that of our national economy as a whole in several possible ways. At the same time, however, it is not unimportant to note that this sector seems to be seriously involved in grappling with quite a number of problems or challenges.⁵³ In view of these widely held viewpoints in the wake of the 1991 Indian economic reforms led paradigm shift, our focus on the various developments that seem to have occurred in respect of India's higher education sector during this period is likely to be quite informative and rewarding from an academic viewpoint. The motivation for the present section is traceable to this very consideration.

In hindsight, what needs to be underlined at the very outset of this section is that with human capital formation becoming the epic-centre of the evolving knowledge- based global economy,

Indian higher education sector seems to have assumed the potential of emerging as an important contributor to the kitty of invisible earnings. In this regard, it has come to be observed that a huge influx⁵⁴ of students has been visible over time from a number of countries such as Bangladesh, Iran, Afghanistan for receiving higher education in various fields like Engineering, Business Management, Medicine, Information Technology and even in Humanities and Social Sciences. It is felt that if this component of the education sector in India is appropriately reformed by charging appropriate tuition and other fees that reflect costs on the one hand, and by allowing greater involvement of the private sector (including the Non-Resident Indian Community) through Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) on the other, its capability to impart training in diverse areas to a far greater number of Indian as well as foreign students will experience a manifold improvement. An important innovative step seems to have already been taken in this direction with the establishment of a School of Management in Hyderabad with the involvement of reputed foreign business schools and Non-Resident Indian scholars. Furthermore, the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), initially put in place in collaboration with foreign institutions, have since long earned the distinction of the premier institutions whose alumni are reported to have scripted India's success in software and management. It is forcefully argued that the Indian economy would make a great leap forward if many such institutions get established with substantial contributions from the alumni of IITs and IIMs. There are, therefore, reasons to believe that the State's getting itself involved in the primary and secondary education, major reforms of the higher education sector are required to be introduced to ensure that the resources needed for bolstering investment in higher education are mobilized largely from the private sector.⁵⁵ It is not surprising, therefore, that in the aftermath of 1991 economic reform, the private sector, as evidenced by the various policy initiatives undertaken by the government, has been assigned a crucial role in terms of its participation in the higher education sector of the country. From the viewpoint of policy implications for the Indian higher education system, this indeed marks an important departure from our earlier overwhelming focus on public sector. Furthermore, the government of India, in its attempt to freeze the higher education budget in the name of fiscal prudence, set up Punnayya Committee⁵⁶ (also popularly known as the UGC Committee) for Central Universities and Swaminathan Committee⁵⁷ (AICTE Committee) for technical educational institutions which submitted their reports in 1993 and 1994 respectively. The basic objective of both these committees, it is not impertinent to mention, was to suggest ways for searching non-governmental avenues for financing the higher education. In particular, each of these two committees, in its own considered wisdom, suggested a hike in student fees, revitalization of student loans⁵⁸ and sale of consultancy and other services as the alternative non-government measures of resource mobilization to supplement and augment the existing State funding of higher education in the country. In the following years, since then, a number of more committees have been set up by the various state governments for purposes of fee revision. Viewed from this perspective, India, in its post-independence history, now stands at a critical juncture in that as against its experiencing a rapid quantitative expansion in higher education while coping with various problems and challenges accompanying the said process of expansion from time to time under high state controls and regulations, is importantly switching-over to Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) strategy in this regard. Whether the evolving strategy is likely to eventually lead to rich pay-offs or prove just counterproductive on a long-term basis for the present as well as the future generations, is indeed a highly contentious issue with no dearth of arguments and counter-arguments on both the sides.

Regardless of what has been observed above, it is important to mention that recognizing the vital importance of higher education as a powerful tool for shaping the knowledge-based twenty-first-century Indian economy and meet the various challenges on this count, a number of

initiatives seems to have been taken by the government during the more recent times. These initiatives, *inter alia*, focus on improvement of access along with equity and excellence, adoption of state-specific strategies, enhancement of the relevance of higher education through curriculum reforms, vocationalization, networking and use of information technology and distance education along with reforms in governance in higher education. For example, with the objective of strengthening the existing higher education structure in the country, a large scale expansion in university education has been attempted in more recent years by setting up new educational institutions.⁵⁹ In addition, upgradation of state engineering institutions, expansion of research fellowships and provision of hostels for girls, reservation for Scheduled Castes(SCs), Scheduled Tribes(STs) and Other Backward Classes(OBCs), focus on backward, hilly and remote locations including the North-East, facilitating greater participation of students belonging to minorities, girls and persons with disabilities, scholarships, provision of education loans with interest free subsidies, setting up of polytechnics in unserved areas, and degree colleges in low Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) districts are the other important measures that have been put in place alongside by the government. Another important development that deserves to be mentioned is that the National Mission in Education through Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which aims at providing high speed broadband connectivity to universities and colleges and development of e-content in various disciplines, is also being implemented side by side. At the same time, with the purpose of improving access to quality education and making it available at any time and at any place, open and distance learning mode of higher education is being also encouraged. Furthermore, for extending the global reach of education, internalization and collaborative arrangements and setting up of UNESCO Category I institutes are the other initiatives being emphasized and put in place. To rope in students belonging to economically weaker sections in institutes of higher learning, a new scheme of providing interest subsidy on educational loans has also been introduced with effect from the year 2009-10. Under the scheme, the central government has undertaken to bear the full interest subsidy burden during the period of moratorium on loans raised by economically weaker section students from scheduled banks under the Educational Loan Scheme of the Indian Banks' Association for pursuing professional and technical courses from recognized institutions in India. In addition, innovative schemes encompassing in particular the provision of scholarships, tuition and hostel fees, cost of books, and other incidental charges attendant to admission in government colleges/institutions and other select institutions has also been provided for students belonging to households at the lower rung of the socio-economic ladder. It has come to be argued that if such efforts get supplemented through the involvement of the public and private sectors for enhancing employment opportunities for the students belonging to the socially and economically vulnerable segments of the society, it will go a long way in the ushering-in of the presently most cherished objective of inclusive growth in the country. And in view of the fact that education in general and the higher education in particular is an important component of economic development as also a driving force for economic growth, the government of India, like its counterparts the world over, is involved in subsidizing higher education quite importantly.⁶⁰ This, nonetheless, apart, the diverging trajectories of costs and revenues due to rapidly increasing per-student costs and increasing tertiary level participation over the period of time has tended to create enormous pressure on the government exchequer. It is not out of context to observe that subsidies on higher education are reported to be inequitable in the sense that all individuals in a state subsidized institution, regardless of their parents' material affluence, get the same level of subsidy. In view of this, it has come to be argued that government support for higher education needs to be reduced and substituted with better commercial loan schemes for the students.

More recently, in consonance with the ongoing process of economic reforms some major initiatives have been taken by the government for promoting higher and technical education in

India.⁶¹ In addition to this, the government of India has also approved and invited proposals from the states for the setting up of 20 new IITs on a Public-Private- Partnership (PPP) basis with the Human Resource Development (HRD) Ministry, respective states where each IIT will be established, and industry as the partners for addressing the growing skill challenges of the Indian IT industry. The task is proposed to be completed over a span of nine years beginning 2011-12. Furthermore, for giving a fillip to innovations, some institutions like the IITs are engaged in creating in-house technology business incubation facilities. In this role, these institutions are proving to be focal points amongst their students and the faculty for working towards taking some of their applied research to the market through the creation of business models for the same.⁶² It is observed that such efforts are required to be greatly replicated by others by scaling up the previously successful centres of such innovations, as also by creating many such centres across the higher technical institutions in the country.

The preceding discussion makes it fairly obvious that the government has initiated several measures towards strengthening the Indian higher education structure in the post-reform period. These measures are expected to prove to be of decisive importance in impacting the pace and pattern of the growth of the Indian higher education system as also that of the process of socio-economic modernization in the country over the coming decades of the 21st century.

SECTION-IV

The Indian Higher Education System: The Flip Side

Having noted the improved access to higher education in India in an overall sense in the wake of its spectacular quantitative expansion over the post- independence decades in the preceding sections, we now set out to look at its flip side. It is frequently observed that Indian higher education system, regardless of its magnificent accomplishments during the post-independence era, is now characterized by the obvious gone astray objectives and fulfillments with the net result that the country now faces enormous challenges in this regard. In this regard, it has come to be pointed out that the entry of foreign universities, resource crunch constraining the further expansion of this sector and, in particular, the deteriorating standards in the indigenous public sector institutions of higher learning do not seem to bode well from the viewpoint of the process of socio-economic modernization of our economy. The emergence, existence and persistence of these and many other such concerns have indeed become a matter of many a lively debate and discussion in more recent times. It has come to be maintained that in view of the fact that the developments taking place in this sector have opportunities as well as challenges, both for the Indian public as also for the planners and the policymakers alike, the concerns cropping up on such counts in respect of this sector in India are bound to have serious policy implications not only for the sector itself, but also for the ongoing and future process of socio- economic transformation of our economy. It is also maintained that in the progressively globalizing emerging scenario of market driven education, the market forces, in addition to creating and boosting avenues for entrepreneurial openings, are reported to be transforming the very character of both teaching and research in a manner that while the former(teaching) seems to have become a function of employability, the latter, on the other hand, that of its sponsorability or funding. The net outcome of this all has been that while some disciplines like the physical and life sciences and economics are at a premium; there are, in contrast, others such as the linguistics, literature, history, philosophy, etc., which seem to get doomed in the process. Besides, it is also alleged at times that most universities in the country, apart from one or two

technical embellishments here and there and cosmetic revisions in some cases, teach almost the outdated curriculum that seems to have outlived its utility in terms of time. As against this, the fact of the matter is that many institutions of higher education in India do not seem to become responsive to such criticisms and are seen refraining from making the institutions transparent, accountable and efficient from the viewpoint of the society as a whole. Given this backdrop, a serious discussion of some of the problems and challenges concerning the higher education in India in an era of global uncertainties is likely to be informative as well as rewarding both from the viewpoint of its academic worth and policymaking for sustainable growth over the coming decades of the twenty-first century. Dictated by these considerations, we seek to identify the various problems and challenges facing the higher education sector in India in this section so that these can be addressed appropriately on a lasting basis.

It is not impertinent to observe at this juncture that grave concern has come to be voiced in more recent times in the matter of continuously deteriorating quality of higher education as reflected in terms of high rates of failure, poor performance, growing number of cheating cases and other fraudulent practices in the examinations, etc. To put the record straight, the declining quality of higher education in the country bespeaks of its becoming progressively more and more inefficient and poorly managed. This, coupled with the allegation that public spending on education as a proportion of national income in the aftermath of economic reforms since 1991 has not risen appreciably, lends further credence to the apprehensions that given the current high rates of enrolments, if resource allocation, regardless of the source it comes from for a while, to the higher education sector in the country does not get adequately augmented, it might virtually become exceedingly difficult, if not altogether impossible, to maintain even the existing level of coverage and quality standards which have, as pointed out earlier, already been experiencing a significant erosion for quite some time. Besides, the limited number of contact hours, the growing indifference on the part of teachers due to non-accountability, government's stringent squeezing of the posts in the name of the much hyped financial crunch, faulty process pertaining to the recruitment of teachers and supporting staff, teachers' expertise being of little relevance to their class-room teaching, etc. are reported to be some of the other well-known factors that seem to undermine the quality of the higher education in India. The proliferation of sub-standard institutions, a fairly large number of fake universities⁶³ and other such institutions of higher learning run and managed by education mafia, deterioration of academic standards, continuing with the curriculums that scarcely seem to fit into the emerging socio-economic realities of the twenty-first century India, failure to maintain academic calendar, diverse set of inconsistencies and contradictions (such as a confusion of objectives, inconsistencies between stated goals and actual policy⁶⁴ (including a specific contradiction between stated goals and resource allocation), and above all a lack of adequate support for research, etc., are, *amongst others*, the major weaknesses that conspicuously characterize our post-independence higher education system. Apart from these academic problems, the heavy subsidization of higher education in India has, regardless of its past, present or future social justification, emerged yet another thorny issue in that it is alleged to involve unbearable financial burden on the government exchequer.

At times, it is also pointed out that the distribution of higher education across various regions (i.e. the spatial distribution) and more importantly across various segments of the society (i.e. inter-group or inter-personal distribution), otherwise considered to be as important as the distribution of income, is characterized by asymmetry and uneven growth. An important point that needs to be underlined in respect of both these distributions pertaining to the higher education (more particularly in regard to its technical and management components) is that there exist enormous

imbalances and distortions in the country. It is not out of context to observe that the quantitative expansion of these components of higher education has, over the years, experienced important deterioration in terms of academic standards so much so that structural imbalances have tended to manifest themselves more pronouncedly with regard to the skill requirement of the business sector and the traditional curriculum followed by the engineering and management institutions. Not only this, the provision of infra-structural facilities in most of these institutions is no better either in that apart from being inadequate it seems to witness severe pressure in ways more than one. To be more precise, regardless of the fact that public expenditure on these segments of the higher education sector in the past has gone up in terms of time, a piquant situation seems to have cropped up now on this count, particularly for the state governments. It becomes obvious from the fact that while various pronouncements by the powers that be unequivocally call for the imperative upgradation and modernization of the higher education related infra-structural facilities, qualitative improvement in its technical and management components, and, in particular, the strategy for augmenting resources required for this critically important sector of our economy, the ground-level realities, on the other hand, look other way round. Needless to overemphasize, the situation prevailing on this count is the net outcome of the interplay between economic and non-economic factors.

Ironical though it may seem to be, the higher education sector in India, in spite of its enormous expansion over the post-independence decades, is reported to be at the moment at the 'crossroads' and as such is 'facing several challenges.' Thanks to these challenges that the quality of Indian higher education system, as judged by its public credibility, has witnessed a dramatic erosion. It seems to have reached a situation where it is always tempting to pass the buck onto the others: the managements as the poor paymasters, the teachers with the lack of dedication and commitment to their work, skills and involvement, rapid advances in technology so on and so forth. The government also deserves its share of blame for the inefficient and poor implementation of its higher education related policies. In addition, the periodic increase in salaries following implementation of UGC scales have also added enormously to the cost of higher education in India. What we wish to affirm is that the various challenges endangering the Indian higher education sector range from institutional barriers such as government regulation and institutional policies and procedures to dynamic challenges related to young people's cognitive skill development having many an important implication for the present as well as the future generations. It scarcely needs any overemphasis to maintain that insights into these challenges assume great significance from the viewpoint of appropriate policymaking for the future.

The challenges of accessibility⁶⁵ to higher education is possibly among the most severe challenges that the Indian higher education sector faces importantly at the moment. In view of the fact that the actual incidence of enrolment in higher education institutions in India, in spite of its rapid quantitative expansion, is very low (i.e. only 12.4 per cent of the eligible youth in the 18-23 age group)⁶⁶ in relation to its desired levels as also in comparison to many developing and developed countries across the globe, there is, therefore, an urgent need of its more rapid expansion. The prevailing ground level realities indicate that the mushrooming of the number of educational institutions of higher learning during the post-independence decades notwithstanding for a while, the building, transport and other physical infrastructure is found to be lacking importantly in a vast majority of these institutions in the private sector. There are several other glaring inadequacies too in this respect. For instance, it is widely acknowledged that technological innovations are bound to remain central to any envisaged process of economic growth in India in the future. In view of this possibility, it has come to be observed that while the higher education sector in India must help in evolving appropriate technologies that make use of the abundant local resources to produce low cost goods on a massive scale and the existing problems on this count need to be overcome by

achieving a breakthrough through a continuous exploitation of evolving technologies, yet the financial constraints often scuttle these otherwise well-intended efforts to this effect. This certainly makes the educational environment for the development and promotion of cognitive or learning abilities unsupportive and severely constrains the task of having a successful life and career in that it generates a lack of self-confidence and self-esteem in the faculty and the taught alike. It scarcely needs any elaboration to emphasize that the provisioning of this all will require a huge amount of resources. Viewed from this perspective, this sector is bound to witness progressively a greater trade-off with other sectors of our economy in the matter of allocation of resources in the future. It is being observed that in view of the fact that government spending on higher education has in an overall sense remained at best inadequate, Public - Private Partnership (PPP) is, therefore, expected to play a significant role in the expansion of higher education in India in the future even though the nature and character of this partnership themselves seem to become highly contentious issues in the Indian context. Furthermore, economic affordability in the case of socially and economically dispossessed segments of our society is yet another important aspect of the challenge of accessibility concerning the higher education sector in India. It is widely known that Indian economy is a developing economy with high incidence of employment in the agricultural sector. Since the non-farm avenues of employment and earnings as alternative avenues have not recorded rapid expansion in terms of time, access to economically gainful employment and earning opportunities in India as supplementary sources has remained at best at a low keel. And given that the public rhetoric about employment generation policies has failed to get itself translated in terms of implementation, our economy continues to be characterized by important socio-economic inequalities (both inter-regional and inter-personal) which are reported to have become more stark in the post-economic reforms era. Apprehensions are ripe that as in the past, the rising cost of higher education might make it unaffordable for those who are at the lower rung of the socio-economic ladder.

The challenge of credibility⁶⁷ is possibly the second important issue that is required to be addressed on priority basis. It is often alleged that notwithstanding its much-hyped quantitative expansion, the Indian higher education sector, being a colonial legacy, produces by and large a large army of bureaucrats at various layers credited with low level of efficiency and not in tune with the growing needs of an economy aspiring to achieve sustained accelerated growth in the times to come. The problems facing higher education sector in India range from simple problems, such as limited funds to keep good personnel or obtain equipment, supplies, to the more complex problems of designing and executing appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the higher education system on a regular basis. While India is involved in addressing these problems independently and a number of experts provide various forms of support for the purpose, the apex regulating agencies, for one reason or the other, seem to be trapped in a flip-flop situation in terms of providing guidelines for the implementation of appropriate remedial measures. The fact of the matter is that these top-level organizations have importantly failed in the development of quality management guidelines for institutions of higher learning, and more so in terms of their implementation. It is not surprising therefore that in the absence of these guidelines and standards, the institutions of higher learning in India are beset to face difficulty in gaining the much-needed credibility to improve their standing in the emerging national and international set-up.

The challenge of attuning⁶⁸ it to the growing needs of the economy is the third important issue that will continue to bother our educational planners and policymakers in the times to come. It is widely acknowledged that with Indian economy attempting to move on its accelerated growth path, it requires a wide variety of special technical and managerial skills. There is no denial to the fact that while the availability of these skills will help in the realization of the desired outcomes; their non-availability, on the other hand, is likely to impact adversely in this regard.

The fourth challenge pertains to the sustainability⁶⁹ of the Indian higher education sector. Objectively speaking, the transition to sustainability of higher education in India is a hydra-headed problem. In the first instance, it is widely maintained that in view of the fact that the crisis eventually occurs when investment in an area reaches a point of declining marginal returns, higher education triggered human wealth generation must, therefore, ensure the reversal of such a possibility through increasing returns to make it sustainable. *Second*, the sustainability constitutes a series of public choices that, *inter alia*, requires effective institutions of governance which are capable of ensuring the fair distribution of higher education within and between generations and regions. It is not out of context to observe that only governments acting on a public mandate can choose to adopt and enforce standards, can rope in the private sector in expanding higher education by allowing it to set up institutions of higher education and regulate its activities for the public benefit over the long-term, create the financial wherewithal to upgrade higher education system and implement strategies of resilience to enable this sector withstand unexpected ups and downs on such counts. *Third*, the transition to sustainability, apart from advancing skills necessary to the needs of a rapidly growing economy, must provide long-term intellectual leadership so as to promote greater transparency, accountability, efficiency and efficacy to strengthen its competitiveness and improve responsiveness to the changing market conditions. And finally, the transition to sustainability requires learning the mechanism to recognize and resolve the diverse set of problems. It is observed in some quarters that while it is always advisable to leave all the perplexities behind and get down to work when caught between the complacency and despair; the Indian higher education sector is, on the other hand, unluckily found wanting on this count in an important way.

And finally, getting passed the stalled legislations⁷⁰ in Parliament in the Budget Session, due to numerous apprehensions and doubts and find a path for moving forward on the reform agenda in respect of higher education sector is yet another challenge facing this sector. It is observed that in the wake of economic reforms, there has occurred a spurt in bogus universities operating freely in the country and existing laws are insufficient to deal with this menace. While it is earnestly hoped that following enactment of the necessary legislation, the dangers of bogus universities affecting the credibility of the education sector in India would be largely removed considerably; yet the prevailing reality in India, on the other hand, speaks other way round for want of enactment of a number of legislations introduced by the Ministry of Human Resource Developments in Parliament that aim at overhauling and reforming the higher education system to ensure autonomy, transparency, accountability and efficiency without the direct intervention of politics or bureaucracy. In addition, many universities in the country, for reasons known to them, overtly seem to be on a spree in affiliating far too many colleges, including sub-standard ones.

From the above, it can be observed that the Indian higher education sector faces enormous challenges. The net outcome has been that the Indian higher education system has tended to witness tremendous pressure as an institutional set up in that the State's seems to be making a retreat from this vital area while the supply of higher education in the country is recording a significant rise owing to the mushrooming of private institutions, both indigenous and foreign. The situation existing in the public sector dominated indigenous higher education system in India is a bold pointer towards the severe crisis, which probably seems to loom large over the country concurrently in the absence of adequate safety-nets. It scarcely needs any overemphasis to assert that such an eventuality obviously has enormous deleterious socio-economic implications for the future economic growth of our economy. At the top of it, the ongoing era of global uncertainties makes the process of locating the most plausible solutions to these challenges somewhat more complicated. We, nonetheless, feel that our planners and policymakers, far from becoming complacent on this count, need to locate the effective workable solutions to meet various eventualities on this count through

appropriate understanding of the prevailing grassroots level realities coupled with prudence- based thoughtful and innovative policymaking.

SECTION-V

Challenges and Strategies:

What obviously follows from our discussion in the foregoing section is that Indian higher education sector faces enormous challenges both in the present and the future. Furthermore, the task of improving it, read against the prevailing reality of global uncertainties on this count, also seems to be an extremely difficult, if not altogether an impossible, proposition. At the same time, in view of the critical importance of this sector, the urgency to do the needful is more intense now than ever before. In view of such an exigency, this section proposes to look at the various measures actually implemented in the past as also the ones required to be implemented to redeem the Indian higher education sector of its various challenges and problems, both present and future. However, before embarking on any strategy formulation in respect of the Indian higher education sector, what necessarily needs to be borne in mind is that several pertinent issues pertaining to this sector assume significance from the viewpoint of prospective growth of the Indian economy in the coming decades. For instance, consequent upon the onset of the intense competition unleashed by the growing process of globalization, educated workforce seems to be becoming an essential pre-requisite for effecting improvements in productivity levels, attainment of cost efficiency and augmenting the competitive strength of the Indian economy appropriately so as to enable it to compete successfully in the emerging world of uncertainties. This becomes imperatively important for the simple reason that the emerging technology-institutional-human interactions are found to resist persistently the frontiers of ordinary human capabilities, most presumably the obvious educational deficiencies of our workforce. It can, therefore, be safely maintained that in spite of the fact that the human capability index of Indian workforce, judged in terms of its educational attainments, seems to be improving steadily over time, yet, as things stand today, the element of human capability continues to be vulnerable in various economic sectors as also in various activities within each sector of our economy as a vast majority of our workers, particularly those hailing from the rural areas still continue to be deprived of higher education in an important way. More precisely, the fact of the matter is that the educational deficiencies of our workforce stand thoroughly exposed when one looks at the educational status of our workers in comparison to that of workers of many other developing economies, let alone the developed world. One can argue that in the absence of an appreciable improvement in the educational status of those at the lower rung of the socio-economic ladder of the prevailing hierarchy in India, more particularly in the rural areas where enormous inequalities continue to exist in respect of the most productive resource, namely land, it is not possible to translate the dream of inclusive growth into reality. The disheartening pattern of attendance of educational institutions or extremely low per capita expenditure on higher education by low-income households as reported in various studies boldly points towards their helplessness and hopelessness. The trend in public expenditure on higher education too is also not encouraging either.

It is not impertinent to observe in respect of India's higher education sector in passing that the National Policy on Education, originally promulgated in 1986, was followed subsequently by the

Revised National Policy on Education in 1992. A distinctive feature of both these policies, *amongst others*, was that they sought to focus on the dynamic and highly valuable linkages between education, health, social welfare and employment programmes. Moreover, both these policies attempted to emphasize rather unambiguously on the need to accord a high priority to the qualitative improvement of all types of education (including higher education), particularly in respect of its technical and management components. It is possibly in consonance with such emphases in these two policies that some efforts aiming at improving the quality of higher education have been discernible in India over time. A close examination of both the policy documents clearly reveals that (a) integrated approach to higher education; (b) excellence in higher education; (c) expansion of education in an equitable and cost-effective manner, in the process making university and higher education system financially self-supporting, and (d) making higher education relevant in the context of changing socio-economic scenario, and from this viewpoint the need for redesigning and restructuring of the courses and strengthening of the research facilities in the institutions of higher learning are the various thrust areas that have come to be identified and emphasized unequivocally in the two.⁷¹

Another important point that deserves to be underlined in respect of Indian higher education sector is the growing realization about the need for paying serious attention to all the three components, namely general, technical and management. As observed earlier, in spite of the fact that the number of the universities and institutes of higher education has experienced a manifold rise during the post-independence decades and quite a number of them continue to maintain reasonably high standards of education, the fact, nonetheless, cannot be denied that alongside the rapid expansion in quantitative terms, it is reported to have suffered in terms of quality in an important way. It is frequently observed that since an inadequate provision of budgetary resources by the government is a major problem faced by the universities and other public sector institutions of higher learning, these institutions, therefore, must imperatively need to make concerted efforts at their own to augment and supplement the resources, over and above what they receive from the government. In this context, it is generally pointed out that the fee charged by the universities and other public sector institutions of higher learning is unrealistically low and has not since long witnessed a significant revision upward. Our continuing with such a policy has, it is argued, only tended to starve these institutions of higher learning of the minimum quantum of resources needed to ensure quality education in the country. And moreover, since this policy has served no cause either of the students or that of these academic institutions of higher learning, a slow but sure hike in the fee charged by these institutions of higher learning on continuous basis therefore is essential, maintain those championing periodic fee revision. It is further observed that resources raised through adjustment of fees are required to be further supplemented through assistance from industry, and by constituting funds/trusts like the Bharat Shiksha Kosh⁷², etc. Besides, it has also come to be maintained that while the private universities and other institutions of higher learning need to be boosted, the rigorous efforts, nonetheless, are also required to be made alongside in the direction of monitoring and regulating their functioning. It has been suggested that the existing archaic laws, rules and procedures regarding facilitation of educational institutions must be appropriately changed, modernized and simplified in a manner so that the individuals and organizations with proven sincerity and enthusiasm get prompted for establishing the institutes of higher learning. To put the record straight, the time has now come to put in place a 'carrots and sticks type' monitoring-cum-regulatory mechanism to promote the deserving and punish the guilty and must necessarily include control on fees, teachers' salaries, infra-structural facilities, staff strength etc.. Such a mechanism, we feel, is the answer to various emerging problems and challenges visible on such counts. The educational planners and policymakers are also required at the same time to lay greatest emphasis on devising ways and means to discover the growing number of fraudulent practices as are committed by the unscrupulous

individuals and institutions of higher learning. The appropriate deterrents to this end must encompass the provision of the severest possible punishment for the offenders including the confiscation of their liquid and non-liquid assets in all forms. Needless to overemphasize, such a mechanism must also concomitantly ensure relatively greater free functioning to the genuine and honest individuals and institutions with utmost devotion and unflinching commitment. These considerations must apply with even greater force to the technical and management components of our higher education system. In order to provide broad-based multi-disciplinary education incorporating composite skills and knowledge to meet the challenges posed by the ongoing process of globalization, all the three components (i. e. general, technical and management) of higher education system of the country are required to be managed strategically. In our well-considered viewpoint, only a well-conceived, well-planned, well- drawn and equally well- implementable synchronization among the said three components is the most appropriate answer to effectively cope with the onslaught of negative externalities of the ongoing phase of globalization. Furthermore, in view of the spurt in demand for higher education in more recent times, particularly in information technology and other new and emerging technology areas, suitable courses at the degree level need to be designed and given a boost. The challenges posed by faculty shortage and resource limitations are required to be met through the rationalization and networking tools and techniques. In addition, for increasing the supply of appropriately trained teachers and their availability in ample measure there is imperatively a need for periodic upward revision of the incentive structure for genuinely performing teachers. It is not unimportant to mention that at the present juncture, the growth of teachers is much below the envisioned education targets. The stop- gap arrangement in terms of provision of guest faculty as is currently in vogue in these institutions of higher learning is causing more harm than good. In view of this, appropriately designed programmes are, therefore, required to be worked out for the adequate provision of teachers at levels matching with the likely demand pattern in the future.

We feel that in addition to the above, a combination of the following measures can significantly assist the educational planners and the policymakers of the country in devising appropriate remedial strategies to effectively deal with the various problems that characterize our higher education sector in the emerging scenario of global uncertainties:

In the first instance, there is imperatively an urgent need for reforming the reformer. In this context, what we wish to affirm and reaffirm unreservedly and unambiguously is that what is needed in respect of the apex institutions involved in regulating and monitoring the higher education sector in the country is their radical restructuring to make them more broad-based, fairly representative, transparent, accountable and responsive to the changing times and not merely the cosmetic changes as are being attempted presently in the form of fine-tuning here and there. *Second*, addressing with the credibility challenge requires the pooling of collective wisdom and experience. Serious efforts are required to be made to improve the credibility of our higher education system by making it more respectful and inclusive in the eye of the various stakeholders. This can be accomplished by enabling the higher education sector to earn the stakeholders' trust and respect through the setting up and adherence to high professional standards. In view of this therefore, the planners and policymakers are required to learn from the past mistakes and address the important weaknesses appropriately through well-devised and equally well-implementable mechanisms aiming aimed at improving the credibility of the Indian higher education sector. To be more precise, concerted efforts are required to be made to restore the lost credibility and maintaining its place by resisting changes that diminish the quality of higher education. We firmly hold that the quality of higher education should not be compromised under any circumstances. In our opinion, organization of meaningful conferences, seminars, orientation and refresher courses, knowledge update, self assessment appraisals etc., and

not gathering of the mobs as normally is the case, hold the key in the maintenance of quality of higher education. *Third*, it has been repeatedly alleged that in view of the fact that most of the research work undertaken in Indian universities and other institutions of higher learning is at best repetitive as well as unproductive, the expenditure incurred on this count, by any yardstick, is an enormous waste of resources that economies such as ours can ill-afford. Accordingly, to address such allegations appropriately as also for making the research both meaningful and productive from the viewpoint of the rapidly growing needs of our society, greater emphasis is now required to be laid on the quality of research rather than on its quantity. *Fourth*, in view of the fact that the country has been experiencing rising population pressure persistently over time, the need for making the higher education sector more job-oriented cannot be sidetracked easily. To put the record straight, even though our past experience in respect of vocational education stream has been far from satisfactory in an overall sense owing to its several weaknesses, our growing emphasis in the future, nonetheless, must necessarily be on this segment of education rather than on general education. This, we feel, will help our economy in getting uninterrupted supply of trained workforce. *Fifth*, the expansion of 'higher education in science' needs to be planned carefully owing to its becoming allegedly a costly affair. The educational planners and policymakers of the country must bear in mind that producing science graduates only for clerical jobs which can be handled equally well by commerce and arts graduates whose education involves relatively much less expenditure, tantamounts to colossal wastage of resources that a developing economy like India can ill-afford, given the often talked-about scarcity of these resources. To put it more pithily, the country must design its future manpower policies in consonance with its technical and managerial manpower requirements involving higher education. The technical and management education should also be properly planned in a similar way. Appropriate strategy is required to be devised to ensure that the country continues to maintain its cognitive and technical skills over time. In our viewpoint, there exists tremendous potential for further analytical and empirical work in respect of this particular aspect of Indian higher education sector and the future research programmes would attempt to probe the various challenges on this count more deeply and explore all possible options. Since making this all possible involves heavy cost, the government must appropriately diversify the economic base of the economy in a manner so as to ensure jobs to all the pass-outs in these areas. Furthermore, if a person, on successful completion of one's technical and/or managerial education at the government's expense, emigrates abroad to avail the economically more rewarding employment there, the government must devise an appropriate mechanism for recovering the money expended on his/her education. *And finally*, as is felt in some well-meaning academic quarters that if higher education in India was provided solely by the private institutions, a significant proportion of our highly educated population, particularly its poorer segments, would have remained largely deprived of it. What this suggests is that it would certainly not have been possible for many to enrol and attend the institutions of higher learning in the absence of public sector participation in higher education in the country. It is observed that the attainment of higher education by growing number of persons implies more responsible and responsive persons catering to the needs of our rapidly growing economy. In addition, in view of the fact that business community also requires workers with adequate skills and the ability to learn new skills, the government run/supported institutions assume still far greater significance. Owing to these reasons, what is, therefore, imperatively desired is that along with establishing new institutions of higher learning in the public domain, the government must also simultaneously initiate policy measures as are necessary to make these institutions not only more competitive but also socially more responsive, particularly in tune with the ever-growing needs of the changing times. We strongly subscribe to this viewpoint even after acknowledging the fact that the subsidization of higher education in India is sometimes criticized on the ground that since the institutions of higher learning tend to be mainly joined by the children of the burgeoning middle class, the poor people are made to pay for these

institutions in the form of taxes disproportionately than what is justified by the latter's share of enrolment in them. The allegation that our higher education sector on this count represents somewhat a misallocation of resources can be dealt with effectively by introducing the necessary correctives to this end. In the emerging scenario, the central issue, far from revolving around the quantum or degree of the State intervention in higher education in India, must necessarily revolve around its form and quality. In view of this, the relevant questions to be pondered over are: What can governments do their best in respect of country's higher education in the times to come? What types of policy instruments are required to be introduced by the government to this effect? What we strongly feel is that a blind-folded paradigm shift from policies of planning and control to the policies that operate through markets without taking into account the evolving socio-economic milieu of the country in general and of its various regions in particular may prove to be utterly detrimental or even suicidal for the higher education sector in India in the times to come. Owing to such possible eventualities, it can be safely maintained that co-ordination and the encouragement to new ideas are the areas where the State can play a productive role in assisting the market in respect of higher education. We strongly feel that the changes as they seem to unfold themselves as of now, do not seem to portend well for the country and are bound to have disastrous outcomes for our people if not bridled alongside through adequate safety-nets in the form of effective State participation in this critically most important sector of our economy. Our apprehensions on this count are grounded in the fact that the new rules and actors have tended to proliferate in the field of higher education sector in India in the wake of the introduction of the ongoing process of economic reforms. We do not discount the view held in some academic quarters that economic reforms hold tremendous potential in terms of promising ahead unprecedented opportunities for progress in the higher education sector in the country by way of creating new patterns of higher education in tune with the growing needs and aspirations of a developing economy such as ours. What we, nevertheless, discount is that global uncertainties may overshadow such promised gains which may or may not hold good because we firmly believe that 'a bird in hand today is better than two in the bush that too even tomorrow.' Moreover, it might also compound the enormity of various challenges that our planners and policymakers engaged in the task of higher education planning are likely to face in the times to come. Broadly speaking, the thus far experienced higher education system in India in its post-independence decades, frequently dubbed as the colonial legacy of the British Empire, has, in an overall sense, tended to serve its purpose. The Indian higher education sector, nonetheless, now seems to be losing its erstwhile sheen and is likely to experience tremendous pressure in the emerging globalization-led-scenario on its getting Macdonaldised following the intrusion of new actors in the guise of foreign universities and institutes in a big way in the aftermath of progressive integration of our economy with the rest of the world.

Introducing appropriate necessary correctives in consonance with our own national needs through well-designed and equally well-implementable remedial policy measures is perhaps the most formidable task that our planners and policymakers face in the emerging scenario for the simple reason that it requires a thorough understanding of the mutually reinforcing links between the demand and supply of higher education in the country. For this purpose, people need to be empowered in a manner so that they acquire the capability of ascertaining the transparency or otherwise of our higher education sector, the progress of the various institutions and actors involved in it. Most important of all, there is imperatively a need for introducing a mechanism that stipulates various actions against individuals and institutions involved in violating the established norms pertaining to higher education. What must necessarily needs to be borne in mind is that that improving upon the higher education sector in India requires one basic action i.e. pursuing of an education-oriented approach to development. And this, in our considered opinion, requires a radical shift in our

existing higher education development strategy. In view of this, therefore, the government should make vigorous efforts to create an environment that contributes to the growth of higher education in India. Again, in view of the fact that ours is a developing economy with a sizable chunk of our population suffering from enormous socio-economic deprivation in diverse set of manifestations, it is imperatively required that pro-poor tinge continues to remain an integral component of our higher education policy. The thrust of pro-poor higher education policy must imperatively aim at resource augmentation on the one hand, and designing of appropriate innovative programmes aiming to rope in the socially and economically vulnerable segments of our society, on the other. In addition, while attempting to design any strategy pertaining to the higher education sector for as vast a country as India, region specificity of needs should be adequately taken care of. Great vision and foresight needs to go into the formulation and implementation of measures for developing a framework for institutions of higher learning that fits into a particular region's socio-economic structure and requirements both in the short- and long-term.

To put the record straight, it can be maintained that even though tall claims are often made in respect of the achievements pertaining to the post-independence higher education sector in India, our performance in this regard has, in an overall sense, remained much below our expectations. Owing to this very reason, therefore, the national policy agenda for the future must aim at radical transformation of the prevailing situation in this regard by making concerted efforts towards the evolution and integration of the higher education system with the growing socio-economic, administrative and technological needs of our growing economy. In our well-considered opinion, the formulation and implementation of any lackadaisical approach to this effect is likely to compound the already deteriorating situation on this count. The formulation of a more effective policy must begin with the elementary task of setting clear goals that are adequately ambitious and yet realizable, devising practical measures to meet them, and providing the resources required to implement these measures.⁷³ Finding appropriate and long-lasting solutions to the various emerging problems and challenges indeed is a daunting challenge confronting our planners and policymakers engaged in the most demanding task of education planning in India in the twenty-first century. To be more precise, it can be argued that in view of the fact that the studies uncovering the role of higher education in economic growth unequivocally suggest that it (higher education) has become increasingly important pushing the other factors into the background, massive restructuring of this sector needs to be undertaken so as to attune it to the growing needs of our economy, grappling with global uncertainties of various forms and hues. We feel that a stronger combination of incentives, investments and institutions can transform this into a sustainable reality, particularly at a time when India is aiming to be an important player in the emerging knowledge-based economy.

That there is urgently a need for a thorough radical restructuring of the entire higher education system in India can scarcely be overemphasized. In our well-considered viewpoint, the centre-state relations and Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in higher education; the role of private sector and local communities in managing higher educational institutions; the quality of higher education being imparted both in public and private sector higher educational institutions; the prioritization of general vis-à-vis professional and technical education, on the one hand, and between school and higher education, on the other; the rural-urban, the rich-poor and the gender gaps in access to education are the issues that seem to be critical for effecting significant improvements in the quality of our workforce from the perspective of a futuristic outlook. Concerted efforts put in place in terms of learning from the experience of many other developing economies, roping-in the more and more rural area, growing thrust on female education, region-specific policy, and training/retraining of the existing workforce on continuing basis can, in our opinion, go a long way in making the Indian higher education system sustainable in an era of global uncertainties.

SECTION -VI

Conclusions and Policy Implications

This paper has, *inter alia*, sought to argue that the Indian higher education system, in spite of its having had an appreciable quantitative expansion over the past six decades or so, faces in the emerging global economic set-up enormous challenges such as those of accessibility and affordability, credibility, sustainability, financing so on and so forth. More precisely, juxtaposed against the fact of current and future global uncertainties, an insightful analysis of the various dimensions of the Indian higher education system, as attempted in this paper, suggests that promoting and expanding higher education system to make it equitably accessible to all segments of our society, ensuring that further expansion in quantity does not lead to a compromise in its quality and relevance issues, identification of sustainable financing mechanisms, widening of opportunities so as to create an enabling environment for its utilization for sustainable economic growth, and above all, the devising and implementation of innovative and appropriate remedial strategies seem, *amongst others*, possibly the biggest challenges that our planners and policymakers involved in the task of higher education planning in India currently face or are likely to face quite frequently in the coming decades of the current millennium.

Taking cognizance of the centrality of the Indian higher education sector in shaping India's policies and processes of socio-economic modernization in several possible ways, it can be argued that while the opportunities thrown open by the emerging scenario need to be capitalized optimally; a momentous and an enduring solution in respect of the various emerging problems and challenges confronting the higher education sector in India in the times to come would, nevertheless, require the evolving of a well-conceived, well-planned and equally well-implementable strategy.

An important point that deserves not to be glossed over is that the future growth of the higher education sector in India is likely to originate either exclusively from the private sector or from the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) domain. In other words, the likelihood of a growing demand in the strategically important area of higher education in the future in India thus presents an important opportunity for the active participation of the private sector. What this implies is that there exists a considerable scope for the establishment of higher education institutions in this sector in the country. This, in our opinion, would contribute significantly in effecting a change in the mind-set of the masses. At the same time, this would also require appropriate policy reforms by planners and policymakers engaged in India in the task of planning of this sector, particularly with regard to effective monitoring and regulation of the private sector by the government. Therefore, the moot question to be pondered over at this juncture is: What policy options do there exist for India in respect of higher education in the twenty-first century? In addressing this question, what must not be overlooked is that the policy reforms being presently witnessed in the country in respect of higher education, have created messy conditions. It is apprehended that many promising aspirants of higher education are likely to get squeezed owing to the fact that they can ill-afford the steep fee hike being charged by the private sector institutions of higher learning. The conceiving, devising and implementation of appropriate policy measures envisaging effective monitoring and regulation of the higher education sector particularly in respect of keeping this sector within the reach of the budding aspirants of higher education remains, therefore, a daunting challenge for the planners and the policymakers tasked with higher education planning of the country. It scarcely needs an overemphasis to maintain that as in the past, the public sector intervention in respect of higher education must imperatively continue to play its central role. It would also require significant

additions to the public sector allocations to higher education which the government seems to be squeezing.⁷⁴ There is clear evidence that public sector investments in higher education have, in the past, remained largely biased in favour of the urban areas. This, in turn, has compounded the natural advantage enjoyed by the urban areas over their rural counterparts. This pattern needs to be reversed by opening more and more institutions of higher learning in the rural areas of the country over the next couple of decades of the twenty-first century. It would, in our well - considered opinion, work significantly to alleviate the most often talked about critical gap in terms of availability of opportunity of higher education between the rural and urban areas of the country. The persisting spatial and group imbalances in respect of Indian higher education system are also needed to be attended to by designing an appropriate strategy to this effect.

It scarcely needs to be overemphasized that addressing of the various emerging challenges of higher education in India in the twenty-first century will require a well-synchronized judicious-mix of policies that must encourage the more efficient use of the available educational resources. Objectively speaking, our success on this count in the future will be conditioned to a considerable extent by the quality of policy-making in respect of our higher education sector. Unfortunately though, as of now it seems to be in short supply. It is earnestly hoped that the solution suggested in this paper will enable the concerned planners and the policymakers in working out a viable strategy in consonance with the growing socio-economic needs of our economy, more particularly in a scenario characterized by the dearth of quality policy-making amid global uncertainties.

In the meanwhile, it is important to observe that in the current context of global change and uncertainties, India has to upgrade its resilience in terms of improving both its competitiveness and capability to innovate. Localized creativity, small high- tech entrepreneurship, related innovation platforms, social capital embedded in dynamically open territorial communities and continuously upgrading context- specific policy platforms are all means to face the new challenges and to promote increased absorptive capacity within local and national territories. These are much needed in the current globalized economy as a means to sustainability and creating new opportunities for its burgeoning population. What we wish to reaffirm in more precise terms is that reorientation, restructuring and revamping of the Indian higher education system on continuous basis is the most enduring solution of the various challenges as may appear from time to time in the times to come. Viewed from this perspective, the various complexities that now seem to exist in respect of the future of higher education sector in India, need to be examined thoroughly to locate the most plausible, credible and worthwhile and enduring solutions. In more precise terms, appropriate and orderly mechanisms are required to be fashioned in order to both capitalize the opportunities of globalization and cope with the numerous potential challenges and risks coming its way amidst uncertainties. Accomplishing this indeed is the most daunting challenge that our planners and policymakers face in the times to come.

We strongly feel that all types of higher education (general, technical, management, medical including Research and Development generated inventions and innovations) contribute significantly in terms of the growth of general enlightenment and a sense of responsibility towards the young and, as such, transforms growingly a rising proportion of the burgeoning wealth of the nation from investment as physical capital to investment in personal (human)capital. This leads to a largely increased supply of trained abilities, which, in turn, increases the national dividend, and also raises the average income of the whole people.⁷⁵ Viewed from this perspective, the growth of the national dividend depends over time much more on the continued progress of invention through human ingenuity than merely on the augmented stock of physical capital which has also alternatively come

to be known as accumulation of expensive appliances for production. Thanks to education in general and higher education in particular, almost all the innumerable inventions that have given us our command over natural resources throughout the history of mankind have been made by independent workers, receiving themselves only a peanut or even nothing of the fruits of such inventions. From the viewpoint of nation building, the teachers involved in education at all layers must realize that their main duty, in addition to imparting knowledge, is to educate character, develop mental faculties and guide activities of young minds who have to take-over from the present generation and have to be the thoughtful torchbearers for the coming generation(s) in various capacities. In view of this, therefore, all types of education, particularly higher education, are required to be made thorough and for doing so the government needs to contribute generously and even lavishly to this end.⁷⁶ Are the planners and the policymakers involved in the task of education planning in India listening please?

I wish to thank Professor G.K. Chadha, President, South Asian University, New Delhi for motivation. I also wish to express my gratitude to Professor H. S. Shergill for his insightful observations on the theme. The usual disclaimers, however, apply].

Endnotes

1. That globalization is the most hotly debated phenomenon of our times becomes obvious from the fact that each aspect of it has attracted a great deal of controversy. For details, see Jagdish Bhagwati(2004), *"In Defense of Globalization"*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi; also see, Stephen Cullenberg and Prasanta K. Pattanaik eds. (2004), *"Globalization, Culture and the Limits of the Market: Essays in Economics and Philosophy"*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.
2. Since globalization is based upon survival of the fittest, it can spell doom for the disadvantageous and the deprived segments of the society in ways more than one. For details, see M.R. Khurana (2006), "Global Integration of the Indian Economy: Socio-Economic and Cultural Implications", *Panjab University Research Journal (Arts)*, Volume XXXIII, No.1, April, pp.15-51.
3. Several authors point out that the current phase of globalization is distinct from its earlier incarnations in terms of its speed and the extent of the shock transmission. For details, see M.R. Khurana (2010), "Hybridizing Impact of Economic Globalization on Indian Culture", *Panjab University Research Journal (Arts)*, Volume XXXVII, Nos.1&2, April-October, pp.15-56.
4. For instance, the past and ongoing events amply demonstrate that since market failures with uncertain outcomes are imminent under globalization, both upswings and downswings in economic activity are, therefore, presumably unpredictable.
5. For an illuminating discussion on the role of cyclical oscillations and innovations in shaping dynamically the path of development of capitalist economies over the period of time, see Joseph A Schumpeter(1934), *"The Theory of Economic Development"*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge; also see,———(1950), *"Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy"*, Third edition, Harper and Row, New York.
6. All this suggests is that the higher education is an important factor in the introduction of transformative mechanisms that help in the attainment and sustenance of economic development in the long-run.

7. For a careful, detailed and penetrating analysis on the role of education in general and the higher education in particular being the primary driver of economic growth, particularly in the wake of the emergence of human capital-driven growth scenario, see Gary S. Becker(1993), “ *Human Capital : A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis with Special Reference to Education,*” Third edition, Columbia University Press(for NBER), New York.
8. It is now widely believed that higher education is the mainspring of the production, transmission and dissemination of knowledge including inventions and innovations.
9. For an exposition of various forms of innovations, see Joseph A Schumpeter(1934), *op.cit.*
10. This implies that economic growth is an evolving concept whose meaning has been changing over the period of time.
11. The asymmetrical pattern of distribution of gains attendant to higher education has been mainly because due to its being perceived as an item which only the economically well-to-do people could afford.
12. In our well- considered viewpoint, recent developments indicate that with growing proportion of females receiving higher education and getting gainfully absorbed in highly remunerative economic activities in the times to come, the male -centric pattern of distribution of gains is bound to melt in the times to come.
13. What this suggests is that higher education exerts a profound impact on the nature, character and attributes of the process of economic growth and its other correlates.
14. It can be argued that education in general and higher education in particular, in addition to contributing towards making the socio-economic milieu growth conducive, also acts as the source of innovations which, in turn, lead to significant growth of productivity. This indicates that higher education, innovations and productivity growth are importantly linked with each other.
15. Such a view, for instance, has emerged due to the multi-facted importance of human capital formation in the process of socio-economic modernization.
16. Some of the earlier major contributors who had emphasized the role of education of the learning by doing type in the process of economic growth were Sir William Petty, Adam Smith, J. B. Say, William Nassau Senior, F. List, J. H. Von Thunen, W. Roscher, Ernest Engel, Leon Walras, A. G. B. Fisher, etc. Of these, Adam Smith, in particular, while focusing upon the gains resulting from division of labour, could clearly visualize new inventions becoming possible in the process of ‘learning by doing’ type education. As such, he is reported to have made a ground-breaking contribution in respect of the role of education in economic development.
17. It may be noted that Gary S. Becker has, among others, endeavoured to differentiate between general and specific brands of on- the -job training. For details to this effect, see Gary S. Becker (1993), *op.cit.*
18. Some important recent contributions pertaining to the revival of human capital theory are by Robert E. Lucas Jr. and Paul M. Romer. Earlier, the theory of human capital was contributed to richly by several scholars such as Kenneth J. Arrow, Theodore W. Schultz, and Frederick Harbison and

Charles A. Meyers. Almost all these scholars have put forward the thesis that investment in education is undertaken primarily for return and should be regarded as investment in human capital which enhances human capital formation. For details, see Frederick Harbison and Charles A. Meyers (1970), “*Education, Manpower and Economic Growth*”, Indian edition, Oxford and IBH Publishing Co., New Delhi, p.25. For other important outstanding contributions to this literature, see for example Hirofumi Uzawa (1965), “Optimum Technical Change in An Aggregative Model of Economic Growth”, *International Economic Review*, Vol. 6, No. 1, January, pp.18-31; Robert E. Lucas Jr. (1988), “On the Mechanics of Economic Development”, *Journal of Monetary Economics*, Vol. XXII, No. 1, July, pp.3-42; Robert J. Barro (1991), “Economic Growth in a Cross Section of Countries”, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. CVI, No. 2, May, pp. 407- 44; and N. G. Mankiw, P. Romer and D. Weil (1992), “A Contribution to the Empirics of Economic Growth”, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. CVII, No. 2, May, pp. 407-37.

19. The empirical studies conducted during this period in regard to the relationship between productivity and education in agriculture showed that the educated farmers seemed to be reaping higher productivity returns in comparison to their illiterate brethren in a changing modernized environment than in a static traditional one. It has come to be widely recognized that education makes farm people (both males and females) health conscious. It leads to an improvement in the physical working capacity of the individuals. As a result of this, productivity level of the economy gets substantially enhanced.
20. For details, see Alfred W. Stonier and Douglas C. Hague (rep. 1976), “*A Textbook of Economic Theory*”, Fourth edition, The English language Book Society and Longman Group Limited, London, p.646.
21. Alfred W. Stonier and Douglas C. Hague (rep. 1976), *ibid.* p.647.
22. Alfred W. Stonier and Douglas C. Hague (rep. 1976), *ibid.* p.647.
23. Alfred W. Stonier and Douglas C. Hague (rep. 1976), *ibid.* p.647.
24. Alfred W. Stonier and Douglas C. Hague (rep. 1976), *ibid.* pp.647-48.
25. Alfred W. Stonier and Douglas C. Hague (rep. 1976), *ibid.* p.650.
26. The term ‘sustained economic development’ essentially implies its occurrence over a long period of time. It is important to note that several enlightening studies in respect of the contribution of education towards economic development have been undertaken by Theodore W. Schultz, a Nobel Laureate and a staunch adherent to this line of thinking. In our opinion, some such studies by Schultz are: Theodore W. Schultz (1960), “Capital Formation by Education”, *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. LXVIII, No. 6, December, pp. 571-83; —————(1961), “Investment in Human Capital”, *The American Economic Review*, Vol. LI, No. 1, March, pp. 1-17; —————(1961), “Education and Economic Growth,” in N.B. Henry ed. (1961), “*Social Forces Influencing American Education*,” University of Chicago Press, Chicago; —————(1962), “Investment in Human Capital in Poor Countries,” in P. D. Zook ed. (1962), “*Foreign Trade and Human Capital*” Southern Methodist University Press, Dallas; and —————(1980), “*Investing in People – The Economics of Population Quality*”, Hindustan Publishing Corporation (India), Delhi.

27. We are cognizant of the fact that the concept of human capital is very wide in that it encompasses in its fold all types of formally organized education, health facilities, on-the-job and institutional training and retraining, study programmes, adult education, so on and so forth. For necessary details to this effect, see Robert E. Lucas Jr. (1988), *op.cit.*; and also———(2002), “*Lectures on Economic Growth*”, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.
28. For details in this regard, see A. P. Thirlwall (2006, rep. 2007), “*Growth and Development With Special Reference to Developing Economies*”, Eighth edition, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, p.80.
29. A. P. Thirlwall (2006, rep. 2007), *ibid*, p. 80.
30. This observation is attributable to late Prof J. K. Galbraith, a former U. S. Ambassador to India. For details, see J. K. Galbraith (1962), “*Economic Development in Perspective*”, Harvard University Press, Massachusetts, Cambridge.
31. For details in this regard, see World Bank(1986), “ *Financing Education in Developing Countries*”, Washington DC; also see———(1994), “ *Higher Education: Lessons of Experience*”, Washington DC.
32. A. K. Cairncross, among others, seems to have emphasized this point quite forcefully. For more details in this regard, see A. K. Cairncross (1962), “ *Factors in Economic Development*”, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London.
33. O. Stark, C. Helmenstein, and A. Prskawetz(1997), “ A brain gain with a brain drain”, *Economic Letters*, Volume 55, pp. 227-34; and A. Mountford (1997), “Can a brain drain be good for growth in the source economy?” , *Journal of Development Economics*, Vol. 53, No. 2, August, pp.287-303.
34. M. Beine, F. Docquier, and H. Rapoport(2008), “Braindrain and human capital formation in developing countries: winners and losers”, *The Economic Journal*, Volume 118, pp. 631-52; and S. Boucher, O. Stark, and J.E. Taylor (2005), “ A gain with a drain? Evidence from rural Mexico on the new economics of the brain drain”, Working Paper No. 05-005, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics, University of California, Davis.
35. William Johnson(1978), “ A Theory of Job Shopping”, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Volume 92, No. 2, May, pp.261-78; and, Larry H. Long (1973), “Migration Differentials by Education and Occupation: Trends and Variations”, *Demography*, Vol. 10, No. 2, May, p. 254.
36. Among the pioneering studies focusing on the residual aspect is the seminal contribution by Nobel Prize winning economist Robert M. Solow. For details, see Robert M. Solow (1962), “Technical Progress, Capital Formation, and Economic Growth”, *The American Economic Review*, Vol. LII, No. 2, Papers and Proceedings of the Seventy-fourth Annual Meeting, May, pp. 76-86.
37. E. F. Denison (1962a), “ Education, Economic Growth and Gaps in Information”, *Journal of Political Economy*, Supplement, Vol. XXX, No. 5, Part 2, October, p. 127; also see,——— (1962b), “ *The Sources of Economic Growth in the United States and the Alternatives before us*”, Committee for Economic Development, Library of Congress, New York.
38. E. F. Denison (1962a,1962b), *ibid*.

39. G. Psacharopoulos (1991), "*Education for Development*", World Bank, Washington DC ; and—— (1994), "Returns to Investment in Education, A Global Update", *World Development*, Volume 22, No. 9, pp.1325-43.
40. It is not unimportant to mention that several attempts have been made to estimate rate of return in respect of education, particularly higher education. Some such attempts have been visible in the Indian context as well. We are aware of the fact that many past studies overwhelmingly signal towards an inverse relationship between the level of education and rate of return.
41. For instance, the gist of the underlying argument is that the temporal change and improvement in rate of return and improvement of skills are found to be importantly correlated.
42. Jacob Mincer(1974), "*Schooling, Experience, and Earnings*", Columbia University Press, New York
43. This dual role of higher education shows that it is of critical importance in the process of growth.
44. The origin of higher education in India, for example, is traceable to the Vedic and Upanishadic periods. That the universities of Takshashila and Nalanda were the prominent institutions of higher learning worldwide in olden times is a widely documented fact. This apart, what is important for us to note in particular is that the modern Western system of higher education in India started sometimes in the beginning of the 19th century. It was possibly the setting up of Hindu College at Calcutta in 1817 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and David Hare which marked the beginning of Western higher education system in India. The setting up of universities in the presidency towns of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras in 1854 following the Wood's Education Dispatch (in 1854), popularly known as the Magna Charta of Modern education, is considered to be another great milestone in the direction of promoting higher education in India. There now seems to be a broad consensus that regardless of the merits envisioned by the Britishers for giving a fillip to higher education in India on the face of it through such measures, the fact of the matter is that in actual practice, the government of the day was guided primarily by economic motivation in the form of creating a supply of public servants, to stimulate its inhabitants to develop its vast resources and to enlist the general sympathy of natives in favour of the Britishers. Furthermore, regardless of the motivation for the setting of institutions of higher learning, these institutions carved out a niche for themselves and became famous for their academic excellence in diverse areas. Nevertheless, narrowing down the scope of our enquiry in the present paper in view of its limited objective, it is important to note that at the time of independence, there were only 17 universities in the country. Ever since then, it is asserted that higher education in India has experienced a spectacular growth, and has also, over the period of time, helped in the building up of a huge and ever-growing reservoir of economically productive manpower in the country.
45. Ranjana Sidhanta (1978), "Education", in V. B. Singh ed.(1978), "*Economic History of India: 1857-1956*", Allied Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi.
46. Government of India (2009), "*Economic Survey 2008-2009*", Economic Division, Ministry of Finance, p.271.
47. Government of India (2009), *ibid.* , p. 271

48. Thanks to the introduction of the Open and Distance learning mode , lakhs of under-graduate and post-graduate students are enrolled in the country in the institutions of higher learning today in general , technical and management education.
49. Like the USA and China, India also belongs to the genre of countries having a very large higher education system.
50. Government of India (2005), "*Economic Survey 2004-05*", Economic Division, Ministry of Finance, p.234.
51. Government of India (2005), *ibid.*, p.234
52. For further details in this regard, see G. Ram Reddy (1994), "The Financing of Higher Education in India", *Artha Vijnana*, Vol. 36, No.4, December, pp. 307-25.
53. For example, infrastructural crunch, access, equity and relevance, reorientation of programmes in terms of emphasis on values and ethics and quality of higher education together with the assessment of institutions and their accreditation are, *amongst others*, some of the frequently talked-about problems and challenges being faced by the Indian higher education system in spite of its having had a remarkable growth in terms of time.
54. According to an estimate even though as many as 156000 Indian students are enrolled in USA alone, Though the recent years have witnessed a huge Influx of students from neighbouring countries, yet this should not be construed to mean that Indian students are not enrolled in foreign universities. The observatory evidence shows that the number of Indian students enrolling themselves in foreign universities located in countries like the USA, the UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and Singapore is on the rise due to the interplay between progressive immigration policies, multi-cultural environment, good lifestyle and healthy and economically more rewarding employment and earning opportunities, and the trend on this count is expected to rise further in the times to come.
55. T.N. Srinivasan and Suresh D. Tendulkar (2003), "*Reintegrating India with the World Economy*", Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p. 62
56. University Grants Commission (1993), '*UGC Funding of Institutions of Higher Education- Report of Justice Dr. K. Punnayya Committee-1992-93*', University Grants Commission, New Delhi; also see, M. Shatrugna(1994), "Financing Higher Education: Justice Punnayya Committee Report", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Volume XXIX, No. 32, August, pp. 2060-62.
57. AICTE(1994), "*Report of the High Power Committee for Mobilisation of Additional Resources for Technical Education*", Dr. D. Swaminathan Committee Report, All India Council for Technical Education(AICTE), New Delhi.
58. It is important to observe that the student loans as the answer to lack of resources for higher education has generated a lot of debate. Several plausible arguments have been advanced on both the sides. For instance, the protagonists of this viewpoint argue that these loans meet the canon of convenience, constitute an efficient mechanism of mobilization of resources, save on huge public expenditure on higher education, increase access to higher education, reduce regressive distribution

of public resources, prevent wasteful expenditures taken as they are only by the needy, and above all improve internal efficiency in that students with loans are likely to be more diligent and serious about their studies. This apart, a close examination of the concept of student loans as an instrument of resource augmentation for higher education, nevertheless, makes it abundantly clear that it does not recognize the basic character of higher education as also the uncertainty of the relationship between higher education and jobs. The antagonists further maintain that not only the philosophy at the back of these loans is dangerous for the socio-economic fabric of our society, the so called gains as are discerned to be associated with these loans are also by and large elusive. Also, while the assumptions underlying the philosophy of student loans are unrealistic, the provision of these loans has, on empirical grounds, also neither proved to be a feasible solution to the problem of inadequate resources for higher education nor a counteractant to the regressive effects of increases in fees. In view of these problems, these loans, it is apprehended, may indeed arrest the future growth of higher education in the country.

59. For instance, 30 central universities, 8 new Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), 8 new Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), 10 new National Institutes of Technology (NITs), 20 new Indian Institutes of Information Technology (IIITs), 3 new Indian Institutes of Science education and Research (IISERs), 2 new Schools of Planning and Architecture (SPAs), 374 model colleges, and 1000 polytechnics were planned to be set up during the Eleventh Five Year Plan for strengthening the existing higher education structure in the country. For details, see Government of India (2012), *op.cit.*, p. 323.
60. The heavy subsidization of the Indian higher education system is a widely acknowledged fact and, as such, scarcely needs any elaboration.
61. For instance, in 2011-12, Content generation and Connectivity along with the provision for access devices for institutions and learners have been made as the major components of the National Mission in Education through Information and Communication Technology (ICT). What in particular needs to be underlined in this regard is that alongside providing 1 Gbps connectivity to each of the nearly 400 universities or configuring them under the scheme, more than 14,000 colleges across the country have also been provided VPN connectivity at the moment. At the top of it, a number of projects have also been sanctioned for the innovative use of the Information and Communication Technology. At the same time, creation of e-content for 996 courses in Phase II in engineering, sciences, technology, humanities, and management has also been undertaken by IIT Madras. The Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC) has been tasked with creation of e-content for 87 undergraduate subjects. In addition, a proposal by the University Grants Commission (UGC) has also been approved for the creation of e-content for 77 postgraduate subjects. The available evidence shows that more than 2000 e-journals and 55,000 e-books from 297 publishers have been made available online under this programme. The launch of Aakash, the low cost access-cum-computing device on October 5, 2011 has been the other major development that must not be glossed over. Furthermore, a sum of Rs. 47.72 crore has been granted to IIT Rajasthan under the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology scheme for the purpose of acquiring and testing of Aakash devices. For further details, see Government of India (2012), *op. cit.*, p. 324.
62. Government of India (2012), *ibid.*, p. 325.
63. It is observed that as many as about 12-odd bogus universities operating in the country seemed to endanger the future of enrolled students.

64. Government of India (2002), "*Economic Survey 2001-2002*", Economic Division, Ministry of Finance, p.250.
65. In our opinion, accessibility is a loose term which is easy to perceive but difficult to articulate. In plain words, it signifies the ability to reach something. Viewed from this perspective, higher education is a serious matter of accessibility, and serious efforts are required to be made to make it reachable for all people. Also, care should be taken not only to make it within reach of everyone, but also to make sure it is properly usable by everybody. The lack of accessibility is linked closely both to economic and knowledge poverty. India is characterized by extremely low accessibility partly because of lack of awareness on a massive scale and partly due to lack of awareness on the part of those responsible for designing and implementing policies of the needs of the growing economy.
66. In the emerging scenario, while achieving ever-expanding inclusive higher education has been the national motto, physical access to higher education has at best remained limited, particularly for the socially and economically disadvantaged segments of the Indian society. It becomes evidenced from the fact that the net outcome in respect of accessibility to higher education in India has been highly disappointing in that only 12.4 per cent of our eligible youngsters in the age group of 18-23 years are enrolled for higher education. It is suggestive of the fact that of all the disabilities constraining the accessibility to higher education in India, the stranglehold of economic disability is possibly the most powerful. It also suggests that the existing higher education structure in India needs to multiply as many as nearly eight times to rope- in all in this age group.
67. It has come to be argued that quite a number of ongoing developments seem to threaten the very credibility of the Indian higher education system. For instance, the entry of some unscrupulous elements in the profession owing to the politico-bureaucratic patronage is alleged to be an important weakness of the Indian higher education sector that has been discernible alongside its rapid expansion over the post- independence decades.
68. The underlying contention is that with the Indian economy moving onto its higher growth path, its higher education related socio-economic needs are bound to rise appreciably. It is apprehended that if such needs are not appropriately met, the ongoing process of socio-economic modernization might get arrested.
69. The concept of sustainability, ever since its first appearance in Wes Jackson's work on agriculture in the late 1970s and its gaining popularity subsequently has, in more recent times, has come to be served in different hues and flavours due to its use, overuse and even misuse. And this is what makes it ambiguous. Nonetheless, the concept of sustainability, when viewed as an anonym of the term 'collapse', essentially implies the process of creating long- term economic, political and such other arrangements that seek to secure the well-being of the present and future generations.
70. Some such bills and legislations that are awaiting legislations as of now are: (i) Prohibition of Unfair Practices in Technical, Medical Educational Institutions and Universities Bill to empower the Centre to initiate criminal proceedings against private institutes that charge capitation fee or indulge in other unfair practices; (ii) Educational Tribunal Bill to help deal with all disputes between students and institutions, teachers and institutions instead of taking them to civil courts; (iii) National Accreditation Regulatory Authority Bill, 2010, to mandate an accreditation and assessment process for every higher education institution to ensure quality; (iv) National Academic Depository

Bill to create a national-level database of all academic certifications; (v) Amendment to National Council for Teacher Education Act, 1953; and, (vi) Amendment to National Institute of Technology Act, 1997.

71. For necessary details to this effect, see, Government of India (1986), “ *National Policy on Education-1986* ” , May, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi; also see, —————(1992), “ *The National Policy on Education-1992* ”, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi.
72. Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen eds. (1997), “ *Indian Development: Selected Regional Perspectives* ”, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.
73. Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen eds.(1997), *ibid*.
74. As against this, we hold that globalization essentially is a world of unequal opportunities cannot be dismissed so simply. In such a world, ideas and knowledge, and not traditional resources like land, are beginning to emerge as the critical determinants of the pace and pattern of development or the lack of it. For this very reason alone, education cannot be left entirely to the market forces. In view of this, therefore, what is imperatively desired is that Indian planners and policymakers engaged the onerous task of higher education planning for the future need to formulate appropriate policies to tame the challenges and capitalize on the opportunities that globalization has thrown open to us. In any envisaged exercise, what, nevertheless, needs to be ensured is that in the evolving global set up, the Indian higher education sector, far from becoming subservient to the market forces, retains its essential moral and ethical values. The case for state intervention, especially in higher education, can be argued on yet another ground as well. In view of the fact that the waning disciplines, otherwise equally important for the socio-economic transformation of our society, are currently getting the short shrift both in terms of funding and enrolment, there is, therefore, a need for more state funding to support these disciplines. It is not out of context to observe that even in a country like the United States two-third of the total funds to institutions of higher learning come from the state coffers. This, nonetheless, should not be construed to mean that institutions of higher education, particularly universities, must not actively mobilize funds from non-state sources to become self-sufficient. In addition, we also feel the government needs to put in place an effective and efficient regulatory mechanism to provide protection to the students against exploitation by rapidly mushrooming sub-standard educational institutions.
75. Alfred Marshall (1890 rep. 1974), “ *Principles of Economics* ”, Eighth edition, The Macmillan Press Ltd., London, p.567.
76. Alfred Marshall(1890 rep. 1974), *ibid*, p.597.

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The Ancient Mariner: Colonizer or Colonized ?

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Abstract

Coleridge as a construct of the ideological web of the 18th century culture has given birth to The Rime of the Ancient Mariner that is the poet's textual participation in a transatlantic voyage of colonial expansion. There is a subversive voice within the poem which is the debunking of the myth of the national hero which Coleridge shows by the transformed state of mariners back home. The myth was fabricated to encourage voyages to unknown (Oriental) lands. The crucial point here is that this cannot be taken as Coleridge's attack on imperialism or colonial expansion but his concern regarding domestic purity and order. To him it is the fate of the sailors and British families that matters not the natives. This study uses Bhabha's ideas of "hybridity" and "in-betweenness" to show the Mariner's new state after being exposed to the natives and the Pacific. The Mariner's new state as both colonizer and colonized and probable exposure to Oriental diseases are threats to the domestic order and racial purity which cannot be overlooked by a Western poet.

The years between 1744 and 1760 marked the French-English wars the violence of which led to even more competition for transatlantic voyages of expansion and economic growth. Economy as a shaping force was important, and slavery was a main part of the economy of Europe. It was after the defeat of Napoleon that the global trade settled in Britain. One role Romantic poetry played at the time was encouragement of mariners and glorification of colonial expansion. Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1799) was no exception and the question is not what the poem means in itself but what the function is within the web of social relations in which it is embedded. Despite the anti-colonial lectures made under the influence of Burke, Coleridge desired his own pantisocratic colony over the sea which signifies that a Romantic poet like Coleridge was shaped by the dominant ideology of discovery that was in the air. The subversive voice of debunking the myth of the national hero within *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* as a verbal reproduction of external materials does not actually show Coleridge to be against colonial expansion but his anxiety over the fate of the Mariner representative of British sailors and the domestic household representative of the English nation. In the poem there is no reference to what may happen to the natives and how they are treated by sailors. This is because, from a Saidean perspective, Coleridge could not act outside historical forces surrounding him to the extent that Spivak believes "nineteenth-century British literature cannot be read 'without remembering that imperialism ... was a crucial part of the cultural representation of England to the English'" (Knellwolf et al., 2007). Coleridge might have not been thinking of British sons when he produced, in *Table Talk*, the following words: "colonization is not only a manifest expedient—but an imperative duty on Great Britain. God seems to hold out his finger to us over the sea" (Coleridge 1990). The threat he strongly felt with such writers of the time as Mary Shelley for domestic order and affection made him create the dual-character Mariner who kills the slave-like Albatross "that bring the fog and mist" (l. 102) to save the crew. What is noteworthy is the Mariner's

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exposure to the colonial world of the Pacific and the colonial subjects that makes him, Kurtz-like, a slave of both imperial and natural forces surrounding him. The Mariner becomes a figure resembling both the colonizer and the colonized existing in Bhabha's "hybrid" or "in-between" condition. No wonder the chain-like Albatross "above my neck was hung" (l. 141). Césaire believes "colonialism not only exploits but dehumanizes and objectifies the colonized subject, as it degrades the colonizer himself ... colonization = thingification" (Césaire 1950). Coleridge's *The Rime* is a subversive voice that survived the powerful cultural forces that might have silenced its message of the fate of British sailors returning home from the unknown. It is an artwork inseparable from the power struggles of the time that constituted social reality.

Discussion

Britain's power and her Western identity depended on naval superiority, and this did not leave such figures as Southey and Coleridge without anxiety. British sailors' glorious exploration of unknown regions and the ability to use naval superiority to keep other powers off was a dominant theme that is debunked in Coleridge's poem *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The discursively-shaped myth of the national hero identified with Britain's powerful Navy and the civilizing mission, was a powerful justification for imperialism in the domain of Romantic Orientalism. The Mariner's blessing of the Oriental water-snakes in his voyage signifies the Western mission of taking blessings to the East, and is an implied justification of colonialism. Britain's imperial ambitions were put in the myth of the national hero as well as the British Navy that was very powerful in the Mediterranean sea and under the supervision of the famous Lord Nelson who made a striking success in defeating French imperialism at sea. Many poems of the time were also interventions in the discursive practices of the time. Britain's Navy was also representative of British power and manliness in front of an Orient that was constructed as womanly and passive yet threatening. Circulation of such preoccupations and British power was a need, for there was fear of foreign attacks from either the Orient or Napoleon. *The Rime* is a poem in which the perfect, idealized, romanticized and heroic image or myth of the heroic seaman is shattered in words. A context-oriented reading of the text yields insights into the situation of sailors back from sea voyages implied within the poem. Coleridge debunks the myth that British sailors remain national heroes forever, for the old lie was circulated through different media and contemporary poems to boost voyages into the unknown and exotic nations that might impose threats to England as a different nation. Coleridge's poem is a text in the socio-political context of interests and contradictions that shows the Mariner's changed state best understood with Bhabha's ideas.

Homi Bhabha who was influenced by the Bakhtinian dialogic of mutuality of relationship, Hegel's view concerning truth as a product of certain ideologies in time, and Derrida's notion of difference introduces the notion of "hybridity" that expresses an interstitial state of "in-betweenness" as in a person who stands, ambivalently, between two cultures. He sees opposing spheres of life "linked through an 'in-between' temporality" (Bhabha 1994). Bhabha's notion of "hybridity" is a challenge to supposedly fixed binary oppositions. English colonists under the scientific spirit of the age concerning the superiority of the white race were anxious over racial mixture as a violation of the supposedly fixed binary of white / black, and insisted on keeping their Englishness unmixed. Coleridge's the Mariner who is exposed to the natives on the Pacific becomes a hybrid figure that brings fear upon himself and is possessed by dread: "We could not speak, no more than if / We had been choked with soot" (ll. 137-8). The Mariner's transatlantic voyage begins with the killing of the Albatross—colonial act of killing natives—that exposes him to the colonial world and turns him into an unwilling victim of the slave trade. He becomes like a slave exposed to first moral and later on

physical corruption. The intersection of the domestic realm (West) with the colonial world (East) means that the Mariner is guilty of breaking the discourse of difference between self and other, and is placed unstably somewhere in between. Said's words are interesting that "the traveler crosses over, traverses territory and abandons fixed positions all the time" (Ashcroft et al., 1999). Coleridge could not be indifferent to the violation of ideologically-made representations or binaries, for both a poet and a poem as products of culture have a deep investment in the political character of the society. However, Coleridge's resistant voice shows itself in the Mariner's dual character as both colonizer and colonized.

The role of culture in furthering the development of a national identity is crucial. Bhabha differentiates between "cultural diversity" and "cultural difference." The former, he believes, is "an epistemological object—culture as an object of empirical knowledge" while the latter "marks the establishment of new forms of meaning, and strategies of identification." Bhabha believes that

the identity of cultural difference cannot ... exist autonomously in relation to an object or a practice 'in-itself,' for the identification of the subject of cultural discourse is dialogical or transferential in the style of psychoanalysis. It is constituted through the locus of the Other which suggests both that the object of identification is ambivalent, and, more significantly, that the agency of identification is never pure or holistic but always constituted in a process of substitution, displacement or projection. (Bhabha 2000)

Accordingly, the Mariner's colonial transgression is not merely a triumphant act of imperial discovery but a diseased exposure that affects both the Mariner / crew and later the domestic order of British families. This is due to the fact that the Mariner has violated "cultural difference" by contacting them. The Mariner is won by the white woman on the skeleton ship. He meets his Other which according to Bhabha is "never outside or beyond us; it emerges forcefully, within cultural discourse" (Ibid.). The acute observation of Life-in-Death shows how much the Mariner has identified himself with her. The Mariner becomes like the leprosy woman who is a vampiric exotic other, and becomes a Vampire by sucking his own blood: "I bit my arm and suck'd the blood" (l. 152). The Mariner's drastic change at the end can be viewed as Coleridge's attempt to show the result of a great sin: mixing races or cultural and racial miscegenation as a threat to the Western identity and purity. The Mariner has violated "cultural difference," and as a violator of the ideology of racial difference that acts to maintain control over the colonized Other, has caused cultural mixture and contamination in the very act of negotiation of identity. The reason both the Wedding-guest and the Pilot's boy are afraid of the Mariner is the probable colonial disease of racial mixture (impurity) that causes the insanity the boy experiences:

I took the oars: the Pilot's boy,
Who doth crazy go,
Laugh'd loud and long, and all the while
His eyes went to and fro,
"Ha! Ha" quoth he—"full plain I see,
The devil knows how to row" (ll. 597-602)

Back home, sailors were no longer viewed as British imperial naval heroes but wanderers and threats to domestic affection. The mariners would experience psychic ambivalence, hybrid

identities and instability due to removal of boundaries and violation of the culturally-constructed notion of difference. Many of the sailors were viewed as carriers of tropical diseases. The binary opposition of colonizer / colonized is deconstructed not giving birth to a new one but making the binary “hybrid” meaning that the Mariner is neither self nor other in a fixed binary but a wanderer in between which shows how complex the strategies of cultural identification are.

According to Wisker (2007) “in the times of the British Empire hybrid was used as a stigma related to Colonial ideas about racial purity and a horror of miscegenation.” It is Bhabha’s belief that since every cultural statement is “hybrid,” there is no clear opposition but a “historical and discursive difference.” Foucault shares the same idea as well: “there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations” (Foucault 1978). There is no opposition of colonizer and colonized, but “a space of translation: a place of hybridity” is opened that shapes a new object or a new identity (Bhabha 1994). The formation of a culturally new subject that binds Mariner the colonizer and Mariner the colonized shows the change in both the colonizer and the colonized. The idea chimes with Spivak’s belief in “the colonized subaltern subject” that is “irretrievably heterogeneous” (Spivak 1999) meaning that she does not believe in the existence of a fixed opposition between colonizer and colonized or self and other. Bhabha states that cultures “are never unitary in themselves, nor simply dualistic in the relation of Self to Other” (Bhabha 1994). By killing the Albatross the Mariner exerts his influence upon the natives as the natives write back and influence him and the dying crew in a way that he becomes his own Other and a threat to other sailors.

According to Bhabha, European theory uses the metaphor of otherness to “contain the effects of difference” and “the Other text is forever the exegetical horizon of difference, never the active agent of articulation” (Ibid.) which implies that discourse determines the way to perceive the world. Having violated the imperialist ideology of self and other and the discourse of difference that guarantees Western superiority, the Mariner is exposed to cultural transformation and uncertainty. The interaction between the Mariner (colonizer) and the natives (colonized) in *The Rime* results in the mixture of opposites: the fixedness of hegemonic discourses are put to question and culturally-constructed norms are threatened. The Mariner behaves like the stereotyped Orientals: hanging the Albatross (consumption of the Orient) around his neck shows his cannibalistic change. He is dehumanized, lacks speech, is ghostly, passes like night and finds strange powers (blessing the watersnakes unaware or sucking his blood) remindful of the exoticism of the East. The very act of shooting causes anxiety, tension and uncertainty in the mariners who were not sure if “’Twas right ... such birds to slay” (l. 101) or if it was “a hellish thing” (l. 91). The Mariner is described as a slave: he is ghost-like, less fully human, alone, entrapped, having lost freedom, ghostly, shadowy and an Abel shaped by mysterious forces inadvertently turning him into a Cain. The Mariner breaks “the veils of convention and custom with which mankind normally defends itself from the unbearable supernatural,” and therefore brings upon himself “the curse of Cain” (Natarajan 2007). The curse is shown by the poet to be the very disease that threatens the mariners and their families afterwards. Coleridge, discursively, shows the Orient of *The Rime* to be a source of disease and infection as well as being home to moral corruption. This justifies the West’s presence in the East for offering Western civilization to Eastern primitivism in the negative sense of the term. After returning home, there is the possibility that the Mariner might have been exposed to demonic possession and, accordingly, be a bringer of diseases. Everything is diseased: the bloody sun is diseased; body of the ship is warped; the hermit is “a figure for decay” (Lee 1998) praying at a “rotted old oak stump” (l. 522) which makes the Mariner’s words “And now, all in my own countree, / I stood on the firm land!” (ll. 570-1) ironic. The Hermit of the poem is identified, as an outcast, with the Mariner, for he “lives in that wood” and “loves to talk with mariners / That come from a far countree” (ll. 514; 517-18). England “relied heavily

on people associated with the seafaring industry, these individuals were seen as diseased, disturbing and abject because of their inevitable contact with foreign cultures” (Ibid.). Lee sees the Mariner as a “yellow fever victim” or “potentially unclean victim ... of seafaring disease” (Ibid.). The crossing of the ocean and negotiation of identities has caused the Mariner to contract the disease of unstable identity.

The Mariner and the crew become diseased which results in the decomposition of the ship. Imperialist ideologies of self and other shape the Western frame of thought and the West’s own identity. Writing about the Orient shows Coleridge’s textual Orientalism and obsessed mind with the need to represent the Orient as Other, threatening and different in order to confirm the Western identity. To Coleridge who would see the Orientals as the enemies of domestic happiness and Christianity, the universal bond was of paramount importance. He believed in the “State” as a “moral unit, an organic whole” and that “the individual’s place in the State is ultimately determined by his value to the State” (Brinton 1962). It is important to note that after the interaction of whatsoever kind between the mariners and the natives the ship (of the state) is shattered. The crew is corrupt and voiceless and finally die as the result of their colonial transgression: “No voice did they impart— / No voice; but O! the silence: sank, / Like music on my heart” (ll. 524-26). Accordingly, sailors become identified with Orientals—the Mariner’s stereotyped passivity afterwards and his ghost-like appearance are noteworthy—and the colonizers shift identity to the colonized becoming “culturally abject” (Lee 1998). The Mariner who leaves his family to pursue his glorious quest into the unknown is a threat, when home, to familial love and the Wedding-guest who fears the Mariner’s colonial disease of racial impurity. By narrating his tale, the seemingly identityless Mariner seeks fellow feeling and desires inspiration of pity and sympathy. From an Orientalist point of view the Mariner is so strange, abnormal and mysterious that the Wedding-guest—representative of stability, humanity, order and normalcy—is unwilling to be in contact with him. The Wedding-guest is not at ease with the Mariner and “I fear thee, ancient Mariner” (l. 345). At the end he is enlightened, “sadder and a wise man,” (l. 624) for he learns the endless tale of exploring the unknown when confronting the Mariner as a new political object. The Mariner’s poetry—narration—seems the only means of redemption that helps the very colonization to continue.

The Mariner finds surprisingly great power of speech and narration that signifies the unremitting power of Orientalism. Orientalism continues while the Mariner is left behind giving his place to the Wedding-guest as probably another seaman. The only way for the Mariner to relieve his suffering is narration and dissemination of the discourse of discovery: “With a woful agony, / Which forced me to begin my tale; / And then it left me free” (ll. 579-81). The Mariner with “skinny hand” (l. 225) is a “grey-beard loon” (l. 11) with “glittering eyes” (l. 228) that remind one of the glittering gems expected to be found in the Orient. He is like night associated with African slaves, and with strange power of speech which can also signify one kind of deviation from the normal ability of speaking which is an indirect identification with the Other Orientals. The wandering Mariner, exposed to a variety of pressures, seems to have lost psychological balance, and the only way to stay alive is to contribute to the life of Orientalism i.e., narration. As long as he has the power to narrate and keep the Western community entertained by Oriental tales and keep the motif of quest fresh and be of help to the on-going process of imperialism, he will have listeners and a place in the society. Hemingway believed that in case any story was prolonged, it would culminate in death while the Mariner, like Scheherazade the story teller, finds the chance to live by narrating the tale of the Saidean ever present protagonist that is Orientalism. As a Westerner, the Mariner has the power to narrate, describe, make knowledge about and create the Orient in the knowledge / power context. He creates the Orient(s) in his tale, takes aesthetic part in the project of discovery, and contributes to the circulation of man-made realities.

Guilty of cultural mixture and contamination, the Mariner has violated the ideology of racial and cultural difference. He has violated the discursively constructed binary opposition of Western superiority and Oriental inferiority, and has finally become a threatening figure wearing a frightening complexion that lets not the Wedding-guest move. The Mariner holds, Scheherazade-like, the Wedding-guest who has no way but to remain silent as a listener. It is narrative creativity that holds the Wedding-guest, and shapes his future contribution to Orientalism. Coleridge's imagination reconciles Mariner the Orientalist or shooter of the Albatross with Mariner the Oriental, outcast and diseased who had felt ambivalently "alone, alone, all, all alone, / Alone on a wide wide sea!" (ll. 232-3). The term "ambivalence" introduced by Bhabha means "the complex mixture of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized" (Bhabha 1994). The Mariner who is "like night" finds his "power of speech" as the only means of survival (ll. 586-7) "and till my ghastly tale is told, / This heart within me burns" (ll. 584-5). This implies that Mariner the colonized has become the projection or shadow of Mariner the colonizer, and it is the act of narrating the tale of exploration that can soothe the Mariner and keep him alive. The very act of narration keeps the fire of discovery on, and gives birth to new reports of reality more real than the reality of the Orient. It is Said's belief that each time a statement is "repeated," the "author of the statement gains a little more authority in having declared it" (Said 1978). This political act of recitation (representation and construction) is the only way of survival to the Mariner.

Two related figures are worth being referred to here. First, there is the Hermit which other than being reminiscent of the Mariner is a means that helps the Mariner move away from the interstitial state he is in. This implies that it is through the Hermit—a purifying figure—that the Mariner can to some extent leave the "in-between" state for the state of the colonizer in the binary opposition of colonizer / colonized to narrate the story of colonialism. The other related figure is the white leprosy woman. Coleridge was fascinated by whiteness. The white woman (Life-IN-Death) who is associated with leprosy appears on the skeleton ship: "Is Death that woman's mate? / Her lips were red, her looks were free, / Her locks were yellow as gold: / Her skin was as white as leprosy, / The Night-mare Life-IN-Death was she, / Who thicks man's blood with cold" (ll. 189-194). Coleridge was not unaware of tropical diseases such as leprosy or syphilis, and Boehmer associates the "Other" with "moral pollution, nightmare, and syphilis" (Boehmer 1995). The white woman on the exotic, soul-catching South Pacific putting a lot of make-up on her face as an Oriental temptress or Circe, can be associated with the feminine and seductive qualities of the Orient. Coleridge knew the image of white women as carriers of diseases and means of moral corruption, for to Coleridge sensuality meant corruption. One striking example is line 144 of his conversation poem "Fears in Solitude" (1798) where revolutionaries are described as "too sensual to be free." The idea, Brice believes, comes from Cudworth's *A Sermon Preached Before the House of Commons* (1647) where the "Grossness of our apprehensions in Spirituall things" is caused by our "grosse and sensual affections" (Brice 2007). In the Hegelian sense the confrontation between life and death or self and other is shown in the projected Life-IN-Death that wins the Mariner and causes his degeneration. The red lips can remind the Mariner of the blood of the slaves and the fruit that was the sugar on British tables, and her golden hair can be a reminder of the luxury, charm, exoticism and beauty of the Orient. It is interesting that McClintock refers to Fanon's idea of the "female body" representing "colonized lands" (McClintock 1995). As a representative of colonial lands to be conquered and Oriental attributes, she lacks speech—she whistles three times—is abject, frightening and perhaps an opposing figure to the Western bride. Being exposed to the demon-like woman who is an exotic other, the (primitive) Mariner cannibalizes himself by "suck[ing] his own blood" (l. 152) at the sight of the spectre-bark. The Mariner becomes colonized and the victim of the tale of exile and wandering. The corruption caused by the white (Eastern) woman must be partially purged by the (Western) Hermit so that the

Mariner may be able to find a place home. The Albatross as a victim of colonial experience is replaced by the Mariner who becomes a victim to be victimized by other imperialists, and the narration of colonialism goes on. This was precisely what happened in the French Revolution: each group of murderers became murdered by another. In *The Rime* as a colonialist piece of writing we see Coleridge's emphasis laid on the transference of the colonized's psyche to the Mariner and not, to use Abdul R. Jan Mohamed's words, "negative aspects of the colonizer's psyche ... transferred to the homogenized native subject in binary oppositions of self and other, white and black, civilization and savagery, good and evil, superiority and inferiority, intelligence and emotion, rationality and sensuality" (Kitson 2000). This is another implication of Coleridge's Orientalism and bias concerning the Orient's danger and threat.

The Mariner's discomfort as a colonizer is projected onto the Albatross, and he himself becomes an Other that acts emotionally, is devilish, and feels inferior to his countrymen. Being exposed to the culture of the colonized makes the Mariner a mimic man and a menace to himself and the Wedding-guest. He becomes a Romantic poet like Coleridge cut off from the society of men floating in the sea of uncertainty (after disillusionment with the French Revolution). Coleridge suffered a lot from the aftermath of the Revolution where he had planted seeds of hope, love, liberty and fraternity. The event, instead, gave birth to bloodshed and fratricide. The circumstances push every mariner from an idealized British naval officer to a hero-villain as Coleridge the poet of pure imagination and subject of the complex web of 18th century Orientalist discourses desired to show the disastrous influences of Oriental exposure.

Conclusion

As meaning is generated by context, western poems on the Orient confirm the Western need to stabilize itself and make certain binary oppositions as civilized / savage or Western Self / Eastern Other which, according to Boehmer, are "built on the thought of ... Hegel and Sartre" and it "signifies that which is unfamiliar and extraneous to a dominant subjectivity" or "the opposite or negative against which an authority is defined" (Boehmer 1995). A literary text that is abounding with binary oppositions as such is a kind of Romantic discourse situated within the web of cultural discourses that identify nationality with superiority. The discourse of Orientalism was for the benefit of Europe, and national distinctiveness was a significant aspect of it, for culture, nation, race and religion were culturally naturalized and synonymously used. Coleridge was under the influence of such cultural discourses, and would mind domestic peace and affection as well as colonial interest that is shown in his poem of a journey to the unknown. Coleridge's textual debunking of the myth of the national hero cannot be read as an attack on maritime exploration but a concern regarding domestic purity and order that signifies the poet's perpetuating the prejudice of Western superiority and Oriental threat.

The Mariner is constructed as a colonial subject in Coleridge's poem where the poet does not insist on beautifying colonialism. *The Rime* as a literary piece and a discursive product is the Western Coleridge's textual participation in the West's colonial interests. Despite the questioning of some dominant ideologies, and despite no explicit offering of humiliating views towards natives, Coleridge's poem reproduces the very power structures that shape the poem. The reason that Coleridge's *The Rime* is open to a variety of readings is the reconciliation of Oriental inspirations and the marriage of confirming and resisting ideas as well as discursively constructed binary oppositions in his myth-making imagination that has the power of creation if enkindled by surrounding circumstances. In this narrative of a voyage to an unknown land, different forms of power such as slave trade, colonialism, Orientalism, and imperialism interplay, and opposing inspirations such as beauty and sublime; luxury and horror—best subjects and the magic of Romantic poetry—are reconciled in the poet's imagination. Coleridge refers to the structural foundation of *The Rime*: "My system ... is the only attempt I know ... to reduce all knowledge into harmony I have endeavoured to unite the insulated fragments of truth, and therewith to frame a perfect mirror" (Natarajan 2007) which implies that although Coleridge produces such a resisting voice as the national hero within his poem, as a product of the cultural web of the 18th century he gives birth to a poem that holds

discursive “fragments of truth” and is in “harmony” with the ideologies of Western superior difference and Eastern threat upon domestic affection. The Mariner’s power over language allows him shape both the Wedding-guest’s frame of thought and create a mirror to reflect any desired Western reality. However, one should not forget that one possibility of using language is “that people use language generally to conceal rather than to communicate reality” (Edwards 2004). Hayden White’s words are also insightful that “the language in which history is written cannot be dismissed as window dressing ... it is neither transparent nor neutral, nor does it disappear to allow the pure truth of history to emerge” (Leitch 2001). By juxtaposing different discourses and reconciling Oriental inspirations in his unifying imagination, Coleridge produces a text that serves the dominant ideologies of his time. *The Rime* must be read as “subject to the discourses and ideologies of a particular time and place” (Day 1996) and the political unconscious of the text will reveal much about the poet’s Orientalist sentiments. This signifies that historical events are value-neutral unless read contextually.

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Cultural Politics of Caste, Class, Religion, and Gender: Reading Marginality in *Kiran Nagarkar's Novel *Seven Sixes are Forty-Three*

Rajesh Kumar Jaiswal**

Cultures are not just creative, they are also
'Contested terrains', sites of struggle.
Stuart Hall, Encoding/Decoding (1981: 55)

Abstract

*Culture is a highly capacious concept. It plays a very prominent role in constituting individual's sense of self- socially and spiritually. Cultural categories - such as caste, class, race, religion, language, nation and gender etc. -have a powerful role in shaping and construction of human subjectivities¹ and identities². Contrary to the western materialist and historicist idea of culture, the Indian vision of culture as a holistic way of life that necessitates the performance of values and world-views on the part of humans. It is noticed that the marginalization³ of certain groups or communities is an effect of various cultural discourses embedded in the institutions of caste, class, religion and gender. Thus, the utter fallacy of the dogmatic ideologues of post-modern and Marxist versions of 'culture' who continue to condemn, reductio ad absurdum, the famous Arnoldian notion of culture as a repository of some excellent values, that is, "the best that has been thought and known in the world" (Arnold 1869: 44). The present paper is a study of Kiran Nagarkar's seminal novel *Seven Sixes Are Forth-Three* in the context of the above theoretical formulations. Here, it is shown that though the marginalized subjectivities of the central and the supporting characters of the text have been deeply affected and even incapacitated by the politics of their cultures, forging hierarchy, oppression and exclusion, there are open interpretive spaces woven into the textual matrix that resist the historically or politically determined reading of fictional characters and situations.*

Reading the novel

Translated in English, the text, *Seven Sixes Are Forty-Three* is the author's first novel, originally published in Marathi as *Saat Sakam Trechalis* in 1974. The novel set in post independent Maharashtra, revolves around the protagonist Kushank Purandre, an unpublished author, living in a Mumbai chawl, who enjoys the goodwill and a host of friends, relatives and lovers. In the novel, Kushank is presented not only as a victim of the social structures and circumstances but also as a witness to the plight, struggle and desperation of a host of characters as daughters, wives, workers, untouchables, forced migrants and victims of police atrocities. In the absence of a fully coherent and linear narrative – ruptured by flashbacks and the juxta positions of scenes – readers of the text are

* Kiran Nagarkar is a Mumbai based novelist, playwright, actor and film critic. He writes in English as well Marathi. His novel *Cuckold* earned him Sahitya Akademy Award in 2001.

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forced to see Kushank as a unifying factor. In writing this novel, Kiran Nagarkar has drawn upon the insights of the Marathi literature, which reflects a strong social concern for the oppressed and the marginalized.

Marathi literature, whether drama, fiction or poetry, has expressed concern for the condition of people, their sufferings and poverty. The hopelessness of shanty-dwellers, the oppression of landless labourers, the position of women, the subjugation of untouchables, have all found a place in recent social realist writing. (Masselos 1981: foreword)

Kiran Nagarkar has written 'history from below' in this novel. His central concerns in the text are the lives, experiences, beliefs, attitudes and practices of the people who are victims of illness, starvation, death and utter hopelessness. Trapped in the extreme life-circumstances, characters in the novel undergo the experience of being broken down to the nothing. There is hardly any hope of redemption for them. It is shown that neither religion nor socio-political ideologies have answers to their problems of "illness, starvation, death, hopelessness" (Masselos 1981: foreword). Despite a gloomy presentation of reality in the novel, Nagarkar's overriding concern is for the people of the Marathi society and their crushing realities. It is often said that a creative writer has a social conscience. He/She is duty bound to his society. Kiran Nagarkar as a cultural worker, has accentuated the plight and sufferings of the downtrodden and the underprivileged through this text. Nagarkar as a writer of the people and for the people, has assailed the constituted wrongs perpetrated through the identity categories of caste, gender, religion, class, language and ethnicity etc. Advocating his plea for the poor in the novel, he descends deep into the lowest strata of his society and lampoons the rich, the affluent and the powerful.

Through this literary cultural exploration, Nagarkar has not simply given a powerful representation to those who are the chief victims of structural violence, but also a voice to ones who succumb to their wretched circumstances and whose sufferings, more often than not go unnoticed. Author's concern and commitment is towards those deprived sections of his society and people, who are obliged to die in the silence of history. The text is a searing critique of the society, which generates, sustains and promotes the hierarchical and discriminatory cultural values and ideologies through the institutions of gender, caste, class, religion, language etc. and transform thereby a major chunk of people as the underprivileged and marginalized. The novel has a very moving and disturbing effect on its readers as it offers a vast panorama of poverty, alienation, desperation, injustice, violence and wretchedness of cross-sections of people and their distressing social surroundings.

Gender Violence

Gender inequality, discrimination, subjugation, oppression and violence against women are all pervasive in any existing human society, especially in the groups and communities belonging to the lower strata of a society. Autocratic and arbitrary operation of patriarchal and masculine ideologies are the key markers of the power imbalance in a given social setup. Multiple cultural, economic and educational disabilities which women have to face in a male dominated society, prevents them from leading a meaningful and dignified life. Sexual domination is the most pervasive cultural ideology and 'sexual politics in a process whereby a ruling sex seeks to maintain and extend its power over the subordinate sex'. (Moi 2001: 26). The Second Sex (1949), a landmark feminist text published by a leading French philosopher and theorist, Simone de Beavoir, highlights the cultural identification of women as the 'other', whereas man is the dominating 'subject', who is considered to represent

human beings in general. Another French feminist theorist and linguist, Julia Kristeva, commenting on the subordinate and marginalized position of women, writes: 'woman as such does not exist' (Kristeva 1977: 16). This statement may be taken to signify the view that woman cannot be represented outside the patriarchal symbolic cultural order. Moreover, 'a woman cannot be: she can only exist negatively' and she as a patriarchal construct can only be understood relationally and positionally. As a consequence, women are rendered as the marginal, since, she owes to the patriarchal, linguistic – cultural order for her identity and existence.

The above given account should make it clear that the social structures, inherently though not essentially, are working to inferiorize and marginalize women and to make women's conditions vulnerable to violence. Conventional, stereotypical gender roles create situations of inequality for women. It is often noticed that women are physically assaulted and subjected to mental cruelties in their own homes. Men resort to "violence as a means to reinforce their already existing social dominance". (Adelman 2005: 193). It is further argued that wife 'battering is a patterned process consisting of coercive and controlling behaviours including but not limited to those related to the body (such as isolation, sexual violence, physical violence)' but also to 'the mind (such as emotional abuse, intimidation and threats)' (Adelman 2005: 194). The performance of hyper masculinity - encompassing 'the values of strength, power, stoicism, action, control, independence, self-sufficiency, male-camaraderie, mateship and work, amongst others' (Barker 2010: 302) - on the part of men leads to a situation wherein women and their existence and experience are perceived as peripheral and insignificant.

Kiran Nagarkar's novel holds a very special significance for the woman-concerns, as it foregrounds the oppressiveness of patriarchy and precarious existence of women. Much of the unsettling and painful impact of the novel is related to the plight of the women characters. Almost all the women are subjected to violence and ill-treatment in the text. Herein even the institutions of family and marriage work to privilege men and disadvantage women. They empower men to control their female counterparts and even entitle them (husband, father and son) to batter their wives, daughters and mothers. Nagarkar's text suggests a pressing urgency for a fresh look of structural transformations of gender roles, ideologies, identities and relations, with a view to improve and better women's conditions. The novel opens with a very shocking act of humiliation and violence:

He came home drunk again. Like every other day, Pratibha shut the door quickly after him. Whatever happened, however angry, terrified hopeless she felt, she would always shut the neighbours out of it all. The same of it must be contained within these four walls, always.

She cowered in a corner of the room while he swayed unsteadily in the centre, lurching out and slamming into her whenever he could make contact. At first it had been his mother. A stinging slap across her face. Pratibha had liked that. Then it was Pratibha's turn. He'd hit her whenever he flew into a rage, with whatever came to hand, wherever he could lay his blows. (1)

The above paragraph of the novel describes an arrogant and male-chauvinist husband, Ajit's acts of humiliation and beating of his wife Pratibha, despite her being very homely and submissive. Ajit meets out the similar treatment to her mother also. Both the women remain mute spectators, robbed of their rights and dignity in their own home. Being deeply entrenched into the

historically and socially constructed artificial hierarchy of patriarchy, Ajit considers it is his birth right to treat the women abusively and brutally. And the home wherein the women – wife and mother – have to live, instead of providing safety and security to them, has turned into a confined space of cruelty and abuse. Instead of treating Pratibha as a dignified human being and a citizen with equal human rights, Ajit intoxicated with the attitude of macho – masculinity, regards his wife as a ‘sub-human domestic worker with a body to please him’ (Barker 2010: 442, with partial adaptations). Pratibha is treated no more than as an object or a property by her husband:

Mounting her pulpy body after the thrashing would really thrill him. Spasm on spasm of dripping satisfaction. She, limply reluctant and tired, and he, worn out with all that effort. He felt like a king. Like the Lord of the whole world (1)

Being fed up with the violent treatment meted out to her by Ajit, Pratibha raised her resisting voice, “you hit me once more and I’ll set fire to myself. I’m fed up. I’ve had enough. I don’t want to live any more”. (1) Stung with her threat, Ajit reacts quite hideously: “so who’s stopping you, you stupid bitch? Go on and do if you have the fucking guts. What are you waiting for?” (2). At her husband’s provocation and abatement, Pratibha poured kerosene over herself and lit the fire. Soon she was engulfed into red flames and her body was very badly burnt. But it was too late before the wisdom dawned upon her and she realized her folly.

Before she lost consciousness. Before they took her to the hospital. Before the police arrived. She hung on to the doctor’s arm with all her strength. And asked him again and again. Over and over. The same questions. “I want to live. Doctor, I want to live. You will save me, won’t you? They need me – my children. And my husband. He needs me too. You don’t know, do you, that he’d lost his mind and I made him all right again? He said to himself. I’m going to live, aren’t I? I’m not going to die? I don’t want to die. Never, ever. Why do you keep nodding your head? Can’t you tell me I’m going to live? I’m going to live – all the time – mornings, evening, when Anil comes home from school, when Jyotsna wets her bed – I’ll be here. Always (3)

Pratibha’s identity is deeply grounded in Indian attitude towards motherhood and marriage. She sees a woman’s value in looking after her children and her duty in adapting to her husband. That is why she even goes to the extent of forgiving her incriminating husband, ignoring the fact that it is he who is responsible for her current miserable state of affairs. “Before she went into a comma” (5) and eventually died, “she made a statement that she had tried to commit suicide because of an incurable illness” (5). Commenting on self-annihilating subjectivity of Indian woman, Prof. Veena Das, a professor in sociology, writes:

Rather than bearing a witness to the disorder they had been subjected to the metaphor they used was a woman drinking the poison and keeping it within her: just as a woman’s body is

made so that she can hide the faults of her husband deep within her, so she can drink all the pain – take the stance of silence (Das 1997 : 85).

This remark made by Prof. Das, is quiet befitting in the case of Pratibha.

Mr. Kushank Purandre, the protagonist of the novel, is sent to fetch Ajit's mother, who is staying with her brother away from her son. She is not aware of her daughter's-in-law tragic fate. When Kushank tells her of Pratibha's death, she expresses no sense of shock and grief. She, rather thinks that it is Pratibha who created misunderstanding between her and her son Ajit. She says: "Ajit was such a sweet boy till she arrived. He was even scared of mice when he was a child. Still is. Then she came and turned his head. Told him nasty stories about me". (5)

The mother thinks that Pratibha's untimely and unnatural death is a God's revenge upon her as she (Pratibha) was a major source of her troubles and miseries.

"So be it. Tormenting an old woman, and what did she get out of it? It's like a judgement from heaven. God is always fair, that's what I say. You can't get away with it, not for ever. It comes to all of us". (5) She even refuses to come home back to mourn Pratibha's death.

As far as Ajit's mother's mental make-up is concerned, she is completely unaware of her acculturation into the patriarchal ideology, which has turned her blind-folded to see any fault in her son. On the contrary, she nurtures a strong sense of hostility towards Pratibha and believes that she (Pratibha) has had a bad influence upon her son. Ajit could have become altogether a different and better person, had his mother kept a check and vigil on his psychological formation, so that the patriarchal mores planted in him, had not taken such a bad and cruel shape.

Indian mothers, for example, routinely encourage their sons to fight every step of their way to dominant social positions and in the process turn them into aggressive oppressors. Aggressive behavior which is encouraged to be cultivated by all at home, including the women, will not be limited to men's behavior outside home. It will eventually percolate through to their relations with their wives, daughters and even sons and other male dependents. Statistics are often cited to prove men as 'domestic terrorists' and to establish that women bear the brunt of their violence. (Mittapalli and Alterno 2009: VIII)

It is however to be noticed that Ajit's mother herself being deprived of all the cultural resources and riches, that capacitate a subjectivity, she has to depend on her brother for her survival if not on her son. Thus, on account of their gendered position in the society, they – both Pratibha and her mother-in-law – have come to acquire a marginalized status.

If the malfunctioning of patriarchal ideology renders wives and mothers as peripheral and insignificant, it is equally incapacitating, constraining and insidious in the case of daughters as well. Mr. Kathavte, called 'Bhau' by his family members, lives in a Mumbai chawl in the neighbourhood of Mr. Kushank Purandre, the protagonist of the novel.

Mr. Kathavte, on the second floor, always felt the itch to beat his daughters at night. After ten. And he had a lot of daughters. The youngest was in the fifth standard. First he had three sons. Then he started on the daughters. He had white hair at forty and was sixty-two when his youngest daughter was born. A tough old man.

Even now, when his married daughters come to visit, the bastard has bearing sessions. To make them feel at home. At night. Only between ten and twelve. The youngest has quite a nice voice. The two middle ones have terrible voices. Rekha sounds like a vulture being dragged along the ground, and Meena is hoarse and scratchy. Her voice has stayed broken for twenty years. She started wailing in a little boy's voice, and then it somersaulted and changed, flattened as though it had been through a sugarcane juice wringer. All of them were beaten quite impartially. (25)

When Mrs. Kathavte intervened and pleaded her husband to stop beating their daughters, she also "got her share" (26)

Once, one of his daughters named Rekha fainted due to prolonged physical assault, Mr. Kathavte says that "she was shaming" (27). Mr. Kathavte would be totally unmindful of the fact that "the yelling and screaming" (27) resulting from his act of beating his daughters, might be disturbing his neighbours. Anna, a neighbourer being upset at Mr. Kathavte's routine battering of his daughters, would finally appear, "Kathavte, that's enough for now, Kathavte. Give it a rest, and let us all get some sleep. She is getting too old for this; she's a big girl now". (27) Even Kushank is moved by the pitiable lot of Kathavte's daughters and their constant subjection to violence and cruelty. "I prayed for those girls to die. I still do" (27), so that they can escape Kathavte's slaps and kicks.

Mr. Kathavte's sons received altogether different treatment from their father. Their privileged gendered position by virtue of being sons enabled them to raise their voice and protest against their father's overbearing and browbeating attitude.

When Rekha was ten, Bhau stopped beating his sons. Only the girls were privileged from now on. The eldest son, Kishore, had warned his father, "You raise your hand against me and I'll smash you to a pulp. You won't be able to move for days.

Bhau stopped beating him. (26)

So, here it would be quite appropriate to quote Sigmund Freud: 'Anatomy is destiny' (Barker 2010: 294)

In the above two episodes, Mr. Kushank was more of a witness, while in the following one, he is a full participant. This episode is about one of Kushank's love-affairs as a college-student at Pune, with a girl named Chandini, who has come from Indore to study there. In Indian cultural milieu, falling in love and getting married is not exclusively personal and easy affair. So many hurdles such

as caste, class, region, religion, language etc. come on the way of lovers, intending to marry. There are generations old encoded cultural norms and traditions specifying whom to love and in what conditions. In such an environment, transgressing the patriarchal norms at times costs the life of lovers. Herein, through Kushank – Chandini episode, Nagarkar reflects on unfair social practice of oppressive and unforgiving patriarchy, hostile to young lovers, that eventually succeeds in breaking and braking the affair and giving a full stop to the prospects of their love marriage.

In this episode of the novel when Chandini's father gets to know about his daughter's love-affair, he comes from Indore to Pune to see her and "to brain wash her" (142). Finding his daughter's act quite irrational, he tells her "not to be foolish and impulsive" (142). He tries to convince Chandini that her decision to marry Kushank is an immature one: "Chandini, this is puppy love. You'll soon outgrow it. Then it won't suffice and you'll leave him behind one day" (142).

In his unrelenting efforts to persuade Chandini, Chandini's father tells her that Kushank has not disclosed certain shady things about his family background:

He hasn't told you about his family, has he I made some enquires about the Purandares before I came. His family are not respectable. Kushank and his brother aren't his father's children. And Kushank's aunt is a prostitute in Bombay..." (143)

He even writes a letter to Kushank saying:

Shri Kushank,

My daughter does not wish to marry you. Even if she did, she would be helpless against my opposition. I'd advise you not to try and see her. Have the intelligence and wisdom to realize what is good for you. (145)

When her exam is over, Chandini goes back to Indore. After sometimes, Kushank also goes to Indore to see Chandini, considering that her father will not send Chandini back to Pune for her further studies. With a fear of being spied by her family members, Chandini secretly comes to see Kushank in a cinema hall and apprises him of the situations at her home.

For days no one spoke to her. When they did, they called her a slut, whore, bitch. If she was near enough, they would grab her by the hair and beat her blue. (148)

For day and night Chandini's family members kept her telling awful things about Kushank and his family. They also made Chandini write to Kushank that she would not marry him. Thus, they (Chandini's family members) finally succeeded in breaking her affair with Kushank, although, even Kushank's own economic conditions were completely unfavourable for him to enter into a wedlock with Chandini.

Through all the three episodes elaborated above, Nagarkar has portrayed patriarchal gender relations. Women in all the three different subject positions – as wife, mother and daughter – have suffered oppression. Their marginalized subject positions deprived them of their voice to be heard.

They can exercise little powers within and outside the structures of family and domesticity. These women are considered to be guided by their emotions rather than reasons and believed that they have instinctive tendency befitting only for domesticity and motherhood. These patriarchal assumptions about women have legitimated the power relations of dominance and subordination. The moment women come to resist their subjection and try to change their lot by self assertion and by deciding to take their own independent decisions regarding their own matters, men tend to start feeling insecure and threatened. For example, when Chandini sheds oppressive mode of femininity based on patriarchy and refuses to be auctioned in a marriage without her consent and desires to marry a man of her choice, she is subjected to multiple cruelties including abuses, physical assault and emotional blackmailing by her patriarch father and other family members. Thus, it becomes quite clear that till men bring change in their attitude towards women and shed oppressive patriarchal attitude characterized by violence, authority and machismo, women cannot have satisfactory subject positions.

Politics of caste: A Study of Bhangi (i.e. the untouchable) Colony

..... What is represented as the 'margin' is not marginal at all but is a constitutive effect of the representation itself. The 'centre' is no more a centre than is the 'margin'.

A. Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora* (1996: 226)

Power is something that occupies a very central position in the functioning of the caste system, constituted on the principle of purity and pollution, inclusion and exclusion. The production of such a damaging and destructive image as "bhangi colony" and associating it to a certain peripheral spatial location, presupposes the power to produce such an image. The term 'bhangi' is something that is not created by the so called lower caste people 'bhangi' themselves, who very often find their location at the periphery or margin of a city. The word 'bhangi' is a coinage of the upper caste actors to maintain their domination over the Dalits and untouchables. This domination of the high caste depends on their assertion of difference: the lower caste people are inferior, seen as dirty, disgusting, impure, inauspicious and their locality is associated with filth, decay and some other stereotypical representations. These people are seen to have a nature that enable them only to perform traditional stigmatized jobs such as collecting dirt, feces and garbage etc.

Such stereotypical modes of representation of the lower caste persons by their upper caste counterparts is a means of practical control. In addition, such inferior modes of representation procure the upper caste people a ground to see themselves as culturally superior and different. Thus behind such a cultural politics, there is an anxiety of identity for the higher caste managers.

'Wearing a world-creating web of rhetoric, defender of a dominant order attempt to make that order seem natural, necessary, even sacred-and surely they often persuade themselves. Dominant groups produce legitimating concepts of reality that obscure the capricious foundation of social life, making it possible for social actors to believe, at least some of the time, that they live in a just and moral world (Parish 2008: 8)

As a consequence, very often though not necessarily, the lower caste people carry the psychological burden of being low, inferior and powerless and constantly living in such a capricious

social environment, their fulfillment denied selves convince them to consider the cultural discontents as their ordained fate and they take retreat into alienation. In this regard, Prof. Gopal Guru comments:

In the Indian social cultural context one might hold the Brahmanical social order responsible for producing and reproducing the idea of dirt and squador. The ideology of purity and pollution that is so central to the definition and survival of Brahmanism primarily aids the politics of cultural metamorphosis that involves the conversion of the corporeal body into what Barrington Moor calls the walking carrion, which thus becomes deeply repulsive. Walking carrion is the concentrated repression of repulsion. Within the Brahmanical mode of conceptual construction the untouchable represents the combination of multiple stigmatized images which make him/ her untouchable, unseeable, unapproachable. It is in this sense that the untouchable's body is perceived and treated as 'sociological danger' (2009: 14).

Kiran Nagarkar's first three novels are deeply entrenched in foregrounding the cultural politics of caste and its fatal consequences on the marginalized, lower caste communities. His gloomy picture of the Dalits and untouchable in the 'Bhangi Colony' section of the novel, highlights the plight and injustices suffered by the people of the ghettoized community. Here, the novelist recounts many aspects of dalit life including construction of their identities in terms of various negative derogatory images that provide them inferior subject-positions and create cultural trapping for their subjectivities, and make them suffer an acute financial crisis. They have to live a miserable life deprived of food, clothes and other basic necessities of life. In addition, the author also focuses on the extremely disturbing, the inegalitarian distribution of power between different castes and the social relations based on animosity and exploitation among different communities. Here, Nagarkar expresses his commitment for the restoration of basic human dignity to the lowly people suffering from the multiple inhuman practices of the caste system and its insidious ideologies.

In this section of the novel, the author depicts the untouchables and their locality 'the Bhangi Colony' set in the famine stricken Nandadhela, a holy pilgrimage site of the Sikhs in the Southern Maharashtra. Kushank Purandre affectionally called as 'Shank' by his cousin Raghu, who is an engineer by profession and is working for an "international organization" 'MORE' with its headquarters in Geneva (76)

Jobless Shank, agrees to be an observer for the Organization and accompanies Raghu to Nandadhela, which is completely famine ravaged:

Man and nature, both had changed unrecognizably here. As the motorbikes passed, flocks of kites and vultures rose lumbering, then slowly settled down to work again. Sporadically we saw human beings sitting, lying, dying, by the roadside. Skeletons. On the move (79).

Raghu and his disaster management team including Shank, reaches at Nandadhela to dig a well, the exclusive source of water for the drought hit people. Here, 'the earth was smouldering cinder..... Not a bird in sight apart from the carnivores. No green or yellow leaves. No dry leaves. Just

the scorched and crumbly earth and an occasional eye-stinging whirlwind. The scared, shrunken trees. (79)

On their motorbike, heading towards to Dalit locality (the Bhangi Colony), on the way Raghu and Kushank encounter the wretched and hapless inmates:

A bullock, his bones sticking out, gave up pulling the cart and slumped down in the middle of the road. The family in the cart were thrown forward and the baby landed at the front wheel of the bike. Its mother gazed expressionlessly at the sky. Her left tit, dry and puckered, pointed at the sky too.... It must have been 'dead a couple of hours'. Its rickety stomach was stretched and swollen tight over its ribs. (80)

Painting the ghastly pictures of the rural dalits, the above paragraph speaks volumes about the plight and miserable conditions and the utter helplessness of the untouchables. Let alone quality food and clothes, here the womenfolk have to struggle and fight everyday even for water.

Each morning enough water would collect in the one well in Nandadhela to fill three or four buckets. When that was gone, the women started to fight. But there was not spirit in their fights. They were too starved, too desperate, too weary to utter any more than half-hearted abuse. Then that too died down and the village relapsed into hot stillness. (85)

Indicating at the exploitative nature of the upper castes, Raghu tells Kushank not to make an ass of himself believing that the untouchables will be allowed to have an access to the well, after the completion of the task of digging the same, "which son of a bitch in Nandadhela do you think is going to let the untouchables drink from the well? They'll have to fight and force their way if they want water" (86).

Reeling under the unending indignity and misery, being crushed under the weight of poverty, and chronically suffering from such ailments as cholera, typhoid and dysentery, the physical appearance of the untouchables looks quite deformed and deshaped. The novelist has drawn a very disturbing graphic landscape of their faces:

Millions of lines, indefinitely finer than hair, held those faces together. Only the long snow-white lashes indicated that the old woman had a pair of eyes. The eyes of the old man on her right were petrified with watching the goings-on in the world for so many years. The seven spaced hairs on the other old man's bald head were like periscopes, observing the movements in the village from a distance. (84)

Nagarkar, hinting at a very degrading, and dehumanizing conditions in which the wretched village people have to live and struggle through, remarks: "words like helplessness humanity and poverty had no meaning in Nandadhela. But even in that famine-ravaged place I had not seen people quite as broken, crushed and barely human as these. They just stood for a couple of hours. The

diggers ignored them completely". (86). Even the diggers – who themselves were wage-earners – could afford to ignore and treat the village as insignificant, lowly creatures.

Thus, the Bhangis – the lowest of the low caste, who are given the job of cleaning the latrines and sweeping the streets – and the dirty nature of their work further the view of themselves as impure and stigmatized. Somewhere towards the middle of this section of the novel, Nagarkar comes to give a depiction of "the Bhangi Colony" (81), which symbolizes nothing less than an assemblage of disease, dirt, disorder, backwardness, violence and ignorance. The social and physical conditions of the colony in which the Dalits have to live, can not help but bring ill fame and evil repute to the dwellers of the colony:

The Bhangi colony. Three mongrel dogs. And one mother kicking her child out of her way. A thin abrasive haze of dust softened the outlines of everything around. Then the village. A kid started to chase the bike. The women at the well pulled their saris over their faces. The old man at the door of his hut spat a greenish-yellow gob at our wheels. It spattered our legs as the bike went over it. The tailor, the peanut vendor, the doctor with the positions against old age and impotence, the grocer, the Rama temple, the blacksmith and his son working the parched bellows and hammering at a red-hot wheel. Then a few scattered houses. (81)

Edward Said in his book 'Orientalism' remarks: "The orient was almost an European invention" (Said 1978: 1). Extending the argument of Said's book to study the 'Politics of Caste', it can be maintained that the representation of the Dalits (untouchables) and their locality (the Bhangi colony) is an act of powerful upper castes. Here the colony is conceived in terms of such demeaning images as 'mongrel dogs', 'mother kicking the child', 'abrasive haze of dust', 'hut', 'a greenish-yellow gob of spit', 'potion against old age and impotence' etc. The truth of the Bhangi colony is an effect of the upper caste people's powerful position, as these people can only define their inferior the 'lower caste ones' and not the vice versa. The analysis of the above given paragraph regarding the representation of the 'Bhangi Colony' in terms of violence, dirt, backwardness, ignorance, is an effect of the politics of caste, working on the principle of domination, control and exclusion etc. Such a degrading socio-cultural representation of the untouchables give them inferior subject position in their society. Their subjection to the dominant regime of representation affect everyday life of these people. They cannot be oblivious of themselves and their identity in the dominant culture. The untouchables would hate the degrading images of their locality as the 'Bhangi Colony' which signifies as a place of ill fame, an evil repute, 'the ghetto'. They just can not escape the burden of their degradation embedded in the institution of their caste. Their association with 'chillum' (91) and 'the bubbling of a hookah' (92) are further projection of their inferiorization and backwardness.

"One's sense of self-consciousness as well as one's sense of self worth is dependent upon the recognition by those whom one seems worthy to recognize" (Crossley 1996 : 66). Unlike, "the women at the well pulled their sarees over their faces" (81) of the Bhangi Colony, non-dalit Sardar, Bhisander Singh, whose family lives at some distance from the colony, boasts of being very modern and upto-date: "we are very forward looking, we do not have purdah in our family, unlike the rest of the village" (90).

Here, in this section of the novel, Kiran Nagarkar's narrative draws our attention towards the dehumanizing practice of the caste system and its incompatibility with democratic values. The

author by highlighting the distorted representation (the plight) of the underprivileged section of his society, urges for a fundamental need of structural change in the social order and perspectival change in the outlook toward the dalits. And for this, the onus lies largely on the powerful, especially the upper caste activists.

The Cultures of Deprivation: Reading Class

To study the actual situation of the marginalized people in India – which is a more appropriate concept: ‘caste’ characterized in social terms or ‘class’, explained in economic terms?- is still an unresolved issue, as both the terms stand hopelessly inter-twined. However, after studying the ‘politics of caste’ in the previous section, it is quite pertinent to focus on ‘class’. The orthodox discusses of “ class “ and “ class consciousness” as available in the Marxist perspectives can scarcely be applied to or used in studying the representations of “class” in the literary texts in India.

Despite the suggestions coming from the feminist and post-modernist theorists regarding the irrelevance of class analysis to study people’s life as they consider the present day identities are too fluid and too complex to be captured in the rigid category of class than they were in the past, for many culture thinkers the concept of ‘class’ is highly significant. It is a powerful tool for studying society and social relations. Such key concepts as ‘power’, ‘inequality’, ‘domination’, ‘social control’ and ‘ideology’ are the focal areas of class-culture analysis. Expressions like “class struggle is the motor of history” (Wright 2005: 4) and “the executive of the modern state is but a committee of the bourgeoisie” (Wright 2005: 4) retain the prominence of the concept, ‘class’.

As one of the fundamental categories of social stratification, the term ‘class’ signifies collectively sharing the same social, economic or occupational standing. Class divisions are commonly conceived in hierarchical terms, with higher classes enjoying more privilege and greater prestige and authority (Mikula 2008 : 24).

Marx and Engels, the leading systematic thinkers of the material approaches to cultural analysis, consider class as a central concept in their schema of cultural exploration. For them, marginalization is an effect of exploitative capitalist mode of production, in which the working classes, deprived of productive resources, are forced to live through miseries and alienation.

The present day capitalist mode of production presupposes the existence of the two classes on the one hand, that of the capitalist, who are in possession of the means of production and subsistence; and on the other hand that of the proletarians, who being excluded from this possession have only single commodity to sell, the labour powers of theirs in order to obtain possession of the means of subsistence, and who therefore have to sell their labour power of theirs in order to obtain possessions of means of subsistence ... the process of exclusion expands alienation of the working class from his or her ‘species essence’ as a human, from the work and the production process, from the society and from themselves (Marx and Engels 1970: 86)

The analysis of class within the Marxist framework is rooted in an egalitarian distribution of the material conditions of life, which however, seems to be too ambitious. Contemporary thinkers

such as Charles Taylor and Pierre Bourdieu in their analysis of class have highlighted the hitherto ignored forms of expression including misrecognition, disrespect, humiliation and discrimination. These thinkers are of the view that people at the margin claim for the legitimacy of their values, along with the removal of poverty. They deserve more material resources, wealth, recognition and respect than they have at their disposal at present.

As a social realist writer, Kiran Nagarkar has a key concern and empathy for the oppressed and the exploited. Highlighting the plight in terms of illness, starvation, death and desolation of the marginalized, is at the centre of the narrative of the novel. As social beings, Kushank and co-characters of the texts suffer exorbitantly due to their culturally and materially deprived class positions. Their lives are nothing less than big rounds of sordidness, poverty and degradation from the birth to the death. Scanty access to the material resources and amenities constrain their lives. And at their expense, the very few persons like capitalist Sardar Bhisander and his family thrive. Thus, even in the context of the novel, it can be maintained that 'class matters because it creates unequal possibilities for flourishing and suffering' (Sayer 2005: 218)

Most of the characters including the protagonist, Kushank Purandre suffer from multiple deprivations and incapacities such as quality-education, good health and a reasonably good standard of living. They are under the constant pressures of economic insecurities, and precarious livelihoods, strained social relations and skewed gender relations. They are frequently abused and exploited by those in power such as land-lords and the police. Jobless Kushank tried his hands at various occupations.

I had been jobless since that hospital project. Six months of fruitless searching for a publisher. A couple of Indian publishers had shown some interest, but the bad printing would have ruined the photographs. So I looked for a publisher overseas. Two of them held our promises, but even after a year there was little progress. A whole year of despondency and hopelessness. No doubt they had good reason for the jobs. (77 – 78)

Because of his constant subjections to unemployment and resulting poor economic conditions, Kushank is forced to offer tuitions.

I woke up one morning and decided to give up the book. If they publish it, well, that's fine. I started to tutor school-children. Bought myself a book to brush up my grammar. Sometimes I got bored and told them stories. One of the parents warned me against this a couple of times, but the boy and I got on well, so I hadn't been sacked yet. (78)

Kushank's humble economic background is further revealed by the father of Chandini, who tells Chandini that Kushank's aunt indulges into prostitution to earn her livelihood. Chandini's father says:

I made some enquiries about the Purandares before I came. His family are not respectable. Kushank and his brother aren't his father's children. And Kushank's aunt is a prostitute in Bombay... (143)

Chandini's father considers Kushank almost a street urchin. Keeping in view, the disadvantageous socio-economic condition of Kushank, he dissuades his daughter Chandini to marry Kushank, saying that the relations of intimacy between the married couples can not last long, if they are not supported by a strong financial security. With an effort to convince his daughter, he says: "Chandani, this is puppy love. You'll soon outgrow it. Then it won't suffice and you'll leave him behind one day". (142)

Keeping in view his pathetic economic conditions, Kushank himself could not commit marriage to Chandini despite Chandini's offer to wait till both start earning. "I promise we won't get married till we're both earning our living" (139). However, not being sure of himself and his improving economic lot in coming times, Kushank ruminates:

Left to myself, I couldn't have asked her for another four or five years, no, not in a lifetime. If the distance between your mouth and your belly is uncertain and elastic, then your opinion of yourself is likely to fluctuate too. Add to that extreme self-depreciation and innumerable inferiority complexes. And Chandani becomes unattainable. (139)

Prachiniti episode in the very early sections of the novel is another harrowing account of suffering caused by penury. Very intimate to Kushank, Prachiniti married to a painter, named Shatlaj and the mother of little Arshad, is admitted in a municipal hospital. "If Prachinit had been taken to hospital ten months earlier, she might have lived another couple of years" (34) Prachiniti's prolonged and insufferable ailment coupled with her family's utter state of destitution, hurts Kushank immensely, despite his own being in a state of privation. "Shatlaj tried to sell his paintings. Tutored others in painting. And then sold his colours and easel too. To buy Prachiniti's medicine" (34). Finally Prachiniti and her husband Shatlaj look up to Kushank for the monetary help to meet the hospital expenses and contact Kushank for the same. However, Kushank is pained at his utter helpless and replies:

"If I had money I wouldn't come and eat at your house every other day. "There's no one else I can ask. I've already borrowed from other friends. And they ask me why I always need money. To survive. To eat. Why don't they understand? Don't they ever get hungry? Morning, noon, and night? Why not just eat once? For a lifetime? Why do we eat so often? Even people who have never lent me money ask the same questions". (34-35)

Kushank still efforts to arrange the money and asks his friends and relatives but only to meet his dismay. His rich but callous friends remain unmoved. Kushank recounts:

Sometimes, I tried begging, begging doesn't necessarily get you anything. Certainly not money. My friends were happy to take me to the movies, the theatre, concerts. But they didn't offer me the money for the tickets. So my wallet stayed empty and Prachinti went without medicine for days. (34)

And Prachiniti "only died, slowly through ten months, ten times thirty days. Days and weeks and all the hours of the day". (35) And eventually realizing the futility his efforts, Kushank is

so much overpowered by the grief that he did not even turn back to look at her "oxygen cylinder, temperature charts, jars of saline, bottles and bottles of medicine". (36)

Hunger and poverty at times become a breeding ground of shame and humiliation. The poor class subject position affects access to esteem or respect from others. It also affects our relationship with others and shows how people are valued in this situation. It has been noticed that life-chances and achievements are heavily affected by the lottery of the birth class. In the context of the novel, Kushank recalls an incident that occurred to him in the early part of his life, when he was heaped with humiliation.

When my mother died I started eating out. My father gave me money every month and let me fend for myself. If I asked for more, he gave me more. But I didn't like to ask too often. Then I had to go hungry. I had got used to two-day fasts. But sometimes my head and stomach would play havoc. There's a point up to which hunger is unbearable. Cross it and then it's easy. But when I'd missed three or four meals, I felt a string wind itself round me and start to tighten. The world swam before my eyes and there was a numb humming in my brain.

And when the hunger became insufferable, Kushank finally dropped in at his friend Jitendra's house and it was his "third meal in four days at Jitendra's". It was almost midnight, but I knew they are late and anyway, however, lat it got. I was sure of getting a meal there. As I reached for my second hot chapatti, Jitendra's mother said something angrily, in Sindhi. There was a sudden silence at the table. Jitendra's little brother and sister stared at their plates. I had never learnt Sindhi, but I did know enough to interpret what she had said, "Hasn't he a home to go to? Here, every day.... Is this a home or a restaurant? Only Jitendra continued to eat calmly. I thought of pretending that I hadn't understood. But my face had paled. (168 – 169)

Despite his friend Jitendra's consolation that "Don't let her (the mother) worry you. After all, I'm the bread-winner in the family, aren't I?" Kushank could never forget the bitter taste of biting words. It is quite possible that Jitendra's mother would not have behaved the same, had Kushank been from an affluent class or family. In this regard, Adam Smith, the father of Modern Economics, very befittingly comments on the human tendency to treat the rich and poor with double standards: 'This disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect, persons of poor and mean condition, is ... the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments. (Smith 1759: 1984: 61)

Exploitation is a pivotal concept in the Marxist analysis of class. It is a process through which the dominant group or person excludes a major chunk people from having access to productive resources including land, capital, raw material etc. And the very process of exclusion enable the exploiter to appropriate the labour output effort of exploited lots. So, exploitation is a direct result of the inequalities in incomes generated by inequalities in the ownership

of material resources. To be more precise: the material welfare of exploiters causally depends upon the material deprivations of the exploited. This means that the interest of the actors within such relations are not merely different, they are antagonistic of the realization of the interest of exploiters imposes harms on the exploited. (Wright 2005: 23)

In the novel, the plight of the villagers, almost reduced to skeletons, migrating from the famine stricken Nandadhela, owes a lot to their deprived class subject positions. Their dying of food-poisoning, cholera, dysentery, typhoid or even plain starvation speaks volumes of their marginalized material status. The drought hit land can yield no crops to feed their stomach. Even the life sustaining water has become an equally scarce commodity for them.

Each morning enough water would collect in the one well in Nandadhela to fill three or four buckets. When that was gone, the women started to fight. But there was no spirit in their fights. They were too starved, too desperate, too weary to utter any more than half-hearted abuse. Then that too died down and the village relapsed into hot stillness. (85)

'There's a curse on Nandadhela that not even the white men could lift' (80) In the given pressing circumstances, the villagers are condemned to sell their dear land to "the stock villain" (81), self-conserving and profit making, feudal, Sardar Bhisander Singh at a very negligibly low price. The conversation between Kushank's cousin Raghu and a villager should make things more clear.

Raghu started at him incredulous. "You sold your land?"
 "Yes, sahib, Not just me. A lot of people in the village sold theirs too."
 "What price?"
 "Price?" he smiled feebly. "How can I bargain at a time like this? It was God's gift, my piece of land. But I took what they gave me."
 "Did you put your thumb on the deed?"
 Of course. To receive money and not put my thumb on the deed – it'd be as bad as masturbating in a whore's bed."
 "Will you come back with us?"
 "No, sahib. It's no use." (80 – 81)

Geneva based an International Non-Government Organizaion, MORE – Raghu and his team work for it – is working here at Nandadhela to counter the disaster and digging a well for the people. Sardar Bhisander, projecting himself as a messiah of the local people urges Raghu to stop his men digging the well:

There is no water in this village. You're wasting my people's time. Giving them false hopes. You'll up and leave one day, but they'll stay and die of hunger. These are my people. I won't stand by to see them suffer. (88)

However, the real intention of the Sardarji is to let the people leave the village at non availability of water, so that he can amass their land almost free of cost. To execute his intention,

Sardar Bhisander corrupts Raghu offering him bribe, so that he withdraws his men from digging the well.

During the course of the deal, Raghu says to Bhisander "you brought half of the village for practically nothing. What is fifty thousand to you?" (89)

And "finally, the Sardar produced the money" (90).

As if this is not enough, the Sardar played a trick and got in a local Newspaper, The Nehalpur Daily, published: "Sardar Bhisander's generous gift to famine – stricken Nandadhela – 50,000 rupees" (90).

The analysis of the above narrative should make it clear that the flourishing of the Sardar Bhisander – salute receiving "figure in the sherwani" (85), an impressive man (88), puffing on his pipe (88), a huge alsatian dog (89), a high brick wall surrounding a two-storey house (81) – is in the inverse proportion to the suffering of the Nandadhela villagers, who are 'quite broken, crushed and barely human' (86). The Sardar makes his material advantage by excluding the villagers from access to their land – the only source of their livelihood and survival. Thus, it seems quite convincing to conclude that the privileged position and the advantage of a person/ group is at the expense of the disadvantaged. "In the case of exploitation, the exploiters actively need the exploited: exploiters depend upon the effort of the exploited for their own welfare" (Wright 2005: 24).

Keeping in view all the given above episodes involving Kushank, Prachinity, Chandini, Jitendra and Sardar Bhisander, it is quite clear that for the effective exercise of the human agency, the fulfillment of certain basic needs are must. Exclusion and non-access to the material riches and resources, really leads to the damage and debasement of people. Hence,

'class matters to us not only because of differences in material wealth and economic security, but also because it affects our access to things, relationships, experiences and practices which we have reason to value, and hence our chance of living a fulfilling life. At the same time it affects how others value us and respond to us, which in turn affects our sense of self-worth'. (Sayer 2005: 1)

Religious Identity and Violence: Reading Police Brutalities

Violence is formented by the imposition of singular and belligerent identities on gullible people, championed by proficient artisans of terror.

Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence* (2006: 2)

According to a French theorist, Louis Althusser, the 'State Apparatuses', a set of institutions by which the ruling class keeps its hegemony and dominations over the ruled ones intact, are of two types, though they are not mutually exclusive. On one hand, the state comprises of institutions – the religions, the educational, the family, the legal, the political, the communication (press, radio, television etc.) and the culture (literature, arts, philosophy etc.) – what he calls the 'Ideological State Apparatuses' (ISAs). On the other hand, there are repressive institutions – the police, the army, the courts, the prisons, the civil servants, the govt. – through which the ruling class enforces its rules, argues Althusser. He calls the latter category of institutions as the 'Repressive State Apparatus' (RSAs).

The fundamental difference between these two categories of institutions is explained by Althusser himself:

The (Repressive) State Apparatus functions massively and predominantly by repression (including physical repression), while functioning secondarily by ideology. (There is no such thing as purely repressive apparatus) ... for their part, the Ideological State Apparatuses function massively and predominantly by ideology, but they also function secondarily by repressions, even if only ultimately, but only ultimately, this is very attenuated and concealed, even symbolic. (There is no such thing as purely ideological apparatus). (1971: 136)

With regard to this novel, the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs) including gender, caste and class and their constructing and constraining impact on the subjectivities of the characters have been discussed at length in the earlier sections of this project. Now, we will take recourse to the second category of the State Apparatus, the Repressive State Apparatus (RSA), the police and its brutality, in reading the most depressing and despairing concluding section of the novel.

It is an occasion of celebrating the Ganpati festival in Bombay. Kushank Purandre holding his relative Kaku, is "caught up in the maze of whirling bodies. Being sucked in" (207), possessed and hypnotized by the fervor of the festival, Kushank is completely lost "in his godhood" (207). He says: "I was face to face with archetypal forces and which make myths more meaningful, inevitable and powerful than both reality and rationality". (207) Kushank being almost in a state of trance, was "no longer in danger of losing" (207) his personality. But all of sudden, something contrary to the situation and completely shocking and unanticipated occurred.

Looks like a South Indian. Long live Shivsena. The first blow knocked out three of my teeth. Don't talk shit. The bastard's Muslim. Look at his eyes. Throttling me. Check his penis to make sure. Don't allow the motherfucker to desecrate Lord Ganesh. Jai Bhavani. Long live Shivaji, Sirens, police. What evil spell has the son of a bitch been casting? Blows, sticks, arriving at the police station with a torn lip, bloodied, black and blue. (207 – 208)

Kushank, presumed to be a muslim by the police, is taken to the police station and beaten black and blue there on the charge of desecrating the sacred Hindu god 'Ganesh'.

This is my second trip to a police station. They all look the same. The colours of the uniforms change. A picture of a smiling toothless Gandhi on the wall, and the current president. It was Radhakrishnan in Benares, here it is Giri. (208)

Then they beat me. How these people beat you. At Chowpati and here at the station. Beat you, beat you, beat you, beat you, beat you. Kicks iron rods, rats down your legs, sticks, boots, I don't remember any more. Singly and collectively, they keep beating. Putting their boots into my kidneys, shoving lighted cigarettes up my nose, rapping my swollen testicles with the butt end of a pencil, breaking the bridge of my nose, blue, black, green, purple, beat you, beat you, beat you, they never stop. (208 – 209)

Kushank, wrongfully accused by the police, is beaten savagely. Believing him to be a Muslim, he is shown no sense of sympathy and fellow-feeling. In the garb of securing and safeguarding the interest of the society and acting as a state agency, the police subjects Kushank to cruel, degrading treatment and barbaric torture to secure confession.

Name?
Address?
What party do you belong to?
Religion?
Muslim?
Hindu?
Name?
Address? (209)

Also charging him to be a traitor (211), Kushank is further subjected to inhuman treatment to extract information from him. "And after a while, the officer opened my swollen lips gently and pushed in a Novalgian tablet and then some water". (210)

It took me a long time to surface after he had kicked me in the back. Then I was out of the water and had hit the air. I could breathe but couldn't force the air down my throat. My eyes bulged and my ribcage came apart at the seams. Then I lost control over my body and the breath flowed in.

I moved my leg and found that I had wet myself "Oh, God," I whispered, "This can't be happening, can't be." (212)

The given below couplet by an American punk Rock Band, 'the Dead Kennedys' popular in 1980, written satirically as a mark of protest on social and political issues, including the state and police atrocities, seems quite befitting here even in the case of Kushank's subjection to the police torture:

Roll down your dress, here's is kick in the ass,
Let's beat you blue until you can shit in your pants.
(<http://www.scintila.altervista.org/Archivio/Festi/...>)

And finally Kushank loses his voice in history forever. "Only the certainty of a full stop. Then blackness and no more pain. Was it hours or days of unconsciousness? All I know is that it was a time without pain without myself". (213) In this regard, a social theorist remarks a very pertinently:

Personal pain is degrading and dehumanizing experience unless meaning is vested in it. The investment of personal pain with meaning transforms it into suffering, which then becomes a social process. The individual derives dignity out the acknowledgment of her [his] pain and is thus in a better position to feel worthy of the suffering, and available to the possibilities for healing. (Ramphele 1997: 114)

In the novel Kushank is not able to transform the pain inflicted on him into suffering and thus he meets a very bad death.

A politically correct critical reading of the horrendous and ghastly account of the tortures meted out to Kushank by the Bombay police should compel us to think: why should he be subjected to such a cruel and ugly treatment? And what is his fault for which he has to meet such an ugly treatment leading to his death? Even a bit of reflection should make it quite clear that his only fault is that he is assumed to be a Muslim by the police and whose mere presence desecrates the celebration of the Ganesh festival. One would, however, do well to remember that the Kaushank episode does not function as a metaphor to suggest the miserable condition of the minorities in India. The inhumane power and authority of the state in India crushes and oppresses equally ruthlessly the people of majority community also. Kushank's fault is not that he appears to belong to a minority community, but he is weak, deprived and shorn of protection. Kushank's supposedly religious identity of being a Muslim occasion his subjection to violence and eventually to death. To be a Muslim is simply a matter of being a culturally different person from that of a Hindu but this "cultural difference is one of several forms of essentialism used to explain away assaults on dignity and suffering in general practices, including torture". (Farmer 1997: 278).

However, the causes of violence are not inherent in human beings' religious-cultural identities themselves. They are there in their perceptions of those "cultural difference". Such a high degree of intolerance and prejudice against the religious 'other' prevalent in the law enforcing agency, 'the police' leads to the appalling consequences. This attitude of 'miniaturizing' (Amartyasen's coinage) a person, that is, defining a person in terms of a singular identity (especially the religious one), calls for re-examination and reassessment. Overlooking of various other affiliations and identities other than the religious one that people have – such as that of class, gender, profession, language, morals, politics – is a big intellectual error. In this regard, Prof. Amartya Sen writes, very cogently in the preface of his book 'Identity and Violence:

The prospects of peace in the contemporary world may well lie in the recognition of the plurality of our affiliations and in the use of reasoning as common inhabitants of a wide world, rather than making us into inmates rigidly incarcerated in little containers. (2006: XVII)

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

Kiran Nagarkar's landmark text, Seven Sixes Are Forty-Three – a representation of the marginalized and oppressed sections of the post independent Indian/ Maharashtrian society – is a disturbing narrative of struggle for existence and survival in a world abounding in poverty, degradation, crime, violence hopelessness and distorted human relations. The novel denies the Arnoldian sense of culture as some autonomous realm of ideas, values and beliefs. Rather it (the text) views culture as fundamentally and inextricably linked to power, history, subjectivity and identity. The cultural categories of caste, class, gender and religion have deep effects on our subjectivities. Our sense of who we are, where we belong and what we can do, are most clearly explained through these cultural categories. Religion, class, caste and gender oppression operate in a social set-up as much through the institutions of culture – the family, educational and religious institutions and media – as through the repressive and violent forces of the police and other state agencies.

Much of the twentieth century literary – cultural theories and approaches, such as New Criticism, Russian formalism, Archetype Mythical approaches and structuralism deny the role of history and see culture as atemporal phenomena. However, the current novel under scrutiny, asserts

the centrality of history: the above reading of the text should make it clear that the protagonist Kushank and other characters of the text are deeply rooted and located in their historical contexts and they cannot escape the burden of their histories. The novel may also be considered as an important cultural-political intervention for change, as it calls for the recognition of the unjustness of exploitation and oppression. Mr. Mulk Raj Anand, one of the great Indian writers in English, speaking about the real test of the novelist, once said:

What is writer if he is not the fiery voice of the people, who, through his own torments, urges and exultations, by realizing the pains, frustrations and aspiration of others, and by cultivating his incipient of expression, transmuting in arts, all feelings, all thought, all experience – thus, becoming the seer of a new vision in any given situation. (Dhawan 1992: 14)

Highlighting the importance of commitment in her writing, the eminent Indian writer of the marginalized, Mahasweta Devi writes:

I have always believed that real history is made by ordinary people ... the reason and inspiration of my writing are people who are exploited and used, and yet do not accept defeat for me, the endless source of ingredients for writing, is in these amazingly, noble, suffering human beings. (Wikipedia)

Kiran Nagarkar in his writings and especially in this novel, has done a great social service by championing the cause of humanity, social justice and human welfare. Deriving the impetus for his writings from the oppressed and the exploited, his contribution in the field of literature, it may be maintained, is as immense and significant as that of Mulk Raj Anand and Mahasweta Devi. Kiran Nagarkar as a writer for 'the people', assails the constituted wrongs done to the poor. This novel dwells deep into the lowest strata of his society and lampoons the rich and the affluent ones. Nagarkar also draws our attention to the fact that there can be no alleviation of human suffering without the restoration of human dignity to the common people and no positive change can be wrought in a society without realizing the value of respecting the different, the other.

Endnotes:

1. The term '**subjectivity**' signifies the process and the socio-historical conditions of being a person. It is primarily understood as a person's perception of the self and that of others. It is constituted by and mediated through language, culture and society.
2. **Identity** is a description of ourselves with which we emotionally identify. It is a person's individuality, a way that enables him/ her to differentiate from or feel similar to other people.
3. The term '**marginalization**' signifies a process or situation of being on the margin or a state of relegation to the fringe of a society. The study of marginality aims at unveiling the structural

and ideological sources – caste, class, race, ethnicity, religion and gender, etc. -of human suffering.’

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Transcending the Barriers of Home and Marriage and Affirmation of the Self in Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters*

Manjeet Rathee*

Abstract

Home and marriage has been the defining frame of reference for a woman for many centuries and even in these modern times, her identity as a wife and as a mother holds more significance than any other assertion or achievement as an independent human being. This confinement of women to family and 'womb' has been central in restricting her status and identity to an 'incomplete' individual, one who is necessarily defined 'with reference to man'.

The present paper attempts to explore how the central woman protagonist-Virmati and other women characters in the novel, comprehend, compromise and at the same time transcend the traditional boundaries and value codes attached to home and marriage and how far they go on to re-evaluate and redefine their individual relations and social spaces in an attempt to achieve a significant breakthrough as far as a woman's independent identity and autonomy is concerned.

A woman's dignity and honor is believed to be 'located' primarily inside the boundaries of home and all the other social and intellectual achievements and contributions are considered to hold good only as far as they help her to 'settle' and 'perform' well within the domestic terrains. 'A woman's shaan is in her home. Now you have studied and worked enough. Shaadi,' exclaims one of the woman characters to her daughter in Manju Kapur's debut novel 'Difficult Daughters.' (Manju Kapur, 1988: 13) Home and marriage has been the defining frame of reference for a woman for many centuries and even in the modern times and circumstances, her identity as a wife and as a mother holds more significance than any other assertion or achievement as an independent human being, inside or outside home and marriage. The belief that men work out of the home as 'bread earners' and women within its four walls, as nurturers and care providers has long governed the psyche of the male dominated society irrespective of caste, class or region. This confinement of women to family and 'womb' has been central in restricting her status and identity to an 'incomplete' human being, one who is necessarily defined 'with reference to man.' Betty Friedan rightly points out, 'The problem is always being the children's mommy or the minister's wife and never being myself.' (Friedan, 2001: 73). Simone de Beauvoir in her seminal work 'The Second Sex', narrates that 'Marriage is the destiny traditionally offered to women by society.' (Beauvoir, 1989: 425) and that the concept of marriage has always meant 'different things' for men and women in terms of relationship, rights and responsibilities. It remains a 'perennial puzzle' for a writer like Virginia Woolf as to why, for centuries together, 'no woman wrote a word of that extraordinary literature when every other man, it seemed, was capable of song or sonnet.' (Woolf, 1992: 53)

The struggles of the last two centuries for democratic rights, gender equality and social justice that went hand in hand with the struggle for independence and freedom of various nations including our own country, have proved decisive in resisting and challenging these domestic

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structures of power and control based on exploitation and suppression of the disadvantaged and the marginalized sections. This ongoing resistance in the realms of 'personal' spheres is aptly being reflected in the Indian English writings of women, as also that of the male progressive writers in the form of various women protagonists endeavoring to redefine their individual and social spaces against all kinds of economic, social and cultural barriers by challenging and redefining the basic premises of home, family and marriage and in the process, taking significant strides towards attaining autonomy and selfhood as an independent and complete human being.

The present paper is related to exploring how the central woman protagonist- Virmati and other women characters in the novel, comprehend, compromise and at the same time transcend the traditional boundaries and value codes attached to home, family and marriage and how far they go on to re-evaluate and redefine their individual and social relations as well as spaces in an attempt to achieve a significant breakthrough as far as a woman's independent identity and autonomy is concerned. Beginning from Virmati's struggle to 'adjust, compromise, and adapt' (236) within the given family values and domestic spheres, Manju Kapur presents a whole range of other female voices not only trying to resist and challenge these structures and pre conceived notions of power and control but striving hard to arrive at situations and conditions where, by being an active part of struggle for India's independence and social reform movement, it could be possible for a woman to be something other than a wife or a mother. This constant search for 'being on one's own' includes understanding and breaking the barriers of 'the endless monotony' of domestic chores, 'the unrelenting tyranny' of customs and traditions, 'the bastions of male learning' and above all, an inner journey into the dilemmas, pulls and pressures of one's own emotional world, in an attempt to make a strong presence in the social and intellectual world.

Simone, while scrutinizing the historical reasons behind the 'destiny' and 'situation' of woman's lives, rightly identifies "sexuality and socialization" as the basic 'poles of analysis' around which her subjugation and subservience revolves. The right to property and ownership and its denial to women for ages can be said to be the other decisive 'pole' that has confined her existence and identity to a secondary human being, always seen and understood in relation to men. The traditional male control over economy and resources and lack of social opportunities led her historically to fall in the category of 'other' and operate as an 'object' rather than as an individual 'subject' who can take her own decisions and make her own choices. Her long and deliberate exclusion from history and political participation and her near total absence and invisibility, till recently, from any kind of social and economic contribution and achievements, has reduced her to being an 'absolute sex', meant only to satisfy the sexual desires of the male and carry forward their lineage by giving birth to much preferred sons.

Family as an institution has been held in great reverence in our societies as a place that provides strong ties of love, care and 'psychological security', without probing into its traditional forms and structures of unequal power, hierarchy, repression and control, summed up under the broader term of patriarchy which has controlled a woman's life and desires at every step – be it personal, social or political. The intrusion of the market forces into the domestic terrain and familial relations with the advent of globalization and free economy has made the matters worse for a woman in the sense of further curbing her real self in the name of providing very limiting choices related to her body and social role. Her intellectual growth is stunted in the name of her prime responsibility at home, while market forces are thriving on the aggressive exploitation of her body in the name of her depiction as a modern and cosmopolitan woman. Women's writings have questioned all such existing view points, that are essentially 'patriarchal, and 'conventional' in nature. An educated and enlightened Indian women's efforts to understand herself and to affirm her identity as an independent human being in the midst of all odds are worth recognition and appreciation. Her urge for assertion of dignity and self respect and her frantic efforts for achieving a new kind of harmony of relationships with herself and her surroundings are being reflected with great vigor in the modern writings, especially by contemporary women writers like Shashi Deshpande, Namita Gokhle, Nayantara Sehgal, Geetha Hariharan, Bharati Mukherji and Manju Kapur.

Manju Kapur's first novel *Difficult Daughters* (1998) spans three generations of women - Ida, Virmati and Kasturi, so as to depict the gradual generational change in women's situations, mode of thinking and transformation of consciousness in the backdrop of the country's larger freedom struggle against British rule. All the three could be called women of modern consciousness and sensibilities in the sense that they all, in their own limited ways, try to break the traditional barriers that confine a woman's place and role to domestic sphere in an attempt to create more individual and social space for their passions and aspirations but ironically, 'the language of feeling' is denied between them as they try to 'connect' to each other in the pursuance of their cherished dreams and desires. Virmati, does not share a warm affectionate bond with her mother - Kasturi and despite sharing tremendous responsibilities and always being 'loaded with work', she fails to get the love and recognition from her mother that she always secretly longed for. Similarly, the one thing that Ida, Virmati's daughter, had 'wanted' was, 'not to be like my mother,' whom she knew as 'silent, brisk and bad-tempered.' (1) The tale of struggle is narrated through Ida, who, after Virmati's death, in an attempt to root out her mother's past, comes to know that her grandmother Kasturi was contented in being married into a rich and large family and accepted her lot though she had the inclination to rebel against physical and mental burden of giving birth to many children. As circumstances would have it, Kasturi, who in her own times, happened to be the only woman who was educated and who happened to 'choose' her own husband, now wants her daughter Virmati to finish her education as soon as possible and get married safely, for, in her opinion, "what good are degrees - when one is not settled." (19) Kasturi, born and brought up in an atmosphere filled with 'essential rituals of life,' finds it hard to compromise with the fact that studies or social duties can overtake family obligations, while for Virmati, 'higher education involved being on one's own.' (18) and marriage clearly occupied a secondary place in her life. Ida, a middle aged, lonely woman, 'without husband, child or parents' (3), and with the stigma of 'divorce' attached to her, goes a step further to not only take her own crucial decisions related to family, marriage and divorce but also to weave 'a connection' between her mother and herself that could lead her to rediscover her own real autonomous self through discovering her mother's past and thus 'fitting narratives into a discernible inheritance.' (258). Women of three generations are thus depicted as constantly trying to create familial and social spaces for themselves in their own significant ways and though their efforts do not necessarily lead to successful and fulfilling life but it does provide them with an opportunity to explore their own potential and destiny, with its irrevocable cycle of pain and sufferings.

Virmati, the central woman protagonist, right from the beginning aspires for a free and independent life where she can take her own decisions without doubting her inherent worth and capabilities. Shakuntala, her cousin, convinces her that in the changing times, real answers to women's problems lay 'outside' the domains of home, in the active participation for social change. With Shakuntala's support, she is able to challenge the traditional family set up where 'marriage is the only choice in life,' (15). The belief that it was possible for a woman to be something 'other than a wife' strengthens her passion for higher studies and she struggles hard to get her arranged marriage to a canal engineer postponed and ultimately cancelled so as to successfully pursue her studies. Not only that, she also succeeds in breaking the 'bastion of male learning' by joining the Arya Sabha College in Amritsar which had a ratio of four hundred boys to six girls, Virmati being only the seventh one to enter. For a girl like Virmati, who had been neck deep in 'weary' household work, and who, being the eldest, had looked after her ten younger brothers and sisters like a 'second mother', this sort of intellectual fervour, speaks volumes about her keenness and determination to define and visualize her life outside the traditional barriers of home and marriage. Her passion for higher studies is further ignited through her love affair with an Oxford returned Professor in English Literature, who constantly makes her realize the worth of 'higher things' in life but the fact that he is already married, spells doom for her and from there on she is constantly torn between her individual desire for a well settled life and her social obligations towards the larger cause of country's independence which can ensure her 'fruitful engagement' with the society. Though her aspiration for an independent and meaningful life does not bear full fruit due to her incomprehension and vascillations in love, yet her struggle as a whole is not to be undervalued because, as Gur Pyari says: 'What is necessary is to

break the patriarchal mould and for Virmati to have tried to do that in the forties was a great achievement.' (Gur Pyari Jandial, 2003)

Virmati could successfully protest against the monotony of the domestic chores, she could wage a battle against traditionally arranged marriage and for her right to higher education, but the temptations and longings of her own heart prove too strong to be resisted. Entwined in the trap of Professor's love, the larger social and political spaces begin to lose their relevance and she begins to feel 'out of place' in the political rallies and conferences, yet the fact that she is at the same time able to see through the futility of 'useless love and doubtful marriage', goes on to indicate the dilemmas and complexities in the path of going beyond the traditional barriers and how neither one is an easy option. In spite of tremendous pulls and pressures, Virmati continues to strive for an option that promised to bring 'sense and purpose' in her life. Deep inside her heart, she wanted to solve her problems 'on her own' and wanted to prove 'worthy of independence.' She does take the crucial decision of getting the Professor's child aborted on her own and tries to resolve her long accumulated restlessness first by beginning life anew as the Principal of a prestigious College in Simla and later through her journey to Calcutta for further studies at Shantiniketan and strangely enough: 'with every mile she felt stronger. There was a life of dedication and service ahead of her and in that she would forge her identity.' (182)

Once again, the Professor's repeated pleadings for marriage after five years of long waiting, seal the fate for her as she is tempted into tying a marital knot with an already married professor. Soon after, she realizes her grave mistake and in order to make amends, again takes resort to her ever burning passion for further studies in the form of doing an M.A from Lahore. The active participation of young and old alike in the freedom struggle makes her realize the irrelevance of 'petty domestic matters' at a time when the whole nation was 'on trial.' She finally resolves to merge herself into the spirit of the nation: 'I have tried adjustment and compromise, now I will try non-cooperation.' (239) She donates generously to the people in distress in the ensuing communal riots and killings and was keen to associate the arrival of her baby girl with the birth of a new country by naming her 'Bharati,' but the Professor insists on naming the daughter as 'Ida'- which meant, 'a new slate, and a blank beginning.' (256) The journey of defining one's autonomy and selfhood, is indeed, a new beginning for every woman but the old connections with the ongoing strivings and struggles for freedom and independence for all can not be ignored. Virmati's persistent strivings for her 'own life', in the backdrop of the vast canvas of the social and political upheaval, conveys that it is not the success or failures that make a decisive difference in the affirmation of the self and social identity but what ultimately matters is the constant urge to break the barriers and continue to strive for widening the horizons. In the midst of all the inner and outer obstacles, virmati's intellectual growth and development does not get stunted and she is able to acquire not only very high qualifications but respectable jobs too, which ultimately make her survive the most critical phases of her life. That she does not accept stagnation till the end and continuously keeps trying for more meaningful life resonates well with the actual life and situations of endless women in India in real life. As Dora Sales Salvador points out that the writer has tried to bring to the fore the efforts made at that time by numerous women, who in their attempts to transcend the conventional roles, were a visible force. Manju Kapur herself, in one of her interviews with Sukhmani Khorana, remarks: 'Women's struggle in India is an ongoing one. There are no black and white winners and there is a constant negotiation with the family setting.' (Women Writing and Indian English: A Conversation with Manju Kapur, 2010)

Virmati's limitations and unfulfilled desires acquire meaning and significance in the light of the struggle of other supporting female characters who provide a fitting backdrop to Virmati's dilemmas by leading a life of well defined purpose and single minded devotion. These women, be it Shakuntala or Swarna Lata or young Kiran, are able to lead a life which goes beyond 'husbands and children' and in the process are able to set 'inspiring examples' for other women to follow. Shakuntala, despite tremendous pressure from her family, decides to remain unmarried for serving the cause of the nation and has no qualms about it: 'She had a life of her own. Her manner was expansive, she didn't look

shyly around for approval when she spoke or acted.' (34) Virmati's close friend Swarna Lata also believes in leading a full life and handling her individual and social affairs with firm grip and determination. She remains active in the social field even after marriage and strangely enough, 'her activities did not threaten her family structure.' (232) Kiran, a young school going student whose father had served in the Indian National Army, sets an example by openly joining in non-cooperative marches and protests even to the extent of braving police lathi charge and getting injured. All of them prove to be 'difficult daughters' in as far as they are able to challenge the dominant patriarchal and colonial mindsets, attitudes and practices in one form or the other, sometimes wholly, sometimes partially and in the process inviting a trail of agonies and tensions. Manju Kapur is eager to see in her women protagonists an abiding urge 'to explore their own potential or to live on their own terms regardless of their consequences that such a rebellion may have on their lives.' (Bala and Chandra, 1999: 107)

The writer aims to show that any progress towards attaining independence and individuality is necessarily linked to larger domains of social responsibilities and actions and there is strong connection and bonding between various women and the groups involved in the struggle for change both inside and outside the homes since it is only in furthering the broader cause of collective freedom and equality that the seeds of individual freedom lie. The various women characters in the novel, while resisting and challenging the domestic barriers, simultaneously, at one stage or the other, identify themselves with each other's problems, try to help and reach out to the other and take keen interest in the processes and actions for social and cultural transformation, be it the struggle for country's independence and strong participation in Gandhian movement or the backdrop of partition and the resultant violence. This shows how the individual struggle of the women to gain freedom and affirmation of the self is tied up with the larger struggle against colonial, patriarchal and market forces which try to confine and demean their work, status and image within the traditional norms of domestic subjugation on one hand and distorted display of modernity and empowerment on the other.

Further, one finds that the process of challenging and redefining the structures of home and marriage and finding outlets for individual and social space, at no stage involves mindless denouncements of the positive values of love, care and compassion inside the family or relishing the individual space at the cost of denying freedom and individual expression to other sections, as it is sometimes made out to be. On the contrary, the whole struggle of redefining human values, structures and institutions in order to attain autonomy and selfhood is necessarily an all inclusive process where it is not the question of man or woman alone but that of creating a conducive situation for both the sexes to be able to function as equal partners in domestic as well as social spheres in a combined effort to create a truly participative society based on love, mutual respect, equal opportunities and social justice for each and every individual irrespective of caste, class or gender. As revealed by the novelist, this challenge of going beyond the domestic and social barriers, since it involves reversal in co-relation of power and mechanisms of control along with radical change in the consciousness of the society as a whole, is by no means an easy task and is bound to entail immense struggles, conflicts, and contradictions. Hence it is difficult to arrive at any foregone conclusion and it has to be an open ended endeavor with multiple streams, possibilities and potentials. What counts in this process of transformation is not the ultimate destination but the constant urge to resist the various hegemonies, retrogressive thoughts, practices and structural barriers and inching gradually and collectively towards the realization of the goal of freedom, dignity and social justice for one and all.

It is refreshing to find the multiple images of various women characters in the novel who are not dictated by their instincts or thirst for power or quick fame but are guided by clearly defined larger socio-political goals and values and have the courage to pursue their path in spite of numerous obstacles. They are all undoubtedly 'difficult daughters', in the sense that they have challenged the conventional norms and beliefs prevalent in the families and societies and have chosen to tread upon difficult paths where there are no given answers and solutions. The fact that they attempt to

engage and grapple with the living realities of thousands of women of various strata of the society and endeavor to project life in all its richness and complexities, is in itself a sign of hope and reassurance. As Juliet Mitchell says, "...transforming the hidden, individual fears of women into a shared awareness of the meaning of them as social problems...this process is consciousness raising" (Mitchell,1971:61). What Manju Kapur seems to establish through *Virmati* and other women characters is, that this process of transcending the confinements of 'home and hearth' and aligning with the social and public realm to redefine their individuality as agents of social transformation, is the only alternative that can help a woman to sustain and affirm her own self against all odds and assure her a life of dignity and purpose. The writer has repeatedly been asserting in her interviews as well as various works that the literature by women about families always has these 'larger considerations' concerned with social and economic forces, gender relationships and how they are played out 'in home.' She rightly feels that all kinds of things 'happening outside' in the wider social sphere are bound to affect what is happening 'inside the home'. In the absence of these larger inter-related concerns and obligations, a woman's life is likely to remain an empty slate and more often than not, she, like *Virmati's* daughter, *Ida*, is left 'hovering like a pencil notation on the margins of society.' (258) The choice between opting for a well settled, conventional family life on one hand and breaking the barriers for assertion of dignity and self by a woman is by no means easy and there is a whole range of 'complex emotional shades of grey,' but, as Kalpana R. J asserts, it is time that women are given "the freedom within their chosen life patterns and freedom in choosing alternative life patterns." (Kalpana, 2005 : 25) The price that a woman has to pay for choosing to lead a self defined life, is in many ways, a necessary step in the collective struggle of bringing about a qualitative historic leap in her life from being considered a mere object of consumption to the process of attaining and affirming her real self. This 'difficult' path of challenging the traditional structures, mindsets and stereotyped roles so as to bring about a radical transformation in the consciousness of an individual as well as in the collective consciousness of society is what makes these women 'difficult mothers' and 'difficult daughters.' They think for themselves, take their own decisions, devise their own paths and strategies and as far as possible, endeavor to integrate the individual freedom and affirmation of the self with larger social concerns. There are no shortcuts to achieving the goal. The fight for assertion of democratic self has to go on till the 'difficult' becomes desirable and acceptable.

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Theoretical Underpinning for Corporate Social Responsibility: Holding Business Responsible

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Abstract

Dramatic cases have recently given the impression that the international business community runs rife with fraud, a lack of respect for legislation and regulations, unethical behaviour and executives looking to line their own pockets. This undermines people's confidence in the entire business community. As corporate struggles to find its ethical identity in a business environment that grows increasingly complex, managers are confronted with some poignant yet highly debated questions. These questions have definite ethical ramifications.

A flourishing literature documents the "dark side of organizations," and the ethical interrogation basically has questioned business activities and they have been subjected to merciless scrutiny from various stakeholders, vigilant press and civil society at large. The centrality of the debate stems from the idea that the privileged position of business enterprises and because of the power they yield they are expected to go beyond the constraints of normal morality and to act positively for the public good.

The Role of the Corporation: Does it Encompass Social Responsibility?

Competing, mutually exclusive visions exist concerning the ultimate purpose and true nature of the corporation. Various descriptions exist: communitarian versus contractarian,¹ the Berle v. Dodd debate,² the shareholder paradox or the separation thesis,³ these differing visions reflect conflicting political and moral preferences concerning the nature of corporations. Most famously, the debate is reflected in the sharply contrasting views of Milton Friedman and his many critics.⁴

In the conventional structure of the firm, the nexus of rights comprises residual rights, control rights, and decision rights (Ricketts 1994).⁵ The residual rights, held by the stockholders, entitle them to the surplus (profit) that remains after all the operating costs have been paid. Control rights pertain especially to the appointment of managers; the shareholders normally delegate these rights to the board of directors.⁶

The managers in turn exercise decision rights in their day-to-day oversight of the production process. Thus, because of the separation between ownership and control, shareholders are usually remote from the exercise of decision rights, although ultimately they may withdraw the control rights (by appointing new directors) from which the operational decisions derive. Clearly, in this hierarchical structure of the company, the various personnel have different rights according to the positions they occupy. Not surprisingly, such differences often entail substantial inequality of decision making

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power (and of income earned) in the firm. The determining factor in all this is property, for its possession determines the final distribution of power and authority.

Two views have emerged in response to this problem. At one extreme is the view of those who argue that, because the rules that tie organisations together allow us to say that corporations act as individuals and have intended objectives for what they do, we can say that they are morally responsible for their actions are moral or immoral in exactly the same sense that a human being are.

At the other extreme is the view of philosophers who hold that it makes no sense to hold business organisations morally responsible or say that they have moral duties. These philosophers argue that business organisation is the same as machines, whose members must blindly and undeviating conform to formal rules that have nothing to do with morality.

However both these are extreme views. The central point that we must keep in our mind as we apply the standards of ethics to business activities that we must not let the fiction of the corporation obscure this that human individuals underlie the corporate organisation. Consequently, these individuals are the primary carriers of moral duties and responsibilities. Corporate policies, culture, norms and corporate design can and have enormous influence on the choices, beliefs and behaviour of employees.

CSR, corporate sustainability and corporate governance collectively are shaping the identity of organisations and are therefore increasingly integrated into the business strategy of successful corporations. Consequently, the field of responsible business strategy and practice is becoming one of the most dynamic and challenging subjects corporate leaders are facing today and possibly one of the most important ones for shaping the future of our world.

Two Contrarian Views on CSR

In market economies, the primary purpose of companies is to maximise shareholder value (e.g. economic profit, share price and dividends) bound by legal/regulatory obligations which address specific social and environmental issues. For this, companies pursue competitive strategies which rely upon and develop relationships between the corporation and its stakeholders.

Since the early 1990's, corporate responsibility issues including the social obligations of corporations have attained prominence in political and business debate. This is mainly in response to corporate scandals but also due to the realisation that development centred only on economic growth paradigms is unsustainable and therefore there is a need for a more pro-active role by states, companies and communities in a development process aimed at balancing economic growth with environmental sustainability and social cohesion. corporate responsibility and sustainability as part of a new vision for the world based on a global partnership for sustainable development ;corporate responsibility and sustainability as a business management approach that should provide in the long run better value for shareholders as well as for other stakeholders.

Early roots of corporate social responsibility can be found in the actual business practices of successful companies and early theoretical views in the 1950s and 60s linked corporate social obligation to the power that business holds in society. Theoretical developments are currently

broadly subdivided into the ethical and accountability issues and the stakeholder approaches to strategic management.

The present day conception of corporate governance and corporate social responsibility (CSR) implies that companies voluntarily integrate economic, social and environmental concerns in their operations and interaction with stakeholders. The European Commission defines CSR as “a concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and a cleaner environment.” (2001, p. 5)⁷ It is related to complex issues such as environmental protection, human resources management, health and safety at work, relations with local communities, relations with suppliers and consumers. Corporate Social Responsibility is part of the strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It can help to shape the competitiveness model.

The notion of CSR is one of ethical and moral issues surrounding corporate decision making and behaviour. Knowing if a company should undertake certain activities or refrain from doing so because they are beneficial or harmful to society is a central question. Social issues deserve moral consideration of their own and should lead managers to consider the social impacts of corporate activities in decision making. Regardless of any stakeholders’ pressures, actions which lead to things such as the conservation of the Earth’s natural resources or bio-diversity preservation are morally praiseworthy. In summary the total social responsibility of business entails the simultaneous fulfilment of the firm’s economic, legal ethical and philanthropic responsibility. In equation form, this might be expressed as follows: Economic responsibilities + legal responsibilities + ethical responsibilities + Philanthropic responsibilities = Total Corporate Responsibility.⁸

Fig1: Four-Part Mode of Corporate

Types of Responsibility	Societal Expectations	Examples
Philanthropic	DESIRED of business by Society	Corporate contributions Programs supporting Community/education Community involvement/ Improvement : volunteerism
Ethical	EXPECTED of business by society	Avoid questionable practices. Respond to “spirit” of laws. Assume law is a floor on behavior; operate above minimum required by law. Assert ethical leadership
Legal	REQUIRED of business by society	Obey all laws; adhere to regulations. Environmental laws. Consumer laws. Laws affecting all employees. Obey Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. Fulfill all contractual obligations
Economic	REQUIRED of business	Be profitable. Maximize sales revenue. Minimize costs (administrative, production, marketing, distribution) Make wise strategic decisions. Be attentive to dividend policy.

Source; Archie B. Carroll, ‘The Pyramid of Corporate Social Responsibility’, Business Horizon, July-August 1991

The global community has been increasingly coming down heavily on Business Houses on issues impacting their interest and concerns. The global stakeholders are drawing attention to a) compliance status against applicable legal requirements that companies need to abide by to increasingly address sustainability. Non compliance with regulations is costly as non compliance costs to companies includes high penalties, fines, remediation costs, legal costs, lost productivity due to additional inspection, potential closure of operations and related effects on corporate reputation; b) burning global issues such as natural resources depletion, climate change, release of pollutants, and erosion of trust are urging organisations to address the social and environment problems; c) global financial crisis reinforces the need for transparency in business; d) demand on greening of Supply Chain/Ethical Consumers; Product responsibility; Ethical Labour Practices etc. while certainly these issues are not new but the attention being paid to them is unprecedented.

Activist, civil society groups and media have become critical and are pressurising the corporates to be more accountable and transparent to address and mitigate such concerns, primarily by taking the stakeholders into confidence through stakeholder engagement. Effective institutionalized corporate social responsibility and sustainability strategies allow corporates to generate shareholder economic value, while having a positive impact on the community, enhancing reputation and minimizing the adverse impact on the society at large.

However, some argue that the contribution of concepts such as CSR is just a reminder that the search for profit should be constrained by social considerations (Valor, 2005, p. 199). Increasingly CSR is analysed as a source of competitive advantage and not as an end in itself (Branco and Rodrigues, 2006). In effect, the concept of CSR has evolved from being regarded as detrimental to a company's profitability, to being considered as somehow benefiting the company as a whole, at least in the long run (see, for example, Hess et al., 2002; Porter and Kramer, 2002; Smith, 2003).⁹

CSR has been conceptualised in a number of different ways which are related to differing views regarding the role of business in society (see, for example, Clarke, 1998; Lantos, 2001). These views are often presented within the stakeholder-shareholder debate of corporate governance. The idea which underlies the "shareholder perspective" is that the only responsibility of managers is to serve the interests of shareholders in the best possible way, using corporate resources to increase the wealth of the latter by seeking profits (see, for example, Friedman, 1998; Jensen, 2001). In contrast, the "stakeholder perspective" suggests that besides shareholders, other groups or constituents are affected by a company's activities (such as employees or the local community), and have to be considered in managers' decisions, possibly equally with shareholders (see, for example, Freeman, 1998; Werhane and Freeman, 1999).

Perspectives on Corporate Social Responsibility

Based on Clarke (1998) and Lantos (2001) two viewpoints on the role of business in society (which lead to different views on CSR) will be distinguished (see Table below).¹⁰ The "classical view", based on neoclassical economic theory, defines it in purely economic profit making terms, focusing on the profit of the shareholders. In contrast, the "stakeholder view", based on stakeholder theory, holds that companies have a social responsibility that requires them to consider the interests of all parties affected by their actions.

<u>View</u>	<u>Position on Business' Role in Society</u>
Classical	Pure profit-making view: business has lower standards of ethics than society and no social responsibility other obedience to the law.

Stakeholder	Socially aware view: business should be sensitive to potential harms of its actions on various stakeholder groups.
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Source: Adapted from Lantos (2001)

Classical view - Lantos (2001) has identified two perspectives in the classical view: the “pure profit-making view”; and the “constrained profit-making view”.¹¹ The “pure profit-making view” is exemplified by Carr’s (1968) position. The distinctive feature of this author’s perspective is that some degree of dishonesty is acceptable because business people have a lower set of moral standards than those in the rest of society. He compared the ethics of business to those of the poker game. The lower set of moral standards permits what he calls “business bluffing” which includes things like conscious mis-statements, concealment of pertinent facts, or exaggeration. Deception is probably a necessary component of a strategy to be successful in business, and thus business people can not afford to be guided by ethics as conceived in private life. Thus, for Carr, a company has the legal right to shape its strategy without reference to anything but its profits, so long as it stays within the rules of the game legally set out by law.¹²

The major proponent of the “constrained profit-making view” is Friedman (1998), who believed companies should behave honestly: that is, they do not engage in deception and fraud. This economist argues that the purpose of the company is to make profits for shareholders. The only responsibility of business is to use its resources to engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game. Because managers are agents of the shareholders they have a responsibility to conduct business in accordance with their interest. This is generally to make as much money as possible and maximise their wealth. Under this view, because shareholders are the owners of the company and therefore the profits belong to them, requiring managers to pursue socially responsible objectives may be unethical, since it requires managers to spend money that belongs to other individuals. Asking companies to engage in social responsibility activities is considered to be harmful to the foundations of a free society with a free enterprise and private property system. Social problems should be left for the state to address. Although Friedman’s ideas are better known, his view had a conspicuous predecessor in Levitt (1958). Levitt believed that companies should be concerned with improving production and increasing profits while abiding by the rules of the game, which include acting honestly and in good faith, and that social problems should be left for the state to address.

The classical view also has contemporary adherents. Their arguments, which can be associated with the “constrained profit making view”, have arisen mainly in debate with stakeholder perspective proponents (see, for example, Barry, 2000, 2002; Coelho et al., 2003; Henderson, 2005; Jensen, 2001; Sternberg, 1997; Sundaram and Inkpen, 2004). However, it is important to note that not all of these authors can be shown as opposing social responsibility actions by companies.

Barry (2000)¹³ argues that companies can only engage in social responsibility activities in the less competitive markets and that such engagement is a form of rent seeking by managers. However, the central argument is that the use of companies’ resources to further social goals amounts to managers’ usurpation of the political function. The difficulty in making appropriate decisions when the predominant authority of shareholders is removed and the purpose of maximizing shareholder wealth is disregarded in order to take into account a variety of interests. He argues that in such conditions decision-making in a company “would resemble that of a parliamentary assembly.” Barry (2002, p. 545)¹⁴ and claims that it leads “to the politicization of the company in that many groups and a number of almost certainly competing purposes must then be considered.” Therefore, Barry’s

assessment of the stakeholder perspective is that it “tries to make the business system operate like the political system.” (op. cit., p. 552) This is not advisable because it will “bring all the disadvantages of voting, as well as the enervating effect of pressure groups to an activity that depends on personal freedom and individual initiative to fulfil its promise.” (ibid.)

The ex-OECD Chief Economist David Henderson (2005) is another of the modern critics of CSR. Whereas Friedman focused his concern in managers adopting misguided objectives, Henderson’s focus is on outside interferences with efficient resource allocation. Henderson contends that CSR adversely affects a company’s performance. However, his case against CSR rests primarily on the contention that it impairs the performance of business enterprises in their primary role, and would make people in general poorer. He is an adamant opponent of over-regulation, and views increased legislation in this matter to be harmful, and lead to decreased business activity. CSR is seen as leading to ineffective markets, reduced wealth generation and increased social inequity and poverty. He does not attribute any social responsibility related function to companies.¹⁵

Other contemporary authors defend shareholder value maximization as the one objective function to all companies but are not necessarily against the social responsibility actions by companies (Jensen, 2001; Coelho et al., 2003; Sternberg, 1997; Sundaram and Inkpen, 2004). Basically these authors argue that having more than one objective creates difficulties for managers and some confusion in their decision making. On the other hand, having shareholder value maximization as objective is believed to lead managers to decisions that enhance outcomes for multiple stakeholders. Jensen (2001, p. 11), for example, considers that “200 years’ worth of work in economics and finance indicate that social welfare is maximized when all companies in an economy maximize total company value.”¹⁶

These authors repeat several of their predecessors’ arguments, but they are not necessarily against the social responsibility actions by companies. In the words of Sternberg (1997, p. 9), a company “cannot afford to ignore any stakeholder concern that might affect its ability to generate long-term owner value.”¹⁷ A company’s interactions with its stakeholders are recognized as affecting profitability, and “ethical executives should consider this as part of their fiduciary duties to shareholders.” (Coelho et al., 2003, p. 18)¹⁸ Social responsibility actions might even be used strategically by companies in seeking value maximization of the company. These authors seem to defend what Jensen (2001) calls “enlightened shareholder maximization” view, according to which a company cannot maximize value if any important stakeholder is ignored or mistreated, but the criterion for making the requisite tradeoffs among its stakeholders is long-term value maximization.

Even Carr (1968, p. 149), in spite of defending the pure profit-making view recognized that if a company wishes to take a long-term view of its profits, “it will need to preserve amicable relations with whom it deals. A wise businessman will not seek advantage to the point where he generates dangerous hostility among employees, competitors, customers, government, or the public at large.”¹⁹ However, he thought that “decisions in this area are, in the final test, decisions of strategy, not of ethics.” (ibid.)

The classical view is justified mainly on the basis of neoclassical economic theory arguments using notions such as the free market, economic efficiency, and profit maximisation. This view might be grounded in three different, but complementary, ways: - first, shareholders are the owners of the corporation, and managers have no right to act on their own preferences, to make discretionary decisions or to use company’s resources to further social goals which cannot be shown to be directly related to profits; - second, companies’ role is to produce wealth, and pursue

socially responsible objectives may impair their performance in that role interfering with efficient resource allocation; - finally, other organizations exist to deal with the kind of function requested by socially responsible actions, such as government, and companies and managers are not equipped to perform such role.

It is believed that CSR is often useful in generating long-term owner value. For some time the arguments that have been presented for strategic CSR arise, at least in part, from the classical idea that the sole objective of business is to maximise shareholder wealth and that a company should engage in CSR activities only if it allows value to be created. This approach is synthesized by McWilliams and Siegel (2001, p. 125). They argue that decisions regarding CSR should be treated by managers “precisely as they treat all investment decisions.”²⁰ Some authors argue that CSR “should be considered as a form of strategic investment.” (McWilliams et al., 2006, p. 4) The table below sums up the competing views on CSR were the justification for the corporate to enter into ‘social responsibility domain varies from ethical to strategic CSR.

Table 1 - Type of CSR

Carroll’s classification	Lantos’ corresponding classification
1. Economic responsibilities: be profitable for shareholders, provide good jobs for employees, and produce quality products for customer.	1. Ethical CSR: morally mandatory fulfilment of a company’s economic responsibilities legal responsibilities, and ethical responsibilities.
2. Legal responsibilities comply with laws and play by rules of the game.	2. Altruistic CSR: Fulfilment of an organization’s philanthropic responsibilities, going beyond preventing possible harm (ethical CSR) to helping alleviate public welfare deficiencies regardless of whether or not this will benefit the business itself.
3. Ethical responsibilities: conduct business morally, doing what is right, just and fair, and avoiding harm.	3. Strategic CSR: Fulfilling those philanthropic responsibilities which will benefit the company through positive publicity and goodwill.
4. Philanthropic responsibilities: Make voluntary contributions to society, giving time and money to good works.	

Source: Lantos (2002, p.206).

Shareholder to Enlightened Stakeholder view of CSR

Stakeholder theory is based on the notion that beyond shareholders there are several agents with an interest in the actions and decisions of companies. Stakeholders are “groups and

individuals who benefit from or are harmed by, and whose rights are violated or respected by, corporate actions.” (Freeman, 1998, p. 174) In addition to shareholders, stakeholders include creditors, employees, customers, suppliers, and the communities at large. Stakeholder theory asserts that companies have a social responsibility that requires them to consider the interests of all parties affected by their actions. In contrast to the classical view, the stakeholder view holds that “the goal of any company is or should be the flourishing of the company and all its principal stakeholders.” (Werhane and Freeman, 1999)

Many interesting typologies of stakeholders have been pro-posed. Clarkson’s typology of stakeholders is the most widely cited and accepted. Clarkson (1995)²¹ distinguishes primary and secondary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders are those “without whose continuing participation the corporation cannot survive as a going concern” (shareholders and investors, employees, customers and suppliers, and also governments and communities “that provide infrastructures and markets, whose laws and regulations must be obeyed, and to whom taxes and other obligations may be due”) (op. cit., p. 106), whereas secondary stakeholders are “those who influence or affect, or are influenced or affected by, the corporation, but they are not engaged in transactions with the corporation and are not essential for its survival.” (op. cit., p. 107)

Some of the problems with stakeholder theory lie in the difficulty of considering “mute” stakeholders (the natural environment) and “absent” stakeholders (such as future generations or potential victims) (Capron, 2003, p. 15)²². The current dichotomised and static approach used in corporate governance cannot fully explain the complexity and heterogeneity of corporate reality. More flexible and processual approach to the understanding of corporate governance practice does not completely abandon the mainstream theories. It admits that the shareholder and stakeholder views as social constructs do have their own merits within a local context. Zingales (2000) argues that the traditional definition of the firm and ownership is valuable in a society where intensive assets is significant for the exploitation of economics of scale and scope, such as during the industrial revolution.

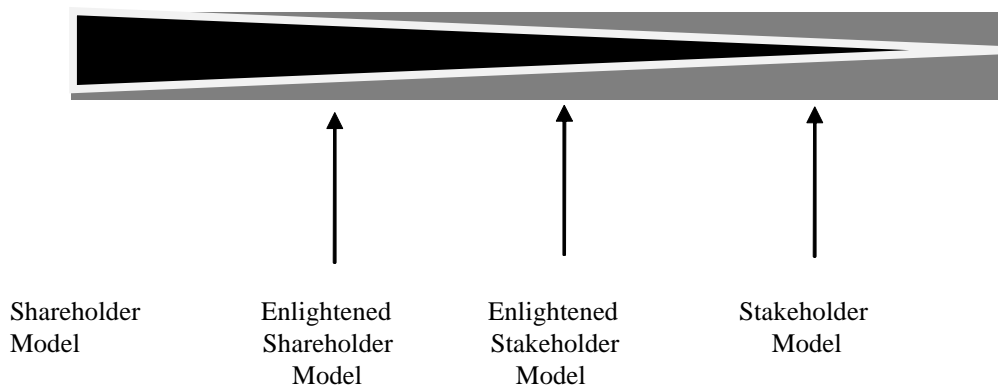
However, both perspectives have been shifting and continually changing. Although the shareholder model is the traditionally dominant ideology in the Anglo-American society, it is evidenced that corporate governance has been evolved and moved backwards and forwards between the shareholder and stakeholder models (Sundaram and Inkpen, 2004). And the recent shift from shareholding towards stake holding since the 1990s has been demonstrated not just by scholars’ intensive arguments, but also by political, judiciary, and legislative supports for stakeholder interests (e.g. Stoney and Winstanley, 2001; Gamble and Kelly, 2001). On the other side, corporate governance in Germany and Japan has also slightly changed from the stake holding perspective towards a shareholding and market-based model since the 1990s, due to the pressure of globalisation and world-wide competition, and the recession of national economies (Schilling, 2001; Stoney and Winstanley, 2001).²³

Therefore, we may draw a pluralistic view by looking at corporate governance process ‘as a continuum’, at the two ends of which lie the shareholder and non share owning stakeholder perspectives. Both represent two extremes of corporate governance purposes, structures and mechanisms. Since the corporate reality and environments are dynamic and changing, the effective framework of corporate governance is always moving forward and backward between the two ends, which is contingent upon local contexts and various factors (social crisis and power are two major triggers for changes,) with no pre-set equilibrium. Hence, instead of polarising the views between

two extremes –shareholding vs stakeholding, corporate governance theorising need to reflect the shifting and swing process in the continuum.

The recent enlightened shareholder model and enlightened stakeholder model are good examples of this balance balanced, but pluralistic approach to theorising. In both theory and practice, we can observe a pattern and trend of corporate governance, which is not longing for the two poles in the governance continuum, but for mutual learning and absorption. Again, as process corporate governance is not aimed to stop at any fixed place in the continuum, it is continuously judging and adjusting. In this sense, corporate governance is truly an art, not a science (Allen, 2001). See the figure 2 below depicting the continuum from classic shareholder model at one end to stakeholder model at the other end of the spectrum.

Fig 2 The process of corporate continuum



The Stakeholder Idea in Two Ethical Traditions :

The Stakeholder in the “Business Case for CSR” or in “Enlightened Stakeholder Theory”

What is widely referred to, at least in Europe, as the “business case for CSR” is interested not so much in how to ground CSR ethically but rather how to persuade managers to implement socially responsible behaviour. In its primitive form, the business case defines CSR in terms of its capacity to maximize shareholder value, along the lines indicated by Friedman in his famous statement that “the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits”. In its more developed version (the one we hear about more often), “enlightened” self-interest allows the sacrifice of a part of today’s profit for greater long-term return in the future, building a good reputation. Thus, we can fairly easily dismiss both the business case and enlightened stakeholder theory as being ethically inadequate, for while they certainly encourage business people to adopt certain practices, but they do not give any ethical basis for doing so.

The Stakeholder Idea in Deontological or Social Contract Approaches

This is the “home” of the stakeholder idea, where it was born and where it belongs most fully. The deontological version of stakeholder theory is indebted to Freeman’s use of the Kantian

idea of the intrinsic value of the human person. It shifts the basis for CSR from the ethics of consequences, as we saw in the business case approach, to the ethics of duty. Using the Kantian “respect for persons” principle, it elevates groups other than owners (such as employees, customers, suppliers etc.) that influence and are influenced by the company, to the status of stakeholders. Stakeholders’ rights are to be respected and their interests are to be considered and balanced by the socially responsible company. Such a shift of focus from a material good (profit) to a human person with inalienable dignity and rights is a laudable step forward, and seems to offer a less shaky ethical ground for CSR than the business case. However, its ethical individualism leaves it with deficiencies at both the ethical and practical levels.

Social Contract Theory – Another normative base that has been attached to the stakeholder idea in relation to CSR is social contract theory. Put simply, society provides a kind of legal and social space that makes possible the activities of corporations. The underpinning of modern business demands confidence, trust, legal protection and privileges (including that of limited liability); it demands a kind of contract with society - a “license to operate”. Under this approach CSR is a kind of pact between, on the one hand, the wider society that needs business for economic and social development, and, on the other, business institutions that need society to provide their supporting environment and infrastructure (legal systems, market systems, transport regulation and so on). More elaborate theoretical versions of this approach involve a two or three stage hypothetical social contract conception: a macro social contract that binds all people together in society, the one that a rational individual would establish behind Rawls’ “veil of ignorance” in the “original position”, and one or more micro social contracts (Lorenz has two), agreed at the level of the stakeholders (Donaldson and Dunfee, 1994).

Understanding the Power of Stakeholders

Having established the importance of stakeholder management, a question that remains is which stakeholders managers view as most significant. This question has been addressed by Mitchell et al. (1997). They offered a theory of stakeholder identification and salience that suggests that managers’ perceptions of three key stakeholder attributes (power to influence the company, legitimacy of the relationship with the company and urgency of the claim on the company) affect the degree to which managers give priority to competing stakeholder claims.²⁴ Power is a stakeholder attribute that has been used to identify and prioritize stakeholders, with some authors suggesting that companies respond to the most powerful stakeholder issues. For example, Nasi et al. (1997) found that companies is focused on issues that were relevant to the most powerful stakeholders rather than on those issues that were relevant from an ethical or socially responsible point of view.²⁵

For example, one way of seeing the ‘environment as a stakeholder’ or mute stakeholders is through the interests of future generations (Jacobs, 1997). However, it is impossible to ask the opinion of the natural environment or of future generations, and they cannot be members of a consultative committee. Thus, the problem is that only humans are capable of generating the necessary obligations for establishing stakeholder status and of the necessary volition in the acceptance of benefits of a mutually beneficial cooperative scheme (Phillips and Reichart, 2000, p. 191). However, if among the interests of legitimate stakeholders is a concern for the natural environment, it has to be taken into account. Moreover, the interests of the environment and future generations should be contemplated by “being represented in decision-making structures, whether of companies or of society as a whole.”²⁶(Jacobs, 1997, p. 26)

Regarding stakeholder theory, Donaldson and Preston (1995)²⁷ argue that it can be used in three different ways:

1. the descriptive/empirical, when it is used to “describe, and sometimes to explain, specific corporate characteristics and behaviours” (op. cit., p. 70).
2. the instrumental, when it is used to “identify the connections, or lack of connections, between stakeholder management and the achievement of traditional corporate objectives (e.g., profitability, growth)” (op. cit., p. 71); and
3. the normative, when it is used to “interpret the function” of companies and identify “moral or philosophical guidelines” that should be followed with regard to their “operation and management” (ibid.).

The empirical and the instrumental uses are interrelated inextricably. This suggests a difficulty in relating empirical and normative endeavours. Whereas the former is descriptive in nature and attempts to analyse the way things are, the latter is prescriptive and aims to prescribe how things should be. The normative and instrumental uses probably entail the existence of two conflicting approaches to stakeholder theory. The normative approach to stakeholder theory views stakeholders as “end”. The instrumental approach is interested in how stakeholders can be considered in a way that enhances financial performance and efficiency, and thus regards stakeholders as “means” or as factors to be taken into account and managed while the company is engaged in maximization of shareholders wealth. The underlying argument is that stakeholders’ interests are considered ‘as means for higher level goals, such as profit maximization, survival and growth’.²⁸

The “social activist” perspective shares with stakeholder theory the notion that companies are accountable to all other stakeholders beyond shareholders.²⁹ Hence, they should behave to actively promote social interests, even when it is not expected or demanded by society. Companies should be involved actively “in programs which can ameliorate various social ills, such as by providing employment opportunities for everyone, improving the environment, and promoting worldwide justice, even if it costs the shareholders money.” (Lantos, 2001, p. 602)

From the perspective, rather than offering a definition of CSR it seems more worthwhile to agree on the following five key elements identified by Buchholz (1991, p. 19):

- companies have responsibilities beyond the production of goods and services at a profit;
- these responsibilities involve helping to solve important social problems, especially those they have helped create;
- companies have a broader constituency than shareholders;
- companies have impacts that go beyond simple marketplace transactions;
- companies serve a wider range of human values than can be captured by a sole focus on economic values.³⁰

Enlightened value maximization versus enlightened stakeholder theory

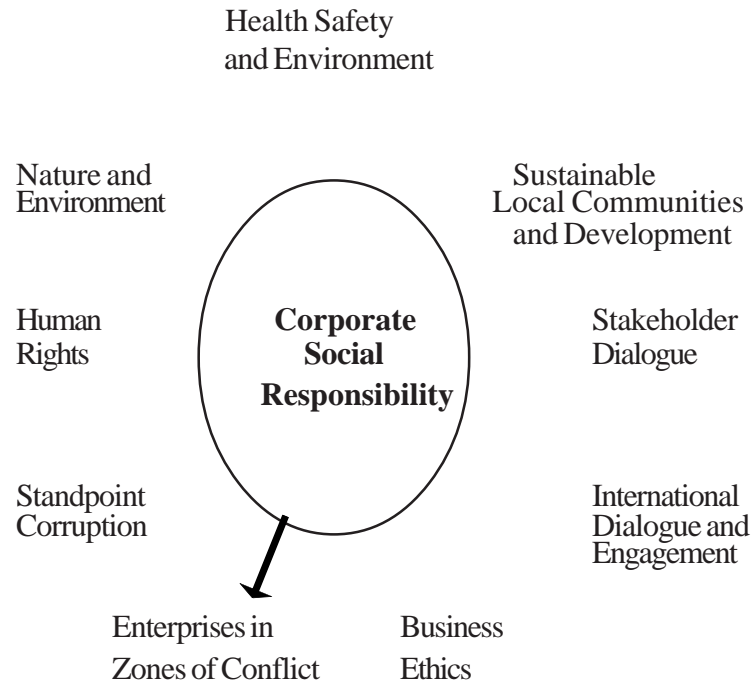
The question that one can legitimately pose at this point is: In what way is the use of some kind of stakeholder management as a means to achieve marketplace success different from the classical view? If stakeholder theory does not give any primacy to one stakeholder over another, there will be times when some groups will benefit at the expense of others. The problem that then arises is which groups would be given preferential treatment? One can say that the classical view is purely economic in nature, and presents a clear differentiation between economic and social aspects, whereas stakeholder management perspective brings to-gether social economic and environmental aspects.

Jensen (2001) argues that what he calls “enlightened value maximization” and “enlightened stakeholder theory” may be thought of as identical. Enlightened value maximization uses stakeholder theory to consider that a company cannot maximize value if any important stakeholder is ignored or mistreated. However, it maintains as the criterion for making the requisite tradeoffs among its stakeholders long-term value maximization. Enlightened stakeholder theory considers long-term value maximization or value as the objective function of the company, thereby solving the problems that arise from considering multiple objectives, as in traditional stakeholder theory.³¹

Proponents of stakeholder theory, such as Freeman et al. (2004, p. 366), question the alternatives available for managers to create shareholder value other than “by creating products and services that customers are willing to buy, offering jobs that employees are willing to fill, building relationships with suppliers that companies are eager to have, and being good citizens in the community”.³²

What is it then that differentiates stakeholder theory from this enlightened value maximization. Freeman et al. (2004, p. 364) argue that the former “begins with the assumption that values are necessarily and explicitly a part of doing business, and rejects the separation thesis”, according to which ethics and economics can be separated clearly. They see a moral dimension to business activity, because economics “is clearly infused or embedded with ethical assumptions, implications, and overtones.” (Carroll, 2000, p. 35) On the other hand, many proponents of the shareholder, single objective view distinguish between economic and ethical consequences and values and see business as an amoral economic activity.³³ The figure below depicts the potential areas impacted by CSR activities. The large reach is also indicative of the power wielded by business in today’s world.

Fig 3 Potential Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility



The figure indicates various areas potentially impacted by corporate social responsibility. The area most feasible for an individual enterprise will vary from situation to situation

CSR and Social Audit.

The dichotomy between economic and social objectives is being challenged because companies do not function in isolation from the society in which they operate. In the long run, then, social and economic goals are not inherently conflicting but integrally connected. Therefore, contrary to Friedman's ideas, managers who undertake social responsibility activities do not necessarily always misuse financial resources that legitimately belong to shareholders.³⁴

Freeman et al. (2004, p. 364) correctly consider that the shareholder, single-objective view "is a narrow view that cannot possibly do justice to the panoply of human activity that is value creation and trade, i.e., business."³⁵ Whereas the shareholder view sees a unique answer, and attributes one objective function to all companies, stakeholder theory admits a wide range of objectives. Freeman et al. (2004) believe that shareholder /stakeholder theories should not be considered as contrasting, in the sense that even shareholder theory can be regarded as a version of stakeholder theory, (op. cit., p. 368). As a particular version of stakeholder theory, shareholder view's moral presuppositions can be seen as including "respect for property rights, voluntary cooperation, and individual initiative to improve everyone's circumstances. These pre-suppositions provide a good starting point, but not a complete vision of value creation."



Sundaram and Inkpen (2004, p. 356) recognize that decisions to enhance efficiency can be by corporates to increase shareholder value and impose the costs on other stakeholders. They seriously object to this and imply that it is an 'acceptable trade-off'.³⁶ According to stakeholder theory such costs are unacceptable unless it can be proven that benefits for the society outweigh them. It is important to note that existent deviations between short run impacts of business activities and the long run alignment of business and social interests in wealth creation leave ample scope for abuse or market power and irresponsible conduct (Windsor, 2001, p. 250)³⁷. Furthermore, "the leitmotif of wealth creation can easily lead to both moral misconduct and financial manipulation ultimately destructive of social purposes and stakeholders' welfare." (ibid.)

The concern for CSR has been expanded to include a concern for social responsiveness. The responsiveness focus suggests more of an action oriented theme by which firms not only must address their obligations but also must decide on basic modes of responding to these obligations. The interest in CSR extends beyond the academic community. On an annual basis, Fortune magazine polls executive on various dimensions of corporate performance; one dimension is called 'social responsibility'. The council on economic priorities published a land mark report which further heightened public interest in the social and ethical domains of business performance. The business enterprise trust now gives awards for exceptional social performance. Business for social responsibility, promises to be on cutting edge of CSR practice.

Finally the social conscious or ethical investing movement seems to be flourishing. This indicates that there is growing body of investors who are sensitive to business's social and ethical (as well as financial) performance. Studies of the relationship between social responsibility and economic performance do yield consistent results, but social efforts are nevertheless expected and are of value to both the firm and the business community. Social audit is a systematic attempt to identify, measure, monitor and evaluate an organisation's performance with respect to its social efforts, goals and programs.

In fact, more than a dozen companies are drawing up or in the process of implementing a social audit of the impact of their business on stakeholders. The motivation is only partly altruistic; most of these companies have come to the conclusion that businesses that understand their impact on key stakeholders can mould a healthier, more productive corporate culture. In other words, a regular social audit can actually strengthen the bottom line. Major corporations in the US first began considering social audits in the 1970s, mostly as a response to the nascent consumer and environmental movements. In the past decade, however, there has been a resurgence of interest in social auditing driven by the so-called 'green business' and 'ethical investment' communities that come to prominence with highly publicized boycotts of firms doing business in South Africa. The net of corporate social performance criteria has expanded to include issues like diversity, philanthropy, community service and the environment. The social audit methodology based primarily on stakeholder surveys, focus groups and interviews. Its strategy encourages a company to create specific measurement criteria. In this way, a company can monitor its progress in meeting the goals or "social mission" it sets for each stakeholder group. This helps to identify critical social and ethical information needs of management and stakeholders generally. These corporate "best practices" also help facilitate what has been called "ethical strategic planning."

To date, there are approximately a half dozen social audit models that have been or are currently in use: • social balance sheet which prevailed in the 1970s; • social performance index similar to ethical investment scorecards which assign rankings or numerical ratings to social issues; • independent social assessments such as the early Ben & Jerry's reviews or "The 100 Best Companies" series; • stakeholder surveys, a dimension of the NEF approach; • benchmarking by objectives, also

employed by NEF and more commonly in environmental audits • disclosure reports which evaluate companies on their disclosure of critical information of stakeholder concern.³⁸

Corporations may be well served to carefully consider which of the various approaches, individually or in tandem, are best suited to address their internal needs and public disclosure objectives. It is imperative that a social audit go beyond a review of a company's stated mission. A successful social audit requires a company to demonstrate its commitment to publicly disclose information about company operations and its responsiveness to solve problems uncovered by the audit. There are also indications that management emphasis of ethical qualities as an important part of a company's governance and control structure is strongly and positively associated with measures of corporate performance in both financial and non-financial dimensions. Most critically, a social and ethical evaluation should appraise the effectiveness of control mechanisms, how the company monitors its ethical compliance and whether an independent corporate board exercises ethical oversight.

Most believe that CSR issues will increasingly permeate the board room whether as a risk management issue or as a more fundamental issue pertaining to the nature and purpose of the company. The overall trend towards greater accountability of corporations, not just in financial matters, but regarding impacts on society will have a big impact on how this drama is played out. The renegotiation of the accountability boundaries of business will be further advanced by the appointment of independent directors from more diverse backgrounds resulting in increased consideration of CSR factors in governance, at both the risk and value levels.

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An Empirical Analysis of Disclosure and Performance of Indian Microfinance Institutions

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Abstract

The paper examines the performance of Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) that practice different levels of transparency. A disclosure-performance framework is proposed to explain the difference in performance of MFIs observing different level of transparency in reporting their organizational performance. The proposed framework holds that intent behind transparency is to increase MFIs' visibility to funders. Since the funds at the disposal of MFIs are limited, they look for external funding to expand their operation and avoid liquidity crunch. Funders need to evaluate the financial, social and organizational performance of MFIs before committing their funds. This makes it imperative that MFIs disclose accurate and periodical performance. MFIs start practicing higher level of transparency and report their data for evaluation by funders. With adequate funding support, MFIs are able to achieve their financial as well as social objectives. With time MFIs observing higher transparency level outperform their peer group.

Based on data reported to Microfinance Information Exchange (MIX), Indian MFIs are divided into high disclosure and low disclosure categories. Independent sample t-test is employed to test the statistical significance of difference in performance variables for the two groups. Findings support the proposed framework in that better performing MFIs belong to high disclosure group. High disclosure group has better financial and social performance; however, organizational efficiency is not too different for the two groups. Also, size of firm influences the level of transparency.

1. Introduction

Voluntary disclosure is a topic of global discussion as a number of researchers study voluntary disclosure practices in developed and developing economies. While some study voluntary disclosure in relation to corporate governance (Eng & Mak 2003; Chaua & Gray 2002; Haniffa & Cooke, 2002), others focus on the factors influencing corporate disclosure by firms (Barako, *et. al*, 2006; Stocken, 2000; Meek, *et. al*, 1995). Other studies concentrate on internet reporting practices of corporate firms (Debreceeny, *et. al*; 2002; Ettredge, *et. al*, 2000; Kelton & Yang, 2008). The literature, by far, is focused on public listed companies and few studies have been conducted in microfinance industry to examine the disclosure practices followed by MFIs (Agarwal & Sen, 2009; Gutie´rrez-Nieto, *et. al*. 2007).

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Microfinance industry, earlier referred to as microcredit, has come of age to be known by its present name as the product basket now includes more financial products such as micro savings, micro insurance, money transfer, etc. Various research studies provide sufficient evidence to establish that microfinance is by far the most effective institutional innovation to address the issues of poverty in developing countries (Brau et al. 2009; Haque & Yamao, 2009; Hoque, 2008; Hiatt & Woodworth, 2006; Tilakaratna & Wickramasinghe, 2005; Pitt and Khandker, 1998; Khandker, 1998).

Microfinance Institutions (MFIs) differ from other business organizations in that they have two sets of objectives to achieve, social and financial objectives (Hartarska & Nadolnyak, 2007). Social objectives require providing financial services to maximum possible number of poor people at affordable price, and financial objective mandates financial self-sustainability. While the social objective is supposed to supersede the financial objective, there are apprehensions that in order to maintain sustainability, MFIs compromise their social objectives by lending to better off section of society. However, empirical studies have not found conclusive evidence on that (Mersland & Strom, 2010; Christen & Drake, 2002; Rhyne, 1998).

The two objectives are not mutually exclusive, but co-existing as the high degree of sustainability helps MFIs gain access to more funds. MFIs expand their activities and reach more number of poor, and provide innovative products and services at affordable price, hence serving their social objective as well (Rhyne, 1998).

MFIs largely rely on external funding support from donors/investors. In order to commit their funds to an MFI, funders/donors need to develop trust in an MFI. Humphrey and Schmitz (1996) note that trust plays a significant role in various forms of exchanges that take place in financial markets. To win the trust of funders/donors, MFIs need to follow transparency in their performance reporting. Gutiérrez-Nieto & Serrano-Cinca (2009), through their quality-loyalty model of microfinance, provide that transparency serves as an antecedent of trust of microfinance funders. Transparency is the degree of visibility and accessibility of MFI information (Zhu, 2004). It increases visibility of MFIs to their funders, and hence, increases the number of donors who provide funds to them (Tucker, 2001).

Therefore, high level of transparency regarding financial position and timely disclosure helps in gaining high level of trust of funders which is desirable for continued funding by the investors/donors in competitive markets. Funders/donors need to have access to the information on performance of MFIs on financial and social parameters, which serves as criteria for selection.

In order to qualify for donation/funding MFIs publicize data/information in organizational reports, websites or databases. Donors/investors examine the performance and take funding decision. Gutiérrez-Nieto & Serrano-Cinca (2009) note that high quality financial and social performance leads to high loyalty of the donors/funders. With improved funding, MFIs perform better on financial and social parameters. To gain trust of funders, MFIs improve their level of transparency by disclosing more relevant, timely and accurate information. The cycle goes on and more transparent MFIs become financially sustainable and achieve social objectives as well.

1.1 Proposed Disclosure-Performance Framework

Based on above discussion, this paper proposes disclosure-performance framework that holds that intent behind transparency is to increase MFIs' visibility to funders. Since the funds at

the disposal of MFIs are limited, they look for external funding to expand their operation and avoid liquidity crunch. Funders evaluate the financial, social and organizational performance of MFIs before committing their funds. In order to qualify for funding support, MFIs start practicing higher level of transparency and report their data for evaluation by funders. With adequate funding support, MFIs are able to achieve their financial as well as social objectives. With time MFIs observing higher transparency are able to outperform their peer group. This process results in improvement in performance of MFIs that are more transparent. (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Proposed Disclosure-Performance Framework

In simple words, transparency in performance reporting leads to improved performance of MFIs. Proposition stated above is tested for MFIs operating in India. Based on data reported to Microfinance Information Exchange (MIX), 99 MFIs operating in India are divided into high disclosure and low disclosure categories. Independent sample t-test is employed to test the statistical significance of difference in performance variables for the two groups.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 states the objective statement for the study. Section 3 discusses the research methodology adopted for analysis. Section 4 and 5 provide the results and findings of the study, respectively. Section 6 concludes the paper and provides directions for future research.



2. Objectives of the study

The paper identifies the factors that differentiate between two groups of microfinance institutions. Specifically, the difference in performance of MFIs observing different level of transparency has been tested for statistical significance.

The objective of the paper is to compare the financial, social and organizational performance of high disclosure and low disclosure groups of MFIs operating in India.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Sample and Data

The microfinance industry is not regulated by legislation in India and there are no mandatory periodical disclosure requirements for MFIs. The financial data disclosure is voluntary as of now. However, in competitive markets, seeking funds from donors/investors mandates periodical financial disclosure. MFIs depend heavily on donors'/investors' funds and therefore, engage in voluntary financial disclosure.

The Microfinance Information Exchange (MIX) promotes microfinance transparency by collecting financial, operational, and social performance data from over 1900 MFIs around the world, reviewing it for coherence and consistency, and reclassifying according to international financial reporting norms. MIX serves as the information platform for investors, networks and service providers in the microfinance industry. It was incorporated in 2002 in Washington, DC, by Consultative Group to Assist Poor (CGAP) and operates as a non-profit organization.

There are over 1000 MFIs operating in India (George, 2011). However, only 140 MFIs reported their financial data to MIX across different years as of September 2011. Out of these, 99 MFIs were included in the sample for this study. For better conclusions, data across three years i.e. 2008-2010 was collected for the sample MFIs. Not all MFIs reported their data across all three years. Therefore, different number of firms is analyzed for three years of the study. For 2010 data for 99 MFIs was available, whereas for 2009 and 2008, 88 and 95 MFIs were analyzed.

3.2 Variables

Level of information disclosure and transparency was measured by a diamond rating system followed by MIX. The rating system defined five levels of transparency based on quantity, quality and frequency of information reported by MFIs (Table 1). High disclosure group included the MFIs that were awarded four or five diamond rating, and the rest of MFIs were included in low disclosure group.

Agarwal & Sen (2009) categorized MFIs with five diamond rating as high disclosure group and all others as low disclosure group. For the present study, however, no significant qualitative difference was assumed between five and four diamond ratings, as was assumed by Hartarska (2005) and Tchakoute-Tchuigoua (2010).

Description of different levels of transparency as specified by MIX is as follows:

Table 1: Microfinance Information Exchange Transparency Levels

Diamond	Extent of Information Disclosure
Diamond 1	General information
Diamond 2	Diamond 1 + outreach data (at minimum, data for two consecutive years)
Diamond 3	Diamond 2 + financial data (at minimum, data for two consecutive years)
Diamond 4	Diamond 3 + audited financial statements (at minimum, audited financial statements including auditors' opinion and notes for at least two consecutive years)
Diamond 5	Diamond 4 + rating or other due diligence report (at minimum ratings/evaluation, due diligence and other benchmarking assessment reports or studies for one of the two years reported)

After dividing the sample in to high disclosure and low disclosure groups, performance of the two groups was compared using independent sample t-test. A total of nine variables were used to represent different dimensions of performance (Table 2).

Following the previous studies, financial performance of MFIs was measured by profitability and sustainability indicators; and social performance was measured using breadth and depth of outreach (Bruett, 2005; Lafourcade et al., 2006; Hartarska, 2005; Cull et al., 2007; Mersland and Strom, 2009, 2008). Following Tchakoute-Tchuigoua (2010), commercial performance in terms of profitability was also included in the analysis.

Financial performance was measured by return on assets (ROA), operating self sufficiency (OSS) and commercial success i.e. profit margin (PM). In line with previous studies, social performance was measure in terms of breadth and depth of outreach which were represented by number of active borrowers (NAB) and average loan amount (AL), respectively. Organizational efficiency was measured by operating expenses ratio (OER) and the cost of credit per borrower (CPB). Two firm specific variables were also included in the analysis, namely, firm size (TA) and solvency ratio (CAR).

Return on assets (ROA) measures the capacity of an MFI to use its assets to generate a return. MFIs operate in four organizational forms which include Non-governmental organizations,

Non-banking financial corporations, Village Banks and Credit Unions. ROA was used instead of return on equity to measure the economic performance as it eliminates the effect of different capital structures (Tchakoute-Tchuigoua, 2010; Bruett, 2005).

Operating Self Sufficiency (OSS) is the capacity of the MFI to cover its costs with its available revenue. It measures performance of MFI in terms of self-sufficiency and indicates how well an MFI can cover its costs through operating revenues. It measures a management's ability to run the organization and cover operating costs without making use of subsidies.

Another indicator of financial performance is the success on commercial parameters. Apart from donations, investment is also a source of funding for MFIs. These investors are interested in profitability status to estimate the return on their investment. Profit margin is used to assess the commercial success of MFI (Tchakoute-Tchuigoua, 2010).

Two dimensions of outreach, breadth and depth have been used widely in microfinance literature to measure social performance of MFIs. (Mersland & Strom, 2009, 2010; Hartarska, 2005; Cull et al., 2007; Hartarska and Nadolnyak, 2007). Breadth of outreach is measured by number of active borrowers i.e. number of individuals that have an outstanding loan balance with the MFI. Depth of outreach concerns the MFIs' objective of providing credit to the poorest section of society. Cull et al. (2007) define the depth in terms of average loan per borrower where a low average loan indicated loans to poorest segments, and high average loan indicates that better off sections of people are being catered to. A weak depth of outreach indicates failure to reach the poorest borrowers (Schreiner, 2002).

Organizational efficiency refers to the efficiency of management to run the organization and mainly deals with the costs incurred in extending credit to the borrowers (Tchakoute-Tchuigoua, 2010). Two measures, namely, operating efficiency and cost per borrower are used in this study. Operating efficiency refers to operating cost to gross portfolio ratio indicating the necessary cost for an MFI to provide credit to borrowers. Cost per borrower gives a clear measurement of the efficiency of the institution by showing the average cost to serve a borrower over a year. The lower the ratio, the more efficient is the institution.

Table 2: Variable Definition

Performance	Category	Variable	Definition
Financial Performance	Economic Performance	Return on Assets(ROA)	(Adjusted Net Operating Income-Taxes)/Adjusted Average Total Assets
	Operational Self Sufficiency	Operating Self Sufficiency(OSS)	Financial Revenue/(Financial Expense+ Impairment Losses on Loans + Operating Expenses)
	Commercial Success	Profit Margin (PM)	Net Operating Income/ Financial Revenue

Social Performance	Breadth of Outreach	Number of Active Borrowers(NAB)	Number of Borrowers with loans outstanding adjusted for standardized write-offs
	Depth of Outreach	Average Loan (AL)	Average outstanding loan per Borrower
Organizational Efficiency	Efficiency Ratio	Operating Cost to Revenue (OCR)	Operating Cost/Average Gross Portfolio
	Cost Per Borrower	Cost Per Borrower (CPB)	Operating Cost/Average Number of Active Borrowers
Firm Specific Variables	Size of Firm	Total Assets (TA)	Natural Logarithmic of total assets adjusted for inflation and standardized provisioning for loan impairment and write-offs.
	Solvency Ratio	Capital to Assets Ratio (CAR)	Total equity/ Total Assets

Firm specific variables influence the performance of a firm. The study uses firm size and asset structure as two variables indicating firm characteristics. Firm size is measured by the value of net total assets and asset structure is measured by solvency ratio (total equity to total assets).

3.3 Hypotheses

The disclosure of performance of MFIs assumes great importance since a huge amount of donor money is available to be tapped by MFIs in developing countries. Donors decide to fund MFIs based on their performance. Diamond & Verrecchia (1991) and Levitt (1998) associated good financial disclosure by MFIs to higher investor confidence, hence leading to better performance. Berguiga (2008) had directed to test whether information disclosure had a positive effect on financial and social performances of MFIs.

Gutiérrez-Nieto, Gutiérrez-Nieto, & Fuertes-Calleón (2007) linked for-profit MFIs to higher online financial disclosure. In another study, Agarwal & Sen (2009) had concluded that performance of MFIs didn't differ with respect to disclosure practices. They had found no significant difference in return on assets, operating self-sufficiency, and profit margin of MFIs observing high and low

level of disclosure. However, Ashraf & Hassan (2011) noted that higher disclosure MFIs were more likely to have better governance and hence higher profitability. In order to strengthen the above discussion, we test following hypothesis for difference in financial performance of high disclosure and low disclosure groups of MFIs:

H1: High disclosure group has significantly higher ROA than low disclosure group

H2: High disclosure group has significantly higher OSS than low disclosure group

H3: High disclosure group has significantly higher PM than low disclosure group

As regards social performance, Psico & Dias (2007) noted growing concern of donors about social performance of MFIs in terms of reaching more number of clients and avoiding mission drift. Gutiérrez-Nieto & Serrano-Cinca (2009) had also noted that while financial performance transparency exhibited sustainability of the MFI to the investors, donors required social performance transparency. In their research, Ashraf & Hassan (2011) had found that clients were more likely to respond positively towards MFIs with higher disclosure; hence better disclosure could lead to higher outreach. We frame following hypothesis to relate disclosure practices to two most widely used social performance measures:

H4: High disclosure group has significantly higher number of borrowers than low disclosure group

H5: High disclosure group has significantly lower average loan than low disclosure group

As noted by Ashraf & Hassan (2011), higher disclosure appealed to more clients and hence led to higher outreach. Increase in scale of outreach should reduce the costs and lead to efficiency. However, Agarwal & Sen (2009) noted no significant difference in operating expenses of high disclosure and low disclosure groups of MFIs. But they noted a difference in efficiency i.e. cost per borrower. We also test the two measures of efficiency for the two microfinance groups:

H6: High disclosure group has significantly lower OER than low disclosure group

H7: High disclosure group has significantly lower CPB than low disclosure group

Gutiérrez-Nieto, Gutiérrez-Nieto, & Fuertes-Calleín (2007) had found that large MFIs disclosed greater amounts of information as compared to their smaller counterparts. Also, Agarwal & Sen (2009), based on empirical results, had concluded that bigger and more aggressive firms opted for more voluntary disclosure. They had found significant difference in size of firm and solvency position of MFIs observing different disclosure levels. On similar lines, we test the following hypothesis in Indian context:

H8: High disclosure group has significantly higher total assets than low disclosure group

H9: High disclosure group has significantly higher solvency ratio than low disclosure group

4. Data Analysis

The sample data was explored to test the assumptions of normality and outlier data points were excluded from the analysis. Due to removal of outliers, number of firms analyzed differs across

the years or variables. Log transformations were used for two variables, namely, number of active borrowers (NAB) and total assets (TA), to satisfy the assumption of normality.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics reveal that high disclosure group has higher ROA, OSS and PM than the low disclosure group with the exception of PM for the year 2010. NAB and AL are greater for high disclosure group. Cost per borrower is higher for higher disclosure group. Operating expenses ratio is higher for high disclosure group except for the year 2010.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Disclosure Category	2008			2009			2010		
		N	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.
ROA	low	23	0.023	0.027	34	0.018	0.035	42	0.008	0.050
	high	40	0.027	0.025	37	0.036	0.023	54	0.013	0.031
OSS	low	39	1.051	0.310	37	1.036	0.276	41	1.103	0.159
	high	46	1.211	0.302	43	1.261	0.244	51	1.113	0.154
PM	low	37	0.022	0.283	39	0.006	0.589	41	0.097	0.130
	high	45	0.156	0.150	38	0.207	0.130	54	0.073	0.165
NAB	low	38	4.239	0.706	43	4.392	0.653	41	4.594	0.520
	high	47	4.933	0.722	44	5.139	0.701	55	5.164	0.877
AL	low	35	102.46	46.76	40	132.43	34.92	39	130.00	31.63
	high	47	137.34	74.80	41	149.17	35.95	55	180.36	122.54
OER	low	24	0.085	0.050	40	0.123	0.096	43	0.221	0.136
	high	41	0.165	0.185	44	0.156	0.133	55	0.195	0.138
CPB	low	21	9.29	6.08	35	20.91	19.06	38	17.97	10.68
	high	38	19.50	17.73	41	20.56	16.89	52	22.33	14.68
TA	low	44	6.352	0.690	42	6.639	0.608	44	6.652	1.036
	high	48	7.066	0.773	45	7.456	0.718	55	7.389	1.161
CAR	low	42	0.253	0.267	43	0.180	0.139	44	0.221	0.136
	high	48	0.229	0.233	44	0.247	0.215	55	0.195	0.138

Firms with greater total assets belong to high disclosure group. Also, high disclosure group uses lesser equity capital to finance their assets except for the year 2009. Descriptive statistics show a difference in performance of two groups, however, it is appropriate to evaluate the statistical significance. Independent sample t-test is employed (at 5% significance level) to examine the statistical significance in difference in performance of the two groups.

4.2 Results

Hypotheses formulated earlier have been tested based on results of t-test. The criteria used for accepting a hypothesis is that it must be supported by results of minimum two out of the three years considered for analysis.

Table 4: T-test results for Financial Performance Variables

Category	Variable	t-values at 5% significance level		
		2008	2009	2010
Financial Performance	ROA	-0.601	-2.617*	-0.63
	OSS	-2.399*	-3.873*	-0.305
	PM	-2.731*	-2.055*	0.775
Social Performance	NAB	-4.448*	-5.134*	-3.704*
	AL	-2.426*	-2.126*	-2.504*
Organizational Performance	OER	-2.075*	-1.306	0.114
	CPB	-2.550*	0.086	-1.552
Firm Specific Factors	TA	-4.661*	-5.712*	-3.292*
	CAR	0.446	-1.704	0.942

*results are significant at 5% level

Negative t-value indicates that high disclosure group has higher value for the variable. Results for ROA are significant for only one year which is not sufficient to accept the hypothesis. On the other hand, significant difference is observed in OSS and PM of the two groups of MFIs. High disclosure group has better financial performance compared to its counterpart. On the basis of analysis, H1 is rejected whereas H2 and H3 are accepted.

For both social performance variables, high disclosure group has significantly higher values; however, the interpretation is different. High number of active borrowers indicates better breadth of outreach for high disclosure group, but a significantly high average loan indicates weaker performance on depth of outreach compared to low disclosure group. There is statistical support for H4, however, H5 is rejected.

High disclosure group has higher operating expenses ratio than the low disclosure group. This may be due to the fact that disclosure practices also add to the cost. Cost per borrower is also higher for high disclosure group. However, the results aren't statistically significant for both variables for sufficient number of years. This leads to rejection of both H6 and H7.

High discloser group has significantly higher value of total assets. Asset structure indicated by solvency ratio is not significantly different for two groups of MFIs. Therefore, H8 is accepted, whereas H9 is rejected.

5. Findings and Discussion

5.1 Key Findings

Statistical evidence for difference in performance of two groups is found for five variables, while the difference is not significant for the rest of variables. Significant difference is noted in the financial performance of high disclosure and low disclosure groups. MFIs that belong to high disclosure group have a higher operating self sufficiency and profit margins, which exhibits healthier economic and sustainability position. However, this is contrary to the findings of Aggarwal and Sen (2009) who found similar financial performance by high disclosure and low disclosure MFIs. The contrast in findings can be attributed to the fact that they included only five diamonds rated MFIs in high disclosure group. As a result, an increase was affected in average values of low disclosure group and the difference in financial performance of the two groups was found to be insignificant.

The results indicate that more sustainable MFIs observe higher level of transparency and disclose more consistent information. This supports our proposition that sustainable MFIs are likely to disclose more information to attract more funding.

As opposed to Aggarwal & Sen (2009), significant difference was noted in profit margin of two groups. This indicates relevance of commercial success in transparency level followed by MFIs. This may also be interpreted in the sense that high disclosure group is aggressively seeking profit making as an objective.

A significant difference is observed in breadth and depth of outreach of the two groups. MFIs with higher number of borrowers are likely to be more transparent. Superior breadth of outreach exhibited by high disclosure group shows the perceived importance of social performance to funders. The interpretation is made in light of the fact that the motive of disclosure is seeking external funds.

In terms of depth of outreach, higher disclosure group has weaker performance. A significantly higher average loan size for high disclosure group points to a relatively better off client pool. In other words, it indicates inability of high disclosure group to reach the poorest clients. Rhyne (1998) and Christen & Drake (2002) had stated that with increase in drive for profitability, MFIs seek new customer market. Bruck (2006) noted that MFIs serve less poor as opposed to the very poor which decreases the risk of default, leading to better profitability. This is supported by our earlier finding which indicated that higher disclosure group had higher profitability.

Though a difference is observed in organizational efficiency of the two groups, the results are not statistically significant. Aggarwal & Sen (2009) had also not found any significant difference in total expenses, financial expenses and operating expenses ratios of the two groups.

Larger MFIs disclose more information compared to smaller MFIs. This is clearly due to the fact that bigger firms are more likely to attain economies of scale leading to better financial sustainability. Better performance on sustainability is a prerequisite to gain funding support, hence motivating MFIs to follow superior level of transparency. No significant difference in solvency ratio indicates that both groups have similar asset financial structures. Also, solvency ratio has no bearing on level of transparency of MFIs.

5.2 Discussion

Gutiérrez-Nieto & Serrano-Cinca (2009) propounded that high quality financial performance led to high loyalty by funders. Further, Rhyne (1998) had stated that with access to continued funding, MFIs become sustainable which increases the possibility of achieving social objectives as well. The results of this study provide support for the above cited works and validate the framework proposed in this paper.

The proposed disclosure-performance framework holds that MFIs following higher transparency level are able to outperform their peer group. This proposition is confirmed by the present study in that high disclosure group of MFIs has superior financial and social performance. However, observing higher level of transparency may not improve organizational efficiency.

There are doubts of weak social performance in terms of depth of outreach by the high disclosure MFIs which points to the possibility of targeting less poor borrowers. The intention behind targeting a better off section of borrowers is to avoid risk of default and maintain profitability. While the profitability of MFIs improves by serving a better off section of society, the social mission of reaching poorest remains unfulfilled. It is a matter of grave concern as also highlighted by Mersland & Strom (2010).

Another notable finding is that transparency is related to social success as well as commercial success of MFIs. This means that social performance and sustainability position are both important to the funders. Therefore, MFIs need to strike a balance between social and financial performance to gain continuous funding support.

6. Conclusion

The paper aims to examine the performance of two groups of MFIs with different levels of disclosure. It tests the proposed disclosure-performance framework to explain the difference in performance of MFIs observing different level of transparency in reporting of their organizational performance.

Theoretical framework of paper is supported by the findings. Transparency is related to superior performance by MFIs on financial and social parameters. More transparent MFIs are more likely to win the trust of funders and gain continued funding. Organizational efficiency is not

associated with better disclosure practices. Transparency is related to both social and commercial success of MFIs.

Overall, the difference in level of disclosure by MFIs is attributed to sustainability and outreach. MFIs with better performance on these parameters are more transparent. To maintain this level of sustainability and outreach, MFIs practice transparency which provides them continued funding support. While the donors look for sustainability and outreach, investors may prefer profitability at the same time. MFIs striking a balance between the two have better chance to have continued funding support.

This study compared the performance on financial, social and organizational parameters; however, there are other institutional and economic factors that may affect the disclosure practices followed by MFIs. These include organizational structure, funding pattern, regulatory regime, market competition, etc. Further research may be taken up to evaluate the impact of these factors on disclosure practices.

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An Evaluation of Business Ethics and Human Values: A Case Study of LG Electronics, India

Gagandeep*
Deepak Sharma**

Abstract

Every organization strives to perform better and aims at yielding the desired goals. Despite the profit generation as the prime motive, there are social responsibilities attached to the business players. The words like ethics, values, norms, standards and morality are used inter capriciously in modern era of management and business. The essence of these words personifies soundness of morality. The human values and business ethics plays significant role in shaping and performing these responsibilities. The present study explored the practice of human values and business ethics in the transactions of business internally as well as externally. Further the study imparted the recommendations which can lead to effective implementation of ethics and enforcement of human values in organizations.

Introduction:

Human values and ethics are universalistic in nature. The ethical standards are of pivotal importance in every entity, may it be public or private. All these words are of qualitative aspect which cannot be quantified easily. There are various kinds of software's and hardware's but all these do not hold any importance until man ware is ethical in conduct. Various management experts connote ethical behavior as "governed by beliefs or feelings of what is right or wrong regardless of self interest". The credibility is one of the most crucial factors, one must possess in market to sustain for longer period. The goal of business is to generate profits and one must ensure that organization is working with compliance of business ethics which is acceptable to society. The human values plays significant role in shaping the face of an organization. The cohesion between various departments of organization can be ensured with high moral standards of manpower's working at various levels and resolves wide ranging problems like conflict, disputes , strikes and so on which is crucial for success of every organization. Human values are the greatest asset for an organization and act as determinants its success. In today's world the crises of values are soaring, the problems like maladministration, corruption, neo-nepotism and inter organizational conflicts are proving as hurdle in smooth transaction of business in an organization. The emerging concept of having sound public relations is based on reputed building of firm by assuring its clients about high moral standards. Once the image gets maligned due to poor show of morality on part of organization, it is nearly impossible to recover the same. So there is need to have sound and comprehensive policies for personnel for carrying out the work in desired manner. Every employee of company represents the brand and holds social accountability , so the values should be inculcated strongly and theory of red hot stove should be

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there which symbolically delineates that nobody can evade the punishment, the closer one gets the hotter it feels. Such policies create healthy atmosphere in the organization which in turns provide efficient working environment. Every wrong doing starts from degradation of values and thus the role of values can be rightly termed as key to panacea in an organization.

Meaning of Human Values and Business Ethics:

Human values and business ethics are emergent and developing discipline in context of carrying out business transactions. These words are like coincide, business ethics and comprehensive policies do not carry any weight until human values are intact. The dictionary defines ethics as the study of standards of conduct and moral judgment; moral philosophy, a treatise on this study or the system or code of morals of a particular person, religion, group, profession, etc. The role ethics for every organization holds significant place as it determines its success and pillars for the future. Without these tools, the credibility of organization remains at stake. Basically it comprises rules of business conduct and policies by which respectability of business activities may be judged. Values and ethics go hand in hand to protect society from malpractices like corruption, maladministration and other negative tendencies. With the proper adherence of values and business ethics, business becomes gadget of human welfare. The most acceptable definition of values regards the distinguishing mechanism between right and wrong. It may be inter organization or intra organization. There is great concern of values in society as it is backbone of any nation. The affect of values is so huge in context of quality of work life for every organization. The literal source of values can be traced back from sages, seers, philosophers, thinkers and leaders. Management by values connotes the concept of self in man has to cuddle the various dimensions like spirituality, the creative energies of human beings, intrinsic and enduring motivational strategies, style of leadership and so on. The literature on business ethics is bifurcated on its views about the stimulus and reason for businesses to have an ethical dimension. *Harrison (2001)*, there are two major schools of thoughts, firstly those who advises that firms are profit making institutions and therefore business ethics is yet another way to attract clients, secondly those who support corporate conscience and internal motivation for the inculcation of business ethics but it has been widely recognized that social enterprises need the support of governments and corporations in order to start-up and develop into strong, viable and sustainable businesses, *Burkett, I & Langdon, D. (2005)*. Dynamic markets and munificence are found to be related directly to strategic social positioning and the social responsibility orientation of the firm is related to their social planning. Social positioning is related to value creation for the firm, but social planning is not. *Husted, B. W. & Allen, D.B. (2007)* While Recent conceptualizations of sustainable global development have reflected societal concerns not only with environmental stewardship, but also with social amelioration. However, the tripartite goals of corporate profitability, environmental protection, and social responsiveness are unlikely to be achieved through conventional models of globalization *Simola, S.K. (2007)* Although Principles of social entrepreneurship, based on the idea that the market can be a tool for delivering many values other than profit. *Frances, Nic (2009)*. Business ethics has been considered very subjective in nature and according to *Paul (2001)* is considered a function of time and culture. It has been established that with the time business ethics have developed and also that the cultural values and norms drive business ethics within

national and regional boundaries. One of the major studies regarding the national values has been conducted by Hofstede (1983).

So the significance of values and business ethics is immense. It is very important to have an ideal system comprising comprehensive policies and practice. The nature of business ethics can be divided into five fold structure namely specification of moral judgment, moral judgment and moral standards, justification and adherence of moral judgments, logical reasoning and moral judgment and finally moral responsibilities. The study will explore the standards kept by LG and policies enforced to adhere those enshrined values and bossiness ethics.

Research Methodology:

The study analyzes the various aspects related with business ethics. The study examines the responsibilities and duties towards customers and employee's transactions. Further it assesses the corporate responsibilities and job satisfaction of the employees. To accomplish these objectives, both primary and secondary sources of information have been used. The secondary data has been collected from books, journals, thesis, dissertations, internet, newspapers and annual reports of the organization. The primary data has been collected through questionnaires. On basis of random sampling method 50 structured questionnaires were administered to the customers of urban and rural areas respectively. Appropriate quantitative and qualitative techniques were applied to generate the data in terms of quality. After the analysis of results, the study imparted recommendations for further refinement of values and quality.

Introduction of LG :

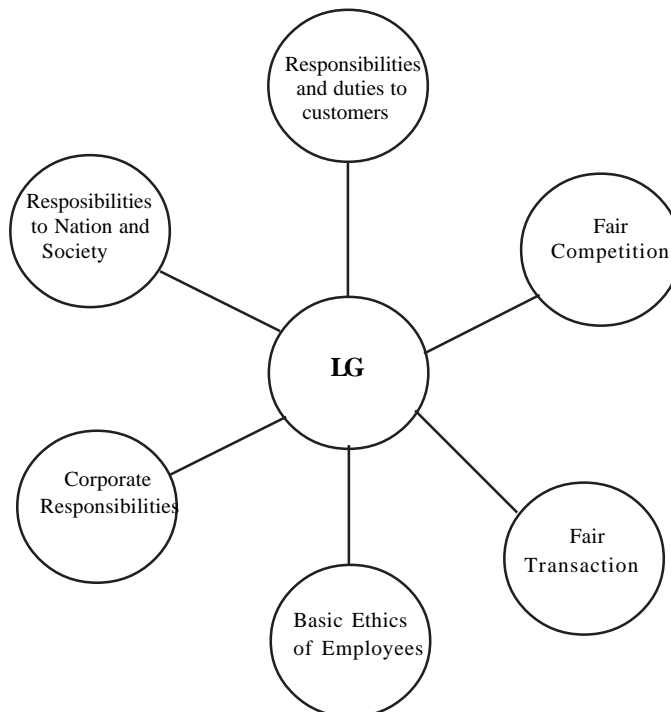
The LG Corporation is South Korea's second largest that produces electronics, chemicals, and telecommunications products and operates subsidiaries like LG Electronics, LG Display, and LG Telecom in over 80 countries. LG Corp founder Koo In-Hwoi established Lak-Hui Chemical Industrial Corporation in 1947. In 1952, Lak-Hui (pronounced "Lucky", currently LG Chem) became the first Korean company to enter the plastics industry. As the company expanded its plastics business, it established Gold Star Co., Ltd in 1958. In 1995, to better compete in the Western market, the company was renamed "LG", the abbreviation of "Lucky Good". More recently, the company associates the letters LG with the company tagline "Life's good".

VISION STATEMENT:

The role of business ethics and human values plays a pivotal role in shaping the perspective of every organization. LG holds distinctive place in global market. The focus of LG is on core values and business ethics in transaction of business. The goal of this management is to ensure long term excellence based on ethics management and true competition. The management is not confined to ethics management only but encompasses in bringing about lasting results. LG signifies corporate culture and its compliance of committing to realizing the company's management policy. The vision statement of LG strives for creating values for customers and respecting human dignity. The JEONGDO

management is unique code of conduct. The vision statement of LG claims to create values for customers and requesting human dignity for smooth value based business transactions. LG claims to be number one with efforts of JEONG DO management and strives to sustain the stand for half of decade, the top boss of LG claims the supreme role of integrity which provide lasting role in context of reputation. The word JEONG DO calls for transparent management. The transparent management serves customers with integrity and strives to build competence through innovation. Respecting human dignity symbolizes equal opportunity for its people.

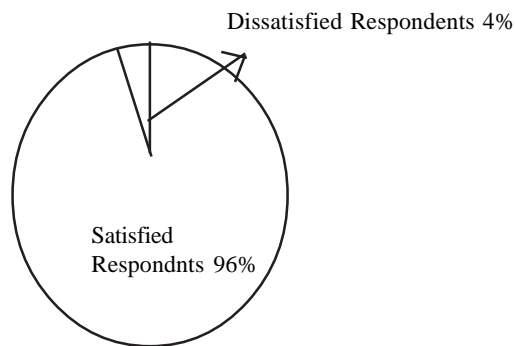
VISION STATEMENT



LG CODE OF ETHICS

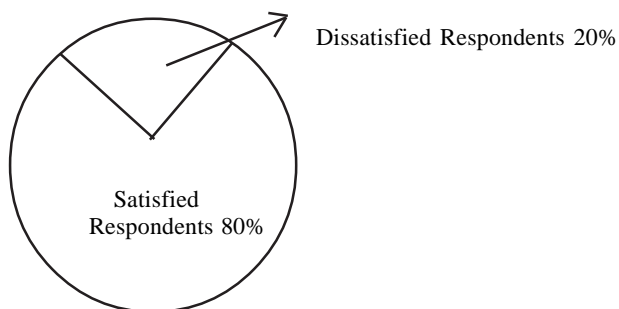
MAJOR FINDINGS:

Responsibilities and Duties to customers: The role of adhering and valuing customers is a key to success for any business organization. The customers are considered as foundation of the business. The LG endeavors to earn unshaken trust in terms of quality and services offered to them. The LG gives great weight age to opinions of the customers and fulfill their practical need at every moment. They regard customer's most important basis for drawing decisions and enumerating conducts. LG provides priority to the customers getting focal importance of the management. LGs judgments are based customers feedback. The unethical acts are omitted from working curriculum. The LG maintains confidentiality and maintain the reverence regarding corrective measures and information received in form of efficacy. The dealing and provision of services towards customers are to found to be ethical and value based. On basis of simple random sampling the questionnaires were administered by the researcher to customers residing in urban and rural areas clearly personifies that LG is providing up to the mark services to them and adhering values as committed at the time of sale and afterwards.



Sample Size = 50

Response of people regarding services provided by LG in Urban Areas



Sample Size =50

Response of people regarding services provided by LG in Rural Areas

Fair Competition:

LG strives to gain advantage through fair methods by traversing the path by respecting laws and regulations. The role fair completion holds significant importance globally by upholding the principle of free market economic system and pursuing the open competition around the world. LG throws open the competition to the market and wins trust of the customers by providing top quality products and least interference in interests of the other competitors by ensuring fair acquisition and prohibiting unfair collusion. LG strictly complies obeys the local laws and regulations as far as business activities in domestic and overseas market is concerned. To ensure this LG makes their employees pledge to refrain from bribery in all transactions.

Fair Transactions:

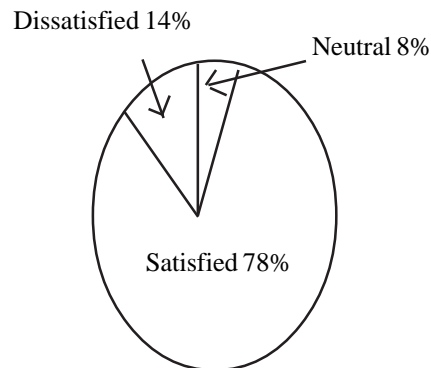
LG guarantees fair competition with equal opportunities to all entities. They seek to build interest through cooperative relationship and transparent transactions. Such transactions are not easy to build as they are based on long term relations and mutual growth. The LG welcomes all qualified companies for shaking hands as business partners. The credibility of LG has found be to very good in the market on the basis of systematic, fair and evaluation process. To ensure this practice LG adopts the policies and principles of impartial selection, not only in contracts but also in simple service contracts. LG ensures that top notch employees shall not exercise their discretionary power to allow preferential treatment or discriminate against any specific company due prejudice. Company's procedures and laws are adhered to the extreme precision to comply with laid guidelines in unavoidable circumstances. There are comprehensive policies enshrining the code of conduct to keep the business fair ranging from changes and approvals. None of the employee can unilaterally violates the terms and conditions of the contract, howsoever influential he or she may be. Such strict policies make the working of LG fool proof and ethical. Mutual growth holds very important place in domain of LG as they offers long term growth of dealers and vendors by enhancing the competitiveness through technological managerial assistance. The management guidelines ensures at the time of pledge to be followed to in letter and spirit. Even the audit department adheres to the core of the JEONG-DO pledge.

Basic Ethics towards employees:

The employees of LG have great trust in company and always maintain honesty and fairness. It can be easily made out from their retention in the company over the years. The work carried out by employees in LG reflects their whole heartedness, trustworthiness and fair manners. This delineates the employees ethics kept by LG is up to the mark. The work efficiency of employees literally contributes to the huge profits earned by the company around the globe. The targets assigned to employees are well achieved with high moral standards and elevated growth. LG focuses on the development of personnel through effective training policies which are critical in making of it. To ensure the fair handling of the job there are various kinds of track records and reports maintained by organization. There are strict instructions to employees to stay away from stakeholders in order to refrain them to yield personal benefits. The policies for employees are user friendly which entitles them all perks, benefits and social securities. To avoid conflict of interest with company LG provides

fool proof framework to zero the inter-organizational conflicts and to ensure the compliance of employees to their policies. The administered questionnaire depicted that employees are satisfied with remunerations, treatment in context of personnel policies and the ethical treatment of employees. The results are as below:

Job Satisfaction Amongst LG personnel



Sample Size = 50

Corporate, National and Social responsibilities:

LG regards all employees as dignified individuals and gives elite treatment to encourage them for achievements and encouraged to express their creativity to its full capacity. LG treats each employee with warmth and trust to individual's dignity. They provide great opportunity to feel pride and personal fulfillment by giving them ownership in job. The evaluations of employees are done in ethical ways and offers great incentives and recognition to make them grow and feel satisfied. There are well laid a policy which protect employees from discrimination on basis of gender, nationality and promotes sufficient cohesion for work culture. The creative environment makes the working and ethical treatment more prevalent. The work culture is developed through mutual trust and understanding. In order to promote and ensure this the suggestions, opinions and complaints are redressed effectively and corrective actions are taken immediately. As far as nation and society is concerned LG contributes through generating employment, tax contributions and promotion of cultural and welfare programs. LG takes appropriate measures to conserve environment by effective compliance of rules and regulations of environment protection by securing anti pollution facilities and operate personnel to avert environmental pollution.

From above finding we can deduce the adherence of human values in form of business ethics and practices carried out at LG which undoubtedly makes them at the top of the world. The satisfaction of customers enriches the organization and makes them grow at the rate of leaps and bounces. The turnover of company exemplifies the tremendous success generated by LG and most importantly adhere the human values and business ethics. The measures taken by LG to ensure business ethics are apt.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS:

Establish an Enforceable Code of Conduct:

A code of conduct, often referred to as a code of ethics, is the foundation of any ethics program. The code of conduct should not be intended as a response to past missteps. An ethical culture is built upon the practical efforts of the organization. The growth of the code of conduct should be led by those at the top of the company, and should also include employees in the process. While ultimately, the tone of the program and the ability to enforce it will be strong-minded by the actions and examples of the executives, when workers have a hand in the code's development, they become owners as well.

Initial and Ongoing Training:

One of the most important aspects of developing an ethical culture is the ongoing training that companies can provide to executives and employees. The purpose of training is to help employees know what is expected of them and to help them understand that a strong ethical culture can protect the company's status and actually enhance profits. Employees need to know that their ethical or unethical choices will have a direct impact on the success or failure of the company.

Effective Communications:

The goal of communications is to make ethics a live, ongoing conversation. In today's global business environment effective organizational communication internal and external has a significant impact on an organization's success. Reasons for the increasing importance of organizational communication are many, with workplace change front and center, if ethics is something that is constantly addressed, referenced habitually in company meetings, and in personal discussion among managers and employees, and then people are more aware and more willing to defend the company's policies when they see or hear of problems. Employees will hold other employees responsible and accountable for living the company's values.

Secret Reporting Hotline:

An anonymous hotline provides employees with a confidential way of reporting unethical or inappropriate behavior. Many people are not comfortable with reporting bad behavior for fear of being considered a "snitch," possible impact if the guilty party learned of who reported him or her, or perhaps impacts on their job

Rewarding Employees that Subsist the Culture:

The ultimate step in developing an ethical culture is rewarding employees that behave ethically and live the culture that the organization is trying to instill companywide. With an ethics policy in place, ongoing training and communications, the ability to report unprincipled behavior and strict enforcement, an organization will have the structure in place that will leave little doubt the importance of ethical behavior.

Conclusion:

Despite the successful working of LG, still there is a need to address the challenges to provide ethical functioning of the giants in the developing nations like India. There is need to reorganize and enforce a code of conduct, effective and ethical public relations, and rewarding employees with subsistent culture, as corporate social responsibility is the voluntary commitment by company managers to integrate social and environmental considerations in their business operations. The inculcation of comprehensive value based policies at the time of inception makes the transaction of business ethical and strong.

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Supply of Electricity in Punjab with Special Reference to the Sustainability of Electricity Supply Systems

Nisha Bhargava^a

Abstract

The study of electricity supply assumes special significance in view of the fact that demand for electricity is rapidly increasing and it is not possible to effectively meet this demand since creating electricity generating capacity involves long gestation lags and intricate planning. The present study, besides reviewing the power scenario in Punjab, evaluates the existing electricity generating options in the state and concludes that our electricity supply systems are not sustainable and are causing deterioration of environment. Moreover, no existing generation option is a clear winner. The study further takes a look at the latest renewable options and suggests that a greater penetration of these technologies is required in the state. There is a need to develop environmentally benign sources of electricity and to completely restructure power systems to yield economic development, energy security, human health and sustainable development. The successful policies and best practices worldwide need to be emulated.

Section I

1.1. Introduction

Electricity is a perishable commodity and its demand and supply are simultaneous. It is an important and non-substitutable input to other goods and services. It powers the main activities of modern world and one cannot imagine life without it. Because of these features of electricity and its non replaceable nature, security of supply is necessary though the era of reforms and liberalisation has reduced the significance of this objective. The study of electricity supply system and its sustainability assume special significance in view of the fact that demand for electricity is increasing at an accelerated rate and it is not possible to effectively meet this demand especially in a developing country like India. As such, increase in supply is not commensurate with increase in demand. Moreover, capacity creation takes a long time because large investments, long gestation lags and intricate planning are required for the same. Therefore, the government has to ensure that neither excess capacity is created nor there is a shortage of capacity.

Nowadays electricity supply is not considered a natural monopoly like earlier times. It varies on hourly, daily, weekly, monthly and seasonal basis. For example, more electricity will have to be supplied during morning and night hours. During the summer season, more electricity will be required in agriculture for irrigation purposes and for cooling of space. During the rainy season,

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supply will decrease depending on the amount of rainfall and during winter season again supply will increase for space and water heating purposes.

Electricity is supplied to various categories of consumers. Agricultural supply includes supply for irrigation pump sets and other agricultural equipment. Industrial supply includes supply of electricity to factories, railways, workshops and mills. Commercial supply is for the shops, offices, business and trade centers. Domestic lighting is for residential areas and the other consumers such as government offices, public buildings and public lighting are included under miscellaneous category. Different categories of consumers need electricity at different times. It implies that there will be a high base load demand and varying peak hour demands. The base load demand cannot be exposed to uncertain supplies and must be covered by assured generation. There have to be standby arrangements to bring in supplies when there is an unexpected power system failure. A diverse portfolio of power stations based on different input fuels e.g. hydro, thermal and gas can reduce the vulnerability of electricity system to changes in prices of input fuels and enhance security of supply.

1.2. Objectives and Plan of the Study:

The major objectives of the study are:

- (i) To review the existing electricity generating options and to assess the sustainability of electricity supply systems.
- (ii) To explore various renewable power supply options and to suggest a policy framework for Punjab state.

The data has been compiled from the Central Electricity Authority, the Statistical Abstract of Punjab and the Energy Statistics of Punjab. The study is divided into three sections. Section I introduces the concept. Section II outlines basic dynamics of electricity supply and the power scenario of Punjab. In section III an effort is made to assess the sustainability of existing electricity supply systems and to explore various renewable options for Punjab.

Electricity supply consists of four components namely generation, transmission, distribution and supply to ultimate consumers. These components are sequential and there are various technological options for electricity generation. A number of studies have analysed the pros and cons of these options.

Bhabha (1957) showed that nuclear power could be cheaper in India when it is located at a considerable distance from coalfields because near the coalfields thermal power will be cheaper. The Energy Survey Committee (GOI-1965) estimated relative costs of generating hydro, thermal and nuclear power. Hydro power was found to be cheapest and also coal-based power was cheap at the pitheads. It remained cheap so long as coal was not to be transported to distant places. Otherwise nuclear power could be the cheaper option. Dayal (1980) also made a case for hydro generation. Tak (1966) observed that hydro stations involved high expenditure during initial years whereas thermal stations needed more investment during later years of operation. Komanoff (1976) studied thermal and nuclear plants and suggested that two smaller plants (of any kind) were better than a larger one because diseconomies increase with size. Ramanna (1983) made a case for the development of nuclear power in India due to the exhaustible nature of conventional sources. He tried to combat the criticism regarding the hazards of nuclear power and asserted that after an initial investment, long-

term energy security will be substantial with nuclear power. Mattoo (2005) and Rejikumar (2005) supported his views. Mian & Ramanna (2005) however, cautioned regarding the costs and risks of nuclear power stations. The authors cited a scientific study carried out in Rajasthan which revealed a high incidence of serious diseases in nuclear power generation areas. Therefore they recommended alternative methods of producing electricity to save environment. Even the late Homi Bhabha, a great nuclear scientist said in 1964, "*Wherever power is needed and it is feasible to generate it by water power, this should be done in preference to other methods.*" Reddy (2005) also made a case against nuclear power and preferred coal for power generation due to its sufficient availability.

Pachauri (2006) cautioned that use of coal for power generation is constrained by mining capacity and transportation bottlenecks which necessitate imports of oil and gas. The author opined that the Indo-U.S. nuclear agreement is crucial for power security and it must reach an early culmination. It is obvious that despite various electricity generation options being available, none is considered perfect. A study by IEA (1998) concluded that no single technique is clear winner economically in all the countries. The technique actually used will depend on fuel availability and relative costs.

Section II

2.1. Supply of Electricity

Electricity is supplied to various categories of consumers using different power generating systems. The supply of electricity primarily involves generation, transmission, distribution and supply to ultimate consumers. Let us take a look at different components of electricity supply.

2.1.1. Generation

Electricity generation refers to state owned generation (both hydro and thermal), power purchased from independent power producers and from central power sector undertakings. As the cost of electricity produced from generating plants varies, power generation plants are arranged in a merit order on the basis of cost and efficiency. The least cost and the most efficient plant starts generation first of all. Less efficient plants start generating power subsequently. It is argued that plants with the highest fixed cost and lowest variable cost should be operated maximum (i.e. these should be used for base load generation) and the plants with lowest fixed and high variable cost should run minimum (these are ideal for peak load generation). However, it is not always possible due to different types of constraints.

The concept of regional planning and operation was adopted in India during nineteen sixties. Five regions were identified for the purpose of electricity generation and transmission. Almost two third of generating capacity in India is owned and operated by the states through the state electricity boards or electricity departments. A significant part of electricity is generated by central power undertakings. However, states also own generating stations. Despite the opening of generation to independent power producers in 1991, the contribution of private sector to total generating capacity is comparatively non-significant.

2.1.2. Transmission

After generation, electricity is transmitted and distributed to consumers. A modern transmission system requires minute-to-minute coordination among generation, transmission and distribution points for efficient and smooth working of the system. Voltage and frequency fluctuations

have to be kept at minimum level. There are some features due to which transmission grids have remained natural monopolies over a relatively large geographic area. Transmission distance can be very long and cover hundreds of kilometers. Voltages are raised to very high levels for transmission purpose because at high voltage, transmission losses are minimised. At the sub-station, again voltage is lowered using transformers before finally distributing electricity to ultimate consumers. Nowadays the transmission lines within the grid are not natural monopolies, at least in advanced countries. Two transmission lines may efficiently and economically run more or less parallel to each other. This technical feature implies that transmission services can be provided by different owners within a single interconnected network. The modern transmission systems allow power exchange over long distances and thereby establish an electricity system where power can be traded among states, geographically dispersed plants can be operated at least cost and reserve capacity can be utilised. These features mean that in most locations, electricity traded over inter-regional transmission grid is vastly cheaper than locally generated power.

2.1.3. Distribution

Distribution is transportation of electricity at lower voltage to a specific group of end users. State Electricity Boards/Distribution Companies (public or private) perform the distribution function. Distribution is cheaper and economical in densely populated areas and expensive in sparsely populated and hilly/ difficult terrains. A single distribution network can serve only a few people. In India, central government is not involved in distribution. Consequently, states own the distribution companies. Distribution is considered a natural monopoly because duplicate distribution lines would be uneconomical due to high fixed cost of investment. Distribution system consists of distribution lines and sub stations. In India, most of these lines are overhead. It is better to have them underground because overhead wires are a visual irritant. Besides they are prone to breakage and distribution losses. The distribution sub stations are typically of 11 kilowatt and 33 kilowatt capacity.

2.1.4. Supply to Ultimate Consumers

More recently, the onset of power sector reforms has encouraged the emergence of supply or sale of electricity to ultimate consumers as a separate and distinct function. It includes metering and billing of power consumed. It can also comprise of activities such as consumer information, advice and financing. Supply of electricity can be wholesale or retail.

Transmission and Distribution (T&D) losses constitute an important segment of supply line. Higher the share of these more is the requirement to enhance installed capacity. But it is not always easy to get the details of this component as it is often used for absorbing diverse political pressures. Mostly the released figures are not reliable. For instance, these losses in Punjab have suddenly jumped with change of guards in the state; currently agricultural supply has become free but part of its weight appears to have been passed on to as T&D losses.

The basic objective of all the components of power system i.e. generation, transmission and distribution is that they should work in close coordination to generate enough power at the most viable cost using the most economical mode and also provide it to the consumers by ensuring regular supply and a reasonable price. In fact different parts of electricity supply are inter-related but their relationships are very complex. Sometimes, generation and transmission act as complimentary services as transmission is necessary to make generated electricity reach end-users. At other times they may act as substitutes for each other as larger transmission network may allow power to be

available from another generator. Resultantly the need for self generation may be reduced. Different climatic regions may have peak demand at different times and the systems may have surplus power during rest of the time which can be exchanged among regions if adequate transmission infrastructure is available. The larger the interconnected area, the cheaper will be the supply and vice versa.

2.2. Power Sector of Punjab

The present study focuses on Punjab, a small Indian border state that has progressed remarkably due to green revolution and its hardworking people. It is believed that power development facilitated the advancement of the state by providing uninterrupted power supply for irrigation and hence ushering in green revolution in the state. Today both the industry and agriculture are dependent on power. Besides this, the living standards of people of the state are improving day by day and the demand for power is also increasing every year (Bhargava & Gupta 2007).

For quite some time the power sector of Punjab has been facing many problems (Bhargava and Gupta, 2006) such as serious power shortages, mounting debt, high T&D losses, insignificant capacity additions and many more. It has been observed that the problems of power sector are partly due to untargeted free/subsidised power supply to agriculture which has subsequently led to wastage of power as well as water and also due to the nonpayment of compensation by the state government to power utility for free of cost electricity supply. Unlike other market commodities, the price of electricity is not determined by its demand and supply rather various other socio-political forces are at work. Power development, which initially acted as a catalyst in the development process of the state has, of late, become an impediment. Table I depicts some power development indicators in Punjab State.

TABLE (1): SOME POWER DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS IN PUNJAB STATE

Year	Annual Per Capita Electricity Consumption (kilowatt hour)	Plant Load Factor of Thermal Plants (%)	No. of Pump sets Electrified	Share of Agriculture in Total Power Consumption (%)	Transmission & Distribution Losses (%)	Power Purchased (million units)
2001-02	802	79.2	829114	27.97	26.25	4220
2002-03	816	73.5	857559	28.33	25.07	1556
2003-04	854	76.5	880902	28.46	25.33	1413
2004-05	937	77.5	912889	27.53	24.27	2281
2005-06	941	79.0	931209	28.73	25.07	2405
2006-07	968	83.0	970139	29.52	23.92	4327
2007-08	1076	87.89	981157	31.22	22.53	6020
2008-09	1033	87.62	1032616	28.65	19.91	5184
2009-10	1131	82.4	1105517	31.00	20.12	4653

Sources: 1. Govt. of Punjab, *Statistical Abstract of Punjab*, various vols.
2. The Central Electricity Authority, New Delhi.

The table indicates that the per capita consumption of electricity in the state is steadily increasing. The Plant Load Factor (PLF) of thermal plants that indicates the utilisation rate of plants is also increasing due to our increasing dependence on thermal power. Today there are more than 1.1 million electrified tubewells in the state therefore the share of agriculture in total power consumption is quite high. A significant percentage of total power generated is lost in transmission and distribution. Further, due to negligible capacity additions and also because of mounting demand, a lot of power is purchased from out of state at high costs. These unsustainable practices have existed in the state power sector for a long time now and have led to the precarious condition of power sector. Following the recommendations of the Expert Group on Power Sector of Punjab, (Haldea-2003), the Govt. of Punjab took the initiative to reform the Punjab State Electricity Board. The reform process is already under way and the Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission (PSERC) was constituted in March 1999. Though the Punjab State Electricity Board has not been privatised, yet it has been bifurcated into two corporations namely the Punjab State Power Corporation Ltd. (PSPCL) and Punjab State consumers in Total Electricity supply in Punjab during different years: Transmission Corporation Ltd. (PSTCL). Table (2) shows percentage share of various categories of total electricity supply in Punjab during different years.

TABLE (2):

PERCENTAGE SHARE OF VARIOUS CONSUMER CATEGORIES IN TOTAL
ELECTRICITY SUPPLY IN PUNJAB DURING DIFFERENT YEARS

Year	1970-71	1980-81	1990-91	2000-01	2008-09
Category					
Domestic	9.77	11.74	13.60	22.02	22.16
Commercial	5.22	3.29	2.74	4.74	6.51
Industrial	35.96	38.09	36.26	41.95	36.85
Public lighting and others	11.05	3.27	4.53	2.44	2.48
Agriculture	38.00	43.66	42.87	28.8	32.00
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Govt. of Punjab, *Statistical Abstract*, various vols.

The table indicates that during the previous decade, a marked change in the pattern of electricity supply has been observed in Punjab. During the 1980s, supply to domestic consumers was only 11-12 percent of total supply and today its share has increased to 22 percent. On the other hand share of agriculture which used to be 43-44 percent of total supply in 1981, has come down to 32 percent in 2009. It is not that supply to agriculture has actually reduced. Earlier, due to unmetered supply to agriculture, T&D losses were clubbed with agricultural supply but since the beginning of reforms, losses have significantly increased and agricultural supply has come down.

Section III

3.1. Sustainability of Electricity Supply Systems

Various electricity generating options are available in India namely thermal, hydro, nuclear, wind and solar among others. India's electricity generating capacity is predominantly thermal followed by hydro, nuclear, wind and solar in that order. Let us now take a look at the features of various options available for electricity generation. Table (3) shows a comparative analysis of various electricity generating options:

TABLE (3): A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PARAMETERS SHOWING THE IMPACT OF VARIOUS ELECTRICITY GENERATING OPTIONS*

Mode Parameter	Hydro	Thermal	Nuclear	Solar	Wind	Gas
I. Technical						
(a) Scale	Large/Small	Large	Large	Small	Small	Large/Small
(b) Peak/Base load	Peak/base	Base	Base	Occasional	Occasional	Peak
(c) Auxiliary consumption	2-3%	8-10%	11-12%	Nil	Nil	3-5%
(d) Fuel Used	Renewable	Non-renewable	Non-renewable	Renewable	Renewable	Non-renewable
(e) Availability	A Few Months during year	Moderate	High	Low	Low	High
(f) Life (Years)	50	30	30-40	N.A.	N.A.	10-15
(g) Start up Time	Low	High	High	High	Low	Low
2. Economic						
(a) Cost						
(i) Fixed Cost	High	Less Than Hydro	High	High	High	High
(ii) Variable Cost	Low	High	High	Low	Low	High
(iii) Fuel Cost	Zero	High	High	Zero	Zero	High
(b) Gestation Lag (Years)	Large: 10-15 yrs Small: 3-5 yrs.	3-5 yrs.	6-10 yrs.	1-2 yrs.	1-2 yrs.	1-2 yrs.
(c) Efficiency (%)	85-90 % if water available	35-40%	30-35%	Low	60%	45-50%

3. Social

(a) Displacement	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
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4. Environmental

(a) Pollution	No	Yes	Yes	No	Noise & Visual	Low
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(b) Geological impact	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Low
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Table compiled from various research studies and websites.

*=N.A. stands for information not available.

It is evident that the life of a hydro station is about fifty years compared to thirty years for thermal plants. Basically, hydro plants are preferred to thermal plants as they can be switched on and off at short notices. Therefore they are ideal for peak load generation. The advantages of hydropower are manifold. It saves on fuel costs and depreciation rate of plants is low. Moreover, their operation and maintenance expenses are also less. Some hydro stations do not need a dam and are built on the stream. They are small in size and are suitable at rivers, which have an assured water flow whole of the year.

There are some controversial issues about hydropower. Some consider hydropower to be cheap, clean, renewable and having high potential whereas there are others who question these claims. The fixed costs for hydro stations are very high and their ecological impact is devastating. Despite being considered ideal, the huge reservoir based dams cause large areas to submerge underwater; they can cause earthquakes and affect migratory movement of fish and have long gestation lags. The most serious impact of dams due to which they are opposed bitterly is that millions of people get displaced when their homes are submerged under water and they are not adequately rehabilitated.

As far as thermal power stations are concerned, the fixed cost and gestation lags of thermal stations are less than that of a hydro station. But the variable cost and auxiliary consumption is very high. Moreover, thermal generation levels cannot be varied as easily as hydro generation because electricity is generated with the help of steam and sudden reduction of temperatures is not possible. Therefore, these stations are ideal as base load stations. Due to high transport costs and high ash content, their overall efficiency and availability is much lesser than hydro plants. They also pollute the environment by releasing various gases into the atmosphere. There are people who prefer thermal power to hydro considering the fact that India has coal reserves which are sufficient to last for two centuries. Still the problems relating to rate of production, transportation and quality of coal have resulted in substantial difficulties in expanding coal based generation.

It is evident from the comparative study of various generation options that despite a large number of options being available, no technology option is the clear winner economically in all circumstances. Specific circumstances within the economy will determine the most economic choice.

The state of Punjab is not resource rich for generating power. The state does not have coalmines, natural gas, tidal power and oil. Coal is transported from distant eastern states to produce thermal power. Due to distant location from sea and due to low velocity of winds the scope for wind and wave energy is nil. There is wide scope of solar energy. However, this source has not been commercially exploited on a large scale as yet (Bhargava et al. 2009). The use of non-commercial sources of energy such as biogas and wood is negligible. For a long time, the state of Punjab has been demanding a nuclear plant. However, the proposal of nuclear plant could not materialize because Punjab is a border state. Recently, the proposal was revived yet it was stalled due to opposition of the local people because of the controversial nature of nuclear power. The main sources of power in the state have been hydro and thermal electricity. Three rivers –Ravi, Beas and Sutlej flow through the state and are exploited to produce hydroelectric power. However, recently, there has been a problem in hydroelectric power generation due to fall in water levels in the rivers of Punjab. During the year 2010, out of total power generated in the state, 28 percent was hydro and 72 percent was thermal. Considering the drawbacks of thermal power generation, it is evident that the power generation practices in the state are not sustainable.

3.2. Renewable Options

Due to the unsustainable nature of our power generation practices, proper consideration needs to be given to non-conventional energy sources as there is a persistent increase in demand for power in all the sectors of state economy.

Worldwide concerns are growing that the conventional sources of energy will be depleted sooner or later. Therefore, research is going on to explore and develop alternative sources of energy. Pachauri (1977) has outlined the possibility of developing solar energy in India in the areas with a large number of sunny days. In another study, however, he (1980) has advocated the development of conventional energy sources because non-conventional sources are too expensive. He has concluded that India has many options to choose from in this regard and has suggested a rational price structure to manage energy demand variations. Hedley (1986) also reaches similar conclusions. Reddy & Prasad (1977) have explored the feasibility of adopting alternative energy sources (e.g. solar and wind) in Indian rural conditions. They, however, state that such equipment could be within the reach of affluent sections of society only. McGown et al. (1980) have analysed the ways and means to obtain clean and abundant energy. The study discusses the advantages and disadvantages of various fuels such as nuclear, solar and geothermal and gives tentative time and money limits regarding various aspects of energy development and use. The authors offer a unique solution i.e. to use hydrogen as an energy medium. Twidell and Weir (1986), having made a detailed study of the renewable energy resources, point out that these sources are much better than fossil fuels because they are less harmful to the environment. The study stresses the fact that economising the use of energy and using it efficiently is very important. Another study by IEA (2005) analyses the latest technologies in the field of energy and emphasises on the need of private participation in development of non-conventional energy.

The state of Punjab has abundant solar energy and biomass/agro-residue sources which can be exploited for power generation. The recovery of energy from waste is a very cost effective option. Keeping in view the abundant availability of sunlight in the state, there is ample scope for solar generation. Now-a-days, concentrated solar power (CSP) technology (IEA, 2005) is being developed in many countries. This technology uses large sun-tracking mirrors to concentrate solar radiation. However, the final steps of generating electricity using these systems are similar to conventional energy generation. Electricity generation depends on steam or gas to rotate turbines. In a CSP system, steam or gas is produced by concentrated solar radiation. These systems provide the cheapest electricity to be generated using solar power. Presently, Solar Photovoltaic (SPV) is another renewable technology which can produce adequate amounts of electricity in a cost effective manner without any moving parts resultantly ensuring a very long life and zero ecological disturbance. This technology is particularly useful for making lanterns, water pumps, street lighting and domestic lighting systems etc. The solar water pumps are totally pollution free and require little maintenance. In Punjab, they can be particularly helpful in managing heavy agricultural demand for electricity.

There is a new kind of dams i.e. pumped storage dams which have two reservoirs- one upstream and another downstream. Water from downstream reservoir can be pumped to upstream reservoir if need be. These smaller power stations are more preferred today as compared to large dam based stations. Moreover as hydro potential has almost been exhausted in Punjab, these recent technological trends of pumped storage development have opened up possibilities of developing a number of sites where seasonal hydro generation is possible.

The combined cycle gas turbine is another cost effective generation option. In particular, while single cycle gas turbines are operated during peak load hours, combined cycle gas turbines have become the base load generating option. They also require less time span to install additional generating capacity. These developments may act as supply enhancing catalysts and improve price elasticity of electricity supply. Traditionally, electricity supply had low price elasticity due to long gestation period of construction of power stations.

These days another kind of generation is in practice, i.e. the captive generation or distributed generation where generation is done at the site of use. An important benefit of such generation is that it prevents the transmission and distribution losses which, under Indian conditions, amount to about thirty percent of the cost of delivered electricity. Distributed generation takes the form of generator sets and power inverters. However, at present, this option is not very cost effective and further research is needed in the area. Apart from renewable energy programs, electricity conservation is also gaining ground these days as it is said that one unit saved equals two units generated.

The state Govt. has established the Punjab Energy Development Agency (PEDA) for initiating the innovative use of solar, biogas and other non-conventional sources of energy and to publicise the means for conserving energy. However, there is still a lot to be done to promote the use of renewable power sources because though PEDA has started working in this direction yet there is a lack of awareness among masses regarding the use of and access to renewable options. Even the basic equipment such as solar cooker and solar lanterns are not within the reach of masses. In the absence of publicity campaigns and development of renewable energy on a mass scale, sustainable power development is not possible in the state.

Policy Implications

An important policy implication of electricity supply analysis is that sufficient generating capacity needs to be created to meet the ever-increasing demand in Punjab. Though the state government should encourage private participation in power sector yet it should not wait for private sector to come and install power stations. Rather it should itself take urgent initiatives in that direction. The present study concludes that each and every kind of existing power generation has some kind of adverse environmental impact. Besides, Punjab has exhausted its hydro resources and thermal electricity has many drawbacks. Therefore, renewable and environmentally benign sources particularly solar power (as the state enjoys a large number of sunny days), small hydro and electricity from waste should be explored. Though renewable energy technologies may appear expensive initially, rigorous research and mass production is likely to cut costs. Moreover, energy conservation measures should be promoted as they can reduce demand for new capacity addition at a fraction of cost of adding new power plants besides reducing environmental pollution. If possible, locally available resources should be used on priority basis. The successful policies and best practices worldwide need to be emulated. It is hoped that in coming years, the growth of power sector of Punjab will be commensurate with the development of the state and non-conventional/renewable power generation technologies will have a greater share in total power generation in the state.

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Khaph Panchayats in Haryana

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Abstract

The Khaph and Sarv Khaph was a system of social administration and organization in the North-western Indian states such as Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, NCR and Uttar Pradesh since ancient times. They, however, have continued to flourish and retain their age-old hold in the present times. These traditional and extra-constitutional institutions co-exist with the modern and constitutional institutions such as PRIs within the similar spatial dimensions. However, the certain decisions of Khaph Panchayats and the political support they have gained reminds of the urgency to rethink their perceived role in perpetuating caste discrimination, oppressions and exploitation in everyday life. The protests against the diktats of these self-proclaimed institutions as the “keepers of socio-cultural norms” have questioned their legitimacy and challenged their decisions. The present paper, therefore, attempted to analyze the role of these institutions in the socio-cultural environment of rural areas in the state of Haryana. The paper, however, is a much limited attempt to understand the interaction within the caste fold by contextualizing it in the recent assertions of Khaph Panchayats.

INTRODUCTION

The Khaph and Sarv Khaph was a system of social administration in the North-western Indian states such as Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, NCR and Uttar Pradesh since ancient times. Khaph is a term used for a social - political grouping constitutes a cluster of villages united by caste and geography. A unit of khaph takes care of the social affairs of almost 84 villages from the same caste. The Khaph panchayat governs the Khaph formed by same Gotra (clan) families from several neighbouring villages. They had been created by upper caste Jats, dated back in the 14th century, to consolidate their power and position. They aimed at regulating the society in a ‘certain’ way to keep the traditions intact and to strengthen the ‘*bhaichara*’ (brotherhood) among the community.

There have been four kinds of traditional panchayats in rural north India, viz, caste panchayat, village multicaste panchayat, the farmer-retainer panchayat and any single-purpose panchayat. These traditional panchayats upheld the four cornerstones of rural life i.e. *aikya* (unity), *izzat* (honour), *biradari* (community) and *bhai-chara* (brotherhood). They mainly dealt with issues threatening the peace of villages, disputes over property, inheritance and sexual/marital transgressions. They have remained active in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh but have lost their influence in Punjab.

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These self-styled panchayats have several peculiarities. *Firstly*, they are all-male dominated institutions. *Secondly*, their appeal and effectiveness have been massive because powerful elements in their deliberations and acknowledged their decisions. *Thirdly*, the kind of punishments these panchayats handed out for transgressions have been archaic. The various forms of punishments could be “fines (nomi-nal or substantial), ritual ex-piation, public humiliation (ranging from blackening of the face, to rubbing the vic-tim’s nose into the dust, shaving of the head and dipping the victim’s nose in human urine), forcing him or her to host a feast; subjecting the victim to a beating; forcing him or her to visit the elders in the village and give a public assurance not to err in the future. Banishment from the caste was the harshest punishment and it was seldom resorted to earlier”. However, it has been seen that this form of punish-ment is frequently used in recent times. The trend of decisions by caste panchayats clearly highlighted its patriarchal nature, devoid of social justice. Hence, the village and *biradari’s izzat* stood above that of individuals.¹ However, this is not to suggest that khap panchayats are directly involved in the murders but they have been responsible for the same in indirect way. Besides, there have been instances when khap panchayats have not been involved and couples have been killed mostly by the family and relatives of the girl; however in such instances, the fear of social punishment and defame cannot be negated.²

In Haryana, traditionally, the rural areas had the institutions of bhaichara panchayats. These panchayats were controlled by landowning castes of the villages for adjudication of disputes and for performing local government functions. The 73rd Amendment Act, nevertheless, provided for the establishment of a uniform pattern of Panchayati Raj institutions. However, it has been seen that the effectiveness of statutory panchayats remained “shallow” whereas traditional panchayats have made their presence felt on social issues. This could be attributed to the fact that the caste system continued to play a crucial role in the rural areas. The value and norms that govern the relationship of rural society and regulate its behavioral patterns, by and large continued to be dictated by the caste. The caste system had, further, been institutionalized through the Khap Panchayats, since time immemorial. Henceforth, khap panchayats have emerged as a largely retrogressive and parallel law enforcing agencies. They used their united power for repressive ends than egalitarian or democratic ones. These are extra-judicial custom based and tradition bound institutions.

The caste panchayats have a three tier structure. A number of villages grouped themselves into a Gohand (corresponding to the present thana area): a number of Gohands formed a Khap (covering an area equal to a tehsil or in many cases a district): further a number of Khaps formed a ‘SarvaKhap’ embracing a full province or state. At what level a panchayat should gather varies depending upon the magnitude of the problem and the territory involved. The Khap Panchayat, therefore, exists at the intermediate level while the Gohand exists at the lowest level and a Sarvakhap at state level.

In khap panchayat, people from different gotras and castes get representation. However, the power has been generally retained by the dominant caste leadership and the lower caste people are not given membership. The khap members have rigid approach towards women, as they do not give representation to them. Generally, the village residents collectively elect their panches with consensus (except women). The old and respected people become panches as they are believed to have enough experience and knowledge of the customs and traditions of the village or rural society. All these elected panches then elect one member amongst themselves as their president whose power is supreme. The caste panchayat though have no reservation system. However, the families possessing strong political background or muscle power continued to be the members of caste

panchayat. Hence, they have the power both to influence and revise the final decision taken by the panchayat.

No formal or regular mechanism of appeal from a judgment made at one level to a council of broader scope has been developed. A man dissatisfied with the judgment could bring his case to a larger panchayat if only he could influence and persuade the elders to reconsider the case. In cases of differences between members of the dominant caste groups and lower caste groups, the former are able to prevail upon the latter and enforce their decisions. The latter are threatened either of economic sanctions or of physical violence.

Khap panchayats, irrespective of other constitutional institutions, have continued to enjoy strong foothold in Haryana. This could be attributed to the following reasons: *Firstly*, despite of urbanization and industrialization of Haryana region, the bulk of Jats remained highly traditional owing to their predominantly conservative culture. Consequently, the kinship ties based on the belief of descent of the clan from a common ancestor kept them tied to this traditional institution. *Secondly*, the statutory panchayats have failed to replace the leadership of khap panchayats. Even the constitutionalization of the panchayats by the 73rd Amendment has failed to bring about any difference in this context because of the lack of political will in the successive ruling dispensations in Haryana. This has further, resulted in incomplete devolution of functions to these institutions. *Thirdly*, the strength of khap panchayats and their unreasonable decisions may be traced to the identity crises suffered by a large section of Jats owing to the fragmentation of landholdings and the breakdown of the joint family system. As a result, most of the Jat landowners have become marginal farmers and find agriculture non-profitable. They fear of losing their land either due to increasing indebtedness or that their lands might be acquired by the government. This would mean not only loss of land but also loss of their *zamindars* (landowners) status, which is their proud caste identity and thereby joining the ranks of the landless from the backward castes and the scheduled castes. It is this psychological state that is being exploited by the traditional leadership of khap panchayats. *Fourthly*, khap panchayats remained strong because the major political parties have not take up the cause of marginal farmers owing to their class character, and the leftists could not do so as they have not been politically strong in Haryana. Further, with the advent of liberalization, privatization and globalization since the last decade of the 20th century, the Jats find it difficult to keep pace with the changing socio-economic conditions. Hence, their disenchantment with the leaderships of political parties and conventional politics has increased their dependence on the institution of khap panchayats. *Lastly*, the weakness of the political parties has been responsible for strengthening of khap panchayats. The personality- and family-based political parties of Haryana – the Congress, the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) – do not have strong organizational structures. Consequently, some of their leaders have no hesitation in wooing khap panchayats, which has influence over the Jat voters. Further, even politicians who do not seek their support for winning the elections too lack the political will to curb these extra-constitutional institutions. The development which posts the court judgment against the perpetrators of the honor killings in the Manoj-Babli case clearly brought to light the magnitude of political patronage enjoyed by khaps. Soon after the judgment, the Kadiyan and the Sarv Khaps demanded amendment in the Hindu Marriage Act constraining marriages on the same basis as the khaps do. It has been seen that politicians across political parties like ex- Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala belonging to the Lok Dal and current Congress MP and leader of its youth brigade, Naveen Jindal, have openly supported this proposal of the Sarv Jatiya Khap and promised to support the resolution for amendment of the Act in the legislature.³

KHAPPANCHAYATS: A RETROSPECT

The khap panchayats earlier known as *Ganas* are reported to have come into inception not only as a social system but autonomous political unit long ago. The available literature pointed that the khap panchayats come into being in the ancient times as the mean to sort out social problems. Basically, they had been the remnants of the tribal councils constituted by different tribes for the settlement of their inter-tribal and intra-tribal disagreements. Besides, these institutions were retained by them not only for the internal maintenance but also for facing the external threats as well; to set bargains with the rulers in Delhi. Further, khap panchayats have been multi-caste or all-caste bodies being attended by the representatives of all the castes. Therefore, they enjoyed hold not only over the same gotra but also on other gotras that resided in the same region. However, in present times they have become purely Jat institutions but not prevalent among the Bagri Jats (area falling in Hisar and Mahendergarh regions).⁴ They have been followed by large masses out of respect or may be out of fear. During ancient times, they fought against the unnecessary internal interference of Afghan invaders and rulers. The role of Khap Panchayats was not only positive but relevant at that time. Khaps also played an important role during medieval times.

The autonomy and authority of khaps in social life was reported to have been recognized by the Mughal emperor Akbar. However, khap panchayats fought against the repressive religious policies of Aurangzeb. Their existence was also recognized by the British. During the British rule, the autonomy of these institutions was repressed and they played an active role in the revolt of 1857 and supported the last Mughal Bahadur Shah Jaffar as the emperor of India. As a result, khaps were crushed and no single meeting had been held from 1858 to 1947. However, they continued to play limited role in the social arena.

After independence from 1947 to 1967, their role in political activities of Haryana region (that time part of composite Punjab) had increased. However, it remained limited when compared with the role played by them in the post 1967 period in the politics of Haryana, as a separate state. In addition, they also remained active during Emergency and the movement for prohibition etc. At present their role in politics of the state has increased to an extent that they have been even fielding their own candidates along with providing electoral support others political parties and leaders. In recent times, they, however, have come into limelight due to their certain decisions related to the institution of marriage in rural areas.⁵

KHAPPANCHAYATS: AN ANALYSIS

Khap Panchayats and Panchayati Raj Institutions

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 provided for the establishment of panchayati raj institutions. However, it could be seen that the Khap panchayats in Haryana have continued to play a strong role in village administration. This could be attributed to the inherent weaknesses of the PRIs. Despite the enactment and implementation of the Haryana Panchayati Raj Act (1994), devolution of the powers of 16 departments to the PRIs through the Notification of 1995, the extension of powers pertaining to 12 departments through the instructions of 2000-2001 and the release of the Document on Activity Mapping on February 17, 2006, for the devolution of functions, functionaries and finances of 10 departments, the constitution of the District Planning Committee on December 4, 2007, and the grant of enhanced honorarium to the office-bearers and members of the PRIs to institutionalize the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment (1992), the PRIs remain underpowered.

Further, due to absence of any judicial power or authority, they are in no position to challenge the authority of khap panchayats.

Moreover, the leaderships of these institutions of grassroots governance have not at all cared to take up the role of social development. This has left the field of control over social intercourse to khap panchayats. Further, the politicization of these panchayats in the post-Independence period has made them indispensable vote banks. The caste-based power struggle that acquired commanding heights after Haryana attained statehood has further enhanced their value. This explains why all political parties, with the exception of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), have not cared to raise their voice against this menace.

II. Khap Panchayats and Honour Killings

The Honour or the “izzat” is the central reason for the functioning of these caste panchayats. The preservation of the caste purity has been the foremost objective of these caste panchayats. This archaic law ingrained in the mind and actions of rural folks motivate them to uphold caste linkages and force them to have closer surveillance on the happening of martial alliances. As already mentioned that Khap panchayats governed the Khap formed by same Gotra (clan) families from several neighbouring villages. Thereby all boys and girls within a Khap are considered siblings. Love marriages are, hence considered taboo in areas governed by Khap panchayats. Those living in a Khap are not allowed to marry in the same gotra or even in any gotra from the same village. Many young couples have been killed in the past defying khap rules. Khap panchayat imposes its writ through social boycotts and fines and in most cases end up either killing or forcing the victims to commit suicide. All this is done in the name of brotherhood and its honour. It is due to the inherent weakness of democratically elected Panchayati Raj institutions that khap panchayats have become powerful. Even the government has not done much to control their power.⁶

According to D. R. Choudhary, a scholar from Haryana, “The practice of honour killing is prevalent in a feudal set up with tribal hangover — Haryana, Delhi dehat, western Uttar Pradesh and Punjab and some areas in Rajasthan near Delhi and in Islamic countries. About 300 women are killed every year in Pakistan and the corresponding figure in Bangladesh is more than 200. Yemen, a small country, had about 400 cases of honour killing in 1997. According to one estimate, about 10 per cent of murders in Punjab and Haryana fall in the category of honour killing.”⁷

In Haryana, numerous instances, from time to time, have highlighted the conservative mindset of Khaps with regard to marriage. A khap panchayat of Jhajjar district⁸ Kadian Barah, took the controversial decision to eject a family of Gehlot Jats of Dharana village for allowing the marriage of a young male member to a Kadian girl of Siwah village in Panipat district by violating the custom that prohibits marriages between clans that have ties of brotherhood. Again, in 2006 the Sheoran Khap expelled a Punia couple from Jevali village in Bhiwani district for violating the traditional norms for marriage. Earlier, the panchayat had decided to boycott the 36-odd Punia families on the same grounds. The khap panchayat agreed to revoke its boycott after the families, including the parents of the bridegroom, gave an undertaking that the couple would not be allowed to enter the village. These are just the few examples that elucidate the inhuman activities undertaken by Khaps.

Further, the advocates of these self proclaimed Adalats believed that khap panchayats are not doing anything illegal. According to them, “Khap panchayats are complimenting customary law and it is the right of khap panchayats, rather their fundamental duty as well, to abide by the customs.”⁹ They validate the actions of such bodies while arguing that marriage within the same Gotra are strictly prohibited therefore, the actions of khap panchayats are not being inconsistent or derogatory

to the Constitution. For them “If khap panchayats do not impose restrictions, then violators will destroy the society and create chaos.”¹⁰

III. Khap Panchayats and Political Leadership

The Khap panchayat has become an exclusive preserve of the Jat community. They try to perpetuate their hegemony in the rural hinterland by using khap as a cover. The task is, further, facilitated by the patronage extended to them by political leaders who treat them as vote bank. This nexus explains the studied silence maintained by top political leaders in Haryana on Khap atrocities irrespective of the party affiliation.

The nexus between the Khap Panchayats and politician have made them a strong political force too. In Haryana, the Khap Panchayats has derived their strength from the weaknesses of political environment. Educationist Virender Phaugat says, “khap do not meddle in politics per se but political leaders of all hues can be seen attending meetings of the panchayats on various issues. Even if no party directly approaches khaps for support, they do not dare oppose any khap decision either.”¹¹

It is, therefore, evident that the Khap Panchayats do not directly participate in political matters, however, no political party and politicians have the courage to take step to curb them. None of the important political party except CPI (M) has raised the voice against the self proclaimed predominant institutions. But, unfortunately CPM do not have much say in the politics of the state. This could be attributed to the fact that Khaps have a strong hold over majority of Jat votes. Hence, due to the fear of losing votes and caste support base, there is lack of political will to oppose them and the political leaders silently support the inhumane decrees of the Khaps i.e. decrees of murder of married couples or declare the man and woman as brother and sister or force the family to oust from the village.¹²

The magnitude of their strength could be judged from the fact that even the Chief Ministers, from time to time, have been found accepting their dominance as the ‘keepers of the social norms.’ Om Prakash Chautala, the former chief minister of Haryana, declared to the aggrieved complainants in 2004 that “whatever the (caste) panchayat decides is right”. Even, the Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh has been found unlikely to take bold decisions in the interests of rule of law or to meet the ends of justice. He reportedly said, “These are social situations. If we take any rash step, it can have an adverse impact on the law and order situation in the state. We have assured the concerned families that they will be protected”¹³ However, the Ved Pal Mor’s brutal death at the hands of the mob succinctly highlights the shallowness of such assurances and at the same time questions the submission of constitutional institutions before the non-constitutional entities.

Hence, it is quite obvious that these social institutions would continue to assert their hegemony as long as they enjoy the political support. Even the new generation of politicians could be seen obliging the khap panchayats by according due appreciation to their role. The Congress MP Navin Jindal, in a letter to the khap representatives, acknowledged the existence of khap panchayats since the time of rulers such as Asoka and Harshavardhana and said they had always given a “new direction” to society. He declared his support to them by saying that the panchayats had been rendering yeoman service to society by resolving people’s problems even before the present-day legal system came into existence. As if to balance his unqualified support of their undemocratic

diktats, he urged them to take up issues such as female feticide and dowry. However, he did not support the undesired dictates of these bodies.

D.R.Choudhry pointed that at present Khap panchayats has become an exclusive preserve of the Jats community. While using these institutions in indirect support of the political leadership landed peasantry at times tries to assert itself to establish its hegemony in rural Haryana. This to an extent also explains the silence of political leadership over the issue. Besides, the CPM and its women wing, Samsher Singh Surjewala, a senior Congress politician from Haryana is the only exception who has taken a outspoken against khap. Khaps at present represent the shadow of the past which are unconstitutional and with no legality in functioning. Women, nearly the 50 percent population along with weaker sections of the society, have no say in them. But these institutions more often than not issue fatwas which affect them the most. They have undermined the judicial system and PRIs.¹⁴

IV. Khap Panchayats and Government

The Indian judiciary, in recent times, has undertaken a serious note of the diktats issued by such self styled bodies. While hearing a case related to a PIL filed by an NGO, Lawyers for Human Rights International, the Punjab and Haryana High Court Chief Justice Mukul Mudgal, had made it amply clear that khap panchayats are not above the law and the Constitution. He firmly asserted that “Are you trying to say that khap panchayats are above the Constitution? This is not Afghanistan, this is India. Talibani courts cannot be allowed here”. Further, advocate Navkiran Singh, for the NGO, said that khap panchayats are an affront to the establishment of judicial system. “The diktats of these panchayats cannot be allowed in a democratic set-up,”¹⁵

Another landmark achievement of the judiciary has been the verdict in the sensational Manoj-Babli murder case on March 30, 2010. After three years of the murder in June 2007, a Session Court awarded the death sentence to five persons who were accused of kidnapping and killing young couple. The court also sentenced life imprisonment to two others, one of whom was a khap panchayat leader of the Barwala gotra. Manoj and Babli, both Jats, had apparently violated the norms of village and gotra exogamy and were brutally done to death. A dominant khap in the area had ordered that the couple be killed. This was the first time that a Court in Haryana awarded capital punishment in an “Honour Killing” case.

Ever since the judgment, khap panchayats have been demanding an amendment to certain sections of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, in order to prohibit same- gotra marriages. Khap panchayats have been on the offensive, fearing of similar verdicts in other cases of honour killing. On April 13, representatives of over 20 khaps met at Kurukshetra and demanded a ban on same- gotra marriages.

Nevertheless, in view of their social significance, The Union Law Ministry has refrained from taking a head-on position regarding the banning of khap panchayats. The Union Law Minister M. Veerappa Moily has, however, overruled the question of making any change to the Hindu Marriage Act, and indicated that a strong deterrent against khaps issuing death diktats would be set in place. Further, the Ministry appears to be seriously contemplating to do away with the 30-day notice period required to register marriages, including inter-caste, inter- community and inter-religious ones, solemnized under the Special Marriage Act, 1954, a long demand of women’s organizations.

Further, to tighten the noose on Khap panchayats, the Union Home Ministry has proposed a stringent law. The proposed law will make all Khap members accomplice in the crime, besides bringing all such cases under the purview of murder (section 300 of the Indian Penal Code).The ministry has circulated the draft of the ‘Indian Penal Code and Certain Other Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2010’, to bring changes in the IPC, Indian Evidence Act, 1872, and the Special Marriage Act, 1954, and put a leash on the spate of honour killings in recent times.

The Union Home Ministry wanted to bring such killings under the purview of murder and have in place a proper definition of dishonour or perceived dishonour. Under the new law, “dishonour” has been explained as acts such as adopting a dress code unacceptable to family, caste, clan, community or caste panchayat; choosing to marry within or outside gotra, caste, clan, community and engaging in sexual relations unacceptable to family, caste, clan, community or caste panchayat.

Further, a new section -105A- will be inserted in the Indian Evidence Act. The new IPC provision will make Khap members accomplice in the crime and prosecute leading members of caste panchayats. During the trial, the burden of proof will be on the accused instead of the victims. The ministry felt that since caste panchayats are informal bodies with no legal status, the members of caste and clan should be treated as accomplices in the crime. The new law would view all members of the caste panchayat ordering the killing deemed guilty by virtue of their association with such a body, whether or not they supported the act.¹⁶

Further, the Supreme Court had issued notices to the Centre and the Haryana, UP, Punjab, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh governments seeking information on steps taken to stop honour killings. On the positive note, the initiation taken by Rajasthan regarding control over khaps is worth appreciating. It has become the first among nine states to reply to the Supreme Court as to what measures it proposes to take to curb the khap menace. It has said in no uncertain terms that it won't tolerate any unwarranted diktats coming from khap panchayats. The state government has directed every SHO to immediately register FIRs against the perpetrators and even detain them under the National Security Act of 1980. Not only that, its path breaking affidavit provided that if the police received information about the khap panchayat torturing a couple from sources other than official, top echelons of the district would be held responsible.

Ironically, not only Rajasthan, but other states like Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi also need to act more emphatically. Nevertheless, 96 per cent of the honour crimes of the country are being reported from these states. As out of the 121 honour killings in the past two years, as many as 48 took place in Uttar Pradesh and 41 in Haryana. Thus, the situation demands action against the extra-constitutional groupings so that individual freedom and choice can be protected.¹⁷

The state governments could no longer act as a mute spectator and are required to deal firmly with khaps. While an amicable solution to the problem cannot be negated, as the individuals cannot be left at the mercy of a set of people who have assumed to themselves the authority of law. Exemplary punishment for those responsible for intimidating the couple would deter other so-called khaps from violating the law of the land. Khap panchayats have no legal standing and cannot be allowed to function as a parallel judicial system.¹⁸

In 2006 the Haryana Institute of Rural Development (HIRD) had organized awareness workshops at various district headquarters for sensitizing the elected representatives of panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) on the issue on the directions of the State government following a letter sent by Union Minister for Social Justice Meira Kumar to Union Home Minister Shivraj K. Patil demanding strict curbs on the illegal activities of khap panchayats.

The elected representatives of the PRIs were told at the workshops, organised between July 7 and July 26, 2006, in the Jat-dominated districts of Kaithal, Jind, Sonapat, Rohtak, Jhajjar, Hisar and Bhiwani, that khap panchayats were relevant in the absence of a constitution, a government, administration, judiciary, the police and elected PRIs and that they had been obsolete in the present constitutional, political, administrative and judicial context, more so on account of the establishment of the democratically elected PRIs. Simultaneously, they were warned that their participation in the illegal activities of khap panchayats was punishable under the various provisions of law.

In its most recent decision, the Supreme Court has declared Khap Panchayats as wholly illegal²¹. It has recommended severe punishment, including the death sentence, to the members of any Khap Panchayat who order the "honor killings" of any boy and girl who marry even though they belong to the same gotra or live in the same village. To further ensure the prevention of such notorious acts, the Bench has directed the State Governments that "if any such incidents happen, apart from instituting criminal proceedings against those responsible for such atrocities, the State government concerned is directed to immediately suspend the District Magistrate/Collector and the SSP/SPs of the district as well as other officials concerned and charge-sheet them and proceed against them departmentally if they do not prevent the incident if it has not already occurred but they have knowledge of it in advance, or if it has occurred, they do not promptly apprehend the culprits and others involved and institute criminal proceedings against them, as, in our opinion, they will be deemed directly or indirectly accountable in this connection."²²

Hence, it could be seen that the Government i.e. legislature, executive and judiciary, have been collectively trying to curb the growing power of the Khap panchayats. The Government has been actively tracking the various illegal activities of these social institutions and undertaking requisite steps to shackle their unconstitutional practices.

CONCLUSION

The spread of education, increased opportunities of interaction and awareness have changed the society at large to a great extent but the khap panchayats have failed to alter and adjust with the changing times. At this point of time they have become not only lost their utility but also have become dangerous to social harmony.²¹

Choudhary²² in his another article pointed out that khaps must be banned if the society has to retain its civilized character as these khaps have already outlived their utility. The concept of bhaichara which has been the very basis of these self proclaimed institutions has itself lost its relevance due to the advent of information technology and the exposure in terms of education. Consequently, the educated rural youth is no longer ready to accept the ethos imposed by such institutions. Secondly, the khaps are not based on any democratic principle and they have rendered the constitutional PRIs powerless despite the fact that latter provides due representation to women and weaker sections. Thirdly, they not at all bridge the gap between tradition and modernity. Fourthly, the execution of khap standards has become unfeasible with the changing fabric of rural society. The khap panchayats not only has become a law unto itself but also developed a parallel judicial system. The silence of the political leadership is really uncalled for. It is high time that these kangaroo courts need to be handled emphatically.

Besides, Prof Khazan Singh also observed that “Youngsters are turning away from the khaps and distancing themselves from their verdicts. The khaps have a better chance of survival if they limit themselves to social justice”²³. Further, the decisions delivered by these institutions have no legal legitimacy/ sanctity and also they aren’t accountable to anyone. Though they claim to be the saviors of the society however, when it comes to take a step against the social evils like female feticide, dowry deaths and domestic violence, they hardly come forward.²⁴

However, the larger issue at present is how to neutralize the influence of the khaps or curb them. It has been argued that the khap panchayats should be dealt properly by the state government. Besides this, the effective solution to the problem lies in further modernizing the rural society through reforms in the rural education system, in resolving the crises in agriculture by giving new sources of livelihood to the marginal farmers through the development of their skills, by strengthening the panchayati raj institutions and by invigorating the organizational structures of political parties. Last, but not the least, the media and civil society can play a meaning role by building pressure on the state government to prevent the illegal activities of khap panchayats²⁵

Also, the judiciary has a crucial role to play but has its limitations too. The judiciary is guardian of the right of life and liberty to married couples on the behalf of the Constitution. However, the state has more or less acting as a mere spectator. A mass movement of the active citizenry is the need of the hour to make the state responsive. The voice of dissent is also getting consolidated under the umbrella of organizations like the AIDWA and other democratic forces. The government and courts must set a precedent while making stringent provisions against the menace of khap panchayats.

(Footnotes)

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- 3 Ranbir Singh, The Need to Tame the Khap Panchayats, *Economic and Political Weekly*, May 22,2010, Vol.XLV, No. 21, pp. 17-21.
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- 5 Ibid.
- 6 *Khap Panchayat in India* , retrieved on January 15,2010,from: <http://www.azadindia.org/social-issues/khap-panchayat-in-india.html>.
- 7 A Tribune Special Bringing khaps to justice Politicians' fear of losing vote banks is misplaced as khaps have no following in villages, says D.R. Chaudhry www.tribuneindia.com/2010/20100411/edit.htm
- 8 Referring to Ravinder and Shilpa case in 2009, where the Khap ordered banishment of the couple.
- 9 Khap panchayats are not above Constitution, says Punjab CJ, retrieved on 29/01/2011, from: <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/khap-panchayats-are-not-above-constitution-says-punjab-cj/553290/0>.
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Violation of Women's Human Rights: A Study of Nari Niketan in Chandigarh

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Abstract

The Paper 'Violation of Women's Human Rights: A Study of Nari Niketan in Chandigarh' is based on the empirical study done by the researcher. The paper reveals that it is quite easy to violate the human rights of women in Nari Niketan. Tragically the inmates in these institutions don't even come to know that their rights are being violated every now and then. Before going to the details of the study it is pertinent to go through the international/ national status of women and the need of the Short Stay Homes with the brief introduction of their Scheme.

Women constitute important agents of development. They have always played a significant role in the socio-economic development of society yet throughout the world women continued to be marginalized from development process (*Progress of the World's Women: Who Answers to Women? Gender and Accountability*, 2008-09, UNDP). At the national level it was believed that independence would help Indian women to emerge from the darkness of subordination and discrimination into the light of liberty and equality. This hope was given sanctity by the promise of the Constitution which guaranteed liberty, equality and justice to all citizens of India regardless of sex and gender. But almost three decades later the Report of the Committee on the Status of Women (*Towards Equality*, 1974) revealed that women in India continued to face oppression in almost every field. The report brought to the fore the 'stark inequalities' which women in India continued to face in spite of the equality ensured by the Constitution of India. The report was an eye opener for policy makers and planners and women came to be recognized as a separate group.

Another three and a half decades down the line women in India continued to be subjected to various forms of deprivation and discrimination. The skewed sex ratio (*Census of India*, 2011) is one of the most prominent and obvious evidence of women's most marginalized status. The causes can be traced from female infanticide to female foeticide. This declining sex ratio is because of want of male child due to the patriarchal structure of society. Notwithstanding the legally imposed ban on child marriage (Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929 and Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006) most of the women are married before the legal minimum age of 18 years. Because of anemia and lack of pre and post natal care, India has one of the highest maternal mortality rate in the world. Where education is concerned, there continues to be a gap between men and women (*Progress of the World's Women*, 2008-09, UNDP).

Violence against women cuts across all the cultural barriers, denying women the right to participate fully in society. Beijing Platform for Action (Document adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995, Beijing, China) declared that violence against women constitutes a violation of basic human rights and is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of Equality,

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Development and Peace. The causes of violence against women are many and the combinations of all these causes, mutually stimulate and supplement each other.

All these discriminations and subordinations are multiplied many fold by the socio-economic circumstances in which women are living. More women are in poverty as compared to men. For these women, the constant struggle to make ends meet is extremely stressful. Living in poverty presents women with multiple challenges and marginalizes them by increasing their risk of victimization. Lack of basic needs (food, clothing and shelter) makes women more prone to violence against them. Further many women have been victims of trafficking in India. UNICEF estimates that there are atleast a million child prostitutes in Asia alone with greatest number in India, which results in marginalization and destitution of women (http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_30204.html).

All this victimization needs an effective action to ameliorate at the condition of women. In recognition of the need to empower women, various initiatives have been taken at both international and national levels. At the International level, The Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1967) proclaimed that any form of discrimination against women, denying or limiting women's equality with men is fundamentally unjust and is an offence against human dignity. On the same lines, The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1979) was held. Further the United Nations also adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993). It is a comprehensive document that defines violence against women which includes physical, sexual and psychological harm or threats of harm in public or private life. The declaration names gender-based violence as a violation of human rights and an instance of sex discrimination and inequality.

At the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna (1993), women's rights were acknowledged as human rights in both private and public domains. The recognition of women's rights to development as human rights also extended the understanding of economic rights beyond formal sector to include poverty issues and employment inequalities. Another Conference on Population and Development in Cairo (ICDP, 1994) focused that women must be central to any population policy and development goals. Women's empowerment and reproductive health were recognized as development priorities. The issue of poverty was raised at the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD) in Copenhagen (1995). It recognized that women bear a disproportionate burden of poverty; more women than men live in absolute poverty and that poverty is not just an economic and social inequity but also a gender inequity.

The United Nations declared 1975 as the International Women's Year followed by declaration of Women's Decade in 1976-1985. It was marked by four World Conferences on Women, Mexico (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1980), and Beijing (1995). All these Conferences led to high projection of women's issues. The fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing identified the twelve critical areas of concern. The critical areas concerning with the cause of destitution of women are, Violence Against Women, Women and Poverty, Women in Armed Conflict, Women and Human Rights. The Beijing Platform for Action further defined a set of strategic objectives and the actions to be taken by the Governments, international community, non governmental organizations and the private sector for the removal of the existing obstacles towards the women's advancement. The efforts to empower women were not only at the international platform but gender equality and equity also emerged as major challenges at the national platform.

A number of Schemes, Policies and Programmes have been implemented by the Government of India. The Central Social Welfare Board was set up (1953) with the objective of promoting social welfare activities and implementing welfare programmes for women, children and handicapped through voluntary organizations. The Five Year Plans organized general as well as special programmes for the empowerment of women. For instance the Scheme of Hostels for Working Women (1972) had provision of safe and affordable accommodation to working women. Swawlamban Scheme was

started (1982-83) with the objective to provide training and skills to the poor and needy women. Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP) was launched (1987) to provide and update skills and knowledge to poor and asset-less women in the traditional sectors for enhancing their productivity and income generation. Rashtriya Mahila Kosh was set up (1993) to meet the credit needs of poor and assetless women in informal sector. Swayansidha is an integrated Scheme (2001) to empower women through formation of self help groups. Another Scheme named Swadhar was implemented (2001-02) for the benefit of women in difficult circumstances.

A number of support services for women have also been setup by the Government. These include help lines for women in distress, awareness generation programmes, family counseling centers etc. Apart from these, certain institutional mechanisms have been set up to help women. The National Commission for Women (1992) advises on the planning process of socio economic development of women and evaluates the progress and development of women under the Union and the State Governments. Further the Ministry of Women and Child Development (2006) strengthens the focus on the empowerment of women. Policies relevant to women were also launched by the government. One such Scheme to help women to get out of difficult circumstances and to empower them is Short Stay Home for Women and Girls.

The Scheme for Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls was launched way back in 1969 by the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India. The Scheme was revised in 1999 to make it more effective and financially feasible and was handed over to Central Social Welfare Board for its implementation. It was to be implemented through voluntary organizations which were provided grants-in-aid for the purpose. The Scheme is specifically launched for the purpose of providing adequate temporary shelter to women and girls in difficult circumstances. The women/girls in difficult circumstances under the Scheme have been defined as those who are being forced into prostitution; who as a result of family tension or being discarded are made to leave their homes without any means of subsistence; women who have no social protection from exploitation and are facing litigation on account of marital disputes; who have been sexually assaulted and are facing problems of re-adjustment in the family or society; victims of mental maladjustment, emotional disturbances and social ostracism; who escape from their homes due to family problems, mental/physical torture and need shelter, psychiatric treatment and counseling for their rehabilitation. The inmates may be sent to the Short Stay Homes under court orders or may themselves seek admission. Under the Scheme the Short Stay Homes are mandated to provide services such as medical care, psychiatric treatment, case work services, occupational therapy, educational cum vocational training, recreation facilities and rehabilitation to the inmates with the major objective of helping the destitute women regain self-confidence and empower them.

Certain guidelines have been enunciated in the Scheme for the setting up and running of the Short Stay Homes which are also referred to as Nari Niketans. First, the organization applying to set up the Short Stay Home under the Scheme has to fulfill certain basic criteria (For the purpose of this Scheme, a voluntary organization should be firstly, an institute registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 (Act XXI of 1860) and secondly, a public trust registered under any law for the time being in force. Under the Scheme, financial assistance is given to organizations with experience in running social defence programmes. Preference is given to voluntary organizations that already have sufficient infrastructure to run the Homes. The organization should have properly constituted managing body with its powers, duties and responsibilities clearly defined and laid down in a written form. Its financial position has to be strong. It should have facilities/resources/experience and personnel to initiate the Scheme for which assistance is sought). Second, the Short Stay Homes are not to be jammed that is a maximum and minimum number of inmates are specified. Third, the very name Short Stay Home suggests that the period of stay in the home should be short that is no inmate should be kept beyond a maximum period of three years. Moreover the Scheme outlines the procedure to be followed for admitting a woman into the Nari Niketan and thereafter includes medical check-up.

The organisational set up of the Short Stay Homes is also specified under the Scheme. A Superintendent is in overall charge. A Deputy Superintendent can be appointed to give assistance to

the Superintendent. The inmates are helped by Case Worker and a Counselor. A part time Doctor and a Psychologist are on hand to examine the inmates medically. A Vocational Teacher is appointed to give skill training to the inmates. A Clerk, Chowkidar and Peon are also the part of organisational set up of the Short Stay Home. The Scheme of Short Stay Home for Women and Girls is being implemented in almost all the States and Union Territories of India. Nevertheless after 41 years there are just 304 Short Stay Homes in India(Annual Report, Ministry of Women and Child Development, 2007-08, Government of India, New Delhi). The significance of Short Stay Homes or Shelter Homes as they are variously called for women in distress has been underlined in numerous studies. They serve as haven for women who are abused and battered both at home and in the social sphere. They enable women to find a safe environment and provide a unique opportunity for women who have been victims of family violence to feel in control of their own lives. The Scheme is being realized as one of the important policies implemented by the Government of India in times when violence against women is on an increase.

The objectives of the Scheme are laudable, nevertheless; a lot of criticism has been directed at the functioning of these Short Stay Homes. First, is the fact that after almost four decades of existence the number of Short Stay Homes remains quite low and in fact has declined from 362 to 304(Sarala Gopalan, *Towards Equality-The Unfinished Agenda*, National Commission for Women, Government of India, 2002, p.323). Second is the operational aspect. The functionaries in charge of these institutions are not gender sensitized. Third there is a shortage of regular and trained personnel. Moreover the purpose of the Scheme is not being realized, in that skill training is not being adequately imparted. In addition to this there are problems of lack of linkage with Government Departments and red tapism, all which hamper the effective functioning of these institutions (information gathered from leading newspapers). Over and above all this, is the almost inhumane treatment meted out to inmates, who witness the reports of sexual abuse of inmates of Nari Niketan of Sector 26, Chandigarh and Meerut (*The Tribune*, 19th May 2009 and *Hindustan Times*, 23rd May 1994). Incidents of thrashing of inmates by iron rods and runaway cases of inmates have also been reported in various newspapers. The living conditions of inmates and working of Nari Niketans has also been the subject of criticism from various quarters. For instance Neera Desai observes, "The homes were uninhabitable both physically and emotionally when we visited. Even the minimum was found wanting. The inmates were leading a vegetative existence with nothing to do and no hope for the future. The homes should aim to bring dignity to the women's lives and train them to be economically independent. These women have a right to survive, so they should be treated as humans and not as trash" (Neera Desai as quoted in Saroj Iyer, 1999, *The Struggle to be Human: Women's Human Rights*, Books for Change, Bangalore, p.45).

The obsolete norms, particularly fiscal, infrastructural and procedural need a revision with a view to improving the outreach and effectiveness of the Scheme. Hence the need for evaluating the Scheme of Short Stay Homes in its present form arises. However till date there have been very few studies on Short Stay Homes. Among these there has been only one holistic study (PEO Evaluation Study of Short Stay Homes for Women and Girls, 1999, Planning Commission of India) which has attempted an overall analysis of Short Stay Homes from both organization and beneficiary aspect. Moreover, there has been no study of the Short Stay Homes in Punjab and Chandigarh. In order to assess the issues and challenges of the Short Stay Homes, the present researcher conducted an empirical study of Short Stay Home for destitute women and girls in the Union Territory of Chandigarh situated in Sector 26.

The Research Methodology used in the study was a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Method of personal observation was also used by the researcher. In order to meet the objectives of the present study, information on a number of parameters relating to planning and implementation of the Scheme, functioning of the Homes, the quality of delivery of services, the pattern of expenditure and sources of funds and experiences of beneficiaries was collected. The primary data was obtained through personal interviews with the functionaries, beneficiaries, non-governmental organisations representatives and few persons who had specialized knowledge about the Scheme and its implementation by virtue of their position/office. The beneficiaries of the Scheme of Short Stay Home were selected randomly out of those who were found

present in the Short Stay Home on the date of visits by the researcher. A few of the issues identified by the researcher may be outlined here.

According to the personal observation of the researcher the campus had dormitories with separate locking system for inmates. However, the pleasant surroundings notwithstanding, the grills and bars at the windows and the doors remind one of jail. A couple of inmates were staying there ever since this institution was founded, which goes contrary to the Scheme that clearly states that the inmates can stay for maximum of three years.

Facts revealed by the interviews of various functionaries of Nari Niketan made the researcher draw various inferences. On the organizational side, there were complaints of lack of coordination between the administration and the officials-in-charge of Nari Niketan. Moreover there was a shortage of trained regular full time staff. Although the specified staff had been appointed, a majority of them were on contractual or part-time employment and that too poorly paid; which hindered the functioning of the organization in terms of delay of files and in the release of grants. Further under the Scheme the Managing Committee of the institution should consist of the Superintendent, Case Worker, Psychiatrist and representative of the Director. But it was found that the functionaries of Nari Niketan were not aware of the provision for a Managing Committee. Moreover there was no Case Worker and Peon.

After the detailed interview with the inmates the researcher came to know that food was supplied from outside the Nari Niketan campus. From the perspective of the beneficiaries, there was no arrangement of attending to any special dietary requirements of the women, particularly the inmates suffering from anemia, mentally retarded and children. Even a desire for a simple cup of tea could not be fulfilled, yet the place is supposed to be a 'Home'. It may be mentioned that the Superintendent who lives on the premises has her own kitchen and one of the inmates cooks her meals.

The inmates of Nari Niketan were upset as no leisure outings for the inmates were planned by the Nari Niketan officials. This gives a contradictory picture, for the Scheme provides inmates to be taken for outing atleast once a month. Also there was no interaction of inmates with the outside world; which is essential to enable the inmates to be self-dependent once they leave the sheltered premises of Nari Niketan.

One of the objectives of the Scheme is skill development, but the study revealed that no specific efforts were made in this context. Nari Niketan is running a project on 'Mathi Making' which initially involved all the inmates but now people are employed from outside. Beauty parlour training and yoga classes fizzled out due to lack of interest by the functionaries. The inmates revealed that the embroidered pieces of cloth by them were not marketed well and if few pieces were sold, the money went to Nari Niketan management rather than to the inmate's account. Thus the inmates were not ready for independent and empowered life outside the Nari Niketan.

According to the inmates there was no regular counselling for them. No emergency medical care was observed. Earlier there was a 'Petition Box' which informed the Director of the Social Welfare Department about the complaints of the inmates but even this had been removed. According to the Superintendent it was decided to change the name of Nari Niketan to 'Disha' or 'Nirmal Chayian' as Nari Niketan sounded a traditional institute for runaway and criminal women; unfortunately the plan was not implemented. The name change could have helped to change the stereotypical thinking of our society.

Cases of sexual abuse have also been reported from this Nari Niketan. One of its mentally retarded inmate was raped by the protectors (gateman and security officer) of the institute with the support of the staff (care-taker maid and nurse). The inmate became pregnant. The decision taken by the court in this case was that the inmate will give birth to the child as it is her human right. But did the court think once about the human rights of the child and whether the mother who is mentally retarded will be able to provide the child with the basic necessities of life or would she understand her motherhood. Whether past or present till date the newspapers quote this particular inmate as

“rape victim”, “rape victim looks forward to child”, “pregnancy diet for victim”, “child delivered by rape victim”, “rape victim case-baby celebrates Lohri” and so on. When would she be freed of such subtitles? Whose human rights are we talking about; those which have been officially violated.

After studying the collected data from the functionaries and the inmates, the researcher came to the conclusion that the Nari Niketan is like a four walled cell where no one has right to information; not to participate or help functionaries for the development of inmates. Rather people’s participation will give a Scheme a ‘Democratic Look’ resulting a healthy environment for the inmates. Rather this concept has been loosely understood in terms of money, material or resource; than imparting care and love to inmates. Workshops should be often organized for the officials of Nari Niketan for efficient functioning of the institution and minimizing the gap between them and the inmates. Finally there is an urgent need to keep on evaluating the Scheme from time to time according to the need of hour and circumstances. Attempting to provide a home and a place where destitute women can mend their broken, shattered lives and begin life anew; the Home is not equipped to enable them to cope with life in a world which is increasingly competitive. There is need for a whole hearted effort to this end.

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Technology Driven Policing: A Study of Chandigarh Police

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Abstract

A decade ago checking crime relied only on old fashioned tools such as strict security at vulnerable places and intelligence gathering by government agencies. In the changing society, with the advent of new technology, crime is also emerging in new forms. The role of police is confined not only to the prevention of traditional crime but to have a regular check on the new genre of crime. The research paper attempts to address the question whether or not the technological tools have affected the policing and if they have, in what manner they have done so.

The policing is known to have taken birth with the advent of civilization. The history of crime dates back to the birth of mankind. In the initial stages crimes were mostly of simple nature and were generally committed by individuals which gradually took the shape of collective criminal acts. The police had to mainly depend on personal knowledge, direct evidence and visible indicators to solve the criminal mysteries. At the dawn of 21st century, with the growing complexity of civilization, availability of faster means of transportation, easy access to global telecommunications and gadgetry; and advancement in technology² like computerization and wireless communications are transforming the ways of crime. Technologies are expanding globally at enormous speed and offer tremendous opportunities and means for aiding the police force in crime prevention, crime detection and crime tracing/solving. E-mail, internet and cellular services have made illegal transaction more and more difficult to trace and increases the workload of police also. This has posed new challenges³ to the police force to cope up with the changing scenario. Now, it has become necessary for the police, to not only equip properly to combat criminals, but also need to use new technology as efficiently and effectively as possible.

The research paper attempts to address the question whether or not the technological tools made in today's society have affected the policing and if they have, in what manner they have done so. It discusses usage of technologies in policing with special focus on Chandigarh and is presented in three sections. Section I discusses the emergence of technologies, technologies in policing and a comprehensive list of new technologies in policing which are used world wide. Section II describes the Chandigarh Police and inclusive list of technologies used by them. Finally, Section III summarizes the major findings and gives some suggestions to make police force more efficient and effective.

Research Methodology

Both primary and secondary data has been used. The secondary data have been collected from various newspapers, academic journals and internet. For primary data, Chandigarh has been

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selected, which in addition to being a Union Territory is also the capital of two prosperous states, namely Punjab and Haryana. 40 respondents were selected on the basis of rank. Total 5 Inspectors, 20 Sub-Inspectors and 15 Assistant Sub-Inspectors have been selected and interviewed from the 11 Police Stations of Chandigarh. Formal and informal interview have been done. These officers have been selected because they were the investigating officers to handle every case and have direct dealing with public. The data has been analyzed by using simple percentage method.

I

EMERGENCE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

Throughout the history mankind has reaped great rewards from on-going technological progress. New technologies bring with them tremendous benefits that include advances in the standard of living, increases the human lifespan and prosperity unimagined in previous eras. At the same time they pose serious questions for and about humanity and create significant potential dangers that have to be addressed. The dangers as well as the benefits associated with the emergence of powerful new technologies need to be weighed for a safe and stable future of the human race⁴.

Technology comprises of the ability to recognize technical problems, develop new concepts and tangible solutions to these problems and exploit the concepts in an effective way to solve technical problems.

Technologies in Policing

Technology involves the generation of knowledge and processes to develop systems that solve problems and extend human capabilities⁵. Now a days technology has become the answer to every problem in almost all spheres of life be it health, education, transport and most of all policing not being an exception. Technology is of great help in fighting against traditional crime. But, at the same time new technology have led to new criminality⁶. The need of the hour is a continuing and concerted effort to understand these emerging technologies⁷. However, as the criminals become more aware technologically, it becomes vital for the police service to not only properly equipped to combat this new strain of criminals but that the tools they use are as effective and efficient as possible.

A representative list (please note that this list does not include all technologies) of communications and support tools which are used worldwide includes video interrogation, electronic listening (parallel listening), digital photography, face recognition, voice dynamics, thermal face scan (measures the internal temperature of your face relative to the external room temperature)⁸ nano technology, electronic nose (is a device that identifies the specific components of an odor and analysis its chemical makeup to identify, biosensors (it is an analytical device incorporating a biological material)⁹, brain fingerprinting (it detects the record of crime stored in brain, as the brain is always in action with planning, executing and recording the crime¹⁰), radio frequency identification (it uses radio waves to identify people or objects¹¹), cyber crime units¹².

The trends compelled by public uncertainty and fears of terrorism, run counter to the creation and maintenance of enduring and widespread peace and prosperity in civilised nations¹³. The need of the hour is a continuing and concerted effort to understand these emerging technologies¹⁴ and to anticipate its use by terrorists and criminals and thereby prevent its use against our nation

and communities. Continued police apathy and ignorance of advancement in technologies, and the potential changes they will bring to our communities and the way of life, will only add to the turmoil, making law enforcement a part of the problem and not part of the solution¹⁵.

II

CHANDIGARH POLICE¹⁶

Chandigarh is a planned city where literacy rate (81.9 %) is high, people are more aware about the uses of technology, media is proactive and police claims to be one of the modern police systems in India. In spite of this, crime rate is growing at rapid pace and maintaining law and order is becoming a challenge for the police. The city was planned for only 5 Lakh people, but today its population is approximately above 9 Lakh and the police force remains lesser in number. Although, the situation of the city is changing due to expansion but Chandigarh Police resolves to give people an efficient, law abiding and responsive law and enforcement machinery.

Chandigarh Police is divided into three divisions (Table No. 1), given below:

Table No. 1
Divisions of Chandigarh Police

Division	Police Stations ¹⁷
Central Division	Sector - 3, 11, 17.
South Division	Sector - 31, 34, 36, 39
East Division	Sector-19, 26, Industrial Area, Manimajra.

Inclusive list of technologies (based on data collection) used by Chandigarh Police¹⁸

An inclusive list of technologies used by Chandigarh Police has been made by the data collected through primary and secondary data by the researcher.

- All police stations are computerized (LAN & WAN)
- GPS (Global Positioning System) unit at headquarter in Sector-9, Chandigarh¹⁹. With the launch of GPS, Chandigarh Police went a step ahead in using technology for effective policing. The system has brought down the response time of police control room vans in reaching crime spots and monitors their movement from the police headquarters. Chandigarh has become the third city in the country after Delhi and Mumbai to acquire this system.
- CCTV in Police Stations: To maintain the highest professional standards, ensure transparency in working and making a corruption free force, CCTV cameras have been installed in all police stations of Chandigarh. It covers the entrance of Police Station, Duty Officer's room, Male and Female lock-up, Record room, Corridors and SHO's room. For better monitoring of police functioning these cameras have further been connected with the computers of Senior Officers at Police Headquarters. Senior Officer's as well as the Police Control Room are monitoring working of any police station at any time with just a click of mouse. The system

is having a storage capacity of about 20 days, which is useful to monitor the facility, recover any evidence and long term information for the department in various Court Cases/ Enquiries. To have an eye on crime these has been installed at various places in the city as well. It has become sharper with the introduction of improvised technology.

- To regulate Traffic (Frequency Radio for speed, and liquor (Alcohol) detection system have changed from Balloon system to Alcohol mouser, hi-tech Ambulance for first-aid, networking of all information through wireless transmitters)
- Cyber Crime Unit at Sector-11, Chandigarh.
 - o Internet (e-mail, quick access, information)
 - o Faraday Bag (if mobile is put in a bag then it becomes unreachable for all networks.)
 - o Cell Dek (if an accused has deleted the records from the phone memory then it can retrieve the call details of dialed, received and missed call numbers from a mobile. Even the sent and received messages can be retrieved.)
 - o PFL (Portable Forensic Lab machine can retrieve the data from any suspected drives and hard disks²⁰)
- Chandigarh Police has launched its own website that provides information on FIRs, missing vehicles and criminals etc.
- Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) assists the police in maintaining surveillance in times of demonstrations, disaster management and VVIP security. It is also known as 'eye in the sky'.
- Internet Protocol (Earlier they have to go manually for the detail of data to the mobile companies and now they just have to mail it to the concern company and get response immediately. No doubt it saves time too)
- Wireless Connectivity (PCR comes immediately)
- Mobile connectivity, cellular tracking system
- Forensic lab, Sector- 36, Chandigarh (Lie detector, DNA test, Chemical Examiner Test, Hand Writing Test, Voice Recording)
- Patrolling (Neighborhood watch system)
- Metal detectors
- Bomb Jammers
- Vajra (Water Tank), Rubber Gun to handle the agitations

IV

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Major Findings

The recent incidents of chain, purse snatching and burglary, in different parts of the city and crime by highly organized gangs, revealed that the crime has become a part of the city. After going through primary and secondary data, the researcher got different output regarding the application and adoption of technologies in Chandigarh Police. The major findings of the study have been discussed below.

The findings reveal that Chandigarh Police is using different technologies in their day to day working like CCTV, cyber cell, forensic science lab team, mobile van, GPS at headquarter. Interviews with the police personnel revealed that 88 per cent respondents (35) opine that after the use of technologies, there is significant improvement in prevention and detection of crime. Technology is

of great help in fighting against traditional crime. Intelligent cameras can detect suspicious behavior, sensors can detect weapons from a distance and broadband can create a desk in the patrol car.

The Table No. 2 shows that there is subsequent reduction in crime since 2006. And it thus substantiates the finding that the crime has been reduced in the city. Although it cannot be said that the use of technology is the only reason for this crime reduction but maybe it is one of them.

**Table No. 2 (Crime Statistics²¹)1st January,
2006 up to 9th March, 2011**

Crime Head	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Murder	12	19	17	22	20	1
Attempt to Murder	21	26	28	18	30	6
Hurt	55	78	73	63	65	8
Riots	44	79	85	66	65	20
Dacoity	1	2	1	4	5	2
Robbery	34	37	23	27	67	15
Burglary	189	191	257	241	236	57
Thefts	1234	1740	1991	1731	1481	285
Kid. & Abduction	65	52	50	43	39	12
Assault on Public Servant	25	19	28	22	278	4
Accident	521	536	477	424	456	87
Cheating	232	170	217	193	163	27
Criminal Breach of Trust	59	38	37	38	23	1
Receiving Stolen Property	13	14	7	13	25	4
Misc. IPC	621	642	644	647	671	99
Total IPC	3126	3643	3931	3565	3373	628
Arms Act	6	5	7	12	13	1
Excise Act	297	311	234	245	211	49
Opium/NDPS	181	144	91	71	48	13
Gambling Act	323	235	212	144	147	48
Misc.Local & Spl. Law	110	158	61	84	98	24
Total local & Spl.law	917	853	605	556	517	135
Grand Total	4043	4496	4536	4111	3890	763

More than half i.e. 62 per cent respondents (25) opine that technologies are most useful in solving the heinous crimes like murder and rape. For example: in a murder case of *Chokidaar* at leisure valley, Sector 10, Chandigarh. The *Chokidaar* was brutally murdered and after investigation police found out that his personal belongings (like his television, video player, cash and mobile) were missing from the crime scene. When his stolen mobile was put on surveillance then the police came to know that the mobile was functional near Chandigarh in *Derabassi*. Police raided that place and arrested the murderer who was supposedly a friend of the *Chokidaar*. With the help of the mobile surveillance technology the case has been solved within 3-4 days. It can be said here that the technologies helped police to improve their efficiency and effectiveness. Further, the personnel put

forth that without the usage of technology it is impossible to solve rape cases as they need medical reports and other technicalities.

It has been observed that 55 per cent respondents (22) felt that by putting CCTV cameras in shops, crowded places like parking, light points and markets helped police to have a check on snatchers, thieves, traffic rules violators etc. The Tanishq dacoity case in Chandigarh is the best example of usage of this technology in which robbers were arrested within few days of incident. There is prevention in the cases of snatching and car stealing, by putting CCTV cameras in markets and parking lots. Traffic violation has also been reduced. Since the installation of CCTV system, Chandigarh Police has been able to enquire into the complaints of torture, illegal detention etc. and bring out true facts by reviewing the CCTV recordings and establish the innocence or otherwise of the police personnel. The complaints of illegal detention and torture by police have substantially declined since then. The introduction of CCTV system in police stations has been a major success because now the public feel safer while visiting the police station. The CCTV system would be quite useful for large and medium cities as this will improve the image of police and bring transparency in the working of police.

The communication within the organization and with outside agencies has become continuous and satisfactory said 85 per cent respondents (34). All police stations, traffic lines and headquarter are inter-connected through LAN and WAN. This allows for better communication within the organization. For example, when a person is challaned for traffic violation, he has to deposit his license or Registration Certificate (RC) of the vehicle. To get back his license or RC, he has to pay challan fee. Initially, people were smarter and if the challan fee was more, in order to save money they registered an FIR in police station that they lost their license and wanted to apply for a duplicate one. In this process the total expenditure was around Rs.200 to get a duplicate license. But now due to inter connectivity, before registering an FIR police checks, is any challan or FIR is pending against him or not? This helped police to stop this type of fraud. In another case at *kaimbwala* village near Chandigarh, a teenager girl was abducted from the village by men who live in the same village as paying guest. The technologies (mobile surveillance and communication with outside agencies) helped to trace them from Delhi within few days. In this case when mobile number of the accused was put on surveillance it was found switched off. Police enquired about his call detail from mobile company and it was found that last call is made to Bihar. Chandigarh Police contacted Bihar Police and got the information that it is his father's number and the accused is in Delhi. Police raided and arrested both of them. Due to the communication with outside agency i.e. Bihar Police, Chandigarh Police solved the case in very less time.

It has been observed that 72.5 per cent respondents (29) felt that the coordination has also increased within the organization. The Police Control Room (PCR) comes within 3 minutes at the spot; all this is only because of the coordination between PCR and headquarters through global positioning system (GPS). It has also increased the investigating and intelligence capabilities as Forensic Lab Van reaches the crime scene within 15 minutes. The telecom companies are now connected to the police departments through web portals and e-mails, by this any mobile number's details, its position etc. are available with police within few minutes.

It was found that with the help of database storage (i.e. finger print, physical appearance) it became easier to find criminal who are their in the records of police told 72.5 per cent respondents (29).

Chandigarh police's website provides all information regarding the FIR, missing vehicles, missing person, cyber crime, recruitment, maps, forms, telephone directory, most wanted, citizen charter etc. 90 per cent respondents (36) described that the police-public interface has become harmonious as public movement to police station and headquarter has been reduced subsequently with its usage.

More than ninety i.e. 92.5 per cent respondents (37) felt that the Chandigarh Police require still better technologies to become more effective. While giving example they said that now a days, FIR gets registered by the computer system with a unique FIR number in sequence, along with system's timestamp is allotted to each reported. Once registered, FIR cannot be changed or deleted. The system facilitates registration of crime at any police station, irrespective of jurisdiction and the same gets transferred automatically under whose jurisdiction the crime has happened. It has increased the capacity of police to store and process large volume of data and availability and accessibility of services. A number of police organizations are using this technology world wide. This will help Chandigarh Police too to become more efficient, effective and transparent in their working.

Further, it reveals that they are facing enormous problems in the adoption and application of the technologies. The average personnel are not well educated said 55 per cent respondents (22), personnel are not willing to use new technologies as they want to stick to older techniques of investigation because they are not in the condition to properly use the technology felt 55 per cent respondents (22). The researcher found that there is only 15 days training period for personnel to learn the use of these technologies. 75 per cent respondents (30) revealed that there is lack of finances in police departments to buy the technologies.

After visiting various Police Stations, it was found that in addition to these problems they are facing other problems also like the process of investigation is too long and it discourages the personnel to take initiative; shortage of manpower which overburdened the policeman, they are forced to work 20-24 hours continuously and the inadequate number of arms and ammunition, vehicles and other police infrastructure has made the situation worst. The permanent personnel felt that the short tenure of higher official's i.e. IGP and SSP made them feel as guests in their own department.

Further, the researcher felt that though Chandigarh Police solved many cases with the usage of technologies as mentioned earlier, they have somehow not managed to get to the root of many cases, Neha murder case in Sector 38 being a recent example. Additionally, as discussed earlier that the CCTV cameras had been installed at various strategic points, but many of them are lying defunct. Thus researcher opines that Chandigarh police needs to employ latest gadgets in policing, particularly in investigating matters and preparing an effective data bank on all activities and cases.

Suggestions

No doubt, the usage of technologies helped police to reduce crimes; but at the same time these are creating enormous problems as more and more people become technologically aware to commit crime. Some suggestions are listed below to make police force more effective in using the technologies and in prevention and detection of new genre of crime.

- Computer knowledge should be made compulsory for selection in the police department.

- Workshops and seminars should be organized to make personnel aware about the new trends of crime and how to tackle them.
- Indian Penal Code should be reviewed.
- The reforms of Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD) and Research Institute should be followed.
- Need to set up police-public committees for bridging the gaps with community as done in Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.
- Patrolling should be intensified and more CCTV cameras should be installed to keep track of suspicious moment.
- There should be need based training.
- Tenure of the higher officials should be increased.
- The senior level officers should provide all type of support during the investigation.
- Duty hours should be reduced for better results.
- Specialization should be encouraged (There has to be different officer for the prevention and detection/ investigation)

Concluding Remarks

The experience shows that the citizens of the country make police a target of unreasonable criticism and condemn it without understanding its difficulties and limitations. Unfortunately, the following quote of *August Vollmore*²² appears to be still relevant to tell the abysmal condition of Indian policeman:

“The policeman is denounced by the public, criticized by the preacher, ridiculed by movies, berated by newspapers and unsupported by the prosecuting officers and judges, he is shunned by respectable, he is exposed to countless temptations and dangers, condemned while he enforces the law and dismissed while does not. He is supposed to pass the qualification of soldier, doctor, lawyer, diplomat and educator with remuneration less than that of daily laborers.”

Police consists of human beings and not of machines; they cannot be and should not be treated like machines. Expenditure on police should be treated as investment. The application and adoption of the new technologies, need based and sensitivity training would be the key for good policing. Rational and scientific method to assess the policing needs and the crime scenario followed by necessary changes in the number of policemen will serve the purpose of good policing.

It is increasingly felt by the police officers that in the battle against crime, the police require active support and cooperation of the public. The police will have to evolve mechanisms for discussing crime prevention strategies with the members of the community by deepening contacts and holding regular meetings. Police leaders and administrators have to think of using police resources far more proactively for meeting the challenges of crime.

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the duty of maintenance of public order and enforcing regulations for preventive and detection of crime.

- 2 Technology is defined as the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes to benefit humanity and to meet the wants of the people. It is considered as “specific information necessary for the ‘development,’ ‘production,’ or ‘use’ of a product”. Technology involves more than just products; it also encompasses a means to produce and use products in a way as to solve a problem.
- 3 The foremost objective of the police is to protect the society by preventing crime and prosecuting criminals. Other functions of police such as preservation of the nation’s unity and integrity, maintenance of public order and implementation of social laws flow from the foremost and main objective. With the changing circumstances in society i.e. social, economical and political changes, the priorities of the police are also changing.
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Mughal Wazirs And Their Contribution To Financial and Infrastructural Development

Gauri Sharma*

Abstract

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were a very significant phase of our history in terms of political unity, imperial expansion and a fair measure of economic growth. This paper attempts to trace the economic expansion and infrastructural development under the Mughals and the role played by the Wazir, who happened to be the leader of the nobility and the right-hand man of the Emperor in bringing about sound financial reforms, boosting commercial activity and improving urban infrastructure that became an index of the development activity undertaken by the Mughals. The paper presents a new approach to the Orientalist view that pre-colonial India was a static economy.

The Study of the Indian state in the pre-modern period and the question of how political authority had been used in achieving social and economic goals in the historical past is one of the main concerns of historiography. The Imperialists' view of pre-British India being a stagnant economy, wishing to retain its traditional and static form and witnessing dynamic growth in socio-economic spheres only under the British has been a subject of debate in the post independence period. While this assertion cannot be dismissed outrightly, their role in shaping the course of Indian history remains unsubstantiated and thus liable to ingenuous conclusions. The Sixteenth and the Seventeenth centuries in Indian history are very significant in terms of imperial expansion accompanied by political unity, centralized administration and a fair measure of economic growth. Infact, one of the greatest factors that contributed to Mughal success was the sound economic base that supported their governance.

This paper attempts to trace the economic expansion and infrastructural development under the Mughals. These economic reforms initiated by Akbar under the guidance of some financial geniuses embodied the indigenous and Timurid concepts along with economic ideas evolved by Sher Shah. In setting up sound traditions of financial administration, where sources of income and expenditure were well defined and commercial enterprise encouraged the mughal emperors were supported by very able *wazirs*. The *wazir* was the highest official to assist the ruler in the medieval Indian state. In view of his duties and responsibilities the *wazir*, who can be called the prime-minister, became over a period of time a channel through whom the Emperor exercised his authority.

Mughal *wazirs* played a significant role in revitalizing the economy in several ways. In the first instance they formulated sound financial policies and extensive reforms that not only checked corruption but also manifested itself in noticeable economic prosperity. Secondly, through encouragement to trade and commerce. Since their jagirs were transferable, the mughal aristocracy was not tied to the land and always open to lucrative economic enterprises. Finally some *wazirs* made a significant contribution towards development of infrastructure that led to urban growth by encouraging architectural activity and setting up of '*karkhanas*' and '*bazaars*' by offering patronage and input of capital to boost economic activity .¹

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A. FINANCIAL REFORMS

Although the specific contribution of *wazirs* in shaping the economy of the mughal empire becomes conspicuous only in the sixteenth century, their interest in financial activities can be traced much earlier. As early as Changiz Khan, the *wazir* exercised enormous influence in all financial matters. Timur, whose legacy to Babur by way of political institutions is fairly substantial, is known to have lauded his *Wazirs* over their dexterity in economic affairs. He remarked "*They kept rich my treasury and they secured plenty and prosperity to my subjects they kept in order the expenses of the government*".² Timur endeavoured to maintain a sound system of administration for he wanted not only to conquer but also to govern³.

With the arrival of Mughals in India, we see the *wazir* taking a keen interest in financial matters. Babur's first *wazir* Baqi Chagniani influenced the emperor in whatever financial decisions he made.⁴ When Akbar ascended the throne in 1556, Bairam Khan became the chief advisor of the kingdom and managed Akbar's political and financial affairs remarkably well, giving the young Akbar a terrific start as mughal Emperor. Bairam Khan's interest in reviving the economy is ascertained by his attempt to adopt a schedule of assessment rate as one-third of the average produce in cash for the state.⁵ Badaoni states that sometimes even Akbar had no say in some of the transactions relating to the expenses of the exchequer which was completely controlled by his *wazir*.

Bairam Khan made a significant contribution in the establishment of imperial coinage by starting new Mughal coins in silver and copper. He preferred to adopt the monetary policies of the Surs over the traditional Timurid style of coinage. In a few years the newly established Mughal regime could boast of a fully functional trimetallic currency comprising of gold, silver and copper coins. This experiment ensured metallic purity and uniformity in currency, a major step towards establishing the empire's credibility.

Akbar was also lucky to have enjoyed the services of Muzaffar Khan and Raja Todar Mal who introduced extensive reforms that totally revamped mughal agrarian and revenue system and survived with little changes until the early years of the eighteenth century. The economy of the sub-continent responded very positively to the innovative experiments launched by them. Abul Fazl aptly remarks, "*the revenues which were the foundation of sovereignty and the basis of dominion and the source of military strength were put on a sound footing*".⁶ Muzaffar Khan, an able financier, carried out several important reforms that led to financial consolidation. Making use of his practical knowledge of revenue administration, the first reform introduced by Muzaffar Khan was abolishing the '*Jama-i-Raqami*'.⁷ This came to be known as *jama hal-i-hasil* where experts made the assessment on the basis of the actual produce of the land. Abul Fazl remarks, "*although this assessment was not really a hal-hasil assessment yet in comparison with the earlier assessment it was undoubtedly more rational and closer to hasil*".⁸

Muzaffar Khan is known to have introduced measures which curtailed the expenditure entailed by the imperial government. His political astuteness, economic judgement and strict observance of rules improved the financial administration of the empire and checked fraudulent practices. Analyzing Muzaffar Khan's accomplishments as *wazir* Abul Fazl remarks, "*He managed in a proper manner the operation of treasury which is the capital stock of sovereignty, the improvement of peasantry and control of the army*".⁹

Todar Mal who followed Muzaffar Khan as Akbar's *wazir* also made a notable contribution to the financial administration of the mughal empire. He suggested vital economic reforms like the

branding regulations of horses in the royal army, fixation of the grades of mansabdars and conversion of jagir lands into khalisa lands which proved financially advantageous to the state.¹⁰ Historians like Khafi Khan, Shah Nawaz Khan and Ghulam Hussain Tabatabai unanimously acclaim his achievements both in administrative and revenue affairs. An original text of Todar Mal's memorandum on revenue administration found in the *Akbarnama*, provides a very profound understanding of the actual working of Mughal land revenue system.

Todar Mal was instrumental in introducing whole scheme of reforms collectively called the '*Ain-i-Dahsala*', which was a ten year settlement.¹¹ Khafi Khan states that the efficient system of financial administration implemented by Todar Mal so systematically became a model (*zarb al misal*) for the people of Hindustan. He also worked out new methods for the assessment of revenue demand which continued to be in force upto the middle of the eighteenth century. Todar Mal also introduced important financial and administrative reforms that put a check on middlemen who were known for their oppressive attitude towards the peasantry.¹² The system of revenue assessment and land survey evolved by him always kept a balance between the demands of the state and the requirements of the peasants. Though the Mughal dynasty died out, the system introduced by him continued to be in use and was followed by the Marathas and to great extent by the British as well.

The most important reform introduced by Todar Mal was changing the language used in maintenance of revenue records. Earlier they were maintained by Hindu muharrirs in Hindi. By ordering all government accounts to be kept in Persian, he coerced his co-religionists to learn the language. This order enabled the hindus, who had hitherto remained politically below their muslim counterparts, to rise in official hierarchy. The efficiency with which Todar Mal was managing the finances of the empire can be estimated from the fact that after his death the incumbents to the office found the work of the revenue department so heavy that the crown lands were divided into four divisions.¹³

As far as the role of the wazirs in the agrarian system under Jahangir and Shah Jahan are concerned the information found in contemporary sources and official documents is scanty and records no important changes in the first half of the seventeenth century leaving us to assume that Akbar's methods of assessment remained in operation in their totality. The success of financial strategies undertaken by successive wazirs lay in strictly following rules laid down by Akbar.¹⁴

Shah Jahan's wazir, Sadullah Khan was a capable financier who paid great attention to the 'property of the raiyyat'. He improved revenue administration by establishing a new territorial unit called '*chakla*',¹⁵ which included a number of parganas. The term does not occur in the documents of the time of Akbar and Jahangir. The *chaklas* proved to be a useful experiment as the *chakladars* who cultivated their land carefully, helped in increasing the revenue.¹⁶

On account of centralization of power in Aurangzeb's hands, the wazir could not make any significant contribution to the growth of the revenue department which happened to be his principal domain. Moreover, their preoccupation in military pursuits also explains the lack of initiative in introducing adequate reforms in revenue administration. The failure to bring about these reforms also ushered the beginning of the economic crisis which engulfed the empire in the eighteenth century.

B. COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISE

Mughal Wazirs as leaders of the nobility gave a boost to the economy by promoting commercial activity in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries. The peace established by the Mughals

in north and central India led to the strengthening and expansion of both agricultural and non agricultural sectors which in turn contributed to an active encouragement to inland trade as well as overseas commerce. Although some scholars believe that Mughal empire was only marginally interested in sea-borne trade, their rule did witness considerable growth in commercial activities.¹⁷ The researches of Tapan Ray Chaudhuri, Ashin Das Gupta, M.N. Pearson prove that the Mughal emperors, princes and nobility all participated in overseas trade.

There is documented evidence that between the sixteenth and the eighteenth century, India's overseas trade steadily expanded both in terms of volume of goods and the expansion into new areas. Since the Mughal nobility was not bound to the land and their jagirs were transferred from one place to another they could not isolate themselves from the commercial world. A large amount of non agricultural production also helped in sustaining internal trade. The setting up of a uniform imperial coinage by *wazirs* like Bairam Khan and Todar Mal went a long way in promoting commercial transactions and since there was no legal ban on private trade by the state, officials indulged in commercial activity with enthusiasm. The undoubted expansion of India's oceanic trade lured the aristocracy into accumulating enormous treasures by investing in trade either by indulging in trade themselves or by making advances in capital to merchants on a high rate of interest. Abul Fazl remarks, "*When an appropriate means of maintenance is secured it is permitted to indulge a little in commercial speculation and engage in remunerative undertakings*".¹⁸ Scholars like Ashin Das Gupta and M.N. Pearson assert that during Akbar's time the economic importance of ocean trade was negligible (only five percent of his total revenue coming from sea customs).¹⁹ Although both royalty and nobility engaged itself in trade, the initial overseas travelling experience was primarily religious, with underlying economic motivations.²⁰ Akbar's *wazirs* Mirza Aziz Koka and Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, are said to have owned personal ships. These were mainly used to cater to Haj traffic. However, there are references to their commercial interests also.²¹

The economic and technological advancements of seventeenth century Mughal India were made possible through the distinct contribution of the nobility. Their exposure to certain European cultural influences were responsible for their direct participation in trade. The keen interest of the elite in trade was to a great extent aimed at procurement of rare articles and the supply of well-bred horses from Arabia, Iran and Iraq. However, a significant point about business venture of nobles was that they traded because it was an easy way to make money through the use of their political power. Another factor that motivated the nobility to indulge in trade can be understood through the growing Iranian influence and their tradition of combining '*imarat*' and '*tijarat*' (state craft and trade).²² Under Jahangir also, overseas trade was inseparably linked with the pilgrimage needs of the muslim population. The participation of administrative officials in commerce both by direct investment in their own names and through proxis gave the state a direct stake in commerce and brought commercial matters to the forefront of state policy.

Since the persian nobility and bureaucracy were combined into one, the nobles who held important administrative charges were in a position to put pressure upon merchants and traders. As the *wazir* was authorised to purchase in the name of the king (who had the first right to purchase) any novelty that they fancied gave them ample opportunity to indulge in trade. The relationship between the nobility and mercantile community helps us to understand the economic forces operating in the society and the role of political authority in helping or hindering them.

Asaf Khan, the premier *wazir* under Jahangir and Shah Jahan, had vast commercial interests through which he amassed fabulous wealth. He took an active part in sea – borne trade from Hugli

and Surat and even maintained an active correspondence with the Portuguese at Goa in this regard. Infact, he was the only one in the so-called '*Nur Jahan Junta*' to be known to European traders, who saw in him a man through whom lucrative trading agreements could be negotiated.²³ Asaf Khan's overbearing influence on commercial transactions is revealed from the fact that when on one occasion the Dutch and English refused to make a trade agreement with Jahangir, Asaf Khan's, intervention proved to be highly effective and the emperor agreed to their representation.²⁴ In as much the ruling elite began to indulge in commercial endeavours, merchants became indirect players in the power structure with free access to the channels of state authority. Infact, an important factor that contributed to the failure of indigenous trade and ultimate success of the English in India was their alliance with mughal officials.

A significant aspect of Mughal economic policy was the setting up of monopolies and monopolistic controls on certain goods and services; very often, the main agents behind these were the members of the royal family and the *Umrah*. Such monopolistic activities had a negative impact on production, and distribution of some articles which were in great demand for internal consumption and european markets. For sometime Asaf Khan and Shah Jahan invested large amounts in trading in cloth and ordered weavers and dyers not to cater to anyone until the royal order was supplied.²⁵ The imposition of such monopolies acted as a burden for the traders and also disrupted the normal flow of exchange of goods. Self centred activities like these where the emperor and premier nobles used their authority to corner the market must have had negative implications for traders and manufactures.²⁶ Shahjahan's *wazir*, Sadullah Khan was the rare example of a *wazir* who indulged in private trade, but keenly protected the interests of the merchant community as well.

Among Mughal *wazirs*, Mir Jumla under Aurangzeb has attracted considerable attention for indulging in commercial enterprises on a large scale.²⁷ His commercial activities offer the most noteworthy example of business investments of a Mughal *wazir*. Very often the involvement of senior nobles like Mir Jumla in commercial enterprises was dubious in nature because the capital invested by him came partly from the empire's revenue resource. This kind of private trade by creating monopolies to augment one's income or *sauda-i-khas* proved to be a great source of extortion. The English in Madras, for instance, could not sell anything except the articles purchased from the Nawab's men at prices fifty percent higher rate than those prevailing in the neighbourhood.²⁹ Aurangzeb is believed to have prohibited the *sauda-i-khas* indulged in by bureaucrats and officials.³⁰

Jafar Khan and Asad Khan, the other two *wazirs* under Aurangzeb, although preoccupied with the prolonged war in the Deccan did not isolate themselves from the commercial world entirely. Jafar Khan was undoubtedly the link between the emperor and foreign merchants and all commercial transactions were conducted through him.³¹ He is known to have granted concessions to French and was instrumental in convincing the emperor to allow them to set up factories in India. His commercial interaction with European powers made him aware of the weakness of Mughal shipping and his desire to improve it is seen in the following remark to Aurangzeb, "*there is no deficiency of money or timber or other materials for a navy but there is lack of men to direct*".³²

Asad Khan who enjoyed the longest tenure as Aurangzeb's *wazir* for almost thirty years was also instrumental in trade negotiations that benefitted Indian commercial interests. When Aurangzeb was confronted by problems of piracy being faced by Indian merchants and wanted to take necessary action, it was Asad Khan who issued the '*Parwana*'³³ to the governor of Surat to exercise pressure on the European trading community. Aurangzeb's confidence in Asad Khan's potential in handling European traders is revealed in his consulting his *wazir* whenever he failed to arrive at a settlement with them.

There is substantial evidence to prove that nobles indulging in commercial enterprises did not always confine themselves to making profit by honest means, a fact that reveals the negative aspect of *Mughal* aristocratic involvement in commercial activities. Bribery was an evil practice they indulged in before granting privileges to traders. Mir Jumla, for instance, stopped the English trade at Kasim Bazaar until some presents were offered to him.³⁴ Similarly the French succeeded in securing a farman for trade from the emperor in 1667 only when they bribed the *wazir* Jafar Khan. Tavernier remarks :

*“ So true it is that those who desire to do business at the court of princes should not commence anything unless they had an open purse for diverse officers of trust whose service they may need”.*³⁵

It may be concluded that Mughal *wazirs* participated in trade through misuse of their official position and in a way hindered the free growth of economic activity of the country. Dutch records mention the commercial decline of Surat in the number of Indian ships falling from eighty seven in 1693 to an average of thirty two in 1716 and further falling to nineteen in 1741.³⁶

However, the productive role of *wazirs* in augmenting trade lay largely in creating awareness for overseas trade through personal examples and establishing the link between *Mughal* emperors and the European traders. However, they failed to realize that control of trade routes was a prerequisite for commercial success. Their dependence on Europeans and their reluctance to adopt foreign technology in shipping or navigation was responsible for their being ultimately overpowered by Europeans in the following decades. Mughal *wazirs* in their capacity as economic advisors to the emperor could therefore be held responsible for the capture of external and internal trade by the Europeans and the decline of its indigenous industries in the Eighteenth century.

URBAN GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURAL DEVELOPMENT:

Urbanization and urban infrastructure are considered to be an index of the state of development and progress in a society. The importance of the towns and town life under Islam was astonishing; and provided the essence of its civilization. French historian Fernand Braudel remarked, *“Towns are like electric transformers. They increase tension, accelerate the rhythm of exchange and constantly recharge human life. Towns generate expansion and are themselves generated by it”.*³⁷ The rapid growth of towns in number, size and wealth was a striking feature in the socio-economic life of Mughal India. Akbar's empire, in the last decade of his reign is said to have contained as many as 120 cities and 3,200 townships.³⁸ The increasing peace and security of the empire, urban disposition of the ruling classes, the increasing opportunities of making a living encouraged growing number of people to flock to royal camps. Growth of medieval towns like Agra, Patna, Lahore and Fatehpur Sikri were the result of this development. Louis Massignon wrote : *“The originality of the muslim urban settlements, as compared to the west, were undoubtedly their precocity, on the one hand, and on the other, their exceptional size.”* Some estimates of the populations of individual towns like Agra 800,000 (1666), Delhi 500,000 (1659) Lahore 700,000 (1615)³⁹ give us an indication of the shift to urbanization and diffusion of agrarian surplus that was being

generated. As a British resident observed, “*the Mughals, magnificent and ostentatious required every article of luxury, towns and cities grew out of this spirit*”.⁴⁰

With the establishment of Mughal rule in India, emperors and the nobility invested a substantial part of their income in the infrastructure that led to urbanization. However, what mattered was not so much the size of the town and the density of its population as the nature of the towns and the role they played in the social, economic and cultural life of the country. Although administrative convenience rather than provision of facilities for economic activity motivated such investments, it did help to stimulate the economy and boost the process of urban development.⁴¹ Although the records of Babur’s and Humayun’s contributions to the building activity in the country which have survived are meagre but the indirect influence of their personalities on the subsequent art of the country cannot be overlooked.⁴²

Unlike Europe, the nobility in India was a class of people who were not only involved in the task of governance, but also reflected a certain level of culture and urbanity. Some Mughal *wazirs* played a major role in promoting infrastructure that led to urban expansion. Munim Khan-Akbar’s *wazir* in the early years was associated with the growth of the town of Jaunpur, where he constructed a number of bridges, mosques and madrasas in the vicinity of the town. The famous bridge over the Gomti at Jaunpur was constructed by Munim Khan and is recognized as Jaunpur’s most significant Mughal structure.⁴³ This must have improved transport and communication that led to making Jaunpur an important urban centre which thrived on account of its trade, *karkhanas and bazaars*.⁴⁴

Munim Khan built another bridge over the river Sai at a place called Pulguzar connecting Jaunpur with Allahabad. A bridge over the same river connecting Jaunpur with Banaras was repaired by him.⁴⁵ These bridges were very useful in facilitating movement of travellers and merchants and such an attempt by a mughal *wazir* in the sixteenth century must have contributed to promoting inland trade which was largely done on backs of bullock by nomadic carriers called ‘banjaras’. He contributed to the urban character of Jaunpur by building a number of public baths in the township. The mosque of Shah Shaikh, a well known saint of the time was built by him. The income from the shops adjoining this mosque was used for giving financial aid to the students studying in the madrasa of the mosque.⁴⁶

Mughal *wazirs* are also known to have been instrumental in the foundation of new towns and revival of old ones. Raja Todar Mal, is said to have brought about the revival of the town of Banaras.⁴⁷ The town witnessed a state of decline during the Sultanat period but regained its position as a place of learning and religious centre due to the efforts of Todar Mal and his son Govardhan Das. They were responsible for the repair and rebuilding of temples and ghats in Banaras. Todar Mal constructed a new temple on the site of the old Vishwanath temple during his tenure. Banaras became a famous centre for silk weaving having a *Katra-i-Resham* with around seven thousand weavers living in Banaras and its vicinity.⁴⁸

Another notable *wazir*, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan is also known to have made a significant contribution in improving infrastructure at urban centres. In Lahore, which became a virtual mughal capital towards the end of the sixteenth century he constructed a number of buildings, sarais and shelters for the poor and the needy. Abdul Baqi Nihawandi wrote, “*when weary travelers put up in the sarais, they forget the difficulties undergone by them on rough roads and their properties were safe*”.⁴⁹

Abdur Rahim, Khan-i-Khanan, founded the town of Jahangirpura in Khandesh. He is also said to have constructed a canal in Burhanpur which carried water from the Tapti river to adjoining areas to be used for drinking and irrigation. The Khan-i-Khanan's name is associated with the building of a congregational mosque, a bath, a garden, a tank and a *Mohalla* in Burhanpur which increased the importance of the vibrant town.

Similarly, Shah Jahan's wazir, Itmad-ud-Daulah also shared a fondness for construction of monuments. One of the best preserved Sarais of Jahangir's time, the sarai Doraha on the Lahore-Delhi route was constructed and maintained by Itmad-ud-Daulah as Doraha was part of his land holdings. It came to be known as Itmad-ud-Daulah Sarai and finds reference as a halting place for travelers in the records of the time. His son and successor, Asaf Khan was not only a noted patron of architecture but also well versed in the technicalities of this craft (Sanat) and involved in planning and construction of imperial buildings. Asaf Khan is known to have constructed a *Charbagh* at Lahore and was instrumental in giving final shape to the Musamman Burj constructed by Shah Jahan.⁵⁰ His love for the aesthetic found representation in the creation of *Nishat Bagh* on the banks of the Dal Lake in Kashmir and has been rated next only to the emperor's *Shalimar Bagh*.⁵¹

Sadullah Khan, Shah Jahan's most influential wazir also had a passion for architecture. His mansion at Shahjahanabad was one of the finest monuments in the city. He contributed to the urban cultural set up of Shahjahanabad where he constructed a square (*chowk*) in the middle of Khas Bazaar, the street that linked the Jami Masjid to the palace.⁵² The chowk Sadullah Khan, as it was called, catered to the entire city and had shops selling cloth, medicine food items, weapons and leather goods. Physicians, astrologers and dancing girls carried on their trade from the chowk.⁵³ The site also became the place for a *Nakhas* an impromptu market, where people from neighbouring areas came to sell perishable goods of daily consumption. Such bazaars contributed to making Shahjahanabad the apex of the hierarchy of towns and cities in north India.⁵⁴ Since most economic activity of the city happened in this bazaar, it drew customers from the city and the other parts of the empire.

Mir Jumla, Shah Jahan's wazir contributed towards improving infrastructure in Deccan and Bengal. In Telingana, where he spent many years, there are several monuments in his name. In Hyderabad, a tank, a garden and a mansion bearing his name still exists. A village called Saifabad near Hyderabad thrived under his assistance. He also improved the road from Dacca to Gandi Kota fort that benefited travellers and merchants.⁵⁵ A bridge by him over the Pagla river near Dacca has been described by Tavernier as a fine piece of construction. He also built a number of rest houses for the general public.⁵⁶

The growth of the port of Hugli was to some extent due to the efforts of Aurangzeb's wazir Jafar Khan who realised that the prosperity of Bengal depended upon its advantageous commerce and showed great indulgence to traders. The encouragement soon made the port of Hugli a place of great importance.⁵⁷

This large scale architectural activity undertaken by the royalty and nobility dominated the land scape of towns in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Cultural life revolved around that of the emperors and nobles and it was these households that to a great extent controlled urban economy and a large percentage of state revenue. Along with their palaces, there emerged markets, commercial and manufacturing establishments and residential complexes of merchants, shopkeepers and craftsmen. The shifting of administrative machinery along with other basic amenities made these localities self sufficient units with regard to their daily requirements. Such endeavours undoubtedly

contributed in determining the character of urban life as the construction of architectural monuments encouraged stone workers, sculptors, carpenters etc. to settle in the vicinity. This further led to a nascent middle class, consisting of shopkeepers, traders, bankers and shipbuilders.

Mughal nobility also contributed towards the religious architecture of their times. Keeping in mind the public character of worship in Islam, growth of towns and cities coincided with the growth of congregational mosques. Akbar's *wazir*, Muzaffar Khan, built a Jama Masjid at Agra. According to an archeological survey of the city of Shahjahanabad, out of four hundred and ten structures in the walled city, two hundred and two (nearly fifty percent) were mosques making Delhi a religious centre with mosques, tombs and graves of saints, shaikhs, pirs and holy men where thousands of pilgrims came seeking advice, comfort and help. The foundation of the Jami Masjid in the heart of Shahjahanabad was laid under the supervision of Sadullah Khan, Shah Jahan's premier noble and Fazil Khan. It was frequented by a large number of people including the royalty and the amirs.⁵⁸

An important aspect of economic life of Mughal India was the maintenance of '*karkhanas*' or workshops by the emperors and the nobility. It was the desire for luxuries and other articles made according to their own specifications that led them to maintain such establishments where a large number of workers were employed to manufacture different things for their use. Following the example of the emperor the nobility also encouraged local artisans either for their own needs or for making offerings to royalty.

Although these workshops did not benefit the common man, as they rarely produced goods for the general market, their impact on urban life and the relations between village and town was tremendous. More than anything else it helped in the movement of labour from rural to urban centres and in developing indigeneous techniques and providing employment to craftsmen and training to their apprentices. The '*karkhanas*' also helped the artisans to acquire status on account of occupational specialization. The biographical material contained in the histories written under the patronage of mughal nobles provides information on the inputs made available by certain wazirs in the manufacture of certain handicrafts.

There is documented evidence of the interest shown by Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan in arts and handicrafts. In his *karkhanas*, skilled artisans were frequently rewarded on displaying excellence. One of his servants Muhammad Suleh Beg from Iran was an expert in manufacturing guns which were better than those imported from Europe. Innovative textile designers of the time, Ghani Beg Asadabadi and Aqa Muhammad Shirazi who were in Abdur Rahim's service.⁵⁹ Although these workshops did not produce goods for the market, but the fact that twenty nine percent of the state's revenue was controlled by the nobility as against fourteen percent by the Emperor shows their dominance in all economic activities during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁶⁰

By the beginning of the eighteenth century circumstances changed drastically. The political disintegration of the empire was bound to affect its economic vitality. The gradual overshadowing of the imperial authority by independent kingdoms was bound to impact India's inland trade; as easy and uninterrupted flow of goods was replaced by transit and custom laws in each kingdom and exposition of heavy duties on goods passing their areas. In analysing the responsibility of the ruling classes in the economic decline that brought about overall degeneration, the failure to change with time appears significant. The contact with the west was open but there was a difference in the use of foreign articles and that of acquiring knowhow about its actual manufacturing. Moreover, the ruling class showed interest only in those things that catered to luxury and vice and not european knowledge

in science and technology. There are virtually no known works written in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries showing any influence of European technological advancements on the Indian ruling class.

The general indifference among the royalty and the nobility to various forms of art and industry which reflected itself in the regression of medieval Indian culture could be ascribed to the economic decline of the nobility that no longer received a major share of the empire's total revenue, whereas in the beginning of the seventeenth century they claimed sixty seven percent of the states revenue.⁶¹ The Akhbarat of the last years of Aurangzeb's reign are full of complaints from nobles that they were in a miserable condition and needed help from the treasury. Bernier wrote, "*There are very few wealthy Omrahs; on the contrary most of them are in embarrassed circumstances and deeply in debt*".⁶² Similar sentiments also find expression in the verses of contemporary poets like Khwaja Mir Dard and Mir Taqi Mir. The former laments at the position of the nobility in the following words.

*"men who once led a life of luxury are without means of livelihood, they are like a sparkling spring that has gone dry."*⁶³

Fortunes of the nobility was bound to result in the breakdown of the patronage system for which the Mughal nobility was renowned, resulting in unemployment for their beneficiaries and the weakening of the economic structure. The dwindling financial status of the nobility along with the crisis in the empire reflected itself in the ruination of Indian industry and its commercial subordination to European powers in the eighteenth century.

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UN PARISIEN AUX INDES EN 1690-1691

Navnit Kaur*

Si on dit qu'on n'a jamais entendu parler de choses si étonnantes, je répondrai ce qu'on m'a répondu, qui est que cela ne paraissant pas vraisemblable, personne ne s'est donné la peine de l'écrire, crainte de passer pour imposteur.

(Journal d'un voyage fait aux Indes orientales, t. II, éd. Mercure, 1983, p. 25)

Ces propos de Robert Challe, voyageur philosophe aux Indes annoncent ce qui va s'entraîner par la suite. Marcel Mauss, sociologue et ethnologue français dit à juste titre, « *Il n'existe pas de peuples non-civilisés. Il n'existe que des peuples de civilisations différentes* ». Challe semble également être d'accord avec Georges Duhamel qui dit : « *Chaque civilisation a les ordures qu'elle mérite* ». Une douzaine de jours que Challe séjourne aux Indes, il évoque une multitude de choses étonnantes, plutôt des saletés au fond de cette société jusqu'à ici inouïes et inconnues de l'Occident.

Robert Challe est assurément le plus grand écrivain de la période 1680-1715 et son *Journal d'un voyage fait aux Indes orientales* écrit au cours de son voyage aux Indes orientales & publié après sa mort survenue en 1721, est la plus précieuse œuvre que nous possédons sur la connaissance d'une civilisation et de l'homme. Challe est le témoin exemplaire de la crise de conscience européenne des années 1680-1720 et cette rédaction est en fait, un écho résonnant de son propre parcours intellectuel et spirituel. Passionnément intéressé par le monde qui se révélait à lui, Challe se met en marche à brasser les questions qui sont au cœur de la vie publique du XVII^e siècle. Fanatique de vérité, nous le verrons étudier les différentes formes de réalité du monde et de l'homme. Ce qui est le plus estimable en lui, c'est un culte de vérité, une franchise d'expression sans égal et une promesse de sincérité réitérée à maintes reprises; il dit sans façon tout ce qui se présente à son esprit. Comme remarque Roger Marchal :

« *Challe, on le sait, au risque de détruire la cohérence narrative de la relation de voyage, multiplie discours et digressions qui lui permettent de sortir des limites imposées par le genre, pour partir à la conquête du vaste monde* »¹.

UN PASSAGER EXCEPTIONNEL ET MASQUÉ DE LA LITTÉRATURE

Il est intéressant de noter qu'ignoré des histoires littéraires françaises jusqu'aux années 1950, Robert Challe, futur auteur des *Difficultés sur la religion proposées au Père Malebranche*, a failli manquer le coche de la postérité. L'auteur lui-même s'est servi de tous les moyens possibles pour préserver son statut anonyme en ne signant aucune de ses œuvres. Pour ce qui est son existence terrestre, on a longtemps vacillé dans l'ignorance.

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L'anonymat de Challe aurait assurément glissé son personnage et ses œuvres vers un oubli injuste et perpétuel n'eût été pour la notice de Prosper Marchand, le premier biographe de Challe, publiée en 1748 constatant qu'un personnage du nom de « Challes, Dechalles ou de Challes » avait bien existé vers 1718. Nonobstant, cette notice ne sera pas lue avant le XIX^e siècle. Encore plus substantiel était le tribut fait par le rédacteur du *Dictionnaire Historique* (1758-1759) d'après qui, un rude marin nourri dans l'eau de mer et la bouteille, selon le vœu même de Richelieu, fut l'astucieux l'auteur des *Illustres Françaises* (1713).

Dès lors, rien de décisif n'était fait pour dévoiler le mystère enveloppant la vie de Challe et pour fouiller dans la paternité des œuvres qui attireraient toujours des louanges du public. Or, le XIX^e siècle verra les grands du monde littéraire saluer ce clandestin passager de la littérature qu'est Challe. Champfleury fait de lui un « maître » ; Waldberg en Allemagne l'accueille comme un « voyant » et « précurseur de Balzac et de Strindberg » ou encore Henri Rodier distingue en Challe « inspirateur de Richardson et de l'abbé Prévost ». Mais quoi que ce soit, on ne cherchera guère à en savoir davantage et la personnalité de l'auteur restera mystérieuse jusqu'au milieu du XX^e siècle qu'une enquête policière menée par Jean Mesnard dans les années 1950 fera surgir un personnage correspondant à ladite notice de Marchand et établira définitivement l'état civil de Challe.

En grande partie, c'est à son anonymat que l'authenticité de ses œuvres était sévèrement mise en doute à maintes reprises. À propos du *Journal de voyage*, Prosper Marchand soupçonne Challe de mensonge et de supercherie en notant qu'il a pu rédiger son *Journal* « pour déployer son génie fertile, entreprenant et brodeur [...] et débiter tout à son aise ce qui, dans son œuvre, se trouve de peu obligeant et même de fort satirique contre le tiers et le quart »².

Or, comme remarque Surinder Jathaul qu' « au XX^e siècle encore, en 1913, les éditeurs des *Sources de l'histoire de France, Bourgeois et André, présentent le Journal de voyage comme amusant mais peu sérieux. À leurs yeux, Challe ne fut qu'un sous-ordre, donc mal placé pour rien connaître d'important.* »³.

Selon la remarque de Roger Francillon, un autre détracteur du *Journal* est l'historien Henri le Marquand. Il dénonce férocement l'authenticité du *Journal* en notant que l'auteur n'est qu' « un fabricant de libelles qui ne fut sans doute pas plus écrivain du roi qu'avocat au parlement, autre qualité dont il se vante » et son *Journal* n'est qu'une « mystification littéraire »⁴.

PÉRIPLE HISTORIQUE DU JOURNAL DE VOYAGE

Journal d'un voyage fait aux Indes orientales paraît d'abord en 3 volumes en 1721 à la Haye chez Abraham de Hondt et est rempli de remarques curieuses sur quantité de sujets et particulièrement sur la navigation et sur la politique de divers peuples et de différentes sociétés. À cette époque, les *Illustres Françaises*, le chef d'œuvre romanesque de Challe a déjà connu un succès phénoménal sans que personne n'en sache l'auteur. La première édition du *Journal* est suivie beaucoup plus tard d'une version peu fiable par A. Augustin-Thierry chez Plon en 1933.

Ce ne sera qu'en 1978 que la première édition moderne intégrale du *Journal* sera réalisée au Mercure de France, bientôt suivi d'une seconde édition augmentée parue dans la collection du « Temps retrouvé » en 1983. À mesure de l'étendue que prend la réputation de Challe, il faudrait encore une nouvelle édition du *Journal*. De plusieurs recherches menées au cours de deux derniers siècles ont tiré de l'ombre non seulement l'histoire de l'existence mouvementée de l'auteur mais aussi sa biographie spirituelle. Il sera connu non seulement pour ses *Illustres Françaises*, comme le

fondateur du roman moderne de la langue française, mais il se gagnera une place estimée dans l'histoire financière, maritime et coloniale de la France, grâce à la publication intégrale de ses *Mémoires* en 1996. La publication fidèle et complète de son traité déiste des *Difficultés sur la religion proposées au père Malebranche* s'achèvera à le saluer comme le père du déisme français.

De plus, la découverte par Jacques Popin d'un manuscrit olographe d'une version primitive du *Journal de voyage*, composée au jour le jour entre 1690 et 1691 et destinée par l'auteur à son oncle et protecteur Pierre Raymond décidera définitivement en faveur d'une nouvelle édition en 2002 chez Marcure de France. Avec cette version, sera complétée la collection des œuvres de Challe récemment publiées.

UN PASSIONNÉ DE VÉRITÉ

Le 24 février 1690, une escadre de six vaisseaux, armée à demi pour le commerce et à demi en guerre, sous le commandement d'Abraham Du Quesne-Guiton, quitte le Port-Louis, en Bretagne, à destination des Indes Orientales. Elle mouillera devant Pondichéry, le 12 août 1690 et rentrera en France l'année suivante, le 20 août 1691, après un périple de dix-huit mois. Robert Challe, fils de Jean Challe, bourgeois de Paris, s'embarque sur l'Ecueil, un des navires de l'escadre, en qualité de l'écrivain du roi et rédige au fil des jours, son *Journal de voyage*, enrichi du vécu et nourri des méditations de grande envergure. Regardons un peu l'Inde des yeux de Challe et évaluons son acuité fine envers cette civilisation.

Le 12 août 1690, l'escadre française accoste Pondichéry. Challe discerne tout de suite la faible connaissance de fortification et de géométrie par rapport aux structures françaises. La vue de grands bateaux bâtis fragilement et appartenant à la Compagnie française ne l'impressionne guère. Pour le fort des Français, il lui paraît ayant été construit sans géométrie ni ingénuité, « *en un mot, un fort très indigne d'en porter le nom* »⁵. Challe décèle avec justesse que ces faibles structures ne sont bonnes que pour risquer la vie des soldats et gêner les marchandises. Il est cruellement déçu par l'esprit mou et la tranquillité facile de la compagnie française quant à ses établissements importants tant pour la défense que pour le commerce.

Challe est saisi à la vue des officiers et des soldats français dont les trois quarts & demi sont tellement pourris par leur volupté et leurs débauches qu'ils n'ont guère la force de porter même leurs épées au côté et que le moindre souffle de vent suffirait les terrasser. Challe se surprend s'ils pouvaient faire résistance à l'ennemi. Cédons la parole à l'auteur :

« *Les français y sont environ deux cents personnes, compris les officiers et les soldats. Les trois quarts & demi de ceux-ci n'osent retourner en Europe : non qu'il leur soit défendu de revenir dans leur patrie, mais, c'est que les filles suivantes de Vénus les ont si bien salés & poivrés qu'ils crèveraient dans les froidures du cap de Bonne-Espérance, s'ils hasardaient de la repasser. Ils ne sont pas difficiles à distinguer. Ils sont si pâles, livides, maigres & hideux que si je ne les avais pas vus l'épée au côté, je les aurais pris pour de nouveaux Lazares, ou du moins des moines de Notre-Dame de la Trappe. Ils ont si peu de force que d'un souffle de vent on les jetterait à terre. Voilà des gens bien capables de faire résistance aux ennemis !* »⁶. Challe ne tarde pas à en tirer la leçon qu'il se ferait « *eunuquiser plutôt que d'en être frappé* »⁷.

Les Français, comme l'estime futur auteur des *Difficultés sur la religion*, « *devraient y vivre chrétiennement, & surtout chastement, du moins pour leur santé. Ils ont devant les yeux*

quantité de bons exemples ; y ayant, outre les capucins, des missionnaires et des jésuites, qui y passent très souvent, & un frère cordelier, qui demeure avec les capucins ; en un mot, autant de pasteurs qu'il en faut pour un si petit troupeau. »⁸.

Sur le plan terrien, l'esprit alerte de Challe est stupéfié de la décision de la compagnie française de s'installer à Pondichéry, une terre stérile, d'un accès difficile du côté de la mer, d'une nature ouverte du côté de la terre et si incommode pour la vie.

Challe est face à face avec une peuplade toute nouvelle pour lui et en fait un portrait lucide comme il la trouve à Pondichéry. Il y observe trois classes : Premièrement, il y a des gentils qui commandent aux autres. Puis, il y a des Mores qui sont à la fois mahométans, circoncis, & idolâtres ; ou plutôt professent une religion ridicule, à laquelle eux-mêmes n'entendent rien. Enfin, il y a des esclaves/Lascaris. D'après Challe, toutes les classes sont idolâtres.

Parmi des gentils, Challe est étonné d'apprendre que des nouveau-nés sont portés dans une pagode et lavés dans l'eau, telle qu'on la trouve. Pour leurs mariages, les prétendus mariés ne se sont jamais vus, leurs filles restant toujours renfermées dans le derrière des maisons et ne voient ni sont vues par qui que ce soit de dehors. Les mariages ont lieu dans la même famille ou caste. Des gentils ne sont pas permis de faire d'autre commerce, négoce ou métier que celui de leur père. De l'avis de Challe : « *Si cela était de même en Europe, & surtout en France, l'exécrable maltôte ne tirerait pas de la charrue une infinité de paltoquets pour en faire de gros seigneurs ; & nous ne verrions pas tant de gens de qualité* »⁹. La classe de gentils contient des « banians » ou marchands, des « neyres » et des « bramènes ». Tous ces gentilshommes du pays ne font rien que commander et font travailler les autres.

Les gens de ce pays ne mangent rien qui a vie, de crainte de manger l'âme, ou le vêtement de l'âme de leurs parents ou amis. Leur superstition va jusqu'à adorer les insectes les plus vils, les plus immondes et les plus méprisables.

Toutes les femmes excepté celles des Bramènes sont permises de se remarier ou rester veuves après la mort de leurs maris. Quant aux bramènes, ils pratiquent la coutume effroyable et inhumaine de « *Sati* » où la veuve du défunt est obligée de se brûler dans le même feu qui consume le cadavre du mari. Evoquons d'après Challe, l'épisode horrible de « *Sati* » dans les mots suivants :

« Premièrement, il ne faut pas que la veuve pleure ; car, si elle jetait une larme, elle serait réputée indigne d'aller se rejoindre à un esprit bienheureux. Secondement, il faut que dès le moment de la mort de son mari, elle déclare qu'elle veut se brûler avec lui, & qu'elle en avertisse tel ancien bramène que bon lui semble, qui est celui qu'elle destine à faire la cérémonie. Si elle mettait un intervalle d'un quart d'heure entre la mort de son mari & sa déclaration, elle n'y serait plus reçue ; parce que cette déclaration serait regardée comme un fruit de ses réflexions & non pas comme un effet d'un amour tendre & désintéressé, qui n'a pour objet que ce qu'il aime. Troisièmement, il faut qu'elle persévère ; lui étant toujours permis de se dédire, jusqu'à ce qu'elle soit liée au cadavre, comme on va voir. »¹⁰.

Pour le reste, voici comment cela s'est déroulé dans un village quelques mois auparavant. « [...] Les bramènes firent trois autres tours en jetant des cris et des hurlements effroyables, & se rangèrent autour du corps à droite & à gauche.

La femme parut ensuite, vêtue de ses plus beaux ornements, pleine de colliers & de bracelets, & enfin parée comme si elle avait été à sa noce. Elle avait le visage riant, la démarche assurée & rien ne témoignait dans sa personne que la mort cruelle qu'elle allait souffrir lui fit aucune horreur. Elle était environnée de femmes & de filles, & de plusieurs bramènes, qui tous l'exhortaient, & la félicitaient d'aller se rejoindre à un homme au bonheur duquel elle devait participer. On lui fit faire trois fois le tour du foyer, sur lequel le cadavre était étendu ; on lui demanda autant de fois si elle voulait effectivement être brûlée avec lui. Elle répondit toujours oui, avec beaucoup de résolution. »¹¹.

Ce n'est point la pauvreté qui poussait cette jeune et aimable femme de dix-sept à dix-huit ans à mourir mais un aveuglement, une illusion, un égarement qui fait éblouir la raison et le jugement. Elle paraît à tout moment résolue d'embrasser la mort.

« [...] elle parut cependant nous en témoigner de la reconnaissance, par des regards gracieux qu'elle jeta sur nous, en nous saluant en riant. Sa constance alla jusqu'au bout. Elle monta résolument sur le bûcher toute seule, baisa et embrassa le cadavre, se releva, jeta aux femmes & aux filles qui l'avaient accompagnée ses vêtements, ses colliers, ses bracelets, & enfin tout ce qu'elle avait sur elle, ne se réservant qu'une pagne ou pièce de toile de coton, qui en forme de ceinture la couvrait depuis le dessus des hanches jusqu'aux genoux. Elle s'assit au chevet du mort, & lui mit la tête sur son estomac à elle.

Jusqu'ici, il lui a été permis de se dédire, mais, elle ne le peut plus sitôt que le bramène, funeste exécuter d'une si terrible résolution, qui est monté avec elle sur le bûcher, lui a lié le bras droit avec celui du mort. Ce bramène se retire promptement, & promptement aussi les autres bramènes mettent le feu au bûcher de tous côtés. On y jette du bois & d'autres matières combustibles : & pendant ce temps, les bramènes, les femmes, & les assistants font un bruit & des cris de tous les diables ; sans doute pour empêcher de distinguer ceux de la patiente. »¹².

L'horreur de cette coutume barbare mène l'auteur à méditer un peu sur la liberté dont se disposent les femmes européennes et conclut : *« [...] & si on obligeait en Europe les femmes à se brûler après la mort de leurs maris, les morts subites ne seraient pas si fréquentes »¹³.*

Challe note en stupéfaction qu'il n'y a aucune loi qui autorise une telle inhumanité mais c'est par un honneur ridicule, une vaine ostentation et par un zèle mal conduit que ces veuves bramènes se précipitent embrasser une mort si effrayante. Du reste, le gain est pour une infinité de bigotes et de fripons de bramènes, pour qui *« ces sacrifices volontaires de soi-même relèvent la prétendue sainteté, & flattent l'amour-propre »¹⁴.*

Pour les esclaves, Challe écrit, *« Il n'y a qui que ce soit au monde plus malheureux & plus misérable qu'eux. Ils obéissent aux autres avec un abaissement & une humiliation qui tient plus du chien que de l'homme, & qui est inexprimable. »¹⁵.* On peut avoir un esclave pour une roupie. Ils se nourrissent très frugalement ou plutôt pauvrement d'où leur corps extrêmement faibles. D'ailleurs, ils sont des victimes de leur extrême lubricité. Le commerce des femmes et des filles est fleurissant chez eux et ce sont des hommes qui font cet infâme commerce. Un esclave n'hésite pas à vendre pour une roupie, sa sœur, sa fille ou sa femme à un Européen. Challe dit être lui-même témoin d'un tel commerce mais il a préféré la sagesse crainte des suites infâmes et surtout des chirurgiens ; il craint les chirurgiens plus que la Providence. Cette prostitution ne coûte presque rien à ceux qui veulent goûter les plaisirs d'amour, *« une roupie par mois en fait l'affaire »¹⁶.* Pour le combler, la prostituée

est obligée de régaler son amant chaque fois qu'il va la voir. De plus, elle est obligée d'acheter une pagne neuve à la fin de mois faute de quoi l'amant est en droit de lui demander à propos de ses dépenses. Quel esclavage ! Challe déplore farouchement une telle bassesse répugnante de l'esprit humain.

L'adultère et la fornication est punie de mort chez les gentils et les mores quoique les incidents en sont très rares non parce que leurs femmes ou leurs filles sont plus vertueuses ou plus sages que des Européennes mais par l'étroite clôture où elles sont retenues avec un grand soin. Cet adultère ne vaut la peine chez les noires. D'ailleurs, une veuve, parmi les gentils ou les mores qui se remarie passe pour une dénaturée et se perd de réputation mais elle est autorisée d'avoir un amant. Notre curé de vérité démontre avec pertinence que c'est intéressant que cette pratique où « *On donne cette apparence de veuvage à la vénération qui est due à la mémoire du défunt & on accorde le reste aux nécessités de la nature* »¹⁷. Donc, presque toutes les veuves préfèrent rester ainsi afin de jouir de la liberté offerte par la mort du mari et de ne plus se rejeter dans l'esclavage. En revanche, cette liberté de choix ne s'étend point sur les veuves des bramènes, obligées de choisir entre le sati ou le célibat pour le reste de ses jours et de vouloir passer pour une infâme. Pour Challe, c'est un paradoxe cruel que l'homme cherche parti ailleurs au cas où la femme meurt avant ou après la consommation de mariage tandis que la femme est traitée comme une esclave inhumaine qui n'a ni raison, ni passion.

N'est-ce pas drôle pour un Européen de noter que le mariage est fixé par les parents dès que leurs enfants atteignent l'âge de 2 ou 3 ans alors que la consommation en est remise à 11 ou 12 ans en cas de garçons et à 8 ou 9 ans en cas de filles. Si le mari meurt avant la consommation du mariage, l'épouse est obligée de vivre dans un perpétuel célibat. Challe remarque douloureusement que de telles saletés ôtent au sexe féminin tout champ de vivre dignement.

Aux yeux de Challe, l'impureté et l'idolâtrie sont à leur comble dans ce pays qui n'inspire que l'horreur et l'indignation chez un étranger. Ces idolâtres abîmés dans les ténèbres de l'ignorance adorent des figures ridicules ayant « *deux bras et deux mains, la tête d'un éléphant, & sur la poitrine une figure de diable en relief, pareille à celles que les peintres & les sculpteurs représentent, pour faire peur aux femmes, aux petits enfants* »¹⁸ et attachent des histoires drôles et ridicules à l'existence de leurs pagodes. Leur vénération est fondée sur des histoires difficiles à croire. « *Leur religion est pleine de pareil sottises & ils donnent à leurs idoles des histoires toutes différentes* »¹⁹.

Challe sera frappé de l'étendue de l'impudeur qui règne au sein de la société au nom de diverses coutumes; les veuves des bramènes dont les mariages n'ont point été consommés et les filles non-mariées à l'âge de 18 ans, sont obligées de s'attacher à ces idoles jusqu'à pollution et servir à leur divertissement. C'est là toute l'occupation de leur vie et il y en a une quantité prodigieuse. De plus, les filles et les veuves chastes à contrecœur et surtout les religieuses et les femmes stériles se servent d'un morceau de bois pour parvenir à leurs besoins naturels. Puisque nous sommes en train de parler du culte de stérilité, il ne sera pas inutile d'évoquer un autre épisode qui vient sur le champ à l'esprit de Challe : il s'agit de la dévotion outrée des femmes stériles pour une statue de saint René de pierre à Nantes en Bretagne dans l'espoir de se retrouver enceintes. Poussées par une foi aveugle, elles se figuraient que leurs prières seraient plus efficacement exaucées si elles pouvaient manger quelque morceau du bas de ventre du saint et donc elles ont gratté le plâtre si bien que « *le bas du ventre est tout mangé et bien plat* »²⁰. Une conscience éveillée ne fera que rire d'une pareille sottise.

Outre les superstitions, ces gens s'adonnent avec un empressement extraordinaire aux miracles et aux choses surnaturelles & des scélérats de bramènes abusent avec impunité de leur faiblesse et de leur ignorance. Mais une chose remarquable chez ces peuples est la charité prodigieuse qui pourrait faire honte même aux chrétiens, ceux qui se flattent beaucoup de cette vertu. Cependant,

à l'horreur de l'auteur, cette charité chez les premiers s'étend jusqu'à sauver, protéger et nourrir même les insectes les plus immondes du monde. Pour nourrir ces insectes qu'ils ne tuent point, un esclave se dispose pour leur subsistance qui se fait un point de religion et de dévotion de s'en laisser dévorer. Cet esclave est donné une roupie pour la récompense de sa charité. Challe dit à juste titre : « *Qu'est-ce que c'est donc que l'esprit de l'homme ? N'est-il pas plus abject que celui d'une bête quand il n'a que lui-même pour guide ?* »²¹. Il n'y a presque rien chez ces peuples qui n'a pas été déifié. Challe remarque judicieusement, « *Que n'a-t-il point déifié ? Les Egyptiens ont adoré jusqu'à leurs légumes* »²². Pour lui, les vers railleurs de Juvénal convient ici :

« *O sanctas gentes, quibus haec nascuntur in hortis Numina* »²³.
(Ô saintes nations, qui dans leurs jardins font pousser leurs divinités.)

Challe rapporte avec justesse que ce péninsule des Indes n'est moins qu'un paradis pour les étrangers portés aux sens de plaisir car les aisés de la société et les baniens, selon leur coutume, régalaient les étrangers avec les filles bien faites et énormément belles comme un point d'honneur tant pour l'hôte que pour les invités. Revenant à la mystique féminine, Challe soutient que la vue seule de ces « Venus » suffit pour que la plupart des Français se rendent sans beaucoup de peine d'où la santé fragile et les corps pourris des soldats Français de la Compagnie à Pondichéry.

Une autre chose bizarre chez ces gens est qu'ils ne se servent jamais de ce qui servi aux autres à repas et qu'ils se croient d'être impurs s'ils le faisaient ; cela comprend les assiettes, les nappes, les serviettes etc. dont on sert à repas.

Challe observe chez ces peuples une fois inébranlable attachée à la vie après mort. Voilà pourquoi après la mort de quelqu'un, on laisse des provisions à côté du corps brûlé croyant que les morts y viennent manger & boire pendant quarante jours. Challe dépeint soigneusement le spectacle suite à la mort d'un noir. C'est plutôt risible à voir comment la femme et les enfants font chacun des harangues au chevet d'un noir mort en lui demandant des questions bizarres comme pourquoi les a-t-il quittés, qu'est-ce qui lui manquait, dans quel corps son âme était passé et une infinité d'autres questions de pareil nature. C'est la croyance de ces peuples que le corps sans âme est un reste impur qui devrait être réduit en matière plus épurée pour aller rejoindre son âme. Challe découvre là-dedans une infinité d'absurdités et de contrariétés ; pourquoi l'âme a besoin de se rejoindre à cette matière subtil et épurée et comment donc s'incorpore la matière à l'âme. Challe apprend que ces noirs ont jusqu'à 75 opinions sur l'âme. La cérémonie du brûlement des morts est accompagnée d'un grand bruit de clairons, de trompettes et de tambours ; des imprécations ou des prières d'un bramène et de la provision de vivres pour l'âme de défunt. Voici le déroulement.

« *Premièrement, deux hommes portant des clairons, ou espèces de trompettes droites, & longues de quatorze pieds, dont ils firent un très grand bruit, non continu, mais de temps en temps. J'ignore [...] avec les trois premiers doigts de chaque main, du riz à trois reprises, qu'il jette à trois reprises aussi sur le mort, justement sur la bouche, un linge bien blanc entre deux, en sorte que le riz reste sur le linge* »²⁴.

À croire ces gens, l'âme du défunt pendant quarante jours a besoin de nourritures jusqu'à ce que le nouveau corps dans lequel il est passé ne commence à lui fournir assez.

« [...] *Ce riz est porté à la veuve du défunt, ou à sa plus proche parente, qui le fait cuire et le renvoie ou l'apporte après le soleil couché, avec un autre pot plein d'eau, qui sont mis tous deux proche du bûcher, après que le corps est consommé ; et cela se continue pendant quarante jours, afin que l'âme du défunt y vienne prendre sa réfection* »²⁵.

Quel aveuglement ! Quelle ignorance ! Et quel apathie de la part des religieux étrangers qui sont venus dans ces terres défaire les indigènes de leurs superstitions mais qui loin d'être touchés par ces absurdités y ajoutent les leurs. Challe suppose qu'il y a peut-être un lien qui existe entre cette notion de quarante jours chez ces peuples et celle préconisée par les médecins européens sur l'animation de l'embryon le quarantième jour de sa formation. Il dit railleusement que peut-être, ces derniers doivent leur inspiration aux indiens.

Une cérémonie si élaborée et des esprits si sensibles à l'égard des morts ! N'est-ce pas ironique que ces gens ne le sont pas autant quant aux vivants puisqu'ils vendent sans difficulté leurs enfants, sans espérance de les revoir jamais.

Allons saluer le génie des indiens d'après Challe. Challe est fâché de remarquer que les indiens ne sont nullement braves et sont trop craintifs pour se battre de pied ferme. Dès qu'ils voient un de leurs tué ou blessé, ils prennent la fuite. C'est pourquoi Alexandre, roi de Macédonie n'a pas eu beaucoup de peine de vaincre un pays si vaste pour se faire une réputation qui ne finira jamais. Le peu de bravoure jointe à une bassesse servile caractérisent le mieux les indiens à l'époque.

L'esprit sordidement intéressé des indiens tant sujets que princes irrite davantage Challe. Pour prendre l'auteur, il n'y a « rien de plus facile à corrompre que les Asiatiques, qui sont tellement avarés et avides de présents qu'ils les demandent, sans honte ni pudeur : étant chez eux un compliment très usité, *Quand j'irai te voir, que me donneras-tu ? Et quand tu viendras me voir, que m'apporteras-tu ?* »²⁶.

Challe apprécie les princes comme suivant :

« *Que les princes orientaux, aussi bien que leurs sujets, étaient tous sans exception frappés de cet esprit d'intérêt sordide ; qu'il n'y avait rien qui leur parût infâme, pourvu qu'ils y trouvassent leur profit* »²⁷. L'épisode du roi de Golconde comment a-t-il impudiquement tiré une somme de sept mille écus d'un Hollandais en échange de seulement une pucelle, renforce les propos de Challe.

Voilà donc Robert Challe, voyageur aux Indes. Voilà la découverte d'un monde connu de son temps fécondée chez lui par une culture classique et un culte de vérité. Voilà une réflexion personnelle approfondie à travers les spectacles et les anecdotes galantes. Au-delà du pittoresque et de la couleur locale, voilà surtout une méditation de grande envergure sur l'être humain et sa destinée, la religion, les mœurs et croyances du pays, la mystique féminine et le statut de la femme, les morales, les économies sans oublier l'écologie et la nature humaine. Challe a une profonde connaissance des passions et des travers humains. Il vaut la peine de le poursuivre.

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Marcel Pagnol et la satire

Nidhi Sharma*

Résumé

La satire est une façon de critiquer les vices, d'attaquer les ridicules avec l'intention de les corriger. Le présent article est destiné à mettre en lumière l'élément satirique dans l'œuvre de Pagnol. Pour nous, c'est un aspect assez intéressant de l'écriture pagnolienne qui non seulement évoque le rire mais aussi les moments de réflexion. Alors, la satire de Pagnol remplit bien ses missions, c'est ce que nous avons démontré. Elle vise à rétablir l'ordre perdu du monde. Le rire et le ridicule sont des armes puissantes dont Pagnol se sert dans la plupart de ses pièces. Outre que la satire politique et sociale que nous avons discuté en donnant des exemples, nous avons aussi mis en lumière la façon dont il se moque de l'hypocrisie religieuse et la crise de moralité. Les pièces de Pagnol, comme celles des fables de La Fontaine, nous laisse un message, et elles le font, la plupart du temps, sous le masque mordant, qui les rend non seulement intéressantes mais impressionnantes. Hardiment tournée vers la critique des défauts, son œuvre reste inoubliable et exerce une influence considérable sur nos esprits.

Marcel Pagnol, écrivain et auteur dramatique français, né en 1895 à Aubagne, en France s'attaque aux vices et aux défauts sous une forme satirique pour faire passer ses convictions. Une question s'impose : le style satirique, est-il le seul aspect significatif de l'écriture de Pagnol ? Non, certes, c'est l'un des aspects les plus importants de ses écrits. Nous proposons donc dans le présent article, de mettre en lumière les éléments satiriques qui se trouvent en filigrane dans l'œuvre de Pagnol, en considérant principalement la satire politique et religieuse, qui donne une allure intéressante et impressionnante à ses pièces de théâtre. Ses pièces contribuent à éclairer les esprits sur l'existence des vices, des croyances trompeuses et des préjugés.

Qu'est-ce que c'est que la satire ? Par l'esprit satirique on critique ou attaque les vices. Elle se nourrit de la violence du monde et la ridiculise publiquement : « *La satire est un objet contradictoire et inclassable qui peut simultanément faire rire et effrayer, séduire et offenser, manier l'esprit et l'invective, susciter le plaisir et la souffrance, ressembler à la folie et énoncer des choses sensées, être de mauvaise foi et viser juste, paraître naïve et se montrer avisée, donner l'illusion d'une colère spontanée et résulter de procédures froidement élaborées.* »¹ Par la moquerie, elle cherche à révéler les discordances.

Pagnol se moque des défauts et des travers de la vie réelle sur le plan politique, moral, religieux ou social. L'écrivain tourne en dérision les sujets brûlants comme l'injustice sociale, la corruption, les inégalités, l'hypocrisie, la jalousie, l'égoïsme. Il travaille librement. On pourrait dire que la satire pagnolienne vise à non seulement évoquer le rire mais aussi à provoquer la réflexion en même temps.

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À notre avis, la satire est une arme puissante pour mettre en ridicule ce qui est défectueux et qui gêne le progrès social. La satire de Pagnol tire son épingle du jeu avec humour et liberté. Sa pièce *Les Marchands de gloire* écrite en 1924 est pleine de satire politique mais son premier succès était *Jazz*, écrit en 1926, dans lequel il se moque de la morale bourgeoise.

Pagnol a pratiqué avec succès tous les genres. Il a écrit des romans, des essais ; il a travaillé dans le domaine du théâtre et du cinéma. Son œuvre est aujourd'hui traduite dans une trentaine de langues, dont le punjabi². La troisième œuvre notable de Pagnol est *Topaze*, où nous pouvons voir la satire de l'arrivisme.

Les Marchands de gloire est une pièce intéressante où il cherche les rapports entre la morale et la politique. Il nous suggère qu'en politique, on ne choisit qu'entre le désastreux et le déplaisant. Les politiciens tentent de traiter les hommes comme des choses, se servent d'eux comme une échelle qui les mène au succès. La façon dont Pagnol se moque des politiciens qui trompent les gens simples, faibles est formidable.

Le politicien fait n'importe quoi afin de prouver sa supériorité, ce qui entrave tout progrès. Pour cette raison, le milieu politique, aux yeux des gens est corrompu. Pour Pagnol, la politique est une comédie : « *Mon cher, en politique, tout est comédie. Et même quand on est sincère - car ça arrive tout de même quelquefois - il faut jouer la comédie de la sincérité, autrement les gens n'y croient pas.* »³

Pour Pagnol, tout comme pour Machiavel, la politique est une technique réglée par la seule opportunité. Sous le masque de gouvernement démocratique, ils pratiquent un gouvernement despotique, lequel, selon Montesquieu est celui où un seul, sans lois ni règles, entraîne tout par sa volonté et par ses caprices. Ils laissent la loi tomber en désuétude. Pagnol démasque les désirs dissimulés des politiciens dans ses écrits.

Le dessein politique est un dessein d'avidité, de malhonnêteté, de mécontentement. Chez eux, l'argent et le pouvoir sont des désirs effrénés. Le paradoxe : c'est qu'ils sont payés pour résoudre des problèmes dont ils sont la cause.

Nous dirions avec Michel Rocard que la politique est « dégueulasse » parce que les hommes qui la font la rendent « dégueulasse ». Le pouvoir est concentré entre leurs mains et ils en profitent. Ils savent l'art de plaire qui est en réalité l'art de tromper.

Ce n'est pas seulement la politique où existe l'hypocrisie, elle est partout, c'est seulement le niveau qui diffère. Prenons un domaine, celui de la religion. Il existe des croyances trompeuses et des superstitions dans toutes les religions. Pagnol met à nu l'hypocrisie religieuse. Les faux dévots, les imposteurs religieux prêchent ce que, selon eux, le Bon Dieu dit, mais aucun d'eux ne peut fournir la preuve de son existence.

En plus de parler de politique, il parle de la religion et des religieux. La religion exerce une influence prépondérante sur la société. Il raille de faux dévots qui ne veulent que prouver leur sagesse, même s'ils n'ont pas de connaissances : « *Tu es prêtre...Tu parles de choses que tu ne connais pas.* »⁴ Leurs victimes sont des gens innocents. Ils disent que le Bon Dieu punira les intolérants, les égoïstes, les hypocrites. Alors, pourquoi Dieu ne les punit-ils pas ? Pourquoi vivent-ils sains et saufs dans la société ? C'est la question que Pagnol veut approfondir.

Pagnol dénonce le fanatisme et la cupidité de faux dévots gouvernés par le vice. Chacun court pour le luxe et le plaisir. Et dans ce but, il répandent des superstitions. Il semble que Pagnol se met d'accord avec la formule de Voltaire : « *Ecr. L'inf.* »⁵ (écrasons l'infâme). L'infâme correspond ici à toutes formes de croyances trompeuses, des superstitions et de l'intolérance.

L'homme se trompe par sa crédulité superstitieuse et de faux dévots exploitent à leur profit la foi du public. Pagnol emploie la satire contre de tels hypocrites. Il semble qu'il accepte comme Diderot : « *La comédie gaie, qui a pour objet le ridicule et le vice* », ainsi que, « *la tragédie, qui a pour objet les catastrophes publiques et les malheurs des grands.* »⁶

Le chef religieux n'a que l'instinct de tuer, non seulement les hommes, mais aussi leurs sentiments, leur pouvoir de raison, leur confiance, ce qui est pire que tuer un homme. Alors, les gens deviennent un jouet entre ses mains. Il envoûte les gens en utilisant des mots sympathiques. Il ne possède aucune intention noble fondée sur la conscience morale.

Même en politique, on soustrait à la liberté des gens sous prétexte d'en donner. Pagnol exprime son incrédulité à l'égard la politique. L'idéalisme est le déguisement derrière lequel les hommes politiques cachent leur volonté de domination. Selon Pagnol, la politique n'est qu'un jeu de pouvoir.

L'œuvre de Pagnol a une signification profonde. Sa pensée indique de grandes qualités humaines. Il voit l'homme tel qu'il est, avec ses qualités et ses défauts. La forme en est intéressante. On y trouve une connaissance approfondie de l'homme.

Une autre pièce où nous pouvons apprécier son influence satirique, c'est *Topaze*. Topaze, professeur naïf, d'une rare intégrité morale, est congédié parce qu'il refuse de falsifier les notes d'un riche élève. Il devient homme de paille d'un conseiller municipal et finit par comprendre que le monde n'est pas celui des proverbes. Ainsi est né un nouveau Topaze qui est parvenu à la réussite matérielle et sociale. À la fin, il comprend que la seule chose qui compte, c'est l'argent avec lequel vient le pouvoir. Voilà comment il s'y prend :

TOPAZE

Mais oui, pauvre enfant que tu es...Ce journal, champion de la morale,ne voulait que vingt cinq mille francs. Ah ! l'argent...Tu n'en connais pas la valeur. Mais ouvre les yeux, regarde la vie, regarde tes contemporains.L'argent peut tout, il permet tout, il donne tout...Si je veux une maison moderne, une fausse dent invisible, la permission de faire gras, le vendredi, mon éloge dans les journaux ou une femme dans mon lit, l'obtiendrai-je par des prières, le dévouement, ou la vertu ? Il ne faut qu'entreouvrir ce coffre et dire un petit mot : « combien » (Il a pris dans le coffre une liasse de billet) Regarde ces billets de banque, ils peuvent tenir dans ma poche, mais ils prendront la forme et la couleur de mon désir. Confort, beauté, santé, amour, honneurs, puissance, je tiens tout cela dans ma main...Tu t'effares, mon pauvre Tamise, mais je vais te dire un secret : malgré les rêveurs, malgré les poètes et peut-être malgré mon cœur, j'ai appris la grande leçon ; Tamise, les hommes ne sont pas bons. C'est la force qui gouverne le monde, et ces petits rectangles de papier bruissant, voilà la forme moderne de la force.

TAMISE

Il est heureux que tu aies quitté l'enseignement, car si tu redevenais professeur de morale...

TOPAZE

Sais-tu ce que je dirais à mes élèves ? (Il s'adresse soudain à sa classe du premier acte.) « Mes enfants, les proverbes que vous voyez au mur de cette classe correspondaient peut-être jadis à une réalité disparue. Aujourd'hui on dirait qu'ils ne servent qu'à lancer la foule sur une fausse piste, pendant que les malins se partagent la proie ; si bien qu'à notre époque le mépris des proverbes c'est le commencement de la fortune... » Si tes professeurs avaient eu la moindre idée des réalités, voilà ce qu'ils t'auraient enseigné, et tu ne serais pas maintenant un pauvre bougre.⁷

Pagnol met en scène une vérité amère où le vice a raison de la vertu, où le mal profite mieux que la bonté. Topaze trahit ses principes moraux pour une vie lucrative et connaît d'emblée un succès bœuf. Topaze gagne peu à peu sa place et Pagnol nous le fait voir par les palmes académiques qui lui sont offerts par M. Muche, le directeur de pension Muche, qui l'avait congédié avant.

TOPAZE

Je puis dire que pendant dix ans, de toutes mes forces, de tout mon courage, de toute ma foi, j'ai accompli ma tâche de mon mieux avec le désir d'être utile. Pendant dix ans, on m'a donné huit cent cinquante francs par mois. Et un jour, parce que je n'avais pas compris qu'il me demandait une injustice, l'honnête Muche m'a fichu à la porte. Je t'expliquerai quelque jour comment mon destin m'a conduit ici, et comment j'ai fait, malgré moi, plusieurs affaires illégales. Sache qu'au moment où j'attendais avec angoisse le châtement, on m'a donné la récompense que mon humble dévouement n'avait pu obtenir : les palmes.⁸

Un autre personnage qui subit une transformation, comme celle de Topaze est M. Bachelet dans *Les Marchands de gloire*, la pièce que nous venons de citer, qui falsifie la mort et puis le retour de son fils pour son intérêt politique. À travers *Topaze* et *Les Marchands de gloire*, l'écrivain nous tient en haleine. Topaze, changera-t-il ? Bachelet, sacrifiera-t-il sa carrière politique ? Mais à la fin il arrive ce qui devait arriver en politique : le vice remporte la victoire sur la vertu.

Pagnol crée habilement les situations où il présente les obstacles réels. On peut y voir une virulence satirique. Il nous invite à renverser les barrières de la politique, de la société. Nous pouvons remarquer son goût et son désir de la vie libérée de tous les vices. Dans son œuvre on peut voir des expressions satiriques où il exprime sa pensée : « *Ce comte Christian est un débauché, c'est un homme sans foi ni loi.* »⁹ Pagnol s'oppose à l'injustice, ce qui le rend inoubliable. Comme le dit Christophe Malavoy : « *Exister, c'est aussi s'opposer, ne pas toujours suivre l'opinion générale.* »¹⁰ Pagnol met en avant non seulement l'état misérable de la société mais aussi pose une question sur son avenir : « *La société, voyez-vous monsieur, si elle continue elle tuera les justes.* »¹¹

L'écrivain met en lumière les tribulations du destin : « *La vie, n'est-ce pas, ce n'est pas toujours du bonheur.* »¹² Son œuvre pose, sous une forme légère, les problèmes éternels : celui de la vie sociale, morale ou religieuse. Il y a des expressions variées dans l'arc-en-ciel pagnolien que le lecteur apprécie.

Il esquisse, dans *Jazz*, le portrait misérable d'un homme, troublé par sa morale : « *Mais c'est la morale qui lui travaille. La nuit, je l'entends qui se promène dans sa chambre. Il parle tout seul.* »¹³ L'homme, entouré par les vices, se trouve perdu. Et dans l'effort de vaincre la difficulté, il perd sa morale.

L'auteur décrit des heures de son découragement quand, jeune homme, le fantôme de sa jeunesse lui reproche de gaspiller tout le temps aux travaux inutiles et surtout de manquer d'amour : « *Ce serait trop commode ! Tu m'as volé toutes mes heures, tu m'as courbé sur des tâches nocturnes pendant des mois et des années... Tu me disais : « courage ! Nous marchons vers la gloire ! » Et voici le beau résultat : la faillite ! Tu me disais : « Nous travaillons pour des buts grandioses... Notre labeur est un labeur sacré ! » Hélas ! Tous ces jours qui sont morts, ils n'ont pas donné deux sous de bonheur, ni à toi ni à personne !* »¹⁴

Et puis arrive le désastre quand le fantôme de sa jeunesse persuade Blaise à épouser Cécile, une fille de vingt ans. Échoué dans l'amour, le fantôme lui reproche encore une fois : « *Privé de tout, affamé, abruti, dévoré de vieux désirs, je suis un raté.* »¹⁵ Troublé par sa morale, Blaise se finit par commettre le suicide. Dans cette pièce, Pagnol évoque les deux sentiments, celui de colère et de sympathie.

Pagnol écrit pour nous, le public, comme il a dit lui-même : « *Si nous n'écrivons pas pour le public, ce n'est pas la peine d'écrire.* »¹⁶ Si dans *Les Marchands de gloire*, il lance une satire sur la malhonnêteté politique, il se moque de la morale bourgeoise à travers *Jazz* ; s'il démasque les ruses d'un curé dans *La Femme du boulanger*, dans *Topaze*, il utilise un style mordant pour présenter l'arrivisme.

Il présente une analyse pénétrante de la nature humaine et dit que c'est l'argent, qui, pervertit les relations humaines. De plus, son expression satirique évoque tout un monde de réflexions. Il se moque de la tendance immorale et frivole. Il préconise que l'homme a besoin de morale qui incite à la joie de vivre.

Une étude approfondie de ses pièces révèle un monde peuplé de personnages qui nous ressemblent et qui peuvent nous apprendre quelque chose sur nous-mêmes. Pour lui, le monde est un désordre complet où la vertu et la morale sont bafouées, trahies. Il attache la plus grande importance à changer ce tableau vicieux de la société.

Une arme contre les vices, la satire de Pagnol sert l'humanité. Elle ajoute, en effet, le sel dans ses écrits. Il révèle que l'homme laisse son âme sous la dépendance des passions et des désirs ce qui

rend la vie malheureuse. L'écrivain démasque le déséquilibre de la société. Comme Juvénal, comme Horace, Marcel Pagnol est un écrivain « satirique ». Il traite avec une hardiesse inaccoutumée les problèmes sociaux et nous fait sentir la complexité des problèmes abordés. Il souligne, en même temps, l'importance de la liberté : « *Rien n'est aussi beau que la liberté.* »¹⁷

Pagnol reproduit la vie. Les problèmes qu'il évoque appartiennent à la vie quotidienne. Il fait preuve d'acuité visuelle. En mettant en scène le désastre, il aspire à la paix. Pagnol met en cause l'avenir de l'humanité, sur lequel repose l'existence de la société. Sous forme de satire, il fait une étude psychologique intense de la société et suggère que l'homme doit se débarrasser de vices.

Son œuvre est un modèle de sagesse fondé sur la réalité concrète et qui fait apparaître son auteur comme un penseur libéral, un bienfaiteur, ce qui le rend appréciable comme le dit Voltaire, la bienfaisance est la plus belle vertu. Les dialogues, parfois mordants, qui présentent des images saisissantes des personnages, de formules suggestives ne sont jamais grossiers. Il présente la vie telle qu'elle est avec ses heurs et malheurs. Pagnol comprend et fait comprendre la situation désagréable d'existence humaine, dominée par l'existence du mal. Il nous fait sentir toute la gamme de sentiments, du rire à la sympathie et de la sympathie à la rage. Pagnol est favorable à une société juste, comme l'est Montesquieu à une monarchie modérée.

L'homme qui veut se mettre en avant, se laisse tourmenter par les désirs et par les ambitions. Mais il trahit ou ignore la vraie morale, celle de l'humanité. À cause de cette immoralité, il y a une quantité de choses désrégées et Pagnol en tire des enseignements sans prendre parti.

Alors Pagnol, est-il un pessimiste ? Absolument pas ! En nous donnant des leçons de sagesse, Pagnol nous donne l'espoir : « *Il n'y a rien d'irréparable, Marius, rien d'irréparable...* »¹⁸ Telle est la dernière parole prononcée par Fanny dans sa pièce *César*, un remède au pessimisme.

Pagnol nous séduit par la finesse des dialogues : « *Il est vrai que les premiers chrétiens se confessaient devant toute la communauté : mais c'étaient des saints.* »¹⁹ De telles paroles ouvrent la porte à la discussion et on voit monter peu à peu la curiosité du lecteur. La satire de Pagnol nous touche autant par sa grandeur que par sa beauté.

Il faut vivre dans un monde juste, se conformer à la morale. Pagnol suggère qu'avec la présence des vices, ce n'est qu'un rêve, au moins pour le moment. C'est de cette façon que Pagnol frappe l'imagination du lecteur. Son style est inimitable ; pourtant il apparaît comme la chose la plus naturelle.

Il se caractérise par une clarté et même si le lecteur doit lire entre les lignes, ce n'est pas un embarras ou une énigme. Même si Pagnol s'exprime indirectement, il le fait assez clairement et les mots ne sont jamais difficiles. Nous goûtons leur simplicité et leur richesse et y remarquons une transparence d'eau limpide.

Selon un des mouvements littéraires du XX^e siècle, les mots, comme le dit Brice Parain, sont des « pistolets chargés ». On dirait que Pagnol le sait peut-être parce que c'est ce qu'on voit à

travers son écriture. Il y a un charme particulier dans ses pièces derrière lesquelles se cache un message, une leçon à retenir. Pagnol démasque le jeu de la méchanceté humaine. Le monde n'est qu'une jungle où les puissants gouvernent les faibles. Sinon, pourquoi y aurait-il la souffrance ? Pourquoi tant d'injustice sur la terre ? Rien n'est fondé sur les lois de la raison, il n'y a que le caprice des puissants. Pagnol souligne l'absurdité de la vie et l'incohérence du monde.

Ce beau génie de France rend son dernier soupir le 18 avril 1974. Concluons par ce mot de Claude Beylie :

*« Ce que Pagnol nous a de tout temps incités à fuir, c'est le ridicule tapage du monde, le vacarme de la civilisation. Il nous entraîne, avec ses personnages, à la recherche de l'innocence perdue, d'une espèce de virginité primordiale. »*²⁰

Notes

1. http://inha.fr/spip.php?article_932&var_recherche=cert
2. Marcel PAGNOL, La Femme du boulanger, traduite en punjabi sous le titre Aurélie par Sukhjit Kaur et Surinder Jathaul, 1990 (Lahore Book shop, Ludhiana, Inde).
3. Marcel PAGNOL, Les Marchands de gloire, Œuvres Complètes I, Théâtre, Édition de Fallois, Paris, 1995, p. 132
4. Marcel PAGNOL, La Femme du boulanger, Œuvres Complètes II, Cinéma, Édition de Fallois, Paris, 1995, p. 826
5. Manuel des études littéraires françaises, XVIII^e siècle, P.-G Castex, P. Surer, Hachette, 79, Bd St-Germain, Paris, 1966, p. 64.
6. Manuel des études littéraires françaises, XVIII^e siècle, P.-G Castex, P. Surer, p.94.
7. Marcel PAGNOL, Topaze, Presses pocket, Paris, 1928, p 268-269.
8. Marcel PAGNOL, Topaze, Presses pocket, Paris, 1928, p 267.
9. Marcel PAGNOL, La Belle Meunière, Œuvres Complètes II, p. 1147.
10. <http://www.evene.fr/citations/mot.php?mot=satirique>
11. Marcel PAGNOL, Topaze, Presses pocket, p.11
12. Marcel PAGNOL, Jazz, Œuvres Complètes I, p.266.
13. Marcel PAGNOL, Jazz, Œuvres Complètes I, p. 192.
14. Marcel PAGNOL, Jazz, Œuvres Complètes I, p. 232.
15. Marcel PAGNOL, Jazz, Œuvres Complètes I, p. 274.
16. Marcel PAGNOL par Claude Beylie, Cinéma d'aujourd'hui, Éditions Seghers, Paris, 1974, p.125.

17. Marcel PAGNOL, La Belle Meunière, Œuvres Complètes II, p. 1097.
 18. Marcel PAGNOL, César, Œuvres Complètes II, p. 491.
 19. Marcel PAGNOL , César, Œuvres Complètes II, p. 402.
 20. Marcel PAGNOL par Claude Beylie, p. 116.
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BOOK REVIEW

***Yumlembam Khogen Singh**

Author :T.K. Oommen

Title: *Social Movements I: Issues of Identity.*

Publisher: New Delhi: Oxford University Press, (ed.) 2010

Pages viii + 252

Price: Rs 695 (hb).

ISBN 13: 978-019-806327-8

The book under review is a reader on social movements which lays especial emphasis on the twentieth-century '*identitarian movements*' in India. It addresses the processes and issues of identity construction in collective mobilizations. This book consisting of ten chapters contributed by scholars from History, Political Science, Social Anthropology, and Sociology has been divided into two parts. In addition to these ten chapters, the book also has a comprehensive general introduction to the field of social movement and two sectional introductions from the editor himself. While the general introduction provides an extensive understanding of social movements by discussing the wide range of theoretical/conceptual issues and the prevailing empirical situations, the sectional introduction highlights the social movements discussed within that section and provides proper contexts to analyse them.

In the introductory part, Oommen highlights the history of and popular approaches to the study of social movements. He goes on to rectify the general misconception that analyses of collective actions were totally absent in classical sociology by putting forward the incipient explanations of collective actions embedded in the works of Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and Karl Marx. Using the defining criteria of social movement employed by different writers, Oommen gives four identifying characteristics of social movements, i.e. (i) goal; (ii) means; (iii) scope; and (iv) content. Oommen asserts that classification of social movement should take into account at least two factors, i.e. the bases of group formation and the nature of goals pursued by them. In concordance with P. Wilkinson, Oommen suggests that social movements should be conceptualized as "purposive collective mobilizations, informed of an ideology to promote change or stability, using any means" violent or non-violent" and functioning within at least an elementary organizational framework" (p. 11). The editor also discusses the classificatory bases and types of social movement employed by Partha Mukherji, M.S.A. Rao, T.K. Oommen, Ghanashyam Shah and Rajendra Singh while making an appraisal of the Indian contributions to the study of social movements. He claims that the first book on social movements in independent India by an Indian sociologist was by Oommen, published in 1972 and asserts that most of the books on social movements by Indian authors are case studies, not claiming to be contributing to the general theory of social movements. Oommen mentions the views of J. Davis, B. Barber, H. Blumer, Wallace, Linton, J.A. Banks, and Abel on why movements emerge; examines the structural functional approach on the appearance of social movements and he points out basic flaws of this approach. According to Oommen, ideology and organization are the two main components of the social movements. The emergence of a movement starts with the crystallization of

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one of its components at the initial stage and crystallization of the other components may happen later. He highlights the dialectical and multipolar relationship between movements and institutions advocating that mobilization is not displaced by institutionalization but both go hand-in-hand to a large extent and often the latter process may accentuate the former. While referring to the theoretical issues in the study of social movements, Oommen highlights two methodological problems, i.e. the problem related to the *scale* of the movement and the issues related to the *units* and *levels* of observation. The editor points out that most of the movement analyses are prone to concentrate on the macro-dimension while there are scant studies of on-going movements by sociologists. According to Oommen, the nature and types of social movements in a society are conditioned by three factors: (a) its core institutional order (CIO); (b) the principal enemy as perceived by the deprived; and (c) the primary goal pursued by the society. He points out three perspectives generally employed in the analysis of social movements in India, i.e. (i) *macro-holistic perspective*, analyzing the totality thereby ignoring the specific interests and motivations of a wide variety of social categories; (ii) *micro-individualistic perspective*, focusing on the specific interest of the specific social category thereby ignoring the existence of overarching mobilization(s) and conjoint concern; and (iii) *situational interactionism perspective*, a perspective that looks into the totality as well as specific interests of a movement across time, regions, and communities. He argues that the macro-holistic and micro-individualistic perspectives are partial and misleading, therefore, recommends situational interactionism perspective for better understanding of a social movement. While referring to some relevant issues of identity, this volume situates the *identitarian movements* in wider contexts like: (a) abbreviation and even abrogation of identities versus elaboration of identities; (b) the tensions between group identity and individual equality; (c) identity as the basis of inclusion and exclusion of citizens in the participatory processes; and (d) perceiving identity of minorities as a source of threat for the nation and the state by the dominant majority as against invoking identity as the route to justice by the weak/dominated minorities.

The first section of the book discusses different facets of religious and caste movements in India providing an account of their persisting traditional leanings and emerging modern trends. In the first chapter, Kenneth W. Jones critically analyzes twentieth century socio-religious movements. He examines the fate of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, the Radhasoami Satsang, the Arya Samaj, and the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripala Yogam movements when they extended from nineteenth to the twentieth century. He concludes that these movements faced difficulties in adjusting to the emergence of communal conflict and the clash of competing nationalisms. Jones finds that these movements added a dimension of social service to Hinduism. He opines that even though the secular ideologies of independent India provided new forms of legitimacy, it weakened the role of the religious movements. However, Jones doesn't discuss why socio-religious movements continue to emerge out of such secular world. In the second chapter, Christophe Jaffrelot analyses the ideologies of the champions of Hindu nationalists and Hindu traditionalists vis-à-vis Jawaharlal Nehru's campaign against Hindu communalism and Sardar Patel's sympathetic dealings with the RSS. The chapter provides an account of the triumph of Nehru's struggle to legitimize secularism as a norm of the Indian political system. Caste aspects in Christianity conversion movements, especially the separation of caste in the church and subsequent church division in southern and western India during the early 16th to early twentieth century is well depicted by Walter Fernandes in the third chapter. He highlights the diversity of motives for conversion, perceptions of baptism, process of conversion, and the implications of conversion among different hierarchical caste groups. Diverse streams of Dalit movements are brought into consideration by Vivek Kumar in the fourth chapter of the book suggesting that Dalit mobilizations should not be treated as a monolithic whole. He highlights the reasons behind the success and failures of different approaches of Dalit liberation and emancipation.

Kumar opines that failure to give any clear-cut direction to the followers by its leaders, inability to bring the diverse streams into a dialogue, and concentration only among a few castes are some challenges confronted by Dalit movements. Shail Mayaram discusses a movement of Islamic rejuvenation called 'Tabligh movement' in the fifth chapter. He provides the salient features of the movement and then goes on to analyse the institutionalization and globalization of the movement. Against the claim of some scholars, Mayaram opines that Tabligh movement has political overtones but he fails in substantiating his claim.

The second part of the book deals with some regional, linguistic, and tribal movements in India. In the sixth chapter, Robert L. Hardgrave provides the backdrop and foundation of the Dravidian movement and shows how this Tamil national movement successfully combined the religious, linguistic and caste identities in its core ideology for re-establishing the ancient Tamil social organizations and its cultural authenticity by metamorphosing the secessionist movement into a non-Brahman political movement. However, apart from explaining the backdrop of the Dravidian movement, Hardgrave should have covered the later development of the movement in his analysis. Dipankar Gupta in the seventh chapter examines the causes and limitations of the Shiv Sena movement in Greater Bombay. He tries to understand this movement as an urban social movement by analyzing its interaction with other structures namely classes, trade unions, and political parties, but his emphasis on the economic domain and class interests in analyzing the movement leads to a somewhat limited understanding of the phenomena as it tends to overlook the movement from the perspective of the assertion of Maharashtrian national identity based on the dominant values and ethos of the Maharashtrians and perceived threats from the non-Maharashtrians. Sanjib Baruah provides the background for the Assam movement and discusses its major repercussions in the eighth chapter. Influx of immigrant from East Bengal (read as Bangladesh) bestowed the feeling of threat of losing their cultural identity among the ethnic Assamese. Then, they confronted the situation by mobilizing against it leading to the ethnic polarization in Assam. Using a theory or perspective in the analysis would have been more fulfilling in understanding the Assam movement. In ninth chapter, Surajit Sinha discusses some tribal movements against the colonial state highlighting their propensity to transform into political parties. He tries to explore the social and cultural context of the tribal movements highlighting the perceived structure of deprivation and their future aspirations. He concludes that one of the major roots of tribal solidarity movements may be traced to their ecological-cultural isolation, economic backwardness, and feeling of frustration about a lowly status vis-à-vis the advanced sections. In the tenth chapter, Frederick S. Downs analyses Christian Conversion movements in Northeast India demonstrating that even though the phenomenon of Christian conversion started in 17th century, proliferation of Christians in Northeast is much of post-colonial phenomenon. Christian conversion movement in Northeast India is indigenously rooted and he suggests that indigenous Christianity is more effective agent of acculturation than foreign controlled Christianity. Downs argues that the dual processes of westernization and Indianization have eroded the distinct cultural identity of the tribal communities and both the processes led to the emergence of a unique and indigenous version of Christianity in Northeast India.

In a very organized way, this book brings together some selected readings on social movements and examines them with respect to the issues of construction and perception of identity. The books' introductory section by Oommen, "*On the Analysis of Social Movements*" can be considered as a must-read for all the researchers of social and political movements in India. It brings up many subtle insights about the typologies of social movements and available frameworks for the study of social movements highlighting those associated controversies. One of the limitations of the book is that it leaves out movements which are explicitly political such as anti-colonial or secessionist

movements. Such omission is serious considering the immense transformative potential of these nationality movements. Oommen rightly says that 'rarely are on-going movements studied even by sociologists' (p. 33). Even he fails to include the on-going movements in his analysis. The volume under review would have been more inclusive if the ongoing nationality movements, identity assertion movements and the movements against Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958/1990 in the intensely militarized frontiers of North-East India and J&K were probed. On a positive note, reading this book is very rewarding and students/scholars of sociology, social anthropology, social history, Indian politics and students of social movements in particular will find it very beneficial.

FORM-IV

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1. Registration No. : ISSN 0970-5260
2. Place of Publication : Panjab University, Chandigarh (India)
3. Periodicity of its Publication : Biannual
4. Publisher & Editor-in-Chief's Name : B.S.Ghuman
Nationality : Indian
Address : Professor, Department of Public Administration, Panjab University, Chandigarh
5. Printer's Name : Jatinder Moudgil
Nationality : Indian
Address : Manager, Panjab University Press
6. Names and addresses of individuals who own the newspapers and partners of share holders holding more than one per cent of the total capital : Panjab University, Chandigarh

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Panjab University Research Journal (Arts)

Volume XXXVIII

Nos. 1 & 2

April-October 2011



Editor-in-Chief
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The contributors expected to analyze different aspects of the pedagogic and performative contexts and contours of education/education-system prevailing in contemporary India.

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