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Panjab University
Chandigarh (India)

Contents

FORM-IV

(SEE RULE 8)

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	:	Krishna Mohan
	Nationality	:	Indian
	Address	:	Professor
		:	Deptt. Of Geography Panjab University, Chandigarh.
5.	Printer's Name	:	Jatinder Moudgil
	Nationality	:	Indian
	Address	:	Manager, Panjab University, Press
6.	Name and addresses of Individuals who own the Newspaper s and partners of share holders holding more than one per cent of the total capital	:	Panjab University, Chandigarh

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Post-Brexit and Covid-19 Period Goan Migration Scenario to the United Kingdom: A Compendium of Literature

AFONSO BOTELHO

Abstract

Of late nationalism features very prominently in a number of countries across Europe's political spectrum. In fact, Brexit became possible because of nationalists who resented globalisation. The objective of the paper is to call attention to the impacts of the new migration policy adopted by the United Kingdom on India with special reference to Goa. The study has adopted a rigorous analysis of the secondary literature available on Brexit, which was a decisive shift into the unknown with confusion and uncertainty prevailing concerning its latent functions, and future relations of UK with the EU and the rest of the world. This study has found that UK's exclusionary immigration policy has led to a decrease in migration of the EU citizens to UK, depriving the disadvantaged, the disabled, aged and people with chronic illnesses of the much needed social and health care during the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically, this study revealed that the potential Goan migrants, in the process of procuring the Portuguese passport to migrate to UK for better economic opportunities, have been adversely affected, having lost not only lakhs of rupees already spent to obtain the Portuguese passport but also the glimmer of hope for a brighter future.

Key words: Goans, migration, immigration, Covid 19, Post-Brexit

Introduction

The political climate in Europe today is one of inter-governmentalism, wherein national capitals tend to favour decisions taken by themselves rather than by Brussels, the HQ of European Union. Not only anti-European feelings but political parties attacking EU and rooting for

sovereignty of the nation are on the rise in Europe. In UK, the roots of
Euroscepticism may be traced to the post-imperial nostalgia for the loss of
the Empire. In many other European countries, there has been
disenchantment with the European Union bordering on complete
opposition to it and this is not exclusive to UK (O'Reilly et al., 2016,p.
811). The European plan of integrating all the nations and holding them
together in the federation of nations is under serious threat due to the
rampant populist nationalism in many member countries.

The Causes and Implications of Brexit

Britain's entry into the European federation of nations was on 1 January
1973, when it joined the European Economic Community. Its exit or
Britain and exit's portmanteau Brexit happened after 23rd June 2016
referendum in which 72.2 percent of the eligible voters turned out to vote
and from these voters, 51.9 percent as against 48.1 percent voted to leave
the EU. Should the United Kingdom remain a member of the European
Union or leave the European Union? - was the question to which the
voters responded at the referendum.

The British public's concern about immigration coupled with the intent to
stem the rising tide of UKIP (United Kingdom's Independence Party)
prompted David Cameron, the then Prime Minister to call for the
landmark referendum in June 2016. A report by Pew Research Center
stated that the highest number of unauthorised immigrants was found in
Germany and the United Kingdom, amounting to almost half of Europe's
total immigrants (Bruns, 2020).According to the Office of National
Statistics (Cohen and Hinchin, 2016), the net migration into UK for the
year ending March 2016was 3,27,000 out of which 1,80,000 were EU
nationals, 1,90,000 were non-EU and the remaining 43,000 were British
citizens who had left the UK. Studies in the UK made efforts to show that
the migrant influx from EU countries was at the cost of the welfare system
in the country. The Brexit campaigners used the rising discontent among
the Britishers of the migration question, wherein they clubbed together

both the intra EU and non-EU migration.According to IPSOS (Market and Opinion Research International), a total of 44 percent of UK population considered that one of the important issues which the UK voters had to decide about was that of immigration, and for a number of years, the rise in the number of immigration was increasingly linked to the country's membership of the EU (Boswell, 2016).

Brexiteers prioritised the interests of the Britishers vis-à-vis those of the immigrants and also expressed the resentment of the British public over the requirement to accept immigrants without any limits. To Pertti Ahonen, an important factor that contributed to the victory of the Brexiteers was the fear that migrants were coming into UK in great numbers (Ahonen, 2019).A reason for Brexit, and one that was linked to migration, was the creation of too many bad jobs and too many workers getting stuck in the jobs alongside migrant workers. Apart from the above, the desire to gain back control motivated the Brexiteers. Brussels (European Union) was seen to be at the root of everything wrong with the country. On the one hand, the Nationalists of UK argued against EU as they foisted on the UK 'rules, norms and people' which were unBritish, on the other hand, the UK globalist libertarians lamented Brussels' interference with free markets. The campaign was animated by an aggressive appeal to the 'UK nostalgia for empire and insular nationalism', taking 'back control' and regaining UK 'sovereignty' and 'making all things possible again' (Ferretti, 2020, p. 140). Before the referendum, the pro-Leave campaigners, Eurosceptic Tories, the tabloid newspapers, the Daily Mail and the Sun, manipulated, exaggerated the number of immigrants stoking fears of 'mass immigration' from the EU. The 'invisible', European citizens', 'free movers', were made 'visible', 'immigrants' and a 'problem' that had to be solved by the UK by 'Brexiting' and thus gaining total control and sovereignty (King, 2020,p. 853). The people were 'duped, lied to, manipulated and brow-beaten by the insidious rhetoric of fear about immigration, including an "invasion" of 80 million Turks about to join the EU'(ibid., 860). The politicians and

the media failed to recognise and acknowledge the immense economic contribution to UK by the EU migrants through their skills at different levels ranging from 'university research, finance and business, and the National Health Service, to lower-skilled jobs in the construction industry, hotels and restaurants, and agricultural work' (ibid., p. 853).

It is contended by some that they saw Brexit coming but, on the whole, when Brexit really happened, people were shocked.So flabbergasting was its impact that the word itself has acted as a model, a source word or an inspiration and generated neologisms in English like Spexit to mean the possibility of Spain leaving EU, Brentrydenoting retrospectively the entry of Britain into the European Economic Community in 1973, or Retireland, describing the hypothetical scenario of Ireland leaving the EU.

Russel King referred to the referendum as a 'wicked event' that opened a Pandora's box with unintended consequences. He termed it 'wicked' as it was a problem that was 'difficult or impossible to solve because of its complex interdependencies, inherent contradictions and shifting nature' (King, 2020, 855). In Brexit's case, what the new relationship between UK and EU should be had to be debated for a long time. The result of the referendum was 'a collective act of national self-harm' (ibid., p. 853). Nicholas Boyle described it very aptly, stating that Brexit was'a collective English mental breakdown, English people living on the dreams of Empire never learned to see others as equals'(Boyle, 2018) The question Brexit raised was 'not one of economics or politics, but of national psychology'(ibid).

The results showed that the various sections of the population of the UK to be sharply divided on the subject of the referendum. High correlations were found between higher levels of education and the vote 'Remain', and between older age and the vote 'Leave' (King, 2020). At the 2016 referendum, people of Britain belonging to different regions, generations, level of education voted differently. While Scotland voted Remain, Northern Ireland was divided, and England and Wales voted Leave. Older

voters voted Leave, while 73 percent of those in the age-group of 18 to 24years voted Remain. The university educated voted Remain and others who had left school earlier voted Leave. It was a motley coalition of citizens who voted leave. Psephologists averred that working-class voters who voted for Leave were 'older, socially conservative, nativists with very different attitudes' from the 'younger, educated, socially liberal, big city cosmopolitans' who voted for Remain (O' Reilly et al., 2016,p. 816). For the leave voters sovereignty determined their choice in that they thought that decisions relating to UK ought to be taken in UK and that Leave would make possible a better control over immigration and the borders. The Leave voters convinced themselves that multiculturalism, globalisation and immigration were forces that could adversely affect Britain.

The fear of the large-scale incoming migrants was an important factor contributing to the victory of the Brexiteers. Brexit manifested xenophobia of the British citizens. However, though one of the reasons for Brexit was to reduce immigration in UK, the prognosis that Brexit will lead to significant reduction in immigration to UK was poor. Immigration from EU had fallen after Brexit as per late summer 2018 statistics but immigration from outside EU had risen considerably. History of Europe has been a history of migration and it will continue, notwithstanding the obstacles, as it has happened in the past centuries. Given the global megatrends of population growth coupled with glaring inequality as well as political instability, increase in migration is a foregone conclusion.

Brexit, Migration, COVID-19 and the UK Society

Brexit was a decisive shift into the unknown with confusion and uncertainty prevailing concerning its latent functions, that is, its unintended and unforeseen consequences, and future relations of UK with the EU and the rest of the world (Hepburn, 2020). Eva Hepburn stated that the increasing uncertainty around Brexit was responsible for a slower

economic growth in the UK and the disproportionate numbers of low-income groups being affected. Several impacts were already visible post-Brexit. Skills shortages were already observed in the UK. Not only the number of the EU migrants to the UK had declined to a six-year low, the EU8 (Central and Eastern European nationals) also were leaving the UK, adversely affecting sectors like social care, thereby depriving the disadvantaged people like the disabled, aged, people with chronic illnesses and others. Some other sectors like agriculture, hospitality and construction wherein many EU nationals are employed, were also facing hardships and damaging consequences.

The EU nationals are uncertain about their position with regard to the possibility of continuing to live and work in UK, despite the provision of the EU Settlement Scheme, as the applications of a number of EU nationals have met with rejections or have been offered less secure and temporary pre-Settled Status (Gentleman, 2019). There are also fears that some vulnerable individuals like those with cognitive impairments, may lose their residence in UK due to their being ignorant of the need to apply to the EUSS (Home Affairs Committee, 2019). Further, the Mental Health Foundation has stated that Brexit-related stress disproportionately affects the equalities groups, including people who are migrants, due to the discrimination and other structural barriers they are likely to face.

Further, the Yellowhammer report acknowledged the fragile situation of the social care market which could bring about the failure of social care because of the need to adapt to the rising staff and supply costs (Hepburn, 2020).UK Department of Health report (*ibid*) submitted to the UK Government's Migration Advisory Committee indicated that women might have to give up their well-paying jobs to work in the informal sector providing care to the loved ones, in the absence of the EU care workers who would face difficulty in migrating to the UK post Brexit and the new immigration system.

Immigration numbers were also affected by Covid-19 and it is a challenge

for the government to make sure that the new immigration system will work in post-Brexit UK. Brexit triggered the labour mobility crisis and the Covid-19 scenario brought it into sharper relief by doubling the adverse effects on UK economy (Alberti et al., 2020). During this corona virus pandemic, certain jobs came to be categorised as essential. For instance, healthcare work, transport, provision of food and necessary goods – these are the very jobs which were over-represented by migrants.

A huge chunk of NHS workers in UK are migrant workers – 'in 2018, 12 per cent of the 1.9 million strong healthcare workforce in the UK were non-UK nationals' (Office for National Statistics, 2019), whilst according to another agency, 'Skills for Care (2020), one in six of the 8,40,000 care workers in England were non-UK nationals' (Alberti et al., 2020, 15) and the huge outflow of the EU workers since the referendum affected the social care activities during the pandemic.

The Covid-19 pandemic period revealed shortage of key products of food supplies, delayed supply chains and urgent requests for labour. The agricultural sector reported a shortage of 80,000 workers as per one survey, despite the fact that 10,000 people had signed up to work on the 'Feed the Nation' campaign (Farming UK Team, 2020).

The corona virus brought about drastic changes in the world and, Sylvester (2020) opined it would be unbelievable to think that it would not bring any changes in the migration policy. A suggestion was made that the migration system should reconsider the categorisation of care workers as low skilled and on the contrary creates a fast-track visa regime for them. The Covid-19 called for a rethink of the post-Brexit migration regulation. The pandemic showed the value of the migrants, of the occupations they were involved in and 'the inevitable interconnectedness of our lives, mobilities, care and survival in a world that cannot travel back from globalisation' (Alberti et al., 2020,p. 18).

The present Prime Minister, Mr. Boris Johnson, has introduced the Australian-style points-based immigration system, which he had promised

the British people. Ithas also replaced the current Tier system bringing both the EU and the non-EU migrants under the same regulatory framework for migration. The new immigration system has brought in a number of checks and controls on migration compared to the free movement hitherto enjoyed by the EU citizens. For instance, migrants are not eligible to gain entry into UK and work in low skill jobs which do not require skills even equivalent to at least A levels and paying an amount less than 25,600 pounds per annum. A significant change in UK's post-Brexit immigration landscape is the need for immigration permission for those who would want to live, work and study in UK.

According to Gabriella Alberti et al (2020) the employer and business advocacy associations and organisations, critical of the proposed points-based immigration system, had argued that the intent of the new immigration system to attract the 'brightest and the best' as out-dated and one that did not reflect the needs of the labour market in the UK nor the strategies employers employ due to competition in the market. Alberti et al warned of the acute labour shortage some sectors would experience with the new immigration system in place. This implies that the country has made entry into UK difficult for labour, such as delivery drivers, home-care assistants, hospital porters and cleaners, who have been so essential during the corona virus pandemic (Child, 2020).

The Remain groups had suggested that the UK citizens in EU could face retaliatory measures should the UK restrict immigration from EU. They rejected the idea of reducing EU immigration. According to them, the EU immigrants have contributed to the UK economy in terms of the welfare state, augmenting the GDP and filling important shortages in the labour market, especially the type of jobs which the UK nationals do not take up either because of inadequate skills, improper conditions or low wages. Reduction of the EU immigrants would lead to labour shortages especially in sectors like 'manufacturing, food and drink processing, cleaning, food preparation, hospitality and health' (Boswell,2016,2). Also, some skilled occupations, such as teaching professionals, nurses and midwives, with

high economic value and those that 'have been heavily reliant on long-term EEA migrant labour may find adjustment to labour market changes difficult' (Home Office 2018).

The UK migration, which had reached to about 3,33,000 in 2016 (Portes, 2020), has experienced a sharp fall in the migration numbers for the last four years. According to the ONS (2020), the net migration of the EU citizens arriving for work has fallen from the 1,90,000 in June 2016 to 79,000. Also, there has been a significant decline in immigration due to slow growth of employment in UK and a simultaneous decrease in unemployment in some major source countries like Poland which was facing labour shortages.

Goan Migration Pre and Post Brexit Era

It is in the context of Brexit and change in migration policy that Goan (People of Goa in India) migration is discussed as the changes in UK have tremendously disrupted and overturned the ambitious plans of many would-be migrants. Goa is a tiny state on the south-western coast of the subcontinent of India with a significant number of migrants abroad. After the 1961 liberation of Goa, an Act of the Indian Parliament accorded Goans Indian citizenship. However, they did not, nor were asked to, surrender their Portuguese citizenship. In 1975, diplomatic relations with India which had ceased in 1961 reopened and Goa was accorded a special status under the Portuguese Nationality Law by which those born in Goa could retain their Portuguese nationality. Based on this liberal policy there emerged a new migratory phenomenon wherein Goans reclaiming their Portuguese nationality migrated to Europe.

In recent times, Goans have been using the Portuguese passport to gain access to the European countries, especially, British job market. Portuguese citizenship acquired much greater importance when Portugal joined the European Union in 1986 and all Portuguese citizens, including Indians who were born before 1961and their descendants up to the third generation benefitted from Portuguese citizenship and joined the larger

European job market. Benefiting from the Portuguese nationality law that allows Goans to recover their Portuguese nationality, even if they did not speak or know Portuguese, many less skilled, less educated Goans migrated to Europe and especially to the United Kingdom.

In the UK of today, Goans are working in many and varied professional fields as hairdressers, university professors, information technology specialists, finance geniuses, salesman and women in UK.Goans migrating to UK meant that villages in Goa had emptied out as the menfolk had migrated to UK in large numbers and often were engaged in the type of work which they had left for non-Goans(migrants to Goa) to do in Goa. The unavailability of jobs, bribery and corruption in matters of employment had led to frustration, ennui and despondency among Goans in Goa and had pushed Goans to UK.

Post-Brexit, similar to all Europeans, the Goans too, who are EU citizens, cannot any longer enjoy free movement into UK territory. The new immigration policy is based on the work permit system as a means to attract the brightest and the best. In UK there are points assigned for specific skills, qualifications, salaries and to what are called as shortage occupations; visas being awarded based on sufficient points gained. Till date, Goans enjoyed the rights and privileges of being EU citizens. With the new immigration policy, the migration of Goans will be determined by the points gained and there will be no opportunity, for instance, to bring their family members along with them to UK. Goans, like other Indians, are quite attached to their families and are begrudge the contractual employment that would keep them away from their families.

Another issue with the immigration policy is that of the occupations eligible for work permit. Swedish model, for instance, is one in which any occupation is eligible for a work permit, but this is considered unusual by international standards. Generally, the criteria for eligibility for work permit systems in high income countries is restricted by occupations, with policies being more liberal to skilled jobs, as there is evidence that

migration of these skilled migrants is potentially economically beneficial. Now, in UK migration is limited only to certain occupations andhigh skilled labour. Many low skilled, unskilled, unemployed and others who were in the process of obtaining the Portuguese passport or had already obtained one, have ended up disillusioned and disheartened.

Work permit systems are the necessary steps towards permanent status and citizenship in many countries. Skilled workers are offered permanent residence almost immediately in some countries like Canada. There are other countries wherein temporary visas are given to migrants which are renewable and which in a few years do lead to permanent residence. In UK the skilled worker visa will last for five years unless it is extended at the end of that period. There are also other countries wherein the workers, after the expiry of their work permit programmes have to go home and are not allowed to apply for permanent residence or settlement. This is truer of low skilled workers who are usually provided strictly with a temporary work permit and are restricted from bringing along their family members with them. In this way, that is, offering a temporary work permit, which may be justified often in horticulture and hospitality as the demand for labour itself may be temporary, and not allowing family unification, the government can reduce the costs of providing for the schooling of the children of low skilled labour. Temporary migration is not without drawbacks: employers, even if they want to, cannot retain their employees who over a period of time end up gaining experience and building up skills required for increased productivity in the firm. The employers lose as they have to make do with new recruits and the temporary workers also suffer, since, with limited rights, they are more vulnerable to exploitation (Sumption, 2020).

There are some low skilled jobs, for instance, in the agricultural sector, hospitality and social care in UK (Migration Advisory Committee 2014) which pay less and the work conditions are poor. The employers in such cases prefer to employ migrant labour as against local workers as employing the latter means paying higher wages. Or else, they have to rely

more on technology, but this means costs increase and one loses in the competitive market. The horticultural industry, for instance, opts for migrant labour as, during the peak period, the requirement for labour increases and if it not provided for by low-wage migrant labour some agricultural production and the industry dependent on that can shrink. Migrant workers do difficult social care work for lower pay rates enabling care providers to reach out in service to a greater number of vulnerable people. Also, tax payers' money is saved as it is the local authority that funds social care. However, UK will need to continue allowing migrant workers to fill the demand for labour. Requirement for migrant labour has also been felt and have been brought into sharper relief during the current pandemic in sectors such as social care, agriculture and horticulture. Goans, especially, the low skilled, unskilled and the unemployed would not hesitate to migrate and work in these sectors, knowing fully well that pounds earned will make a difference in their lives, as has been experienced by them through the ostentatious display in terms of purchasing bungalows, expensive cars and other technological gadget like mobiles and a posh style of life by their countrymen who had migrated to UK earlier.

Like the Seasonal Worker Route, there is also the 'Seasonal Workers Pilot' route which enables recruitment of a limited number of workers for jobs in the horticultural sector. Despite the new migration policy, whether the government will attempt to reduce migration of low skilled migrants required in these sectors or occupations will depend on, finding realistic alternatives that are feasible like labour saving technology and, the consequences of attempting to restrict the workforce. The government may prioritise the labour-intensive horticulture and allow migration to supply the demands for low-cost social care and may adapt its migration policy to allow low skilled migrant workers to support a low-wage industry.

Goans, whether they are skilled or low skilled will be governed by the new immigration policy. Presently Goan EU citizens, who are already in UK

will be able to apply for permanent residence but after Brexit the quantum of Goan migration to UK will depend on the new immigration policy, organised on the principle of government's commitment to reduce migration.

Conclusion

Goans have a long history of migration, migrating to various parts of the world, especially to Portuguese colonies. Thousands of Goans, already in UK, have integrated themselves into the UK society. They have become more like the English without losing their identity as Goans. 'Goanness' or Goan identity itself is being shaped and reshaped through migration. By uprooting and reterritorializing themselves in UK, Goans have been contributing to the 'constitutive element of Goanness' that is being 'decisively shaped by outside forces' and 'changed by all the far-flung places they have come to call home' (Festino et al.,2018, p. 14). Goan loyalty to Goa and to UK is comparable to an individual's relationship with his family of orientation and family of procreation: 'loyalty to second does not require subtracting it from the first'(Martin and Aleinikoff, 2002,p. 81).

It was assumed that immigration had detrimental effects in UK and that the rights and interests of the citizens of UK were jeopardised because of the free movement available for EU citizens in UK. As such introduction of exclusionary immigration policies have been thought to be necessary and morally permitted to protect and further the interests of the residents and citizens of UK. However, evidence do suggests that the effect of immigration could be both harmful as well as beneficial and that immigration may end up lowering the wages of unskilled local workers; at the same time it is contended that it can create more jobs and also increase wages (Beltran, 2020).The priority assumption in which the locals are preferred to the migrants and their interests determine the immigration policies is questionable at least in liberal democracies.

Brexit's ripples have reached far beyond the United Kingdom's borders. It has adversely affected the Goans in UK, their families back home in Goa

and the other potential Goan migrants who had the ambition of migrating to UK with the help of the Portuguese passport. Nevertheless, Goans made great efforts to be in England before the Portuguese passport route hit the roadblock and the free movement between EU and UK citizens came to an end.

The positive contribution of the EU citizens, Goans and other migrants to the UK economy has been overlooked and experts have said that the UK economy will not be able to cope up and keep pace with the requirements of the economy and society without the migrant workforce. Brexit created uncertainties and apprehension among the Goan migrants but there was alsoan upsurge in the number of people who opted for the Portuguese passport and which did help them take off to UK before 31 December 2020 in time to make an application to the European Union Settlement Scheme. The others, who could notmake it to UK by the deadline, will have to find ways to challenge the wheels of their fortune.

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Surveying Frontier, Imagining Territories: Early Colonial Surveys and the Construction of Territories in the Northeast

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Abstract

The construction of space is a key drive behind colonial discourse in general. However, this is more evident in genres such as expedition and survey reports. This paper seeks to explore this politics of territory-production in the northeast frontier of colonial India by looking at two of the earliest expedition-cum-survey reports in the region, namely-Francis Jenkins' Report on the North-East Frontier of India (1835), and Robert Boileau Pemberton's The Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India (1835). The aim of the paper is to investigate the different tropes and rhetorical tools employed in this project of territory-production. It also seeks to examine the rhetoric or tropes that embody the spatial (re)-imagining of the region as an unused but potentially resourceful cornucopia, in these texts. The key concepts of space and territories come from critical geography and postcolonial theory. With the help of illustrations from the texts, the paper draws the conclusion that colonial expedition reports not only construct the northeast into a supposedly blank space to a more accurate and strategic landscape of power and resources. These texts imagine the northeast either as an empty space, so to say—a space with no meaning and pattern, or as a dystopia—that is, an inherently hostile spatial 'other'. They also force markedly colonizing visions of military and economic occupation on this spatial other. They offer extensive visions of intervention and modification of spaces into occupied positions with a certain kind of assertiveness. From possible or desirable geographies, space is transformed into concrete, specific, and planned geographies. Besides, the production of territory, in these texts draws strength from parables of transgression. Eventually, in these texts, the northeast is transformed from a symbolic geography of desire and fear to a clearly marked colonial instrument, a geopolitical space.

Keywords: *Space, territory, trope, transgression, frontier, allegory*

This paper explores territory-making as a keyfunction of expedition and surveyreports in the colonial northeast. It looks at the colonial survey and its documented representation as a strategic and ideological instrument of territory-formation. Empire-building is a territorial exercise. At the same time, the materiality of colonial territoriesare supported by certain fixed ways territories are imagined as potentially occupied military and economic utilities. Genres such as expedition-cum-survey reports emerge as palpable literary and cultural testimonies of the colonial territorial vision. To this extent, colonial expedition texts in the northeast not only derive from the expansionist drives of the empire, but they often function as a metaphorical-ideological counterpart to more evident, material attempts at territory-construction. However, the instrumentality of these writings in the spatial politics of the Empire, is an important yet underexplored dimension in discussions of empire-building in the erstwhile northeast frontier of Bengal. It is with an understanding of expedition-writing's participation in the transformation of space into territories—so to say—into imagined territories, that this paper investigates Francis Jenkins' *Report on the North-East Frontier of India* (1835), and Robert Boileau Pemberton's *The Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India* (1835), two pioneering expedition-cum-survey reports in the colonial northeast, with a focus on their role in preparing the conditions in which the territorialsing pursuits of the empire can operate.

Territorial space corresponds to the transformation of space into a "demarcated", "bounded" (Elden 3) and eventually, into an occupiable and governable unit (Sack 4), that is—its subjection to politic-administrative ownership (Delaney 15; also see Creswell 1). This transformation of space into juridico-political or administrative compartments functions through conceptual and cartographic devices. Colonial space-production is best viewed as anact of ideological appropriation. Colonial territoriality, as it manifest in the northeast, was not in convergence with that of the indigene. The immediate response of theimperial space-makers was to take recourse to ideological appropriation of indigenous spaces in terms of

administrative rationalizations as well as rhetorical troping.

Colonial territoriality prioritizes exclusivity and finality, so to say—with absolute, immutable and compartmentalized spatial compartment (Gadgil and Guha 115). Another noticeable aspect is the tendency to view spaces in the colony solely as military-economic utilities. This instrumentalization of space, as already suggested, was in radical contradiction to pre-colonial spatial arrangements. It is already suggested that the construction of any territory, colonized territories more so, does not necessarily coincide with institutional notifications. In fact, the fuller transformation of space into territory is often founded on imagining territories or imaginative appropriation of space. To this extent, colonial territories do not always correspond to officially notified territorial zones, but also to relatively oblique geographies of power.

The production of territory begins with the assumption of a well-demarcated, valid and legitimate space, its validity largely deriving from its imagination/construction as an antithesis to a constructed exterior seen as the embodiment of otherness/ deviance (Creswell, 15). To this extent, territories are real as well as imagined, their actuality resting on imagined otherness/threat. Tim Creswell identifies this imagined binary of sacrosanct interior/ deviant exterior as key to territory-making—so to say, territory as the condition and consequence of atransgressive imaginary (15).This idea of transgression is key to the understanding of colonial territorial politics.

Both the texts under review here are documents of extensive survey operations in the colonial northeast. *The Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India* (1835), by Pemberton is an extensive survey of the operational and potential passages between Assam, Burma (the present day Myanmar) and Bhutan.Pemberton (1798-1840) served as Joint Commissioner of Manipur. Francis Jenkins (1793-1866)was Agent to the Governor General and Commissioner of Assam and the pioneer of tea as an industry in the region. His report, crucial to the transformation of

Assam into the tea-garden of the Empire, is a useful site to explore the
territorial/spatial politics in the colonial northeast frontier. Both in his and
Pemberton's reports, the region is transformed into a resource frontier, that
is, into a set of military and remunerative geographies.It is important to
note that Both Jenkins and Pemberton travelled extensively in the
northeast. Jenkins surveyed of the entire northeast frontier in 1832 under
the orders from Lord William Bentinck. Pemberton surveyed the Eastern
frontier –Manipur, Assam, Arracan, Kingdom of Pong, Cachar, Jaintia and
Khasi hills. Jenkins on the other hand proceeded to Cachar via Sylhet and
reached the Barak valley in November 1832. From there he travelled to
different places in the Brahmaputra valley. Whatmakes their
narrativesmetaphorical-ideological tools of territory-making is not only
the predominantly obvious territorial vision that underpins them, but also
their dependence on anticipated transgressions as a spatial trope.Whereas
Jenkins's report is driven more by the desire to construct military spaces,
the priorities in Pemberton is predominantly economic. The rest of the
paper argues thatdesigns of territorialization in the texts under scrutiny are
pursued througha three-fold rhetoric: (a) a rhetoric of appropriation
disguised as rhetoric of appropriateness (b) a rhetoric of transgression
disguised as rhetoric of security (c) a rhetoric of empire disguised as a
rhetoric of utility in the studied texts. In other words, it explores the space-
clearing propensities inherent in these discursive instruments of territory
production.

Jenkins' *Report on the North-East Frontier of India* is a useful point of
departure for exploring the centrality of survey and expedition writings in
discursive and material territory-making in the colonial northeast. It not
only derives from the blatantly territorializing impulses of Empire in the
region, but more importantly, it vigorously escalates it by resorting tothe
trope of transgression. Apparently driven by a strong desire to create a
sense of foreboding, required to validate corresponding claims of security
in the frontier, the text predominantly resorts to overstating the tale of
transgression, always conjuring up images of hostile and unfriendly

raiders, which could be viewed as prelude to territory- production.

Jenkins' text imagines/transforms the northeast into a military frontier and is overloaded with overt and covert proposals to militarize the Brahmaputra valley and adjoining areas. This is evident in the way Jenkins visualizes Suddiya, the easternmost station of the British Empire in the Brahmaputra valley, as a well-established military garrison.However, proposals of militarize or territorialize spaces with guns, barricades etc, is backed with the trope of transgression.In other words,a rhetoric of expansion is concealed as a rhetoric of security and civilization. For instance, Jenkins writes:

> Whether Suddiya is considered with reference to the *possible recurrence of hostilities with Ava* [present day Myanmar] or to its position in the *vicinity of the barbarous and numerous tribes of Singphos* [a tribe in Upper Assam], the only people which have *disturbed* the peace of Assam since our possession of the country or to its immediate vicinity to and command over the Moamorias, the only *warlike race* of the Assamese, it appears to me, to yield to no post in Assam in *military importance*. (2; emphasis added)

Similarly, highlighting the risksof river-travel and the paucity of road connectivity in the frontier, Jenkins proposes that "*Suddiya should be placed on such arespectable footing* as regards its military establishments to…*punish aggressions of the neighboring tribes* and be able to repel independent of support from Lower Assam" (2; emphasis added); and "*a strong detachment* at Suddiya" should be positioned (2; emphasis added), in this strategic "post" or "station" (2). Elsewhere, he writes, "The Burmese except that came in great force would not I conceive ever attempt the invasion of Assam by this route knowing that at Suddiya there was a detachment of our troops ready to meet them (2-3).Here also the parable of transgressionemerges as a pretext to territorialize the frontier.This also calls attention to another powerful but overlooked territorializing move in the text, that is, the transformation of the entire northeast into a military

buffer-zone.He continues to reiterate the need to intensify military preparedness in the buffer-zone by putting up strategic infrastructure such as garrisons (7) and stockades (18, 23), positioning troops and detachments (18), ammunition depot (30) to further colonial military and commercial interests in the region. Justifying such a move he writes:

> There is the better opportunity of doing this as the BeesaGaum has been continually spreading reports of apprehensions of being affected by other tribes of Singphos and has made his fears the grounds of an application to erect stockades for his defence. Such rumors…call for our peremptory interference for their prevention. (18).

The trope of transgression, in different forms, pervades the text. Although theBurmese emerge as the key adversary, the supposedly'barbarous' hill-tribesdominate the text asunwelcome visitors or as metaphorical Otherness, evident when he writes:

> The LuttoraGam[a tribal chief near Sadiya] suffered so severely that no repetition of such an inroad is likely to be again attempted whilst we retain a tolerable detachment at Suddiya. To attack them no doubt originated from the smallness of our force posted at Suddiya and the consequent misapprehension on the part of these *barbarians of our strength*. The Luttora Gam is now, I understood, convinced of his mistake. (4; emphasis added)

This trope of a much-anticipated but hazy inroad, so to say—of spatial infringement emerges from an essentially colonial/colonizingnotion of exclusive/rigidterritoriality. The overstated narrative of the tentative inroad enmeshed in a rhetoric of uneasemorphs into an allegory of transgression and lends the much- desired ideological impetus to the politics of territory-making.

Thespatial imaginings that underpin the text regularly operate along certain ideologically determined trajectories. It is important to recognize

ethnicity is transmuted into a territorial marker as well as empire-building instrument in it. It is evident in Jenkins's suggestions to extend strategic support i.e., to select tribes such as the Singphos, in an attempt to raise ethnic militias in the frontier:

> Believing there is little or no danger to be apprehended from the few masquets of oursin the hands of Singphos and that they are greatly useful to them in the way above mentioned, I would not recommend withdrawing them and I would not refuse to grant a few to each Gaum that offered submission to us or to give more to any that complied with our desire in opening roads or to other request we may have to propose. (13)

Likewise, he writes:

> The fealty of all these frontier tribes I should now only put entire confidence when our force kept amongst them was so strong or so well secure as not to tempt them to the hope of overcoming it by surprise. The benefits we have in our power to confer upon them will gradually bind them to us by other ties…though very rude and will become valuable allies under good management. (13)

These illustrates the colonial territorial politics of mutating ethnic difference, also evident in attempts to map out potential economic territories in the region, "The principal clans of Singphos *interposed* on *this road* between the Khamtis [a tribe in Upper Assam], of the Burhampooter and those on the Irrawady[a river in Myanmar] are the Luttora Gam on the Tengapani and the Dupha Gam on the Duphapanee and Noa-Dihing rivers" (4; emphasis added). A tribe is marked out either as an ally or an enemy, which itself is another attempt to transform people as strategic apparatus of the Empire. The motives of desire and fear, the key drives behind territory-production, subsume the indigene as auxiliaries in the project. The Khamtis as a rule are always represented in a favourable light (10) whereas the Singphos are a constant object of repulsion(12). In fact, Jenkins mulls over elaborate plans to deploy them

as a subsidiary territorial force to meet acts of transgression not only by Ava (12-13), but also by other ethnic groups. The act of marking isfollowed acquisitive proposals: "It seems to be greatly desired that these chiefs should be encouraged to communicate with us and to respect our paramount authority" (5). He reiterates the urgency of asset-building such as roads (15).

The trope of transgression also lends supports to proposed territorial countermoves such as retaliatory inroads and secret missions into opponent's territories. Jenkins writes:

> It is to be wished that we had some later information of the state of the province of Hookoom and Magaung through which the commerce traverses not only on furtherance of traffic between Assam and them but with a view to acquire military information and if the rest apprehend no danger of exciting the jealousy of the Ava Government, he might by the dispatch of an occasional intelligent messenger to the Political Agent Upper Assam make us better acquainted with those provinces which are by their position every way of importance to us and smooth the way for the removal of any objections there may at present be to the journey…if these provinces are capable of supporting a division of an army and their population is as little affected to the Burmese Government as there is reason to believe that in the event of war, this might become one of the most vulnerable points of the Burmese Empire. (6)

As already suggested, the construction of territory is preceded by the marking of space along strategic priorities, often in contradiction to pre-colonial spatial arrangements. Interestingly, spatial politics in the text regularlyrelies on a rhetoric of appropriateness and utility. For instance, Jenkins writes: "I cannot however doubt that by *proper and easy arrangements* the state of the districts inhabited by the Singphos and Khamtis might be so greatly *ameliorated* that at a period not remote every article of necessity for a division of strength might be abundantly supplied

from these local resources" (7; emphasis added). Here, the rhetoric of charity, appropriateness and utilityjoin hands. However, military priorities remain central to this project. The first step, he says, to "improve" the station of Suddiya,is the augmentation of the Department of the Assam Light Infantry"(7). Here also, military imperatives remain the thrust. From this perspective the passage illustrates how the politics of territoriality in the text under investigation is predominantly about the transformation of space into something that is beyond its physical attributes. For example, space is transformed into a strategic operational terrain, or a landscape of confrontation:

> The remote distance of Suddiya always remembering the difficulty of the upward navigation makes it essential that the store of ammunition with the department stationed there should be ample and its magazine good and well received by a timber stockade. I do not advocate the erection of any masonry posts. I think a stockade of strong timber an adequate defence, but I would give it corner bastions in which should be mounted on mounds of well-beaten clay for Carronades. (8)

It is obvious that Jenkins transforms the place as a site of possible military confrontation. In other words, he appropriates the existing place into grids of imperial military vision. In subsequent passages, Jenkins offers a more elaborate vision of furthering spatial control:

> I am led to understand that no boundary has been defined for the Cantt. of the department stationed at Suddiya and the Government is aware that the whole of the surrounding countries has been granted away to the Khamti Chiefs; it will be necessary therefore to *settle with them a line of demarcation*. Our troops are stationed south of the confluence of the Koondil Nullah and Burhampooter.(14; emphasis added)

Jenkins continues to imagine and re-imagine other possible subsidiary military arrangements and writes:

> Immediately above our station or about 400 yards from it is a
> thriving village of Dooms attached to the *Dawk* and other
> establishments connected with the troops and below the station on
> the Burhampooter at about the same distance is a village of the
> Meerees, who supply the troops with firewood and small articles
> and furnish Coolies for various purposes. Both these villages
> should be included and an ample piece of ground beyond them to
> admit of the enlargement to leave room for the erection of a fort
> and for the great increase of the *Bazar* and to afford room for
> vegetable cultivation and the grazing of cattle. (15)

Elsewhere, Jenkins makes similar propositions to convert Manipur into a
military frontier (29), Biswanathas the military base (31-33). The vision of
Goalparaas an occupied township or "as the *great commercial mart of
Assam*" is accompanied by proposals to militarize the place, in the form of
troop deployment, and installation of colonial infrastructure (56; emphasis
added).

Jenkins' narrative could be viewed as a discursive attempt to transform the
northeast into a predominantly military strategic site. However, territories
imagined and outlined in the text are not the militarily occupied spaces
alone. Apart from military territories, a cluster of commercial or economic
zonesemerge in the report. As spaces under overt and covert, real and
imagined forms of colonial jurisdiction these are best viewed as colonial
territories. In Jenkins, the northeast emerges as an expanding
economic/resource frontier. Imagining economic assets in the region,
Jenkins writes:

> Suddiya seems of no less importance froma commercial point of
> view and the imports are articles of value amongst which I may
> enumerate Musk…and its communications are with the Lama
> country, Ava and through the Shan provinces to China. There are
> already three or four Marwari *Kootees* established at Suddiya, one
> at Beesa and I understood an agent of these most enterprising

> merchants had last year been pushed on the Hookom valley with a
> view to open *koote* there. (3)

This is important in light of the fact thatplaces like Sadiya or Goalparaare often imagined in the text, as strategic military outposts. Situated at theeasternmost part of the Brahmaputra valley and thejunction of what is presently known as the state of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Burma Sadiya is one of the key colonial positions from which most of the colonial expeditions are carried out. Similarly, lying at the foothills of what is presently known as the Garo hills, in the state of Meghalaya, Goalpara is often seen as an advanced military position to contain Garo inroads. It is also important to note that the Garo hills produced a good quantity of cotton, a key interest of the Empire. What adds to this is the desire of extending colonial control to cross- border territories. Proposing such a venture, Jenkins writes:

> Khamtis of Suddiya are a tribe of Shans and in point of civilization
> I should consider them little at all inferior to Mugs or Burmese,
> whose written dialects they read and through them original
> country of Borkhamtis and occasional intercourse is kept up with
> the Shans beyond the Irrawaddy. This communication would
> without doubt be frequent and be intended through all the vast
> countries of this widely spread and very mercantile people, if the
> Khamtis possessed the tract of country between their present and
> former settlement and the commerce continued to increase in the
> manner it at present promises to do. (3)

The transformation of space into territories, in the text, is decided by colonial military or economic priorities. The indigenous populationi. e., the Khamtis emerge as an auxiliary in this project.Furthering acquisitive visions, he writes:

> The tract of country they [the Khamtis] possess in Assam bordered
> by the Dibong West, the Burhampooter south and hills north and
> east is of considerable extent and it is of surpassing fertility both

from the nature of the soil and the peculiarities of climate. A very small portion however is now cultivated…the condition of this tract is rapidly improving; *the sway of the Khamtis is mild* and an immigration from all quarters into their territory has been taking place since the cessation of the troubles in the neighbourhood and *its progress may be expected to bequickened as the measures* taken by us tend to the *permanent security of property to conciliate the inhabitants* and to *the promotion of their prosperity* by *improving the interchange of friendly communications* between Assam and the bordering countries and so *rendering their country the great entrepot* for commerce its natural position indicates its capability of becoming. (10; emphasis added)

The passage illustrates how the imperial eyestransforma plot of land or a place into a remunerative geography. Jenkins regrets that only a small portion has been utilized. In a way, this is a prelude topotential intervention. This passage illustrates how the transformation of space into territories rely on arhetoric of improvement. It goes without saying that pre-colonial placesare appropriated into macro visions of imperial cartography. Jenkins' narrative presents many instances of such visualization. In fact, throughout his narrative, Jenkins reiteratesarhetoric of improvement which almost always as serve as prelude tocolonial intervention and subsequent transformation of space into colonial territories.

The politics of territorialization in the text does not remain confined to rhetoric alone. In fact, the traveler eagerly pushes for more concrete moves towards spatial transformation such as the commencement and expansion of roads-connectivity. For instance, Jenkins writes: "Under whatever circumstances a war with the Burmese may recur, it must be desirable that *all our advanced posts should be connected together by practicable roads* and that *all known passes between our possessions and there should be equally available to us as to them*" (28; emphasis added). There are similar proposals to revive existing roads for military and

commercial use (41-43) as well as building new roads (41, 42, 16). However, roads, in the text, emerge not only as a transport asset, but more importantly, as an instrument of colonial surveillance, reappearing in the following passage as a proposal to clean up jungle and clear transit routes.

> Between Suddiya and the Senaputty's cultivation, there is a belt of jungle of about fifteen miles, I believe through which it is very desirable that there should be practicable road as the supplies for Suddiya are mostly drawn from that country and a knowledge that there was a ready access to the heart of his country would greatly tend to confirm that Chieftain in good behaviour and from our first acquaintance with him, his conduct has been, I understand far from satisfactory. (16)

This illustrates the multi-layered texture of colonial territoriality, wherein space apparently mutate into beneficent public assets, but with deep-rooted territorial designs. i.e., as a panoptic tool of surveillance. Similarly, landscapes and rivers (18, 24, 25) in the region morph into strategic tools to safeguard colonial territorial interests. Imagining rivers as a colonizing instrument Jenkins writes:

> The NoaDihing [a river in Upper Assam] is navigable 10 or 15 miles above Beesa, whence the Singpho villages of the Dupha and other Gaum stretch up about 25 miles along its banks within the hills and from their most eastern village of the Borkhamtis of the other side of the ridge between the waters of the Burhampooter and the Irrawady the absolute distance is not above 40 miles. (18)

In what could be seen as an attempt at constructing larger territories in the region, Jenkins explores the possibilities of linking up the Brahmaputra in the northeast and the Irrawady river in Burmaentirely as an imperial asset (20).Even the rhetoric of utility is deeply enmeshed in the meta-trope of otherness and transgression. The extension of commerce is viewed primarily as a counter-dose to potential transgressions (21). These re-emphasize the alliance between the trope of transgression and the politics

of territory-making inJenkins.

Jenkins frequently employs therhetoric of progress as a pretextto territorialize. Highlighting the need to "watch" the Khamtis, Singphos and other hill dwellers it classifies them into friends and hostiles: "The Merees are an agricultural and therefore a highly valuable race…the Abors are very rude hill tribes and have been occasionally troublesome" (22.) Stereotyping the hill-men as savages is another trope to lend ideological force to expansionist claims. He writes: "the Duphlas are considered I believe the *most rude and most troublesome*, but the Bhooteahs from their *established character for treachery*... Here is as elsewhere along the whole frontier the provision of occasional strong and well stockade guards may prove the cheapest policy that we can adopt. (39; emphasis added).The same allegory of otherness is made to support the setting-up of ammunition depot (30), military posts (24), and forts (25). He writes:

> Had we retained Upper Assam, I should have recommended the strongest manner that military posts should have been established at the mouths of all the rivers on the South bank of the Burhampooter…for the purpose of protecting merchants and encouraging the formation of villages along the great river, that travelers of all kind might obtain the supplies and assistance they might stand in need of. (24)

The text is full of attempts to mutate natural spacesinto colonial utilities such as borders. For instance, Jenkins postulates a set of boundaries between Assam and Manipur (26-27). Like elsewhere, these arrangements are often made in ways that lends an impetus to further territorialization, and are concealed behind a rhetoric of charity.For instance:

> I should have expected that also the Munipoorees, so settled having an abundant tract of fertile land about them, would have availed themselves of these favourable circumstances and converted the two unprofitable wastes into cleared and cultivated lands and upon them created *a mart for interchange of the hills and*

> *the plains*. A *communication fit for military purposes* would have gradually been established without effort. (26)

Mapping is often followed by extensive proposals to revive the existing and also set up new roads for military and commercial use (41-43). These instances illustrate how the production of territories in thecolonial northeast is by and large, the legacy of colonial military and economic vision, often in sharp contradiction to existing spatial arrangements in the region.

Given that apart from being a physical reality a territory is also a social space, it is important to explore other crucial but usually overlooked dimensions of space.The imperial gaze eagerly pushes for the extension of colonial authority over the indigenous space in ways which are not always obvious, but which lends much impetus to the ideological claims of empire-building. For instance, it is possible to the marking of particular sites as 'waste' and its attending claims of improvement. Highlighting the usability of supposedly waste lands, Jenkins writes: "As the settlement of Englishmen of capital on the *wastes on* these frontiers seems to me to offer a better prospect for the *speedy realization of improvements* than any measures that could be adopted in the present *ignorant* and *demoralized state of the native inhabitants*" (36; emphasis added). This reemphasizes the operation of the rhetoric of otherness as an ideological counterpart to territory-making. To this extent, colonial writers such as Jenkins prepare the ideological backdrop to subsequent and more concrete colonial attempts to transform the northeast into a military and economic frontier. It not only hints atthe expansionist military and commercial interests of the Empire in the northeast, but also unfolds the instrumentality of survey and expedition narratives and tropes therein, in the discursive-material construction of territories in colonial northeast. Pemberton's *The Eastern Frontier of India* (1835), another important survey report consists of observations and suggestions of strategic nature and is best viewed as an exercise in military reconnaissance transforming the region into a series of imagined territories. Despite widespread similarities with that of Jenkins,

whatdistinguish Pemberton's report are-first, its area of operation .i.e., Manipur and its adjoining territories; and second,its prioritization of economic territories than military ones.

Pemberton makes regular attempts to objectify, commodify and transform natural spaces in the northeast into strategic assets, and its reliance on the trope of transgression in ways that are not always obvious. He begins by metaphorically introducing the sub-Himalayan mountain range as a territorial signpost i. e., as a buffer between Assam and it's outside (1). The subsequent passages continue to appropriate natural topographical features in the region as territorial markers (4), mutating natural space into entities subservient to colonial jurisdiction. It should be added here that both Pemberton's survey and his report primarily drives from the need to explore potential pathways of empire in the region.

The text offers an extensive range of visionsto transform the northeast into a resource frontier or a strategic asset. Imagining a river as an imperial utility, Pemberton writes: "The rivers which flow from this mountainous tract of country on the east and west, though numerous are, with few exceptions, of but trifling importance; the *navigation of them, except during the rainy season, being extremely uncertain and precarious*" (5; emphasis added). He offers an elaborate survey of the local rivers (5-6). For instance:

> The principal of those which flow into the Burhampooter, is the Soormah or Barak river, whose sources are in latitude 25 degree 30' north and longitude 94 degree 20' east, among the lofty peaks of the chain of mountains which form the central barrier between Muneepoor and Assam. This stream, after flowing for upwards of 180 miles, through a mountainous country, only becomes navigable for boats of any burden about 20 miles above Banskandee. (5)

Pemberton continues to survey the entire range of rivers in the region between Cachar, Manipur and Burma (6).The primary focus, however, is

always their utility in terms of military or commercial priorities of the Empire. It explains the eagerness on the part of the travelers to map even the minutest of the strategic details, especially, those pertaining to navigability through these rivers. Similarly, he maps out potential harbors (9-10), potential waterways (5-12) as economic commodities. It is important to note howJenkinsalso classifies rivers in the region as valuable or useless in terms of their military-commercial utility.His hunger to map out the naturalwealth in the regioni. e., mineral wealth such as limestone, sandstone, coal-beds, mining spots, coral (13), timber (15) etc. confirm Pemberton's role as a pioneering capitalist vanguards in the northeast as well as a key figure in its conversion into an important resource frontier of the Empire.

After laying out an elaborate cartography of prospective economic territories along the mountain chain of Eastern frontier (1-20), he surveys potential territories in Muneepoorsuch as potential water passages (24-26), agricultural resources (27), timber (27-28), minerals (28-30), livestock (33-34) and other articles of manufacture (34-35). It goes without mentioning that the imperial gaze is alwaysdriven by the desire to occupy, appropriate, that is – to territorialize.

Despite his fascination with wealth-generation, Pemberton does not remain blind to military possibilities and like Jenkins, reiterates the need to maintain occupation over Manipur for strategic concerns: "Their country is to be regarded principally as an *advanced military position* for the defence of the eastern frontier, and its utility must of course entirely depend upon its natural resources and the efficiency of its military force" (50). Like Jenkins he puts forthextensive proposals for augmenting military preparedness such like rising of force (50), augmentation of cavalry (51) or improving road connectivity within(52) as well as across the border to Burma (54-55), as countermove to a probable Burmese attack. The local topography emerges either asan asset or as a deterrent in strategic terms such as conveyance of baggage, potable water and other similar means of sustenance (62- 65). The traveler looks out for similar

strategic assets elsewhere also: "The NoaDihing [a river] which skirts the road the whole way, *affords a convenient line of water communication for the conveyance of supplies* in the small canoes of the country" (67; emphasis added). Another instance of transforming space into military zones is the visualization of encamping grounds for colonial troops (68).

The narrative offers a extensive series of proposals to create military and economic territories in the region. Often such proposals appears as a pretext contain transgression (71-73). In a way Pemberton's text could be seen as an extension of the parable of transgression, initiated by Jenkins's text. In other words, both these texts collaborate in the politics of space-production the colonial northeast.From this perspective, the construction of the Singphos as barbarians and the proposals to discipline them could be viewed as a trope.

That visions to territorialize, in the narrative, not only derive from but alsoreinforce expansionist visions of the Empire is corroborated by the narrative itself when it proclaims as its mandate, the selection of a "line of operation against Ava" (152). Correspondingly the narrative elaborately reflects upon strategic advantages and hurdles in carrying out operations against Burma by the four major lines by Assam, Muneepoor, Arracan (a division in British Burma), and Rangoon highlighting travelling distance, time, modes of conveyance, supply of food-grains and salubrity (153-170). Similarly, postulations of transforming space to economic territories are made. For instance: "The central situation of Muneepoor, its peculiarly fine climate, and its present intimate connexion with the British government, mark it as a spot peculiarly fitted to become the entrepot of a trade between the northern provinces of Ava, and the northern districts of Bengal" (174). He also visualizes largertrans-border economic zones between Assam and Burma (176), and also with Bhutan and Tibet (177-184). Towards that he marks out spots in Cachar, Khasi, and the Jyntea hills such as potential military and commercial transit camps.

The texts under investigation clearly mark a transformation of space into

territories. In other words, they illustrate the transformation of the northeast from a cluster of perceived spaces to a strategic cartography of power and resources. It is substantiated by the extensive visions of intervention and modification of spaces into occupied positions with significant amount of certainty and assertiveness, on the part of the colonial traveler-surveyor.

These texts also mark a transition in terms of strategies of space production, employed by the travelers. The politics of metaphorization, to a certain extent, is taken over by actual politics of space. The traveler-surveyor often participates in the marking and classification of spaces into assets and liabilities, visualizing larger geographies such as military or economic frontiers. From possible or desirable geographies, space is transformed into concrete, specific and more importantly, into planned geographies. It is important to note that there is a resolute assertion of ownership.

The production of territory, in the texts under investigation, draws strength from parables of transgression. To this extent, the project of territory production is similar to the coding of space as landscapes. What distinguishes the use of transgression for converting landscapes into territories is that the potential transgressor is clearly identified. The overwhelming and all-pervasive air of fear and unease is replaced by clearer visions about potential transgressor or enemies as well as allies. Eventually, in these texts, the northeast is transformed from a symbolic geography of desire and fear to a clearly marked colonial instrument, a geopolitical space, thereby preparing the conditions for the transformation of territories into assets.

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Socio-Economic Rise of Spinners and Weavers in Rural India: Empowerment through Khadi

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Abstract

Khadi has been referred as the 'fabric of Indian Independence' that played a key role in the freedom struggle of India. Khadi fabric has historical significance for bringing about extensive rural empowerment and has become a valuable asset providing respectable means of livelihood to huge section of the population- especially rural women.

In this paper an attempt is made to emphasize on the detailed demographics of workers associated with khadi manufacturing as it is important to assess the realities of present scenario in which rural people are working to earn their livelihood.

Detailed information about the workers in the manufacturing units such as demographic profile, monthly income, occupational health hazard/ diseases linked with profession of workers was gathered using purposive sampling technique. Observation and semi-structured interview techniques were used for data collection.

Analysis of the data revealed that khadi sector provides employment and means of livelihood to about five lakh people and work has been going on in the manufacturing units from several years.

Keywords: Khadi, Employment, Rural Empowerment

Introduction

There are two broad segments of Indian textile industry, namely the traditional hand-woven and hand-spun textile segment and the modernized mill segment (Nair & Dhanuraj, 2016). Khadi is part of Indian traditional heritage; it is a hand-spun and hand-woven fabric and produced under the aegis of Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC).

Mahatma Gandhi started the movement of khadi in 1918 and emphasized its use to strive against western clothes. He strongly supported its use in order to revive village weaving and to reduce cloth imports from Britain. The first khadi production centre was established at Kataiwad, Gujarat and Mahatma Gandhi used to refer it as 'the livery of Freedom' (Hankin 2008). The khadi was introduced as a political weapon and as the best instrument for giving concrete expression to the swadeshi spirit to boycott foreign goods. It became a symbol of nationalism, equality and self-reliance during India's freedom struggle. The khadi was the core of the constructive activities of the society and made the Satyagraha effective against the foreign rule. It was in the 1920s that the wearing of khadi became almost obligatory for members of the Congress party, a political gesture (Hankin, 2008).

The manufacturing of khadi gained pace, discouraging the Indians to wear foreign goods and emphasized on use of swadeshi, meaning homegrown products. Millions of Indians turned out in the streets, burning the foreign produced goods and started wearing 'khadi' (Coleman 2013). It became an integrated part of swaraj, meaning independence, giving employment to unskilled rural people and provided clothing to many people and made them self-reliant (Choudhary & Ojha 2015). The soul of swaraj was swadeshi and khadi became the spirit of svadeshi as a part of Indian Identity (Ghosh 2009). The khadi enabled Mahatma Gandhi to spread his message to the people and establish connection with them (Singh & Laxmi 2014). The rediscovery of the spinning wheel 'the charkha' and associating it with khadi by Mahatma Gandhi was a significant contribution to the national freedom struggle and it initiated new economic thinking.

Khadi is natural, hand crafted, eco-friendly, bio-degradable and non-exploitative, niche product. 'Khadi' fabric has originated from Hindi word 'Khad' or pit in which the handloom is fixed. The weaver is seated at ground level and operates the loom with his feet. It is also probable that the name khadi is derived from khaddar, a traditional native word for

homespun and handwoven cloth. It is primarily made of natural fibre cotton; the other raw materials include silk or wool. Khadi is spun by hand into yarn on a spinning instrument known as '*charkha*' and weaving is done on handloom.

All khadi is handloom fabric, but not all handloom fabrics are khadi; the basic difference between khadi and handloom fabric is the method of spinning the yarn. In khadi, the yarn is hand spun (Figure 1) and in handloom fabric, the yarn can be hand spun or mill spun (Figure 2). In both the cases, the cloth is woven by handloom.

Figure 1: Hand spinning of yarn used for khadi

Figure 2: Mill spinning of yarn used for handloom and powerloom

Khadi was introduced as a political weapon to boycott foreign goods where an opportunity was provided by khadi to every man, woman and child to cultivate self-discipline and self-sacrifice as a part of the non-cooperation movement. It became a symbol of equality, nationalism and self-reliance during India's freedom struggle.

After Independence, Khadi and Village Industries Commission was instituted to look after the khadi sector. Presently, the initiatives of KVIC have helped to build up significant development in the khadi sector and rural economy. Initiatives are being undertaken to promote the use of khadi products in various government departments including police forces, government hospitals, railways, airlines and schools.

Today, the unemployment rate in our country is 12.8% in rural India and 15.3% in urban India, resulting in overall unemployment rate of 13.6% (https://unemploymentinindia.cmie.com). Rural youth tend to migrate to bigger cities in search of employment and their involvement in traditional craft has declined. Therefore, the focus of the paper was to find the actual status of rural people working in the manufacturing units. It was important to know about their involvement in the khadi sector.

Methodology

The total khadi production during the year 2018-19 was 144.52 million square meters, out of which cotton khadi production was 113.31 million sq. meters, woolen khadi production was 16.36 million sq. meters and silk khadi production was 14.85 million sq. meters (www.kvic.gov.in/ kvicres/apr.php). Cotton khadi was selected for the study as it is the most popular variety of khadi. The major share of various states in cotton khadi production during 2018-2019 is given in Table 1. Since the North India region had highest share of cotton khadi manufacturing, it was selected for data collection to study the demographic profile of workers involved in making of cotton khadi fabrics.

Table 1
Share of major states in cotton khadi production during 2018-2019

RANK	COTTON KHADI		
	State	**%Share**	**Region**
1st	Uttar Pradesh	43.77	North India
2nd	Kerala	9.97	South India
3rd	Gujarat	8.65	West India
4th	Haryana	7.83	North India
5th	Tamil Nadu	5.60	South India
6th	Karnataka	5.55	West India
7th	West Bengal	5.33	East India
8th	Rajasthan	3.34	North India
9th	Uttrakhand	1.89	North-West India
10th	Andhra	1.85	South India

Source: http://www.kvic.gov.in/kvicres/apr.php

Permission was sought from Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) to carry out the study in major cotton production centres i.e., Dausa in Rajasthan, Jind and Kurukshetra in Haryana and Moradabad in Uttar Pradesh. Purposive sampling technique was used for selection of the sample. Semi-structured interview and observation technique was used for data collection and information was collected twenty each from spinners and weavers.

Since the nature of information required was descriptive and details of processes were to be collected, interview schedules were selected as a tool for collecting information from the respondents in Hindi. These interviews were extremely helpful in exploring in-depth information and were best suited to identify diversity and variety. The tools were pretested during pilot study and finalized.

Observation method was useful in collecting information about the working conditions of the respondents with respect to realities of the situation, ergonomics etc. Participant observation method was used for recording the descriptions obtained from the interaction with people. Brief notes were made and later conclusions were drawn out of recordings.

Results & Discussion

The significant findings from the study on various aspects were analysed. It was found that khadi sector has come up as one of the strongest links in bridging India's economic growth with socio-economic transformation keeping its artisanal roots and sustainability. KVIC has provided sources for employment generation and reverse migration at very low capital investment. The present status of khadi production was studied in the manufacturing units. The detailed profile of the manufacturing units was studied such as, year of establishment, demographic profile of workers, monthly income, recent trainings provided and problems linked with profession of workers which have been discussed in detail below:

Profile of manufacturing units

It was found that the khadi manufacturing units had been operational for more than 25 years (Table 2). The centre in Dausa is one of the oldest manufacturing unit. It was established on 1st April, 1967 and work is going on in this unit from more than 50 years. Jind centre was established in 1988 and this unit is working from more than 30 years. Kurukshetra unit was established in 1990-91 and Moradabad unit was established in 1992, in both the units work is going on from more than 25 years.

Table 2
Details of Establishment of manufacturing units

Unit details	Establishment of manufacturing units
Dausa	Established on 1st April, 1967 (more than 50 years)
Jind	Established in 1988, work started from 1989 (more than 30 years)
Kurukshetra	Established in 1990-91 (more than 25 years)
Moradabad	Established in 9th October 1992 (more than 25 years)

In all the manufacturing units the work is done throughout the year providing employment to people. The study revealed that there were total 1744 people employed in Dausa, 780 in Jind, 750 in Kurukshetra and 724 in Moradabad comprising of spinners, weavers and workers in other miscellaneous jobs like tailoring, accounting, salesperson, computer operators etc.

However, spinning and weaving accounted for bulk of the employees. In all the manufacturing units, there were more spinners i.e., 1167 in Dausa, 700 in Jind, 685 in Kurukshetra and 568 in Moradabad (Table 3). It was observed that mostly females do spinning. Out of total spinners in all the manufacturing units only 6% spinners were males and 94% spinners were females.

It was seen that there were 366 weavers in Dausa, 50 weavers in Jind, 60 weavers in Kurukshetra and 156 weavers in Moradabad (Table 3). 85% weavers were males and only 15% females were involved in weaving.

Table 3
Details of worker's in manufacturing units

| Unit details | Workers sex ratio in manufacturing units | | | | | |
| | Spinners | | | Weavers | | |
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Dausa	167	1000	1167	326	40	366
Jind	-	700	700	35	15	50
Kurukshetra	-	685	685	45	15	60
Moradabad	10	558	568	131	25	156
Total	**177**	**2943**	**3120**	**537**	**95**	**632**

Profile of workers

The detailed profile of spinners and weavers from whom data was collected has been discussed below. It was analysed that nineteen people who were involved in khadi spinning and weaving were from hindu religion and only one was of muslim religion. Some spinners were doing spinning as a traditional craft and out of them one was national awardee for spinning in Kurukshetra manufacturing unit. The other spinners got trained by government and started spinning. The spinners were all females of age group from 18 to 70 years. It is analysed from Table 4 that in Dausa, all spinners were in age group between 26-50 years. In Jind, three spinners were in age group of 26-50 years and two were above 50 years. In Kurukshetra, two spinners were in age group of 18-25 years and three were above 26-50 years. In Moradabad, the involvement of spinners of all age groups was found, i.e, three spinners were in age group of 18-25 years, one was in age group of 26-50 years and one was above 50 years.

Table 4

Details of age of spinners working in manufacturing units

Unit details	Age	Frequency
Dausa	18- 25	0
	26-50	5
	Above 50	0
Jind	18-25	0
	26-50	3
	Above 50	2
Kurukshetra	18- 25	2
	26-50	3
	Above 50	0
Moradabad	18- 25	3
	26-50	1
	Above 50	1

Table 5 shows the education level of spinners. It was seen that some of the spinners were not educated, the highest education they had got was till high school. In Dausa, three spinners were not educated and two had got their education upto high school. In Jind and Kurukshetra, all the spinners were educated upto high school level. In Moradabad, one spinner was not educated and four of them had got their education till high school level.

Table 5

Details of education of spinners working in manufacturing units

Unit details	Education	Frequency
Dausa	Not educated	3
	High school	2
	Senior secondary	0
Jind	Not educated	0
	High school	5
	Senior secondary	0
Kurukshetra	Not educated	0
	High school	5
	Senior secondary	0
Moradabad	Not educated	1
	High school	4
	Senior secondary	0

Employment with khadi has helped the spinners to support their families for their daily needs. It was found from the study that some were having large family size of up to nine members. As seen from Table 6, in Dausa, one spinner had family members below five and four of them had family member above 5. In Jind, all the spinners had family size below 5 while in Kurukshetra and Moradabad each it was found that four spinners had family size below 5 members and one spinner was having above 5 members in his family.

Table 6
Details of family size of spinners working in manufacturing units

Unit details	Family size	Frequency
Dausa	0- 5	1
	Above 5	4
Jind	0- 5	5
	Above 5	0
Kurukshetra	0- 5	4
	Above 5	1
Moradabad	0- 5	4
	Above 5	1

Spinning was done by women as per their convenience in their homes usually in the villages and the average working hours per day for the spinners are 4 to 5 hours (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Spinning done by women using traditional
***charkha* in Dausa**

It was found that all the weavers were practising weaving since their childhood as a traditional craft and their family members were also contributing in the work. Amongst the weavers, one weaver was national awardee in Kurukshetra manufacturing unit. They were having looms in their homes with a little capital investment (Figure 4). Weavers get raw material from manufacturing units and give back woven fabric according to specifications given to them.

Figure 4a   **Figure 4b**
Figure 4: (a) Weaving done by women using handloom in Dausa
(b)Weaving done by men using pitloom in Jind

It was found that both males and females were involved in the weaving and were of age group from 21 to 62 years (Table 7). It is analysed that in Dausa, two weavers were in age group between 26-50 years and three weavers were in age group above 50 years. In Jind and Moradabad, one weaver each was in age group of 18-25 years and above 50 years while three were in age group of 26-50 yeras. In Kurukshetra, one weaver was in age group of 18-25 years and two each were in age group 26-50 years and above 50 years.

Table 7
Details of age of weavers working in manufacturing units

Unit details	Age	Frequency
Dausa	18- 25	0
	26-50	2
	Above 50	3
Jind	18-25	1
	26-50	3
	Above 50	1
Kurukshetra	18- 25	1
	26-50	2
	Above 50	2
Moradabad	18- 25	1
	26-50	3
	Above 50	1

It is observed that some weavers were not educated and the highest education they had got was senior secondary. It was analysed from Table 8 that in Dausa three weavers had got their education till high school and two had got educated upto senior secondary. In Jind and Kurukshetra, one weaver was not educated, one had got their education till high school and three had got educated upto senior secondary. In Moradabad, two weavers had got their education tillhigh school and three had got educated upto senior secondary.

Table 8
Details of education of weavers working in manufacturing units

Unit details	Education	Frequency
Dausa	Not educated	0
	High school	3
	Senior secondary	2
Jind	Not educated	1
	High school	1
	Senior secondary	3
Kurukshetra	Not educated	1
	High school	1
	Senior secondary	3
Moradabad	Not educated	0
	High school	2
	Senior secondary	3

It was found that the employment with khadi had helped the weavers to support their families for their daily needs and even the family members were helping them in the work. It was found from the study that some were having large family size up to thirteen members. As seen from Table 9, in Dausa, one weaver had family members below five and four of them had family member above 5. In Jind, all the weavers had family size below 5. In Kurukshetra it was found that three had family size below 5 members and two above 5 members while in Moradabad four had family size below 5 members and one above 5 members.

Table 9
Details of family size of spinners working in manufacturing units

Unit details	Family size	Frequency
Dausa	0- 5	1
	Above 5	4
Jind	0- 5	5
	Above 5	0
Kurukshetra	0- 5	3
	Above 5	2
Moradabad	0- 5	4
	Above 5	1

Current monthly income of the workers

It was seen that spinners were using two types of charkhas, traditional *charkha* and new model *charkhas* (NMC) in all the manufacturing units. The traditional *charkhas* were used to make coarser varieties while new model *charkhas* were used to make fine quality fabric and were more efficient in terms of production. The average monthly income of spinners was Rs.500-900 per month for those working on traditional charkha and minimum Rs.1500-6000/month for those working on NMC *charkha*. The average monthly income of the weavers ranged between Rs.7000-10,000/month (Table 10).

Table 10

Details of monthly income of the workers in manufacturing units

Unit details	Workers monthly income in manufacturing units	
	Spinners	**Weavers**
Dausa	Traditional *charkha* Rs. 700-900/month NMC *charkha*: Rs.2500-5000/month	Rs. 7500-10,000/Month
Jind	Traditional *charkha* Rs. 500-800/month NMC *charkha*: Rs.1500-2000/month	Rs. 7000-8000/Month
Kurukshetra	Traditional *charkha*: Rs. 600-900/month NMC *charkha*: Rs.2000-3000/month	Rs. 9000-10,000/Month
Moradabad	Traditional *charkha*: Rs. 500-600/month NMC *charkha*: Rs. 3000-6000/month	Rs. 8000-10,000/Month

Recent trainings for upgrading skills

Periodically, new spinners and weavers are given trainings on traditional and new model *charkhas* and on looms. KVIC conducts training programmes for stepping up productivity by bringing improvement in equipment and manufacturing techniques of the craftsman. Various advance technologies have been developed under Research & Development schemes of KVIC, which bring a significant improvement in the quality, productivity and packaging of the products manufactured by the rural industries sector. According to 2018-19 report 10805 people including spinners, weavers and staff have been trained under various disciplines. These trainings are good for their work opportunities (www.kviconline.gov.in).

Various government schemes for benefit of artisans linked with profession

It was found that cotton dirt can cause asthma and T.B., therefore, masks were provided to the workers during spinning and weaving. All the

manufacturing units had health/ life insurance policy such as Jan shri Bima, Group health insurance, Atal Pension Yojna, Mudra Yojna, PPF, Aam Admi Bima Yojna etc.

Khadi Karigar Janashree Bhima Yojna (KKJBY), a group insurance scheme for khadi artisans, was launched on 15th August, 2003 in collaboration with LIC India. Artisans throughout the country were covered under this scheme which was centrally operated. Later, this scheme was renamed as Khadi Karigar Aam Admi Bima Yojana. This was further replaced by the government of India and two schemes were introduced. Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Bima Yojana(PMJJBY) for the artisans belonging to the age group from 18 to 50 years and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) for the artisans belonging to the age group from 51 to 60 years, these schemes are good for them as they provides risk cover for death and disability.

There are several schemes through which the developmental activities are carried out for the benefit of artisans who are engaged with khadi sector. The implementation of Prime Minister's employment generation Programme (PMEGP), is providing continuous and sustainable employment opportunities across the country. Under this subsidy is provided to the extent of 15% to 35% to first time entrepreneurs for setting up village industries unit.

KVIC had introduced worked scheme for artisans belonging to BPL group. The objective of the scheme is to provide better work ambience, more working and storing space for keeping raw material, implements and accessories, yarn/clot etc., thereby improving efficiency and productivity of artisans. In this scheme financial assistance of up to Rs. 60,000 is provided to individual artisans.

State level artisan welfare trust (AWFT) has been established at state level for effective implementation of social security measures for artisans associated with khadi institutions. The trust fund comprises 12% of the artisan's earning along with matching contribution of the institutions to the

trust. Membership of state level AWFTs are mandatory for all Khadi producing institutions registered with KVIC. The artisan who has subscribed for the scheme for at least one year can withdraw the amount to meet a variety of expenses such as children's education, marriage, medical treatment, housing, purchasing equipment, child birth, buy khadi on festivals, death rites, etc. The entire amount is paid to artisan's nominee in case of death of an artisan.

It was found that an amount of Rs. 2662.10 crores was disbursed by KVIC for implementation of various schemes during 2018-19. The grant utilised in Aam Admi Bima Yogna was Rs. 9.38 crores, prime minister's employment generation programme was Rs. 2142.86 crores and workshed schemes for khadi artisans was Rs. 3.72 crores in the year 2018-19.

A new scheme 'Rozgar Yukt Gaon' is proposed to take-off in the year 2019-20, targeting to provide employment by establishing about 50 clusters in the rural areas of the country under the scheme on pilot basis. It can be seen from above data that KVIC is fulfilling its objective of providing employment in rural areas (www.kviconline.gov.in).

Conclusion

It is concluded from the study that khadi sector is providing employment to people at their doorsteps with a little capital investment. The khadi manufacturing units in all the four selected areas had been operational for more than 25 years and work was done throughout the year providing employment to people. Spinners and weavers accounted for bulk of the employees. In all the manufacturing units, there were more spinners. It was observed that mostly females do spinning and males were more involved in weaving. Spinners and weavers get raw material from manufacturing units which were nearby to their homes and give back ready material effortlessly. As its social objective, khadi sector is providing employment in rural areas. It is providing saleable articles under its economic objective and creating self-reliance amongst people and building up a strong rural community spirit as its broad objective. In the

rural India khadi production meets the objectives of green production and employment creation. The average monthly income of spinners was Rs.500-900 per month for those working on traditional charkha and minimum Rs.1500-6000 per month for those working on NMC. The average monthly income of the weavers ranged between Rs.7000-10,000 per month. Khadi is fulfilling its objective of creating employment opportunities, raising income and standard of living of unemployed people in rural areas. Periodically, new spinners and weavers are given trainings on traditional charkhas, new model charkhas and on looms for income generation. According to 2018-19 report 10805 people including spinners, weavers and staff have been trained under various disciplines.

Total employment in khadi sector during 2018-19 has registered at 5 lakh persons. Khadi has emerged as the fabric of the people keeping its artisanal roots, sustainability and low carbon footprint.

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Neo-Liberal Developmental Policies and their Impact on Women and Gender Equality in India: A Critique

NISHA JAIN

Abstract

The trajectory of the development policies in independent India had followed diverse paths. The Nehruvian state followed the policy of a mixed economy model, putting the thrust on the development of public sector along with the simultaneous development of private sector; and unleashing the dominant discourse of a 'welfare state' model, as exhibited through planning, banks nationalization, land reforms, etc. These policies were also adopted in the post-Second World War period in most of the countries, whether they be developed, developing or under-developed. At a similar level, one finds that the discourses on gender equality and women's empowerment were also juxtaposed together with the developmental discourses ever since the early 1970s. These policies continued till 1991, when there was an abrupt transformation in India's developmental discourses and the Indian state adopted the neo-liberal developmental policies of economic liberalization, privatization and globalization. This paper seeks to study the impact of neo-liberal developmental policies on women and gender equality in India. It is a common knowledge that traditionally, women have been marginalized and deprived of their rights and equality. This paper seeks to take a discursive approach by identifying and evaluating the two dominant discourses - one being the 'Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)' and the other being the 'Strategies for New India at 75 years', being adopted by the Indian state. This paper comes to the conclusion that there still remains a widening gap between men and women as far as neo-liberal developmental policies are concerned. Consequently, one finds that there needs to be a comprehensive overhaul of India's socio-economic and political structure, so that gender equality can become a reality and women are treated at par with men in India's developmental discourses.

Keywords: Developmental Policies, Neo-liberal, Women, Gender Equality, India.

Introduction

India's developmental discourse, which has started in right earnest in 1947, has evolved through different phases in the post-independence period. The decade of 1950s and 1960s witnessed the thrust being put on 'growth with stability'. The slogan of the decade of 1970s was 'development with social justice', as the deprived sections of society in India were disappointed with the phenomenon of uneven economic development. And, in the decade of 1980s and 1990s, the central focus was put on 'development with empowerment' (Singha Roy, 2001: 13). Over the years the scope of development discourse has widened significantly across the globe.In the absence of clear cut gender policy, the direction of development has either left the women untouched or affected them adversely. It has been argued that modernization policies which, to 'different degrees and in different guises', have been adopted by most of the nations, 'do not necessarily aim specifically at effecting gender relations but they have invidious and complex implications for women' (Afshar, 1987: 3).

At a similar level, one finds that an important global shift took place during the last quarter of the 20th century that has changed the nature of Indian state and politics drastically. Within the Feminist discourse, the process of development was first highlighted in the decade of 1970's with the publication of the Report titled "Towards Equality" by the *Committee on the Status of Women in India*. This report brought to focus the marginalization of women as well as the cultural bias against them. It was revealed that 'the instruments of political rights, legal equality and education on which so much reliance has been placed to solve women's question has remained outside the reach of overwhelming majority of women who were being marginalized'(Mazumdar, 1985: 5-6).

Kumud Sharma pointed out that as a result of industrialization, the expansion of export-oriented foot loose industries has provided new avenues of employment opportunities for women, but the nature of such industries with uncertain markets, stiff competition in the world market, cheap labour has not brought any fruitful results for women (Sharma,

1985: 11). On the whole women in general and rural women in particular have not reaped the benefits of development. Gender discrimination has continued in modern rural economy whereby men dominate in the management and the decision making of commercial and large scale agricultural units, while women continue to be in subsistence production with low technology and low returns (Acharya, 1984: 70). The rural women have to put in double the labour. Their daily chores involve the hard work they have to put in fields along with their men and then take care of the family as well as do extra work. Regarding the relationship between productive and reproductive labour leading to the exploitation of women, Mies argued that the system of seclusion of women and the definition of their work as being extension of the housewife role leads not only to lower wages for women under unhealthy conditions, but also their meek acceptance of such a situation (Mies, 1982: 112). This way the commodity economy adversely affects women because their traditional productive role gets devalued, on the one hand and they don't get free access to the new means of production, on the other.

The developmental discourse has witnessed a paradigm shift from a welfare state model of the late 1940s and early 1950s to a neo-liberal and neo-conservative discourse in the early 1990s. The essence of neo-liberalism is on promoting a laissez-faire and free market economy, preserving private property and promoting individual freedom and choices. The philosophical perspective behind the neo-liberal theory was advocated by theorists like Isaiah Berlin, F.A. Hayek, Milton Friedman and Robert Nozick in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Friedman (1962) argued that capitalism promotes freedom. What actually gave a boost to these neo-liberal policies was the fact that these policies were actually implemented by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, referred to as 'Thatcherism' and the United States President Ronald Reagan, referred to as 'Reaganism' and later on by former President of USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev by unveiling his policies of 'Glasnost' (i.e., free market economy) and Perestroika (which in essence meant restructuring) in the 1980s.

Thus, according to neo-liberal economic policies, there is a gradual retreat of the state from its social-welfare functions and consequently, the supremacy of the free-market forces is established within the state.Economically, these were the perspectives of liberal international political economists, the most ardent advocates being Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Adam Smith, for example, talked about the free hand of the market. The neo-liberals emphasize on free market, free trade, private property and individual freedom. These neo-liberal policies are also collectively referred to as 'Washington Consensus', since these policies were ultimately framed in Washington D.C.

Contextualizing neo-liberalism in the Indian context, we find that this policy of neo-liberalism eschewed de-licensing, de-control, de-regulation, and, in a wider sense, promoting the policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization. However, this policy is detrimental to the interests of the poor and deprived sections of the society; most prominent being the women, dalits and farmers. This happens essentially as neo-liberalism embraces laissez-faire economy and drastically curtails the social welfare measures. It is a common knowledge that women from the very beginning since their birth are discriminated by the men folk, which had further escalated because of the neo-liberal policies adopted by the Indian state since 1991. Reports after reports whether international ones like HDI (Human Development Index), GII (Gender Inequality Index), GDI (Gender Development Index), or the national ones like NSSO (National Sample Survey Organization), NCRB (National Crime Records Bureau), NHFS-5 clearly reveal that women are gradually being pushed back to the periphery. Thus, one can argue that just as patriarchy is hierarchical and subjugates women's interests; in a similar manner, neo-liberalism widens the gulf between the rich and the poor and pushes to the periphery the women and other marginalized sections of the society.

Women, Neo-Liberal Policies and the Question of Development

Till the early 1970s, under the various Five Year Plans, women especially in the initial period have been placed at the margins of productive and developmental activities. There was a growing feminist consciousness in

the 1970s that women constitute the poorest of the poor, and they have been gradually pushed to the periphery. This was in consonance with the second wave of feminism, which emerged in the decade of late 1960s and early 1970s, which were more concerned with the radical and revolutionary demands of the women's emancipation and empowerment.

In 1977, a working group of employment of women was appointed by the Planning Commission which made specific recommendations for a deliberate policy and a specialized agency for identifying, promoting and assisting individual women and women's groups as well as developing the necessary information and skills for undertaking income generating activities (Sharma, 1985). The National Commission for Self-Employed Women was given the task of studying the living conditions of the poor women and making recommendations for their upliftment. It covers all women as some very important characteristics are shared by all of them. However, the poor women are not a homogeneous group and are divided by caste, class and employment activity. What they have in common is discrimination and deprivation. They have poor access to development. They are discriminated against in the family itself, in terms of distribution of income, consumption and assets. Consequently, poverty affects women with lower consumption level, poorer health and lower education.

Recognizing women's lack of access to the resources was a major obstacle in the process of their growth, the sixth five year plan included a chapter on 'Women and Development' and emphasized economic independence of women as a strategy for women's development, besides the traditional strategies including education, health care and family planning (SAARC Guide Book on Women in Development, 1990: 67). A separate department for development of women and children was also created by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Meanwhile a number of programmes were initiated in the direction of women's empowerment. Yet there is not much evidence to argue that this has changed the situation of women. India does not have coherent policies about women, nor does it have structural facilities for coordinating decisions regarding women. Afshar has made a pertinent observation, 'given the tensions within the

bureaucracies and almost total absence of discussion between the separate branches of the executive, it is not surprising to find policies which have radically opposed implications for the lives of women and men at one and the same time contradictory demands of them' (Afshar, 1987: 3).

In India, women face increasing marginalization in the unorganized sector, which constitutes about 93% of the economy. This sector is usually underpaid and undervalued. Women are gradually pushed back to the margins, as they are paid unequally. The devaluation of women's labour is accompanied by casteist and patriarchal remarks, for that they are prohibited from certain jobs especially in the food processing, sericulture and garment industries. The legislation of equal work for equal pay is not followed especially in the private sector, and this practice compels women to take up the menial work. Moreover, the socio-economic structure in both rural and urban India is such that they have to face a lot of social ostracisation and blame from the peer group. In most cases, the employers or contractors rationality is based on the principle of optimum use of labour power. Anything that counters this principle or prevents the maximization of profits is not welcome. Even occasional rest from the drudgery from work, which is essential for human activity, is considered wastage of resources. This is most evident in the case of domestic workers and daily wage labourers, where employers treat them as bonded labour. The recent Report 'Mind the Gap', by Oxfam also highlights that labour relations are based on a political economy of difference, especially of caste and gender, determining who has access to jobs, under what conditions and with what market outcomes.

The patriarchal structure of the society in a semi feudal and a semi-capitalist economy like India further threatens the women's freedom and autonomy, as women are widely considered as inferior to men. Women are also more vulnerable to neo liberal economic and capitalist globalization, which especially espouses 'survival of the fittest', and this dictum gradually pushes women into the periphery. Neo-liberal developmental policies which have come to dominate the global developmental agenda have led to an overwhelming emphasis on the

economic growth. The economic reforms initiated in the decade of 90's saw '…a definitive shift in India's economic paradigm' (Hasan, 2012: 46). The process of economic liberalization introduces changes in the system which led to '…from self-sufficient, state driven development to much greater dependence on the private sector and export promotion to increase growth'. (Hasan, 2012: 46). As Sujit Lahiry has succinctly summarized the process and impact of globalization:

> Theorising globalization as essentially a 'transitory phenomenon', one can easily discern how globalization hasdislocated the existing power centres, redefined the patterns of power relationships and trying to reconstruct the power structures. Certainly, its impact vis-a-vis the political institutions, relations of power, struggles of power and ideologies are of critical significance. Moreover, the benefits of globalization have not percolated down, and it has essentially bred inequalities and injustices in society. Ithas not only led to deep divisions between the developed and the developing and under-developed countries, but has also produced deep divisions and fragmentations within the latter (Lahiry, 2016: 170-171).

This development framework that concentrates on expansion of output of the social and economic production system and the creation of wealth obscured the concept of development with people at the Centre. This led to the increasing socio-economic inequality and greater marginalization of the poor, deprived and the vulnerable sections of the society in India. In order to understand how gender and globalization interact, we need to focus on women's lives around the world, which has been largely transformed by capitalist globalization.'Urban women's lives especially have been critically transformed by educational investments by their families and the state, and the expansion of employment opportunities in the private sector'. (Arabandi, 2016: 90).

The purpose of the development is to create an environment in which just social and economic order is maintained and in case of women, this seems

to be missing to a great extent. In fact, the development policy has not extended the freedom of choice and the power of women. Power is an area where they still lag far behind men. The law, politics, religion and the state all show the predominance of the role of men and reveal almost ineffective role of women. Women can be empowered in the real sense of the term only when development for them means a process of enlarging their choices as well as long and healthy life, education and access to resources needed for a decent standard of living along with the notion of political freedom.

India's commitment towards undertaking reforms to ensure gender equality is reflected in a number of legislations enacted for ensuring equal opportunities and dignity of life for women, for example to mention a few, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005; Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place (Prevention, Prohibition, Redressal) Act 2013; Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006; Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971; and Equal Remuneration Act, 1976. With a view to implement its commitment to gender equality, various programmes and national level schemes such as Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign, Sukanya Samridhi Yojna, Mudra Yojna and Pradhan Mantri Ujjawala Yojna have been launched by the Government of India. Besides these, there are number of state level schemes as well which aimed at providing welfare, support and building capacity of women and girls.

The government-sponsored policies and programmes are significant as they help individual members to overcome their disabilities and improve their position in the society on the one hand and assimilate the members of deprived groups into the mainstream. The Government of India had adopted the National Policy for Empowerment of Women on 20th March 2001. This policy sets out a rigorous liberal agenda for advancing, developing and empowering women and to eliminate all forms of discrimination against them with adequate policy proposals and tactics. Developments in the 21st Century in the field of Indian economy and information technology had a great impact on the general population and women in particular. This policy sought to put women forward and empower them accordingly. The policy talks of setting up an ideal

structure for the implementation of policies and initiate activities that offer fair privilege and equality for women in family, society, and workplace. After more than a decade and half, the Draft National Policy for Women was unveiled on 17th March 2016, which draws a roadmap for it to act in the next 15-20 years. The significant aspect of this draft policy is that focus is on collection of gender disaggregated data and redistribution of gender roles in the households as well as at the work place. This helps in knowing the impact of policies, schemes on each gender. This information can be utilized for making policies that could break the traditionally compartmentalized gender roles. This policy also attempted to view sectors otherwise understood to be gender-neutral in the light of their impact on women. For example, the policy sought to identify the wives of farmers who commit suicide and make themempower financially.They also looked at the gendered impact of climate change,as well as the impact of trade policies on women.They sought to bringparticular focus on unaddressed healthcare issues and the problems of single women, as well as assessand keep track of the success and failures of all schemes and policies (Bapna 2016).

Niharika Bapna has further pointed out the similarities between the objectives of 2001 and 2016 National Women's Policy. She has very succinctly pointed out that "…the objectives of the National Policy for Empowerment of Women 2001 and National Policy for Women 2016 are entirely similar. All of the nine objectives outlined in the 2001 policy form a part of the 2016 policy, almost identically worded (see Table 1). There are only two additional policy objectives in the 2016 document: one is logistical, concerned with monitoring, evaluation and audit system and the second is welfare-based, dealing with development and empowerment of women belonging to the vulnerable and marginalized groups" (Bapna, 2016: 23). This shows that the contemporary issues relating to women's issues were outlined in the National Policy for Empowerment of Women 2016. However, the policy identified the contemporary issues like the changed status of women and their rights in contemporary India. It seems that women's empowerment has suffered a setback because of institutionalized power relations in a neo-liberal economy.

Table 1

Comparison of Objectives of 2001 and 2016 National Women's Policy

No.	National Women's Policy 2016	No.	National Women's Policy 2001
4(i)	Creating a conducive socio-cultural, economic and political environment to enable women enjoy de jure and de facto fundamental rights and realize their full potential.	1&2	Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential. The de jure and de facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres- political ,economic, social, cultural and civil.
4(ii)	Maintaining gender in all round development processes/programmes/projects /actions.	7.	Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process.
4(iii), (iv)& (v)	A holistic and life-cycle approach to women's health for appropriate, affordable and quality healthcare. Improving and increasing access of women/ girls to universal and quality education. Increasing and incentivizing workforce participation of women in the economy.	4.	Equal access to women healthcare, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and public office etc.

4(vi)	Equal participation in the social, political and economic spheres, including the institutions of governance and decision making.	3.	Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life f the nation.
4(vii)	Transforming discriminating social attitudes, mindsets with community involvement and engagement of men and boys.	6.	Changing social attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.
4(viii)	Developing a gender sensitive legal judicial system.	5.	Strengthening legal system aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.
4(ix)	Elimination of all forms of violence against women through strengthening of policies, legislations, programmes, institutions and community engagement.	8.	Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and girl child.
4(xi)	Building and strengthening stakeholder participation and partnerships for women empowerment.	9.	Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society particularly women's organization.

Source: Bapna, Niharika "Draft National Policy for Women: Repeating Old Themes." *Economic & Political Weekly*, LI.35 (August 27th 2016); 23.

Gender-based Violence and Crimes in India

Staggering figures of violence against women also point out an upward trend in the crimes against women in India. There have been numerous incidences of physical harassment, rape, and kidnapping, domestic violence, eve teasing and molestation, etc., despite progressive legislations. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) 2018 data affirms that domestic violence tops the crime against women, with the "majority of the cases being registered under 'cruelty by husband or her relatives' at 30.9%. This was followed by 'assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty' at 21.8%. The cases of 'Kidnapping and abduction of women stood at 17.9% and the rape cases were comprised of 7.9%. The crime rate registered per lakh women population is 62.4 in 2019 in comparison with 58.8 in 2018. NCRB 2019 recorded 32033 cases of rape that means 87 women were raped every day. Of these, 15% were children (NCRB 2018). Earlier all cases of such crimes do not get reported, may be due to the lack of awareness or due to a social inhibition, people hesitate about reporting these crimes. In the 21st century, looking at the vociferous public protests especially in high profile cases, it cannot be said with certainty that reporting rates have increased or stigma attached to the cases of sexual nature has waned. The December 2012 Nirbhaya Rape Case has generated widespread outrage and protests and paved the way for opening up critical public discussion on pervasive violence against women in the country. Even the public pressure forced the government to fast tract the investigation which culminated in the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013.

The crisis like pandemics, disasters, natural calamities also have disastrous consequences for women as these do not necessarily have disproportionate impact on men, women, and other genders. This is a consequence of gendered roles and existing power relations as well as other social divisions of caste, class, location, religion and status. The ongoing pandemic of Covid-19 though does not differentiate between male and female bodies so far as infection is concerned, yet its socio-political

impact is disastrous for many especially poorest and weakest who suffer the most for systemic reasons. It has dangerous implications for women also as it overburdens them, deprive them from exercising their agency and compromise their safety, due to their dependence on men in the patriarchal fold and their perceived status as secondary citizens in the eyes of the state.The Pandemic also appears to have setback for young women aspiring to get admission in medical colleges. Analysis of numbers of those who appeared for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) from 2017 shows a sharp decline in the attendance rate of girls in 2020. As education goes into a tailspin due to the pandemic,the disproportionate burden of consequences seems to fall on girls and women in higher education, undoing the gains of decades.

The Covid-19 lockdown intensified the surge in gender based violence that raised serious concern about the safety of women.The negative consequences of Covid-19 include the risk of losing job, loneliness, and uncertainty among others. This is regarded as Quarantine Paradox, which pushed women to the private sphere which has serious psychological and socially disruptive consequences. It has been reported around the world that enforced lockdown has provided an opportunity for abusers to unleash violence (Godin, 2020). Against this background, we need to understand the severity and complexity of the problem faced by the Indian women, while taking into consideration their mental unpreparedness and lack of resources or access required to safeguard their interests.

The National Commission for Women reported an alarming rise in domestic violence complaints received during the period of lockdown. It received 257 complaints between 24 March and 1st April 2020(Economic Times 2020, 13 April). There was a steep rise in the cases of domestic violence and 6094 women nearly double than the previous year, recorded their complaints with the commission in 2020-2021. Other categories that saw a worrying rise against women included cybercrime and harassment due to dowry.

Table 2
Complaints by Aggrieved Women

Categories	2020-2021	2019-2020
Cyber Crime against Women	797	458
Harassment of Married Women/Dowry Harassment	4209	3963
Domestic Violence	6049	3369
Right to Live with Dignity	8688	5061
Police Apathy	1460	1968

Source:"25 per cent rise in plaints from women during Covid pandemic: NCW latest report", *The Indian Express* (2021), July 06, available at https://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/jul/06/25-per-cent-rise-in-plaints-from-women-during-covid-pandemic-ncw-latest-report-2326127.html, accessed on August 15, 2021.

Table 2 clearly reflects the fact that crimes against women in India have increased significantly in 2020-2021 as compared to 2019-2020. This can be attributed to the fact that the societal values have remained unchanged even after 75 years of Indian independence, wherein women's rights are brutally crushed. Added to this is to recognize the fact that in contemporary India, the neo-liberal economic reforms gradually pushes women to the periphery of the socio-economic and political system.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Gender Equality in India

Various policies, programmes and special government initiatives are taken to meet the principle of gender equality and the objective of gender justice is enshrined in the Constitution of India from time to time. SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) are one of them. NITI(National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog (earlier it was Planning

Commission) is a policy think tank of the Government of India. It was established to achieve the principle of co-operative federalism fostering the involvement of State Governments of India in the economic policy making process. In 2018, NITI Aayog released the first edition of SDG INDIA INDEX Baseline Report to access India's and state level progress across various indicators under the global Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Goals have evolved from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for 2015 and adopted in the UN Sustainable Development Summit in September 2015 to institute certain time bound goals to be achieved by 2030. India's National Development Agenda is very much reflected in the SDGs.The SDG India Index is intended to provide a holistic view on the social, economic and environmental status of the country and its States and UTs. The importance of SDG India Index is that it is an aggregate measure which can be understood and used by everyone, be it policymakers, businesses, civil society and the general public. It has been designed to provide an aggregate assessment of the performance of all Indian states and UTs, and to help leaders and persons who are at the helm of affairs to evaluate their performance on social, economic and environmental parameters. Its purpose is to measure India and its statesprogress towards the SDGs for 2030. The second edition of the report was released with an enhanced version with 100 indicators covering 54 targets across 16 SDGs leaving SDG 17 as compared to the base version with 62 indicators covering 13 SDGs (leaving 12, 13, 14 and 17). This is a progressive sign with regard to large coverage of goals, targets and indicators (SDG India Index & Dashboard 2019-20).

SDG 5 focuses on gender equality. Gender equality is a key goal as it aims to achieve gender equality by ending all forms of discrimination, violence and harmful practices. It also acknowledges women's unpaid care and domestic work. It also aims to ensure effective participation and equal opportunities for women leadership at all levels of decision making in social, economic, political and public life of women. The goal related to the gender equality is also important as it helps in achieving other goals (see Table 3). Gender equality, a prerequisite for sustainable development is a fundamental Human Right.

Table 3

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Link with Goal 5- Gender Equality

Major Goals	Objectives
Goal 1: No Poverty	It seeks to ensure that all men and women have equal rights and access to economic resources and basic services.
Goal 2: Zero Hunger	It aims to double agricultural productivity, particularly of women farmers.
Goal 3: Good Health and Well-being	It aims to provide better facilities for maternal relief.
Goal 4: Quality Education	It seeks to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education.
Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation	It aims to provide sanitation and hygiene to women and girls.
Goal 7: Affordable and Clean Energy	It ensures access to clean and affordable cooking fuel, consequently improving the health of women working in the domestic environment.
Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth	It aims to provide productive and decent job opportunities, helping enhance the economic condition of women.
Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities	It aims to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of women.
Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	It aims to provide access to safe, affordable, accessible and

	sustainable transport systems for all, with special attention to the needs of women.
Goal 12: Sustainable Consumption and Production	It aims at sustainable domestic material consumption.
Goal 13: Climate Action	It focuses on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning.
Goal 15: Life on Land	It aims at conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems.
Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	It ensures peace and justice-elemental in eliminating violence against women.

Source: NITI Aayog, *SDG India Index, Baseline Report*. Government of India (2018).

Strategy for New India at 75 Years and Gender Equality in India

NITI Aayog released Strategy for New India@75 document in November 2018 to meet the constitutional principle of gender equality. Unfortunately, it seems that the concept of gender equality is not addressed in a meaningful way. This important document include only a very short section on gender which mainly focuses on how to enhance female work participation as if enhancing their work participation will resolve all other issues related to women. The whole gamut of other gender issues which have long term implications for society and of course for women are either being ignored or not discussed in a substantial manner.

The female labour force participation rate (FLFPR) in India has been one of the lowest among the emerging economies and has been falling over time. This has resulted in a decrease in the ratio of working females to the population of females in the working age group. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, job losses had hit women harder. The FLFPR in India fell from

31.2 percent in 2011-12 to 23 percent in 2017-18 and according to SDG India Index and dashboard 2019-20, it stands at 17.5 percent. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey 2018-19, the female labour force participation rates among women aged above 15 years are as low as 26.4 percent in rural areas and 20.4 percent in urban areas in India. Although, there has also been a decrease in the labour force participation rate among rural males, the rate of decline was much sharper for rural women. Not only are women withdrawing from the labour force, they are also outcompeted by men in the existing jobs in rural areas. Low participation of women in the labour force in India is attributed to the lack of employment opportunities, rising level of education and household incomes, and problems in measurement, such as under reporting of women's work. However, the rural distress in recent times has affected women the most as income generating opportunities have disappeared. Besides, as migrants returned to villages in great numbers after Covid-19 lockdown was lifted, the share of women in the work generated under MGNREGA fell down.

Developments in feminist theories have helped us perceive a more nuanced understanding of the quarantine due to lockdown. Feminist scholars reflect that the severe impacts of disasters on women and their well-being include increase in workload and slow economic recovery as compared to men. These factors need particular consideration in the present discussion on public-private binary because of the changing nature of labour. Feminization of labour is a dominant aspect of the restructured labour scenario under the neo-liberal capitalism and free market economy. Women have to produce various kinds of labour such as care work, domestic work, emotional labour, and labour of love both at home and outside.

In India, agriculture constitutes the bulk of our economy. Over 55 percent of women (71% in rural areas), who are counted as being part of the workforce are in the agriculture (vis-a vis 53% in rural areas and 38% overall in case of male workers). The problem of labour demand constraints or the lack of suitable job opportunities is acute for women in rural India, with a fall in the availability of farm jobs and lack of economic opportunities in non-farm employment.In rural India, while 75 percent of

rural workers are engaged in agriculture, women's operational land holding is just 13.96 percent. The absence of land ownership limits their success to access to inputs, seeds, fertilizers, credit and agricultural extension services. Unavailability of gender disaggregated data in all land records further put obstacles in monitoring the progress of implementation of the Act 2005.

The NSSO (National Sample Survey Organization) time use survey 2019 of nearly 4.5 lakh Indians reveal that women spend nearly five hours every day on unpaid domestic work, compared to 98 minutes by men. Less than six percent of Indian men are involved in cooking as compared to 75% of women.There is also a stark absence of reference to the gender wage gap, despite the government report in which the gender wage gap across sectors is as high as 50-75 percent.Women cannot contribute to India's economic growth if they are not participating in the work force. The time spent on unpaid economic activities performed at the household and community levels by women is one of the importantdeterminants of Female Labour ForceParticipation Rate.The time spent on unpaid work, unpaid care and domestic chores has hindered women's participation in the labour force. This is more common in the rural societies which have rigid segregation of gender roles dictated by patriarchal norms. With the reduction in family size and distress migration of rural males, the burden of unpaid work of women has increased disproportionately.

One of thelimitations of the report is that the inclusion of women in the labour force is perceived from the vantage point of economy and growth statistics. It is evident when the document mentions that if more women were to be employed in the formal sector, the GDP would increase by 1.4%. There is absence of any discussion on over-representation of economically active women in the informal sector which leaves the poor and vulnerable, deprived of many work benefits (Tulsyan, 2019). Even the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act 2017 which increases women's leave entitlements from 12 to 26 weeks is for the women in the formal sector and is silent about the workers in the informal sector.The pursuit of profit and productivity creates workplaces highly masculinized, leading to the discriminating effect on women. Women who enter these spaces are expected to constantly prove their physical strength and resilience, often

disavowing their own gender and bodily needs. In order to qualify as dignified labour, women across the industries are compelled to make a choice between proving their productivity and exercising their rights. Employers on their part view their rights such as maternity leave, childcare, sanitation facilities and designated spaces for rest as liabilities. Since maximizing production and profits are their main concern under a neo-liberal economy, even the most basic human rights, are seen as favours. Employers are ready to employ women into the labour force only if they don't ask for such special concessions. Such rationality on the part of that employer can only be understood as barbaric because, through its logic of optimum use, it results in a dehumanized and an alienated female labour force.

There is an upward crime against women as mentioned earlier and they are killed daily in sobering numbers but despite that crime against women was discussed merely as a barrier to women's mobility in the 'Strategy forNew India Report'. Sexual crime against women with unprecedented cruelty has become a daily routine. The sheer volume and cruelty of this crime are being ignored.NCRB data recorded 80% increase in crimes against women between the periods 2007 to 2016. NCRB report clearly reveals that sexual violence is the number one crime among many other crimes against women, especially against the dalit women. The intersection of caste, class, religion and sexual orientation has further aggravated and contributed to the misery of women. Thompson Reuter's Foundation Global Poll in 2018 also identified India as the most dangerous and unsafe country for women in the world.

Another limitation of the report is that this section on gender comes under the head 'Inclusion' in the Strategy of New India Report. But the question which arises here is the inclusion possible, without taking into account the inclusion of women in the political process. It has been realized that gender parity in the political process can be attained by increasing presence of women in the political processes, but the real challenge is how to make women's interests a part of policy discourse by paving the way for them to set an agenda for change. It was felt that without making efforts in this direction, rightful share of women's representation could be ensured and women continue to remain invisible in the power structure of

the society. The number of women participating in national legislatures has increased undoubtedly. However, the experiences of women's participation in parliament have shown that merely relying on getting women into government through election process is not enough to change conditions of gender inequality, when it is deep rooted in the social system. Conscious effort is needed by the women in the state to set an agenda for change and to follow through with policy impacts as well as development of stronger accountability mechanism and processes between the state and civil society. The lack of critical and quality representation of women in key decision making positions results in women's agenda not getting reflected and addressed in public policies and programmes.

Conclusion

Having outlined the relationship between feminism and neo-liberal economic globalization, one can point out the fallacies of the neo-liberal policies on women in general. One of the most important implications of neo-liberal policies is the gradual withering away of small-scale domestic industries, which leaves women unemployed. It adds specifically to the economic marginalization of women who already don't get their remuneration as per the notion of equal pay for equal work, especially those women who contribute the bulk of workforce in the unorganized sector. As Viviene Taylor has elaborated:

> From a critical perspective it is important to go beyond the issue of how the market impacts on female labour force participation and male/female wage differentials and discrimination. Understanding the role played by gender, as well as race and class, in the operation and function of markets is more useful in developing strategies to deal with globalization (Taylor,2001: 57).

One can agree with what Manisha Desai had argued,

> The interrelations (between gender and globalization) are fraught and in some instances have furthered inequalities among women, but this does not preclude other possibilities…(…) feminists have used globalization to further women's agency and their political, economic and cultural empowerment. To see other stories, one

needs to define globalization in the plural and to understand feminists as both constitutive of and important actors in globalization (Desai 2007:797-98).

To conclude, it can be argued that there is a dire need for women's economic empowerment, which will reduce gender inequality and treat both men and women as equals in the developmental policies in contemporary India. This is feasible only if the various programmes and policies of the government are framed keeping in view the ground realities of inequality, marginalization and gender-based discrimination, as well as visible and invisible violence. At the same time, the gender budgeting initiative, if applied cautiously can give women power, and a place in the structure of the governance and enable them to direct local and micro economy to serve their choices.

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Problem of Identity and Space: A Study of Dalit Diasporic Testimonies

PARVEEN KUMARI

Abstract

Diaspora means human migration away from their original homeland. The need for progress is one of the major factors of this migration. Human mobility has become an integral part of the global economy. For centuries Indians have been emigrating to different parts of the world. According to the report published in The Times of India March 27, 2018: "Indian Diaspora is the highest as compared to the countries all over the world". The movement of Indians leads to the influence of Indian culture and traditions on the foreign societies.

Dalits of India form a major section of Indian population and also constitute an indispensable part of the Indian diaspora. The migration of Dalits to Britain, France and Germany as indentured labourers to work in the plantations started during the colonial period. The post-colonial migration of Dalits is directed towards the developed countries such as the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand as professionals and later to the Gulf and South East Asian countries as skilled or semiskilled labourers. Dalits migrate to these developed countries with the hope of progress and also in the expectation of escaping marginalized space and marginalized identity which they endure in India. However, to their sheer disappointment there is no place without caste. The question arises 'has caste prejudice followed Dalits overseas'? The present paper highlights the problem of identity and space in the testimonies of Dalit diaspora in the United Kingdom documented in Nirula's Dalit Diaspora in the United Kingdom which is published in 2014. It is estimated that "50,000 to much higher 200,000" Dalits live in the United Kingdom. These testimonies are evidence of caste discrimination and harassment in United Kingdom which leads Dalits to question 'What are they and what position do they have in the human society?'

Keywords: Dalit diaspora, testmonies, identity, space

Diaspora means "human settlements away from their original homeland" (Kumari 44). Diaspora is a process of human migration away from their own country. The need for progress is one of the major factors of this migration: "…economic conditions are important drivers of migration. People migrate for a variety of reasons including the search for better economic opportunities, education, family reunion and escaping violence" (Vargas-Silva). The aspiration for better future directs the human mobility to a foreign country. This "[h]uman mobility has become an integral part of the global economy" (Mohanty 107).

For centuries Indians have been emigrating to different parts of the world. According to the report published in *The Times of India* 27 March 2018: "Indian Diaspora is the highest as compared to the countries all over the world" ("Indians Diaspora"). The movement of Indians leads to the influence of Indian culture and traditions on the foreign societies. However, Indians suffer a sense of loss and problem of identity: "…the identity category of [diaspora] is constituted between marginalization and invocations of a transnationally committed community …[the] social struggles driven by experiences of misrecognition or marginalization, making 'diasporas' possible political actors—as minorities" (Kleist 1127). Indian diasporic communities suffer discrimination and marginalization because they are in minorities in these foreign countries and also due to racism: "A "model minority", we are well educated, with 70% above the age of 25 holding a college degree. We also face a unique form of discrimination. It seems that Indian [diaspora is] treated less and less like people,…" (Sharma). This discrimination finds expression in Indian diasporic literature which testifies the diasporic experiences which include indifference, apprehension, depression, painful projection, a sense of strangeness, despondency, etc. Indian diasporic writers like V.S. Naipual, Salman Rushdie, Amitav Ghosh, Rohinton Mistry, Vikram Seth, Jhumpa Lahiri, Bharati Mukherjee, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and many others give testimony to the problem of identity and space in their writings based on their diasporic experiences.

Dalits of India form a major section of Indian population and also constitute "an important part of the global Indian Diaspora" (Bahadur 383). Bali Bahadur in his article observes:

> The migration of Dalits to outside world started during the colonial period as a result of the large-scale migration to British, French and Dutch colonies as indentured labourer[s] to work in the plantations. The post-colonial migration of Dalits w[as] directed towards the developed countries such as the USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand as professionals and later to the Gulf and South East Asian countries as skilled or semiskilled labourers. (383)

Like other citizens of India, Dalits also migrate to these developed countries with the hope of progress and also in the expectation of escaping marginalized space and marginalized identity which they endure in India because of the caste system. However, to their sheer disappointment there is no place without caste: "One is of the opinion that you leave behind all the trappings of the caste system once you leave India, but perhaps I was naive" (Saunvedan Aparanti, an Indian student studying in London, qtd. in Mogul). Hence, the question arises 'has caste prejudice followed Dalits overseas'? Nirula in her work *Dalit Diaspora in the United Kingdom* comments, "…the most outré and demeaning of practices in the history of mankind called 'Untouchability' or better called 'Caste Discrimination' has found its way out of India" (Book cover). She further states that the caste system is justified in these developed countries by Indians "as a means of preserving culture, as '*an effort to preserve communal, regional and vernacular based groups*'" (*Dalit Diaspora in the United Kingdom* 17). Many Dalit writers give testimony to the existence of caste apartheid outside India. Urmila Pawar in her life narrative *The Weave of My Life* (2008) writes about her experience in Mauritius. She states that the Dalits living in Mauritius revealed to her "that some people from India have started digging up the history of their ancestors, giving them caste labels" (283). Therefore, Dalits in these foreign countries become doubly

marginalized. According to Shweta Majmundar Adur and Anjana Narayan, Dalit diaspora is ""diaspora within a diaspora"" as their "struggle to belong is multifaceted; as double minorities, their bid to assimilate is thwarted not only by racism in the mainstream [developed countries] but also by casteism within their own ethnic communities" (244).

The problem arises when the natives, that is non-Asians are not aware of caste prejudice:

> …'the authorities' being non-Asians and therefore ignorant about caste…the authorities not recognising the inflammatory nature of the language used, not recognising the harm and hurt caused and not taking the right (or any) action due to their lack of understanding of caste. (*DDUK* 43)

Sujatha Gidla who lives in New York city, in her life narrative *Ants Among Elephants* (2017) writes:

> When people in this country [New York, the United States of America] ask me what it means to be an untouchable, I explain that caste is like racism against blacks here…They know caste isn't visible like skin color…people know only skin color, not birth status….I told a guy I was untouchable, and he said, "Oh, but you're touchable." (4-5)

Hence, the unawareness about the immorality of caste prejudices among non-Asians outside India, the hurt and damage because of the caste system is often remains unaddressed. The present paper highlights the problem of identity and space in the testimonies of Dalit diaspora in the United Kingdom documented in Nirula's *Dalit Diaspora in the United Kingdom* which is published in 2014. In this work, Nirula documents that in 2014 "50,000 to much higher 200,000" (*DDUK* 10) Dalits live in the United Kingdom. These testimonies are evidence of caste discrimination and harassment in United Kingdom which leads Dalits to question "*What are we-what position do we have in the society*?" (10).

"Testimony" according to *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* is "a thing that shows that something else exists or is true" (1) and "a formal written or spoken statement saying what you know to be true, usually in court" (2). The three Dalit diasporic testimonies chosen for the analysis are: Sheila, 24, MA Student; Surbjit, 17, just finished school; Pali, 41, businessman. These three Dalit diasporic testimonies are evidences to the issue of Dalit identity and space on a foreign land. These testimonies are also called as collaborative life narrative. In collaborative life narrative, two persons are involved "one is the investigator, who does the interviewing and assembles a narrative from the primary materials given; the second is the informant, who tells a story through interviews or informal conversations" (Smith and Watson 67). Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson in *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives* identify memory, experience, identity, space, embodiment and agency as important aspects of a life narrative. Identity has "meaning in the material and symbolic structures that organise human societies" (Smith and Watson 38). Identity is always associated in the process of social exchange. An individual's life is organised around "*spaces of sociality*", that is relationships with others. Relationships and actions are structured "in communicative interaction and ritualised or identified by gesture and bodily positioning" (44). The space, an individual acquires in public and private sphere, becomes the part and parcel of her/his life experiences and influences not only her/his social and private life but also self-positioning to herself/himself. Hence, one's marginalized identity and inferior space lead to the marginalized experiences of one's life which are recorded as memories and influence her/his present.

Sheila, 24 years old, an MA student is living in the United Kingdom. Her testimony is documented in Nirula's *Dalit Diaspora in the United Kingdom*. Sheila affirms, "As we all know, casteism is an issue, which is forever growing in our lives, yet casteism is seldom acknowledged in law, the Race Relations Act, in literature and in research" (*DDUK* 212). In the United Kingdom and other countries, caste problem is as grim as race.

However, Dalits suffer silently as the discrimination and marginalization is not timely addressed: "'At work, there is no open discrimination, it is usually discreet. Most of the businesses are small—if you complain, the person who will listen to your complaint is from the 'higher' caste…so no action is taken'" (a respondent qtd. in *DDUK* 71). The reason for no recognition of caste discrimination is also because of the Indian leaders who assert that "caste is not race and moreover should be considered an internal matter" (*DDUK* 53). Hence, caste discrimination which is imported in these foreign countries with the Asian diaspora "affects citizens in ways beyond personal choices and social interaction and occurs in employment, education and in the provision of goods, facilities and services" (30). Sheila testifies to her marginalized identity and space as Dalit diaspora: "At secondary school, my peers knew about my caste before I did and this was evident in name-calling such as choori[1] and chamari[2] and rejection from social and group activities" (212). This led to low confidence and low self-esteem in her:

> The alienated are not accepted as members within a significant subgroup and perceive themselves as unguided persons in an unchartered environment…it is proposed that alienation evolves under conditions generate low self esteem and low social interest…. (Ziller 287-88)

Sheila began to believe that "I was inferior" (*DDUK* 212) and it gave her oppressors "a sense of significance and power over me because it suited them" (213). Vivek Kumar in his article "Understanding Dalit Diaspora" observes, "…caste identities were (are) strong within the Indians diaspora which restrict the interaction pattern of non-dalit with the dalit diaspora" (114). Sheila testifies that how caste narrow-mindedness affects her 'self' in her work space as well as social space.

Shiela narrates the various incidents when she was made to realize not to forget her caste. A Brahman who was the owner of Indian sweet shop in Leicester told her that "…he was higher than me and that was a God-

proven fact" (*DDUK* 213). The owner of her off-license store on discovering her caste regretted his decision of selling his shop to her and "said that he was the highest caste ever and people like me worked on his farm in India" (213). In another incident "a customer at my shop…was of a so-called high caste background who constantly questioned me about my caste…refuses to put money in my hand, like I am an Untouchable" (213). Ravindra K. Jain further substantiates that "…the traditional methods of showing differences between status still exists" (114) in Indian diasporic communities. Through her testimony, Sheila resists this caste narrow-mindedness and discrimination as "…articulation of 'suffering' is empowering in itself…It counters the common notion of …passive acceptance of victimisation" (Lal and Kumar xxii). Sheila asserts, "…casteism still affects our lives and still will if we don't root it out without challenging it" (*DDUK* 213). The marginalized space suppresses the act of speaking and revolt against oppression. Therefore, Dalit diasporic testimonies act as "…third spaces…a place where the oppressed can plot their liberation" (West 53) and can speak.

Even the educational spaces are not free of caste segregation and humiliation. Surbjit, 17 years old who had finished school in 2014, in his testimony narrates the humiliation and alienation he suffered in his school in the United Kingdom because of his Dalit caste identity: "…he [Hardeep] came across and told my friend to stay away from me and also told him that I was a choora…" (*DDUK* 214). His classmate Hardeep told everybody in the class to not be friends with Surbjit:

> … and that his dad had told him [Hardeep] that chooras were a dirty tribe in India and were also called Untouchable. This happened every time my friend and I talked. He said it in front of some of my other mates. This made me feel ashamed because they actually started to ask me if it was true when I was not sure what it meant. They all laughed at me. (214).

Children are innocent but parents and elders permeate in them caste hierarchies creating distance and hatred. This incident exposes the

enforced conditioning of the children in the caste system. Haripriya Suresh in "When caste follows you overseas: Ostracism, discrimination among South Asians in US" reports:

> Many such parents have reported that their children have been treated differently in schools and feel alienated….As per the study, caste discrimination exists throughout a person's education - from K-12 to higher education. 40% of Dalit diaspora reported that they faced discrimination in schools. (Suresh)

Hardeep's behavior became violent towards Surbjit which was not checked appropriately by the school authorities. Once Hardeep smashed the windscreen of the car of Surbjit's father: "We all ran out and saw that my dad's car windscreen was smashed" (*DDUK* 214). The police were called. The situation became more stressful when "police made checks on Hardeep's family and they said that it was I [Surbjit] that that had assaulted their son in the park…" (215). The incidence is a proof that how the victims of caste prejudice become the sinners just because they are helpless due to their marginalized identity and status and the victimizers go scot-free. Surbjit "was made to go to the police station and answer to the sergeant" (215). Gian Chand Ghaiwal, the founder of Central Valmik Sabha (UK International) criticizes 'the authorities in the UK' on the matter of caste atrocities: "…it is sad to see that authorities in the UK find it convenient to agree with the perpetrators" (*DDUK* 182). This episode stresses the need for strict laws against the caste prejudices in the UK and the proper redressal of the caste issues.

Due to his marginalized identity, Surbjit suffered a loss in his studies as well as isolation, and lost his precious moments in his school days: "I was seen as a troublemaker by the school and some of the parent governors….I had ruined my chance to go the leaving prom which was a big thing for me" (215). In another incident:

> At about 11: 30 we all had to queue up to take the exam…. I saw Hardeep running towards me holding an umbrella….I grabbed

> hold of it [umbrella] and pulled him to the ground…The teachers came…. I was again seen as the violent one even though I had a big cut on my forehead…. I could not concentrate and…missed the first two papers of GCSE exams. (216)

Thus, Surbjit's marginalized identity as Dalit diaspora resulted into his painful experiences in the educational space in which he was ostracized as Untouchable: "I first heard the word choora at school at the age of 15 years….This abuse started when I became friendly with a Sikh boy in my class" (213). His testimony becomes the third space where he can articulate the unspoken and hidden ache.

Pali, 41, a businessman grown up in Foleshill, in his testimony testifies that how his marginalized identity as Untouchable affected his private life. Pali's wife is a Jat. Both were in love with each other. His wife's parents were against their marriage. As she married Pali, "She was disowned by the whole family, her sisters, mum and dad, the brother, everybody" (217). Pali tried hard to convince her family but that was of no avail: "'Look what is wrong with me. I don't understand. I'm hardworking person. I haven't got a criminal record'" (217). However, his wife's family was not ready to accept him as son-in-law because he was from untouchable caste. Vivek Kumar in his article "Understanding Dalit Diaspora" affirms, "Ironically, this persistence of caste distinction has not been wiped out even with inter-caste marriages between dalits and non-dalit" (114). Hence, caste affects the person's decision whom to marry or not. Caste tradition goes with Indians everywhere as it is an old tradition of Indian society. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in his essay "Essays on Untouchables and Untouchability: Religious" observes:

> Untouchability is the lowest depth to which the degradation of a human being can be carried. To be poor is bad but not so bad as to be an Untouchable. The poor can be proud. The Untouchable cannot be. To be reckoned low is bad but not so bad as to be an Untouchable. The low can rise above his status. An Untouchable

cannot. To be suffering is bad but not so bad as to be an Untouchable. (Ambedkar 229)

An Untouchable even he becomes affluent and acquires high position in social sphere he still remains a low caste person and he is reminded of it consistently. Pali in his testimony says that if one compares his status and his wife's natal family status, he is far more progressed and rich:

> If you really look at what my status was compared to their status, they were living in a council house they didn't even own and I was on the calibre of living on Kenilworth Road compared to them. Where they were only earning £10,000, I was earning £60,000. (*DDUK* 217)

His wife's brother reprimanded him of his identity as Untouchable: "'You are Untouchable yesterday, today, you'll always be Untouchable and nothing is going to change you in my eyes. No matter how big you become, how well off you might become,...'" (218). Thus, Dalit diaspora are not allowed to enter the mainstream spaces—firstly, they are Indians and secondly, they are Dalits and therefore are ostracized within their own ethnic communities. Pali through his testimony attempts to make a room in forbidden spaces.

David Web, the author of *Policing the Rainbow* states, "…it is disgraceful to see that those who have experienced racial discrimination before, are now quite happy to practice caste discrimination" (qtd. in *DDUK* 174). For many Asians, caste discrimination is a daily reality. In these Dalit diasporic testimonies, narrators through their memories and experiences give testimony to their problems that result from their caste identity and marginalized space on a foreign land. Dalit diaspora are "diaspora within diaspora", that is 'subaltern among subaltern'. Their double marginalized status not only affects them socially (public space) but also internally (private space), "*I lost so many friends and confidence*" (A Dalit girl qtd. in *DDUK* 146). Dalit diasporic testimonies act as "Third space of enunciation" (Bhabha 157) a space where oppressed and oppressor are

both able to come together in the mirror of each other. These testimonies become the statements which testify the existence of caste system outside India; and marginalization and humiliation suffered by Dalit diaspora.

Notes:

1. Choora: Choora or Chuhra is a Dalit caste in India.
2. Chamar: A Dalit Caste in India.

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Performance Assessment of Mgnrega During the Recent Economic Slowdown

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Abstract

The Keynesian Macroeconomic approach has remained supportive of deficit financing to pump prime the economy. During an economic downturn various fiscal and monetary incentives are created to generate counter-cyclical effects in order to take the economy out from the grip of the pessimist economic scenario. The objective of present paper is to ascertain whether Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has been able to produce counter-cyclical effects in the rural India in past three years of economic slowdown and to appraise and benchmark the state-wise implementation efficiency of the programme during the period 2016-2021 by undertaking a non-radial DEA approach. The results reflect an upward trend in the allocation of work and efficiency of implementing the programme, which suggest an improvement in its working during the phase of economic crisis though some state-specific policy modifications are called for.

Key words : Macroeconomic , counter -cyclical effects, MGNREGA, economic crisis

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) aiming to ameliorate the twin problem of poverty and unemployment got enacted by the Indian Parliament in 2005. It is the first legislation world-wide to provide 'guaranteed' livelihood security to the rural destitute. The primary objective of the programme is social protection through enhancement of livelihood security by providing at

least hundred days of wage employment in a financial year to every rural household whose members are willing to undertake unskilled manual work. This objective is supplemented by the objective of strengthening livelihood resource-base of rural India through the creation of durable assets. MGNREGA is a demand-driven programme as it acts as a livelihood security mechanism during the times of job crisis in the rural economy. It has been designed in such a manner that it provides employment buffer when all other sources fail to, which not only helps the masses amid the time of the need, but at the same time also ensures that they do not become financially dependent on the programme during the economic normalcy.

The Keynesian Macroeconomic approach has remained supportive of deficit financing to pump prime the economy. During an economic downturn various fiscal and monetary incentives are created to generate counter-cyclical effects in order to take the economy out from the grip of the pessimist economic scenario. Indian Economy has been in the midst of economic distress since past few years.Periodic Labour Force Survey(2017-18) showed that unemployment was at a four-decade high that year and over 17 per cent of rural men in the 15-29 age group, were unemployed which was triple the number in 2011-12.The magnitude of the slowdown became clear in the fall of 2019 in the third quarter of the fiscal year when the annual growth ratefell to 4.5 per cent with some sectors even experiencing negative growth. This deceleration in the economy's overall growth was substantiated by the pandemic induced lockdown in the first quarter of the financial year 2020-21 which brought all the non-essentialeconomic activities to a standstill.Indian economy went in a short termrecessionary phase where the domestic and external consumption levels further declined, unemployment rates drastically spiked and GDP growth rate fell to an all-time low level. The most excruciating consequence was its impact on the livelihood of the migrant workers who were severely affected as their access to food, health and shelter was endangered. The gradual unlocking of the country from June,

2020 onwards, marked a mass departure of the migrant workers to their rural natives as they weren't equipped with much alternatives in the urban areas, given the negative incomes and future uncertainty they were experiencing.In response to this lockdown induced supply shock, government announced a stimulus package which included tax reliefs as well as fiscal incentives largely focusing on transferring the benefits to the most affected sections especially the the poorest of poor.Given the increase in the magnitude of work demanded under the programme out of this relief package, the objective of present paper is to ascertain whether MGNREGA has been able to produce counter-cyclical effects in the rural India in past three years of economic slowdown.The objective of present paper is to ascertain whether MGNREGA has been able to produce counter-cyclical effects in the rural India in past three years of economic slowdown.

Review of Related Literature:

One of the initial studies analysing the implementation of the programme is by Bhatia and Dreze (2006: 3198-3202)which examined the performance of the Act within the five months of its inception in the deprived areas of Jharkhand using survey method and highlighted that the programme has created a sense of hope for the rural poor despite of the presence of some 'teething problems' in its implementation. Rengasami and Kumar (2011: 36-40) analysed the state-wise performance of MGNREGA and observed biased and faulty execution of the programme.Jha, Shankar and Gaiha, (2011: 69-95) aimed at assessing whether the access to information about the provisions of the programme affect its targeting and delivery in the states of Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra using primary data and Probit Regression for the analysis. The study showed that there was alot of scope of improving all the three aspects - information, access and targeting - as the programme seems to be benefitting the affluent more at the cost of the needy.Pellisary&Jalan, (2011) suggested that in order to become more inclusive in terms of gender, special attention must be paid towards the

types of work created with due consideration of the differences in the physique of both the genders. Borah &Bordoloi, (2014) observed higher degree of economic independence amongst women as the programme increased their incomes and reduced their debts to some extent.Women's decision for participation as well as share in NREGA jobs are influenced by various socio-economic factors like education, caste, religion, alternative income, health-related achievements, and fund availability which were quantitatively examined by Dutta& Singh (2014) using logit regression and DEA efficiency analysis.Gora, Joshi, & Tanwer, (2017)identified various sets of problems faced by the women workers in the Jaipur district of Rajasthan which act as obstacles in their prompt participation under the programme.

Apart from employment, MGNREGA has provided various environmental benefits through its asset creation objective. Esteves et al.,(2013) compared the status of natural resources, crop yields, water availability and vulnerability of the beneficiaries to current climatic risks by using an Indicators-based Approach in 2011-12 with that in 2006-07 in the selected villages of each district from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Vulnerability indices have been computed using different sets of indicators, which declined in all the sampled districts over the period of time.Reducing distress out-migration from the rural areas is one of core objectives of the programme. Jain and Singh (2013) highlighted through their survey that around 25% of the sampled population, migrated to the towns in search of jobs despite the fact that 80% of them believed that urban wage rate was lower than what they can earn in the villages. Various studies have attempted to quantify the implementation efficiency of the programme using non-parametric DEA approach. Saha and Debnath (2015)took all Indian states in their analysis for the period 2008-2014 and after applying DEA, they found the Mean Efficiency Score (MES) fell from 0.832 in the 2008 to 0.694 in 2014. They also found a positive and a negative correlation of the efficiency scores with the literacy and the poverty rate, respectively.Singh

(2016)calculated the state-wise implementation efficiency of the programme as per which the states were benchmarked and ranked. Eleven states were found to be Overall Technically Efficient and highlighted that if all inefficient states operate at optimal input and output levels, on an average 17.89% of total expenditure and a total amount of $780million could have been saved in a single year. Based on administration, funds, expenditure, employment created, works executed and completed, women beneficiaries and households completing 100 days of employment, the MGNREGA Implementation Efficiency Model (MIEM) by Natesan &Marathe (2017), capturedimplementation efficiency status and provides suggestions to propel inefficient states towards efficiency.Vasudevan et al. (2020) critically examined the working of the programme and the need for introducing the changes in the types of works under the programme as well as the reorientation of a part of the programme's funds for creating self-employment enterprises in the Post-Covid times.

After a rigorous review of the existing literature on the programme, it has been found that researchers have conducted both qualitative and quantitative evaluations regarding the programme's working, but quantitative appraisal is relatively scant in which all the studies have employed the traditional CCR and (or) BCC models of Data Envelopment Analysis to evaluate the implementation efficiency of a particular Indian state(s), which do not take into account the non-radial slacks and hence, overestimate the efficiency levels. Also, not much of the work has been done on assessing the performance of the programme during the latest economic slowdown that our economy is experiencing.

Objectives of present Study:

- To analyse whether MGNREGA has been able to provide livelihood security during the current economic slowdown;

- To appraise and benchmark the state-wise implementation efficiency of the programme during the period 2016-2021 by undertaking a non-radial DEA approach;

Methodology& Selection of Variables:

Simple Regression Analysis: In order to assess whether Rural Unemployment Rate affects the yearly allocation of work under the programme, the CLRM has been used. The equation of the following form has been used:

$$y_i = \alpha + \beta x_i + \varepsilon_i;$$

y_i: No. of Households (HHs) allotted work under MGNREGA in i^{t} period;

x_i: Rural Unemployment Rate (RUR p.a., %) in i^{t} period;

i **(Time periods):** 1, 2,…,5 (2016-2021).

Efficiency Assessment using the Slack-Based DEA Measure (SBM): Data Envelopment Analysis, the non-parametric branch of the Efficiency Literature evaluates relative efficiency of a set of comparable entities known as the Decision Making Units (DMUs) and accommodates the use of multiple input and output variables. The traditional DEA models, however fail to take into evaluation the non-zero slacks (input excess or output shortfall) which imply that a significant amount of inefficiency goes unaccounted and hence, they tend to provide an overestimated efficiency score. Various attempts to develop a non-scalar (Additive DEA Model) as well as scalar measures which directly deal with slacks have been made and the present paper employs the Non-Radial scalar measure of efficiency, developed by Tone (2001), which is considered to be an improvement over the traditional measures as it directly deals with the non-zero slacks and hence, is a more accurate measure of efficiency. It is a unit invariant measure, monotone decreasing in each slack in input and output and reference-set dependent[1]. The original SBM DEA model is

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[1]   Reference set dependent implies that the measure is determined only by studying the reference set of the DMU concerned (Tone,1999).

non-oriented in nature, i.e., it computes the ratio of the average inputs reduction to the average output increase. Minimizing that ratio implies the simultaneous pursuit of improvements in both inputs and outputs (Zhang, Xiang and Shilun, 2011: 228). The non-radial characteristic of this model imply that "it does not force the inputs and outputs to be improved equal-proportionally, letting the maximum possible improvement in each dimension be computed by the model" (Zhang et al., 2011: 228).

SBM can accommodate both forms: oriented & non-oriented. For the present analysis, input-oriented SBM model has been used for computing the state-wise efficacy in implementing the programme, as the inputs (as stated in the next section) include funds for various types of expenditure which are in direct control of the state governments.

Construction of the Model: The objective function of a standard non-oriented SBM model can be stated as follows:

$$\rho_0 = \frac{\frac{1}{m}\sum_{i=1}^{m}\frac{x_{io}^t - s_i^-}{x_{io}^t}}{\frac{1}{s}\sum_{r=1}^{s}\frac{y_{ro}^t + s_r^+}{y_{ro}^t}} \qquad [4.1]$$

The numerator in the equation depicts the average reduction rate for the "m" number of inputs (x), while the denominator depicts the average expansion rate for the "r" number of outputs (y). s_i^- and s_r^+ stand for the input excesses and output shortfalls, respectively. The entire equation depicts the efficiency score ρ for DMU_o. Simplifying the equation 4.1, we get:

$$\rho_0 = \frac{1 - \frac{1}{m}\sum_{i=1}^{m}\frac{s_i^-}{x_{io}^t}}{1 + \frac{1}{s}\sum_{r=1}^{s}\frac{s_r^+}{y_{ro}^t}} \qquad [4.2]$$

Such an efficiency measure accounts for all types of inefficiencies as it doesn't mandate the inputs (outputs) to decrease (expand) proportionately. Hence, the SBM efficiency score is either equal or less than the CCR efficiency score.

For the computation of input-oriented SBM efficiency, the linear programming model takes the following form:

$$Min \ \rho^* = \ 1 - \frac{1}{m} \sum_{i=1}^{m} \frac{s_i^-}{x_{io}^t} \qquad [4.3]$$

Subject to:

$$\sum_{j=1}^{n} \lambda_j x_{ij}^t - s_{io}^- = x_{io}^t \qquad [4.4]$$

$$\sum_{j=1}^{n} \lambda_j y_{rj}^t \geq y_{ro}^t \qquad [4.5]$$

$$\lambda_j, s_{io}^- \geq 0 \ (\forall \ j, i) \qquad [4.6]$$

$x_{io}^t \ \& y_{ro}^t$ are the inputs and outputs of DMU_o and any increase in the input slack, s_{io}^-, will reduce the output function in a strictly monotonic manner. Output slack, unlike in the non-oriented model, has no role in the input-oriented model and hence, the constraint [4.5] is similar to the output constraint in the CCR-input oriented model. As a consequence,

$$\theta^*(CCR \ input - oriented) \geq \rho^*(input - oriented \ SBM)$$
$$\geq \rho^*(non - oriented \ SBM)$$

Furthermore, the following holds:

$$0 \leq \rho^* \leq 1 \qquad [4.7]$$

A DMU is said to be fully efficient when $\rho^* = 1$ and vice-versa. The above LPP has been solved using MaxDEA Basic.

Data Sources and Selection of Variables:

The data for the present study has been collected from the Public Data Portal and the MIS Reports compiled by the Ministry of Rural

Development, Government of India available on the official website of MGNREGA[2]. The database comprises observations of the 28 Indian States (DMUs) with the exception of Telangana and the Union Territories primarily due to the constraint of unavailability of statistical information.The period of analysis for the present study of focus are the five latest fiscal years 2016-2021.[3]

Although, data on numerous variables is available and all were up for selection, but given the fact that there is no rule-of-thumb for the choice of variables, five output and three input variables have been shortlisted on the basis of experience and analysis of their social and economic relevance. For ensuring sufficient degree of freedom, the 'number' of variables has been chosen as per the rule of thumb, which is that the number of DMUs should be at least thrice the number of variables[4]. Table-1 enlists the selected variables for the study. Column 2 in table-1 represents the output/input variable selected, followed by its unit of measurement and its relevance on social and economic grounds. The selected variables reflect the application of 'Maximum in Minimum Principle'. The selected output variables depict some of the objectives which the programme aims to accomplish and input variables reflect the resources required to achieve those objectives.

The input variables have been adjusted for inflation through the application of implicit GDP deflator calculated by MoSPI for each Financial Year. For the FY2020-2021, the deflator has been calculated using the forecasts of GDP at nominal as well as current prices, calculated by MoSPI[5].

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[2]   https://nrega.nic.in/netnrega/home.aspx
[3]   Data for the FY 2020-21 is upto January 15, 2021.
[4]   No. of DMUs (28)> 3 * No. of variables (8)
[5]   Press Note on, 'First Advance Estimates of National Income 2020-21', National Statistical Office,MoSPI,GOi (Press Release on Jan 7,2021).

Table-1
Selected Output & Input variables

Parameter	Name	Unit	Relevance
OUTPUTS	Number of Households allotted employement HAE)	Number in Lakhs	**Social:** Increased Standard of Living
			Economic: Direct and Indirect increase in GDP
	Total person days of employment (PDE)	Number in Lakhs	**Social:** To assess the trickle down effects of the policies
			Economic: To ascertain the extent of job and income security
	SC & ST Person-days of employment out of total person days of employment (SC/ST PDE)	Percentag	**Social:** Upliftment of the minorities
			Economic: Increased economic inclusion
	Women person-days of employment out of total person days of employment (WPDE)	Percentag	**Social:** Women empowerment
			Economic: Increased economic inclusion
	Number of households availing 100 days of employment (HAvE)	Number	**Social:** To assess the trickle down effects of the policies
			Economic: to ascertain extent of job and income security
INPUTS	Expenditure on Wages* (WC)	Rs. In Lakhs	**Social:** Welfare-oriented
			Economic: To ascertain that wages are paid optimally
	Expenditure on Material* (MC)	Rs. In Lakhs	**Social:** Workhorse of production
			Economic: Generation of linkages
	Total Administrative Expenditure* (AdC)	Rs. In Lakhs	**Social:** generation of both white and blue collared employment
			Economic: Necessary for the appropriate usage of material and labour

Source: Author's compilation

Results & Discussions:
Regression Model:

Table-2 presents the results of the CLRM which shows the cause and effect relationship between the Rural Unemployment Rate (RUR,%) and the Allocation of work to HHs under the programme in each consecutive Financial Year (2016-2021).

Table-2
OLS Regression Estimates

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
RUR	37.28371	9.252472	4.029594	0.0275
C	339.1665	66.4982	5.100386	0.0146
R-squared	0.844056	**Mean dependent var**	596.1666	
Adjusted R-squared	0.792074	**S.D. dependent var**	92.31063	
S.E. of regression	42.09262	**Akaike info criterion**	10.6068	
Sum squared resid	5315.365	**Schwarz criterion**	10.45057	
Log likelihood	-24.51699	**Hannan-Quinn criterion**	10.1875	
F-statistic	16.23763	**Durbin-Watson stat**	2.45125	
Prob (F-statistic)	0.027473			

Source: Author's calculations using Eviews 9

At 5% Level of Significance, one can observe that the probability value for the variable RUR is less than 0.05 and hence, suggests that it affects the perennial allocation of work to the HHs under the programme significantly. The coefficient of the variable being high and positive, implies that higher the annual rural unemployment rate, higher HHs demand for work under the programme and hence, high allocations are made. Thus, the regression analysis suggests that the programme has provided livelihood security, to some extent, to the worst affected during the present economic and financial slump.

Efficiency Assessment:

a) **National Level:**Efficiency scores have been computed using both CRS and VRS technologies. The AnnualAverage Efficiency Scores at the national level have been depicted in the Figure 1. along with a linear trend line. The figure shows that the SBM-CRS efficiency has increased from that in 2016-17 (0.62) to 2020-21 (0.82). Similarly, the Pure Technical Efficiency (PTE) scores have risen from 2016-17 level (0.7) to 0.9 in 2020-21. The gap between the CRS and VRS scores reflect the Scale Inefficiency (SI), i.e, higher the gap between the two, higher is the Scale Inefficiency. SI is highest in the year 2018-19and lowest in the consecutive year, 2019-20. The trend-line shows an upward trend during the five-year period, which shows that as the economic downturn strengthened, the efficiency in implementing the programme also improved nationwide.The economic indicators started showing a distress like situation primarily from 2017-18 onwards, reasons for which, as per some economists, were the supply-side shocks that started taking place since 2016-17.

	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
CRS	0.62	0.79	0.74	0.83	0.82
VRS	0.70	0.91	0.86	0.86	0.90

Financial Year
Source: Author's calculations
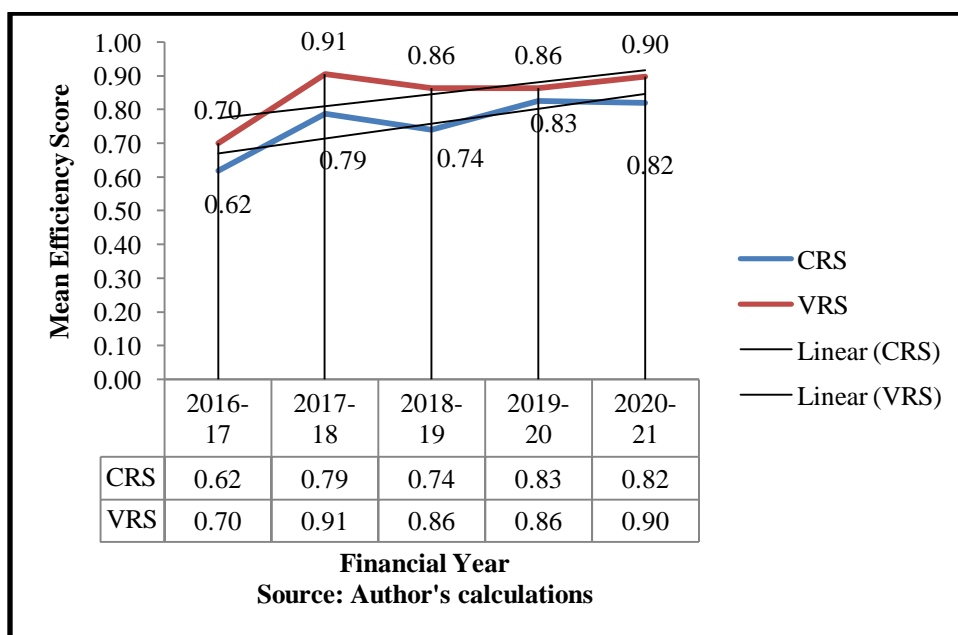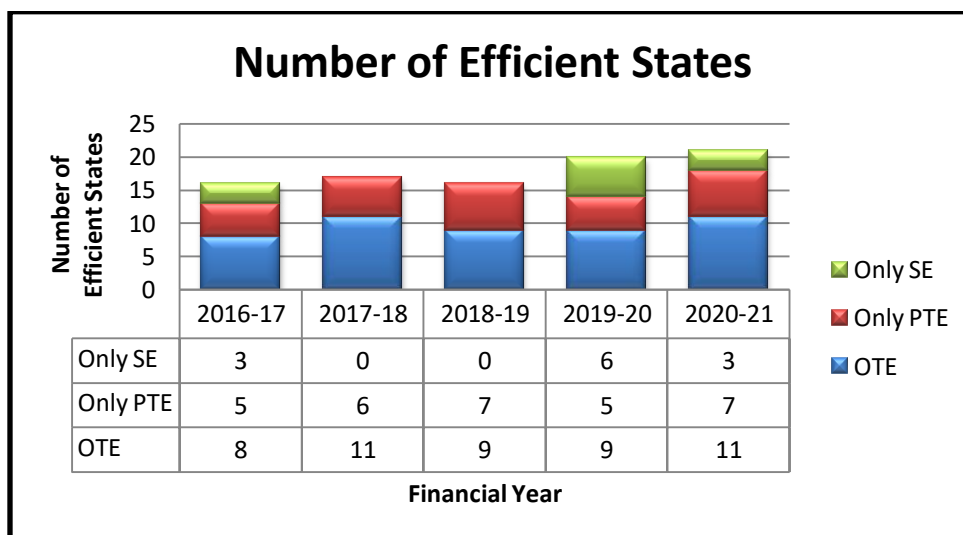
Figure 1. Mean SBM Efficiency Scores (2016-21)

b) **State-wise Efficiency Assessment:**Table-3 depicts the State-wise implementation efficiency of the programme from 2016-17 to 2020-21.

Table 3

DMU	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
	OTE	PTE	OTE	PTE	OTE	PTE	OTE	PTE	OTE	PTE
ANDHRA PRADESH	0.45	0.45	1.00	1.00	0.55	0.57	0.69	0.76	0.69	1.00
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	1.00	1.00	0.39	1.00	0.52	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.57	1.00
ASSAM	0.77	1.00	0.67	1.00	0.76	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
BIHAR	1.00	1.00	0.54	0.75	0.64	1.00	0.85	1.00	0.59	0.72
CHHATTIS-GARH	0.50	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
GOA	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
GUJARAT	0.56	0.56	0.74	0.89	0.66	0.79	0.80	0.80	0.71	0.71
HARYANA	0.45	0.46	0.63	0.78	0.36	0.47	0.62	0.63	0.70	0.75
HIMACHAL PRADESH	0.47	0.50	0.81	0.92	0.61	0.64	0.73	0.73	1.00	1.00
JAMMU AND KASHMIR	0.43	0.43	0.59	0.60	0.75	0.77	0.60	0.60	0.55	0.55
JHAR-KHAND	0.52	0.52	0.81	1.00	0.58	0.67	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00
KARNATAKA	0.32	0.32	0.74	0.84	0.56	0.63	0.62	0.64	0.54	0.55
KERALA	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.75	1.00	0.65	1.00
MADHYA PRADESH	0.43	0.43	0.69	0.78	0.60	0.75	0.72	0.73	0.77	0.80
MAHARASHTRA	0.36	0.37	1.00	1.00	0.66	0.72	0.70	0.71	1.00	1.00
MANIPUR	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.66	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.53	0.61
MEGHALAYA	0.24	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.76	0.80	1.00	1.00
MIZORAM	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.93	1.00
NAGALAND	0.33	0.34	0.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
ODISHA	0.57	0.57	0.71	0.86	0.60	0.84	0.83	0.84	1.00	1.00
PUNJAB	0.63	1.00	0.77	1.00	0.51	1.00	0.84	1.00	0.72	0.98
RAJASTHAN	0.65	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
SIKKIM	0.31	0.34	0.50	0.53	0.65	0.68	0.67	0.68	0.71	0.71
TAMIL NADU	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.84	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.75	1.00

TRIPURA	0.38	0.39	0.59	0.71	1.00	1.00	0.72	0.73	0.90	1.00
UTTAR PRADESH	1.00	1.00	0.75	1.00	0.59	1.00	0.86	1.00	0.90	1.00
UTTARA-KHAND	0.42	0.43	0.64	0.69	0.61	0.67	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76
WEST BENGAL	0.55	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.84	1.00	1.00	1.00
MES	0.62	0.70	0.79	0.91	0.74	0.86	0.83	0.86	0.82	0.90
Source: Author's calculations using MaxDEA Basic										

The efficiency scores which are less than the annual average (shown in the last row of the table) of a particular technology (CRS/VRS) are highlighted in red shade, scores greater than the annual average are highlighted in light green and equal to one (fully efficient DMUs) are highlighted in dark green shade. It can be observed that Goa is the only state to remain Overall Technically Efficient throughout the period of analysis. 9 states have remained Managerially Efficient in the whole period. On the other hand, the states of Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim and Uttarakhand had the OTE & PTE scores lower than the MES, throughout the period. Figure 2. depicts the number of efficient states in the period of analysis classified into Overall Technically Efficient, only Purely technically Efficient (Managerially efficient but Scale inefficient) and only Scale Efficient (Managerially inefficient).

Number of Efficient States

Financial Year	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
Only SE	3	0	0	6	3
Only PTE	5	6	7	5	7
OTE	8	11	9	9	11

Figure-2. Number of Efficient States (2016-2021)
**Source: Author's Calculations**

It can be observed that the number of states Overall Technically Efficient were lowest in 2016-17 and the highest in 2017-18 as well as 2020-21 (11 States). The sum of blue and red portions of each bar shows the total number of Purely Technically Efficient states, which are the highest when the financial crunch worsened in the economy, i.e., in 2020-21 wherein 18 states operated at a managerially efficient level. The sum of the blue and the green portions of each bar shows the total number of Scale efficient states which were the most in the FY 2019-20 (15).

Figure 3.is a radial depiction of the State-wise SBM-Scale Efficiency (SE) scores which are calculated as follows:

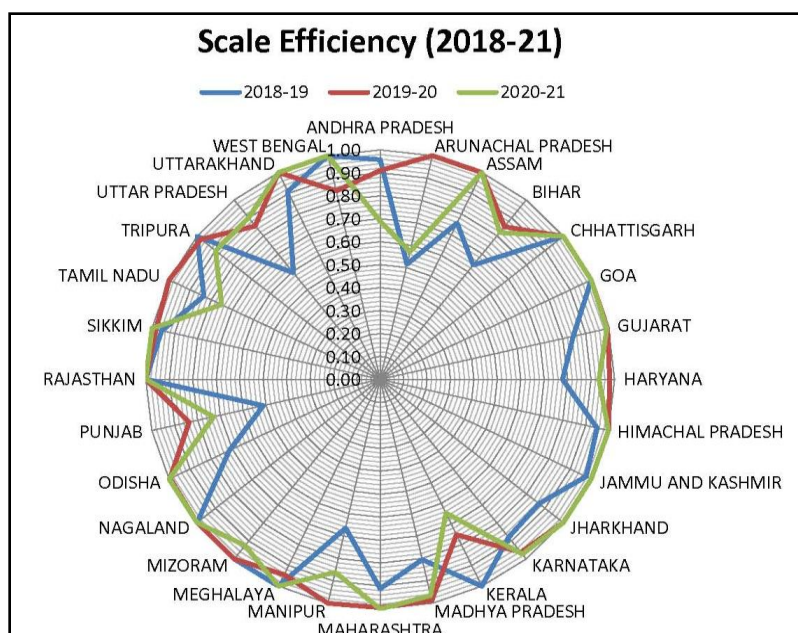Since OTE is defined as a product of SE & PTE, SE can be calculated as follows:

$$SBM\ Scale\ Efficiency = \frac{SBM\ CRS}{SBM\ VRS} = \frac{\rho_i^{crs}}{\rho_i^{vrs}}$$

$$= \frac{OTE}{PTE}$$
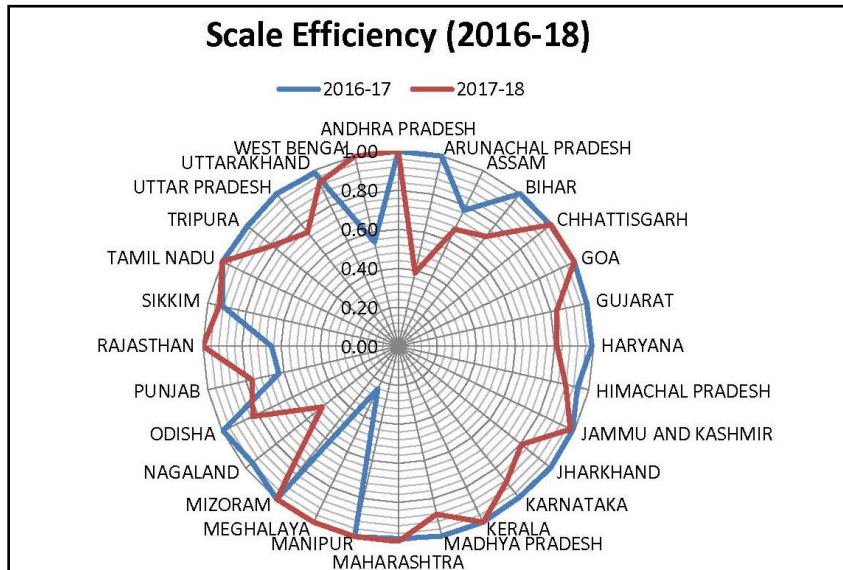
Figure-3. State-wise Scale Efficency Scores (2016-2021)

Scale Efficiency (2018-21)

Table-4
Descriptive Statistics

Outputs					
Variable Name	**Obs**	**Mean**	**Std. Dev.**	**Min**	**Max**
O1	140	21.29171	21.99519	0.013	114.3914
O2	140	892.5179	968.4162	0.14959	3999.42
O3	140	46.28206	23.61915	12.71392	99.48
O4	140	50.58784	14.70166	26.85	91.08
O5	140	129967.1	221955.4	0.001	1336873
Inputs					
I1	140	122898.9	124982.4	19.31751	466150.2
I2	140	41543.55	45382.23	4.807122	225149.2
I3	140	7260.111	7707.647	0.3043769	33581.27

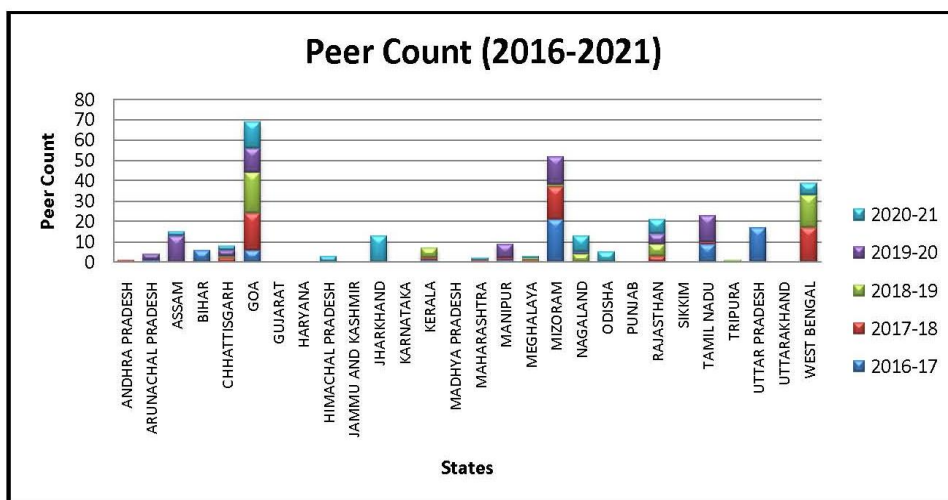**Source: Author's Calculations[6]**

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[6]   **Notes**: O1-No. of HHs allotted work (lakhs), O2- Total person days of employment (lakhs), O3- SC&ST person days out of total person days (%), O4- Women person days out of total person-days(%), O5- Number of households availing 100 days of employment, I1- Wage Expenditure (lakhs), I2- Material Expenditure (lakhs), I3- Administrative Expenditure (lakhs).

Table 5

Pairwise Correlation of Inputs And Outputs

	O1	O2	O3	O4	O5	I1	I2	I3
O1	1.00							
O2	0.95	1.00						
O3	-0.36	-0.31	1.00					
O4	0.12	0.21	-0.29	1.00				
O5	0.55	0.74	-0.16	0.28	1.00			
I1	0.95	0.97	-0.35	0.22	0.68	1.00		
I2	0.79	0.81	-0.30	0.02	0.60	0.82	1.00	
I3	0.67	0.70	-0.27	0.06	0.51	0.68	0.71	1.00
Source: Author's Calculations								

c) **Benchmarking of the States:** Benchmarking will be achieved through the peer count analysis. All the units having efficiency score equal to one are termed as the "peers" or the reference set for the inefficient DMUs. The identified peers act as benchmarked units, following the practices of which the inefficient states can improve their performance. For every efficient state, a peer count has been computed from 2016-2021 which gives us the frequency with which the state has been referred to in the peer group analysis. In other words, it states the number of times an efficient state is benchmarked for improving the performance of a laggard state. Higher the peer count of an efficient DMU, higher will be the robustness in implementing the programme in that state. The DMU with highest peer count is considered as a "**Global Leader**" as it has the highest number of follower (Aggarwal, Yadav and Singh, 2010: 223-224). In the current context, we may use the term **"National Leader"**for the state having highest peer count. Figure 4. Depicts the peer count for the entire period.

Figure 4. Peer Count Analysis (2016-2021)
Source: Author's Calculations

The states having no bars in the graph are the states which have remained Overall Technically Inefficient throughout the period of analysis. The state of Goa, in total, has the highest number of peer count. Table-6 shows the annual data on National Leaders.

Table 6
National Leaders (2016-21)

| Year	National Leader
2016-17	Mizoram (21)
2017-18	Goa (18)
2018-19	Goa (20)
2019-20	Mizoram (14)
2020-21	Goa & Jharkhand (13)
Source: Author's Calculations	

The state of Goa has remained robust throughout the period with considerably high pear count every year. Mizoram has given a staunch competition to Goa in the years 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2019-20, and became National Leader in the years 2016-17 & 2019-20. The state of Jharkhand has shared the position of being a National Leader with Goa in

the latest Financial Year. States like West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, UP, Rajasthan and Assam, although didn't top the list in any year, but have been benchmarked by quite a number of laggard states in some years.

Delving deeper into the results and the current economic situation: Concluding Remarks

Overall, the results of the present study reflect an upward trend in the allocation of work and efficiency of implementing the programme, which suggest an improvement in its working during the phase of economic crisis.

Figure 5.depicts the relation between the trend of GDP growth rate (in logarithmic form, transformed using Logarithmic Modulus Transformation[7]) and the Mean Efficiency Score (Average ρ_i^{crs}).
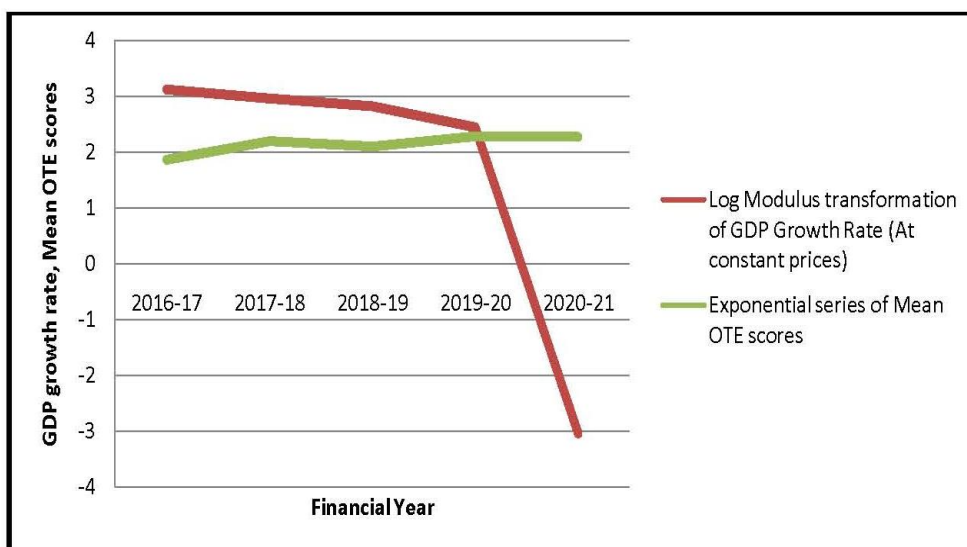


Figure 5. Trend of GDP growth rate and MES-CRS
Source: Author's Calculations using data compiled from own work as well as other sources

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[7] Log Modulus Transformation helps one to compress the scale of the negative values as well.

It is evident that as the GDP growth rate plunged to its all-time low level, the average efficiency levels followed a somewhat increasing trend.

Figure 6.describes the relation between Log of Rural Unemployment Rate and Exp. MES-CRS along with the exponential trendlines for both the variables. The trendline shows a positive relation between both the variables. Both the figures, therefore, suggest that the programme has been able to work in a '**counter-cyclical**' manner.
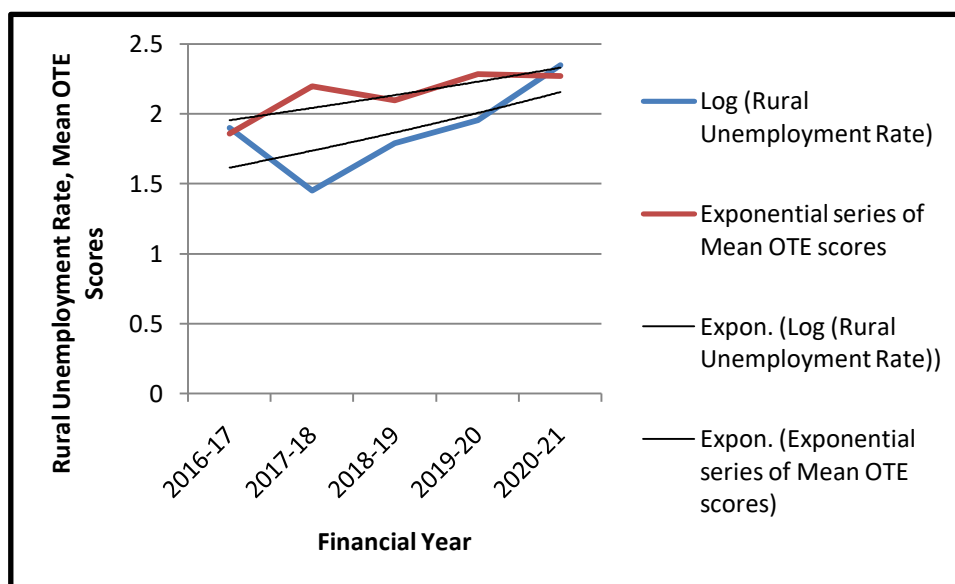
Figure 6. Trend of Rural Unemployment rate and MES-CRS

Source: Author's Calculations using data from CMIE & own work

However, it can be observed that the MES for the most recent FY has been 0.82, which implies that every 18 units out of 100 units of input resources go mismanaged and hence, there exists the scope of further improvement in the performance of the programme. The state of Bihar, where the percentage of rural population in relation to the urban population is highest amongst all the Indian states, has a below average OTE score in the latest FY which implies that the given funds for wage, material and administrative expenditures can be reduced to produce the given level of outputs. But at the same time, the state of UP which has the highest

proportion of rural population out of the total rural population in the country, is managerially efficient and has an OTE score above the national average. Thus, some state-specific policy modifications are called for though overall the study concludes that the programme has the capability of turning a pessimist situation upside-down by providing job and income security in the times of need.

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Disabled Women and their Heterogeneities: Deconstruction from Multiple Lenses

RAJESH KUMAR CHANDER

Abstract

The status of disabled women is low, to say the least. Like gender, disability/differently abled is also socially constructed, and is largely perceived as an individual problem by medical professionals, disability rights activists, academicians and policy makers, etc. At a global level, the disability movement is still struggling to get recognition for differently abled persons rights. Differently abled people, nevertheless are not a homogenous group. Disabled women are a diverse group on account of their nature of problem, poverty, caste, class, religion, ethnicity and place of location (rural/urban), etc. Differently abled women live in precarious conditions as they receive scant attention and face gender-based inequality and differently abled related stereotypes. These women face varied types of prejudice and discrimination within family, community, various institutions, and overall, society. Although a number of Indian scholars, activists and policy makers are engaged in path-breaking work in disability studies, still, it remains sidelined within the wider academics, research and advocacy spheres. According to conservative estimates derived from the Census of India 2001, 1.8 to 2.1 percent of the population suffers from some form of disability, which in absolute numbers comes to approximately 18.49 to 21.92 million persons (Addlakha, 2013:8) The prejudice against differently abled and exclusion of differently abled persons are deeply embedded in the society. These exclusionary tendencies are embedded in the family, in social relationships, and at the workplace. The research paper, based on observation/lived experiences attempts to deconstruct disability in conjunction with other societal divides, like, gender, caste, class, region (rural setting), ethnicity, etc.

Furthermore, it tries to suggest some policy measures for the amelioration of the existing low status of differently abled women.

Keyword*s: Exclusion, Inclusion, Institutional barriers, Intersectionalities, Invisibilization, Stigmatization, Stereotypes, Mindset.*

Introduction

The last three decades have seen differently abled people organizing themselves across impairment and disabled categories to demand change to social structures. There is a raging debate to redefine disability as a form of exclusion and exploitation, not a biological medical condition. The social interpretations of disability made a distinction between impairments as the functional limitations within the individual, and the disability as the loss of opportunities due to physical and socio-cultural impediments. The disability movements and the women's movement have argued that society should be transformed in order to include all its citizens irrespective of their physiology. Differently abled people often confront a normative culture both in India and the world over that carries aesthetic anxieties about difference which gets socially constructed. The differently abled women have thus experienced acute marginalisation, discrimination and stigmatization.

India is home to a population of 50 million differently abled people, the world's largest after China (Karna, 2000 cited in Klasing, 2007: 22). Disability cuts across social markers like gender, caste, class, religion, age and ethnicity/nationality etc. as it can potentially impact any individual at any time. To add further, gender and disability intersect with social categories such as religion, age, caste, class, ethnicity and rural-urban divides. Also, on the one hand, it is located at the intersection of biology and society, and on the other hand, of agency and structure, etc. The study on disabled women (who face multiple discrimination) and the development of disability studies from a gendered/women's perspective is still at a developing stage in many parts of the globe. Moreover, the women with disabilities are excluded from national democratic structures,

within the international system; there is an invisibility of their rights/freedoms, even though non-discrimination is a fundamental principle of Indian constitution as well as international human rights law. In other words, many different methodologies have been employed to understand the disability situation; however, few have been comprehensive from a gendered perspective.

A literature survey on the subject of disability/differently abled women indicates that the issue of disability and the experience of person with disabilities, especially women and that too from lower socio-economic stratas, like, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, backward castes, minorities, etc. have received scant consideration in the academic arena. The irony of the situation is that intelligentsia belonging to Indian feminism as well as disability scholars have rarely studied gender and disability in conjunction.

The interrelationship between gender and disability is a multifaceted issue and is not in fact solely about women and girls, for both are social constructs which affect women as well as men. The objective of the research paper is to study the multiple marginalities, that is exclusion, marginalization and stigmatization of disabled women from a gendered lens. The preliminary findings are; that a paradigm shift is the need of the hour as far as shifting from psychiatric/medical to human rights/gender standpoint is concerned. Moreover, there is a pressing need of getting rid of deep-seated socio-cultural conditioning/attitudes/mindsets, more so, especially in underdeveloped and rural areas.

The volume of work pertaining to social exclusion prevalent in the society is increasing many folds. In this context, the issues regarding invisibilization of women and the disabled remains neglected. The determinants of disabled women's low status are low access to education, health care, lack of employment and negative mindset of the family, society and policy framers. Identity of just being defined as a disabled also takes one away from the other social identities such as caste, religion,

age and gender, which lend importance to social institutions (Mehrotra, 2013:237). The scholars who have researched the intersection of disability, gender, race, and sexuality are (Connor, 2008; Meekosha, 2005; Bjornsdottir, 2010 cited in Mehrotra, 2013). However, as discussed earlier, there is very limited work dealing with the inter-sectionalities between disability, gender and caste (Hariss-White 1996; Mehrotra, 2006; Pal, 2010 cited in Mehrotra, 2013).

Research Methodology

The research paper is primarily based on secondary data and some lived experiences/observation. The methodology is multi-disciplinary and policy suggestions will also be made. As language is a key tool of oppression, naming disabled and language used is extremely critical when a socially disadvantaged section like dalits or disabled of the population seeks recognition and rights, therefore, the language used in this paper is disabled-friendly and gender-sensitive. Feminist research methodology recognizes that the category of 'women' is not universal across time and space, and it is heterogeneous because of the cultural differences, social divisions (ethnicity, religion, caste, class) and power relations lead to varied experiences for women keeping into account their inter-sectionalities. Content analysis method was applied to deconstruct the heterogeneities prevalent within the differently abled women.

Problems faced by Differently abled women

Differently abled women face significantly more difficulties in both public and private spheres in attaining access to adequate housing, health, education, employment, vocational training and employment. These women also experience discrimination and bias in hiring, promotion, pay for equal work, access to training and retraining, credit and their productive resources and, they are rarely able to participate in decision making. Moreover, they are disadvantaged on multiple fronts; attitudinally, psychologically, economically, politically, and socially. Apart from facing the prejudice of disableism, these women also face the

same pressures as other women. Global social movements are well recognized in the contemporary era, yet neither social movement analysts in general nor feminist scholars in particular have paid the much needed attention to the disability movement. Furthermore, drawing the two movements together remain crucial issue. It is clear that a gendered account of these social movements can offer an analysis of meaningful analysis of social transformation.

Ghai (2002) cited in Klasing, 2007 notes that the concerns of disabled women have been systematically ignored by the feminist movement. Medical care is a crucial area of concern in addressing the dismal overall situation in which disabled people in rural India find themselves. Disability prevention refers to the various medical measures taken to avert the causes of disability. For the majority of disabled people in rural India, medical care is beyond reach. Most hospitals have no special focus on the disabled. The early diagnosis, whether a child is differently abled or not, holds the key as far as the elimination of this disability problem is concerned. The sexual violence against the disabled women and marginalized women is an another area of serious concern. Let's further analyse the multiple exclusion and marginalities which the disabled women are confronted with, day in and day out.

i. Obstacles faced by Differently abled Women

The differently women face many challenges and inequalities. They are also at a higher risk of facing sexual violence in home, school, office and public places, etc. The vulnerability of differently abled girls is evident from the fact that even in a planned city like Chandigarh, a differently abled girl was subjected to sexual violence and rape by her close relatives. Furthermore, disabled girls are not supported and are denied full opportunities. The women with disability and living in rural areas depend on family and friends. Due to increasing awareness and rising literacy, the absolute numbers of differently abled people in India is rising. However, girls and women have a higher likelihood of becoming disabled due to gender factors like, violence, illiteracy, malnutrition, less access to quality health care and cultural practices, etc.

It affects their access to basic amenities like safe drinking water, food, shelter, healthcare, self-esteem, access to human rights, etc. Women with disabilities also face obstacle in their marriage and social integration. Women have been consistently feeling that they are incapable of under taking family responsibility and job responsibilities. The prevalent societal negative attitudes towards women and disabled respectively have exacerbated the gender discrimination as well as discrimination towards disabled. Disability is a part of human condition (WHO, 2011 cited in Mehrotra, 2013:238).

ii. Disability & Gender Interface

There is an interlinkage of gender and disability (World Bank report, 2007). According to a UNDP study conducted in 1998, the global literacy rate for differently abled women is miserably low at a mere 1 percent. In this context, Fawcett (2000) articulates that the exclusion of these women is due to lack of access to employment, gender stereotypes coupled with disability stereotypes and glass ceiling effect. Women are mostly confined to low-paid, back breaking, part-time jobs. These women are forced to work from their home, thereby, excluding them from regular employment. However, women with disabilities are further excluded in accessing scholarships, as literature survey points out.

iii. Disability & Caste Interface

As per the latest studies, there are more than 1 crore 18 lakh people with Disabilities (PWDs) who are mainly living in villages. A large number of differently abled people belong to most marginalized sections, i.e., scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. A majority of disabled children have no access to schooling, more so, in the case of SC/ST children. The prevalence of caste-based untouchability in segregation in rural villages only makes the problem even more worst. The intersection of gender discrimination with other obstacles, e.g., disability, class, caste, rural residence, underdevelopment, etc. similarly has a multiplier effect. Dalit women face multiple social exclusion due to caste and gender based discrimination and face brunt of violence (Chander, 2019).

iv. Disability & Underdevelopment Interface

As per contemporary studies, although 80 percent of the disabled people in India live in rural areas, the government and the NGOs direct their activity almost exclusively towards urban centres, and little research has been conducted in rural communities where the incidence of disability is highest. Despite the People with Disabilities (PWD Act), rural differently abled women, especially dalit and tribal women have lower access to health care and other basic amenities. The lack of awareness regarding the disabilities also remains a barrier. Inspite of the best efforts, the Government schemes for the disabled in rural hinterland is not effective. To compound the problem further, the lack of transportation, physical mobility is leading to high drop-out rates of differently abled children. The differently abled children belonging to rural areas rarely reach college education. The fact of the matter is that rural-urban disparities persist in the accessibility of physical mobility.

Suggestions/ Policy Interventions

The social scientists have interpreted the world, but the point is how to bring in a positive change. The following are the suggestions and the special initiatives undertaken for empowerment of Women with Disabilities, undertaken by the Government of India to ameliorate the socio-economic and cultural conditions of the disabled women as follows:

- Promoting gender equality and empowerment of differently abled women thorough change of negative mindset. Sensitization of common public regarding usage of gender and disabled friendly inclusive language.

- Constructive use of media by organizing gender and differently abled sensitizing workshops, awareness programmes/campaigns creating public awareness about various types of women disabilities.

- Starting home schools by training the parents of the differently abled child.

- Sensitizing the school teachers, medical practitioners, government officials about the various activities. By involving more and more corporates into the rehabilitation process in India.

- Providing loans for starting small business, self-help vocational group and purchasing suitable transport for commuting to the workplace.

- Organizing placement camps in open employment/self-group employment.

- The National Commission for Women can focus more on the gender and disability interface and differently abled women can be the direct beneficiaries of their programmes, which can lead to gender equality.

- It is also pertinent to gather gender-disaggregated data of disabled women caste-wise as well as mentioning the rural and urban profiles. There is an urgent need to study these intersectionalities, and how these divides pan out in everyday life.

- National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001 –This particular policy focuses on the empowerment of women, protection, and development of differently abled women.

- Ujjawala (2007): This scheme focuses on combating sex based trafficking. It further focuses on the rehabilitation and resettlement of the affected girls and women.

- Dhanlakshmi (2008): This scheme provides financial incentives for families to encourage them for educating their girl child and it organize public awareness campaign highlighting women issue relating to female foeticide, child marriage, dowry, domestic violence, trafficking and harassment at the grass root level.

- Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (1993): It is fulfilling financial needs of poor and marginalised women also working to promote the concept of women empowerment.

- Rajiv Gandhi National Crèche Scheme for Children of Working Mothers; it encourages women to continue with gainful employment

by providing day care service like supplementary nutrition, preschool education, etc.

- Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme (2015): The scheme aims at ensuring the rights of girl child, girl's safety, and eradication of female foeticide and gender based violence.

- Support to Training and Employment Programme for Women (STEP 2014): As high as 90% of the project cost is given by Government of India. The rest of 10% of the project cost is provided by the implementing agency and training is provided to the targeted beneficiaries. The objectives are to enable groups of women to enhance their capacity by employment cum income generation programmes to train them in managerial entrepreneurship and marketing skills so that both backward and forward linkages can be established to help asset formation in income generation and to provide support services like legal awareness, gender sensitization, health and education, etc.

Conclusion and Policy Implications

The question which needs to be addressed, is that why there is a less interface between scholars working on marginalities and differently abled rights activists. To add further, the challenges faced by differently abled women have been neglected by human rights movement as well as feminist movement. In case of marginalized women, the problem is compounded further. As per the latest studies; the differently women and girls are lagging behind in literacy indicators in comparison to men/boys. In the cultural sphere too, they are sub-ordinated and under-valued; for instance, disabled women's parents in middle class and higher class families, are paying dowry in their marriages. In the economic indicators of employability and per capita income; disabled women are lagging behind. Some disabled women are living in remote areas, where the health facilities are not upto the mark; as a result, their impairment becomes permanent. Finally, their self-esteem is also low as their social acceptability is also less.

Usage of inclusive differently abled language is the need of the hour and words like *Bechara* (helpless) must be avoided. In this light, the analysis of the key linguistic terms and the replacement of pejorative with more value-neutral and positive terms are essential preliminary steps in any movement towards collective self-affirmation and empowerment. Multi-pronged efforts by the Government, NGOs and researchers to ameliorate their status is required.

The global development agencies like the World Bank and others have identified disability, gender and other marginalities acting as an obstacle in the empowerment of the disabled women. This barrier is also adversely impacting the development of the country too. They live outside our collective view and conscience and are conspicuous only by their absence in everyday life, policy and politics, development interventions and research.

Geographical distance, lack of parental support, physical barriers, prejudice and lack of training, institutional barriers act as barriers in their access to education. In rural areas, employment is beyond the reach of the majority of the differently abled people. Disability is a cause as well as a consequence of poverty. However, the implementation of disability welfare schemes have been deficient. The negative attitudes, stereotypes and stigmatization of the disabled women still continues unabated.

Social inclusion of disabled people cannot be simply achieved through legislation, even though it is likely to play a significant role in ensuring the human rights of all citizens, including disabled people. The UNCRPD envisages a society where disabled people become an integral part of the social milieu, and inclusion is achieved in the true sense of the term. It calls for a change in the attitude and the flexibility to unconditionally accept and accommodate them. Gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming can be pragmatic solutions in this regard. In a nutshell, there is a pressing need for more programmes for the disabled women from the marginalized sections of the society.

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Value Inculcating Strategies: A case study of SVM School, Pinjore

NARESH KUMARI

Abstract

This study investigated St. Vivekanand Millennium School (SVMS), Pinjore, Haryana, and explored the value inculcating strategies of this school. It is the only school in Punjab, Chandigarh, and Haryana where value strategies used by Ramakrishna Mission Educational Institutions' (RKMEIs) are practiced. This study attempted to throw light on value-oriented education and value inculcating strategies in the SVM school system. Qualitative data was collected using an unstructured questionnaire, interviews, and observations. The findings of this study indicate that the school environment influences the moral behavior of students.

Keywords: *Values, Inculcation, Strategies.*

Introduction

Value education is an essential training through which a child or an adult learns or acquires the right skills, experiences, thinking, behavior, attitude, right feeling, and emotions (Patra & Mete, 2015). Today, India is badly in need of value-based education (Johnson, 2016). Educational institutions mustinculcate values in their students (Bhagawati, 1999). Many schools are doing their best in teaching value education in different ways (Ishii, 2010). The National Policy of Education 1986 and 2020 also emphasized the importance of education for values in eradicating violence, superstition, intolerance, and upholding social, cultural, and scientific principles to make India a progressive, secular, and democratic nation. Erosion of ethical, social and spiritual values was highlighted by National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2000 for School Education and emphasized on inclusion of value system in the curriculum. Ancient Indian education

was value-based. India has a tradition of value-based education. Its ancient *gurukuls* were places where teachers used to teach values to the pupils through examples. Teachers used to play an important role in inculcating values in their students through teaching. Value inculcation helps transform the world, and a value-based education system is necessary for the intellectual development of learners. Value adds quality to life (Singh, 2016). No school believed in separate subjects to teach values. Community work helps a lot in developing values in students. An Integrated, planned approach for value inculcation is needed. And it is required to be aware of those healthy practices for value development that are being practiced by all schools (Joneja, 2002). SVM School authority is following a systematic way to inculcate values.

Rationale

In India, the moral downfall is a vulnerable issue today (Sethi, 2015). Today's youth do not feel responsible towards society, family, and others. Because of low moral values, students are attracting to alcohol, drugs, indecency, and crime (Kaur, 2015). Student-teacher relations are not respectful in educational institutions (Garcha, 2015).

Some Institutions have an image of value-based institutes which are turning their students into good human beings. Ramakrishna Mission Educational Institutions is one of them. The reason for choosing SVM School for research work was that it was the only school in Punjab, Chandigarh, and Haryana, following the teaching philosophy of RKMEIs. They are providing a value-rich climate in their school. This paper attempt to through light on value inculcating strategies in the SVM school system.

Objective

To explore the strategies used by the SVM school for inculcating values in their student.

Methodology

This qualitative study was conducted in St. Vivekanand Millennium School to know its value inculcating strategies. The researcher followed the case study method (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2008) and visited the school

for three months. Before conducting the study, informed consent was taken. For data collection triangular method was adopted. Unstructured interviews were recorded and open-ended questionnaires were filled by the teachers and the principal. The school environment was studied. Along with Observation, document analysis was also done for verification and deeper understanding of the school and its value inculcating strategies.

The Study

The study was conducted at St. Vivekanand Millennium School inaugurated on 07 January 1996 and founded in 2001 at HMT township Pinjore district Panchkula, Haryana by Punjh Education society established by Sri Madan Mohan Roy Punj. SVM School is an independent Senior Secondary school affiliated with the CBSE board. The school is spread over 27114 square meters of land and has 40 classrooms, 07 labs, 01 library, and 20000 square meters playground. School publishes an annual magazine 'Deepayan'. The school aims to impart modern education along with firmly rooted Indian culture and moral values based on 'Panchkosha' philosophy. The prime motto of this school is to inculcate and enrich humanitarian values in the students and to work for the all-around development of their students. To achieve this mission the school has a Principal, Vice Principal, 08 PGTs, 19 TGTs, 16 PRTs, a health wellness teacher, librarian, and seven other staff members. All the staff members have faith in school philosophy.

Founder of the School

The school was founded by Sri Madan Mohan Roy Punj, with the blessings of the Ramakrishna Mission. He was born in the year 1937 in Gujranwala Pakistan. The role model of his life was his father Sri Fakir Chand. After partition, he came to India with his family. He was a bright child and was good at games, dance, and fine arts. He took admission to Shimla Arts College and got fame in games and dance. He also influenced film playback singer Mohammad Ruffi with his dance performance in Gaiety Theater after which Ruffi Sahib invited him to Mumbai for an offer but he rejected his proposal for his aim. He was also a very good

sculpture. While working in Jalandhar Politech he made a sculpture of Sainik which was inaugurated by the former chief minister of Punjab Sardar Partap Singh Kairon and was appreciated by all. He also worked as a teacher in DAV school Delhi in 1964. And got married to Smt. Kamal Roy. In 1977, he founded the Punj Education Society and established the first Vivekanand School in Delhi, and opened its three branches. In 1996 he opened a branch in Pinjore and named it St. Vivekanand Millennium School, since then the school is progressing day by day. He was a social as well as religious person. He helped in establishing two Mandir in Delhi. He also took responsibilities as the president of the housing board society of Delhi. He left this worldly life on 5 December 2015.

School Philosophy

SVMS believes in gurukul heritage and is following traditional as well as modern value techniques. The educational philosophy of this school is based on 'PANCHKOSHA' which is commonly referred to as the five hierarchical levels of energy in the body. This shows the path of student's development through the Indian way. The meaning of Pancha is 'Five' and the word Kosha stands for 'Sheath or 'Shell'. Therefore, Panchkosha means five sheaths of the human body:

1. Annamaya Kosha or the Food Sheath: Anna stands for food and our health depends on the food that we eat. The diet that a person follows can be used to determine his or her nature. Therefore, the school is developing healthy food habits by following this kosha.

2. Pranamaya Kosha or the Energy Sheath: Prana is life and all birth and death in the universe are a result of prana. The Pranmaya Kosha controls the Annamaya Kosha. With the help of prana, a person can control the speed at which life or energy flows through his body.

3. Manomaya Kosha or the Mental Sheath: It deals with the emotional, mental or perceptual part of the body and influences the Prana Kosha then channels the way we think. It is the abode of all the dominant emotional and thought patterns that comprise one's personality.

4. Vijyanamaya Kosha or the Intellectual Sheath: It is related to the conscious human mind.

5. Anandmaya Kosha or Bliss Sheath: Ananda means pleasure or happiness and it is the root of entire human life. This is the kosha that is not bound by either time or space. When we attain all the four koshas we get complete ananda.

Analysis

This study used a qualitative method for data analysis. Data collected by formal recorded interviews were reviewed several times and panned down on a copy for better understanding. Participants reviewed transcribed data. During observation, field notes were taken and were transcribed, reviewed, and analyzed after each observation or interview.

Findings

Creating Environment

Findings show that school organizers believe in creating a positive and energetic physical environment for value inculcation in their students because students' behavior was thought to be influenced by their surroundings (Njoku, 2000). SVMS authority tried to create a physical environment where students start learning values at every step. For this purpose, all the school walls' were decorated with various flex boards highlighting different teaching values like Road Safety Signs, Surya Namaskara Asanas, Fundamental Duties, Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, Swachh Bharat, and motivating images of school students performing various activities. Each classroom had Swami Vivekanand's portraits and quotes, which attract the young minds to learn positive behavior.

The school authorities believe in Hindu philosophy and are inculcating religious, social, and moral values in their students in a traditional Indian way which was evident from the school environment. At the entrance of the school statue of Maa Sarswati was situated. According to the school teacher,

"When students enter the school every day, they all join their hands to wish Maa and take her blessings, which helps in creating shraddha and faith in Maa."

A Tulsi plant wrapped in the red piece of cloth called "chunni" was planted near the statue. On the other side symbol of Ganpati was engraved on the wall. According to them, this encourages religious values in their students using traditional Indian heritage. The Assembly stage was decorated, with different sculptures performing yoga asanas, playing and dancing, a symbol of the shining sun as the source of energy, and an uprising was engraved.

The school had a meditation room where a prototype Belur Math temple was placed with pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, Maa Sardha, and Swami Vivekanand. It was a very calm place in the school. After prayer, students used to go to Mandir or Meditation room, bow their heads and do meditation for their mental peace. One of the teachers expresses,

"When any student makes any mistake consciously, instead of giving them punishment, teachers used to send them in the meditation room for ten minutes and tell them to realize about what they did wrong and why they did so? Was it right or wrong? And then the teacher tells them to write about what they felt, thought in those ten minutes. Then they express their feelings before the class. By doing so, we help them to realize their mistakes, and let them decide that creating indiscipline is right or wrong, etc. In my experience, students have a good influence."

Three Mirrors of Atmavlokan were hanging on the entry door on these three words were written i.e. 1. SWAMI 2. VIVEK 3. ANAND. One of the teachers described the meaning of these mirrors:

SWAMI: I am the master of my body. I am solemnly responsible for my actions as well as thoughts.

VIVEK: It is the wisdom to control and guide our body. It helps us to use our intelligence in the right direction.

ANAND: With the possession of healthy body and peaceful mind, we experience the divinity in us, which gives us everlasting happiness. This anand satisfies us and enables us to succeed in every walk of life.

So, there prevails a Swami Vivekanand in all of us, and all we have to realize is our true self.

Another value source was a Message Tree. It was an old Mango tree called 'AMANASHRYA' on which many wooden plates were hanging. Different values were written over these plates, in Hindi and English i.e. Peace, Confidence, Snklapa, Vinmrta, Udaarta, Smmaan, Sehyoga, etc. One teacher stated,

> "Anyone who feels broken or frustrated used to sit under its shadow and read the plate and took the lesson of hope which truly works. I tried it many times. It reduces stress."

Value Inculcating Activities and Programs

In the morning, all students, teachers, and other staff begin their day by saying 'Namaste' to each other and go to the assembly ground for prayer at 7:30 am after the alarm bell. In winters all students participate in 'Health Run'. After three rounds of the school ground, they exercise, do aerobics, and yoga for their physical health, and meditate for their mental well-being to strengthen their focusing power. Laughter therapy was also a part of healthy exercise. Then they do daily prayer where they learn the harmony of religion. Students used to recite Geeta Shlokachrana, Hanumaan Chalisa on Tuesday, and Japuji Sahib Paath in the Morning Prayer. Lastly, students used to sing the national anthem to pay tribute to the nation.

Edu Sports Program: It is run by the school to maintain the physical and mental health of the students. According to a teacher,

> "Under Edu Sport technique we organize different activities especially for primary classes such as running, jumping, pushing,

> self-control, etc. We used to assess student's physical activity every
> month to understand their continuous development".

Another teacher said,

> "It is compulsory for everyone present in the school to attend
> morning assembly after alarm bell whether students were present
> or not on that day."

Sustained Graded Value Education Program: Ramakrishna Mission, Belur
math started a four-year SGVE program and provide moral value books to
the students. SVM School adopted this program and a group of teachers
was assigned to help students study these books and inculcate values such
as seva, shradha, tayaag, discipline, punctuality, etc.

Awakening Citizen Program: Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Delhi,
provided training for this program to school teachers. Awaken means
awareness. The motto of this program was to develop students'
personalities as aware citizens. Here students learn that all powers are
within us. They complete 48 modules over three years,16 modules each in
7th, 8th, and 9th grade. Each module is of 45 minutes conducted by the
teachers weekly in two classes. One faculty explained,

> "In 7th class, students will understand the main motto of the
> program, I can, which means I can do everything, and everything is
> within me. In the 8th class, they learn how they can practice these
> examples in society. Finally, in the 9th class, students will feel a
> positive change in themselves. In this class, behavioral changes
> begin in students. Students start wishing even the bus conductors
> daily".

Being Me: Being me program is for all classes. According to a teacher,

> "We teach them Panchatantra stories, Geeta shlok, or adhyaye,
> based on moral values. The motto is to make them good citizens of
> society. It starts from home then goes to the society and finally
> reach the nation."

Celebrating Me: Students learn to celebrate themselves under this program. Here students learn how to stay positive and confident in life in any situation. Students learn to celebrate their capabilities. Teachers indulge students in different activities to sharpen their talents like salad making, lemonade, rangoli, declamation, art activities, dancing, and singing. Students understand to celebrate themselves. They are free to do activities they love. On special occasions like festivals, teachers encourage them to perform according to their talent.

WE: WE means Work Education. It is related to art education. All teachers help students to make models, drawings, charts once a week where students learn many skills with the help and cooperation of their teachers and peers. Under this program, students learn some practical work, for example, best out of waste, designing, color combination, etc.

Plantation Program: SVMS organizes many plantation programs/projects from time to time. They have joined hands with local panchayats to plant five types of plants under the Panchvati program. It will mitigate the harmful effects of modernization and promote the love for nature.

Guru Vaarta: Guru Varta is an activity where Guru (teacher) will recite any moral story based on Swami Vivekanands' thoughts to inculcate values that motivates them to follow moral values in their life. They believed that the story-telling method is effective for value inculcation in children.

Recitation of Mantras: It is part of the daily routine of students' life to recite various Vedic mantras in daily activities. These mantras have the power to purify our minds and body. A school teacher narrated,

> "We start our lecture by singing Gayatri Mantra. Bhoj Mantra, we chant before lunch. It provides a scientific explanation of the relationship between food and energy. The Shanti Mantra for mental peace, Dhyana Mantra, helps students to know that they are the form of Shiva. In the evening, all students assemble to thank their teachers and Swami Vivekanand for everything in their life.

Language Development Program: It is mandatory to speak Hindi and English in a week. Three days each are devoted in the morning assembly to respect both languages.

Skill Development: Another teacher said,

> "It will be easy for students if they are provided with all skills under one roof like we have different labs such as science labs, music lab, math lab, English language lab, dance room, art lab, and robotic labs, etc. Students learn according to their potential from expert trainers. SVMS inculcating different values in students by organizing competitions such as Vivekanand address, be the change, bhajan singing, poetry writing, role-playing, collage and poster making, etc."

Social Conscience: SVMS is developing social values like empathy, service to the poor, respect for society, work in a group, obedience, patriotism, etc. by organizing day celebrations such as Mother's Day, Teachers Day, Labour Day, Birthdays of great personalities, and participating in various activities/program such as Blanket Distribution, Manav Kalyan Shivir, Visit to Slum Area, awareness through Nukkar-Natak, Van Mahotsav, Youth Marathon, time to time orientation programs for teachers and students, speeches and students interactive programs with eminent personalities.

Parent-Teacher Sangh:Parent-Teacher Sangh highlights the cooperation between parents and teachers. This sangha organizes different workshops for the growth and development of the students. Similarly, students' alumni also play an excellent role in the growth of this school and motivate the student to learn for their better future.

Leadership:

Institutional growth depends on wise leadership. SVMS is growing under the leadership of well-qualified and experienced school management, principal, and vice-principal. They all are a devotee of Ramakrishna

Mission. They believe in Vivekanand's educational philosophy and are active in inculcating values in their teachers and students. Principal Mr. Piyush Punj stated that,

> "It is important to set a system for building your institution as a value-based body. For this, we are working on it for years. We recruit our teachers on a merit basis. We are organizing value orientation programs, faculty development programs, and other in-service training programs from time to time for them. We also allot specific library time to every teacher and student."

All teachers can't be the same, and their teaching strategies may be different in different situations. To overcome this, he said,

> "We set some value teaching strategies which are easy to follow for teachers and students such as mantra ucharan, positive way of punishment, aman ashrya, meditation for stress-reducing strategies, self-realization by three mirrors of Vivekanand, etc. If any teacher classroom teaching does not normally meet the agreed standards of the school, we send them a counselling letter and preferably send them for some development program." He further shared,

"I try to influence the quality of teaching in classrooms by regular class visits."

> "We appoint some teachers to attend value education training, monks in workshops from Ramakrishna Mission center Chandigarh and Delhi from time to time."

The Vice-principal said,

> "Our principal implement and encourage new innovative ideas and take initiatives on these. He is very cooperative and, we have to follow his shown path."

One teacher on vice principal mam said,

> "She teaches the concept of 'my school, my responsibility which encourages us to learn a lot and work cooperatively."

Mr. Piyus Punj said,

"Internal and external motivation is necessary for implementing and developing new ideas, and for this, we are running various value education programs. We motivate teachers to participate in these programs by giving them appreciation awards, job promotions, increments, etc." He further narrated,

"Swami Vivekanand's leadership style is a big inspiration for me. School management members are the source of energy. Our role model is Swami Brahmeshananda. We get a lot of encouragement from Ex-Secretory, RKM Ashram Chandigarh, who is very caring and supportive. Similarly, I try to support my teachers and students to a role models for them."

"My strategy is to inspire my teachers to inculcate values in students by sharing good instances, motivating them to read books of RKM publication. A lot of our teachers have done certificate program from ICSVS Punjab University, Chandigarh."

Teaching Strategies

SVM School authority has set some common strategies, and teachers have to follow those strategies of value inculcation. The researcher asked teachers to fill a questionnaire to know whether they are using the same strategies or not. Whether they are using some other strategies too?

Today youth is indulging in drugs addiction. A teacher responded to a question about how they prevent their students from falling prey to drug addiction.

"No such case has ever been reported from our school. Still, we make them aware of the harmful effects of drug addiction from time to time. We indulge students in constructive activities like sports, vocals, art, and craft as per their interests. We emphasize this using nuked-natak, poster

making, videos, painting competition, slogan writing, discussion, debate, role play, article writing, etc."

Students are made aware of health values. They motivate them to follow daily school activities to promote physical health. A teacher said,

"Students do aerobics, yoga, meditation, health run daily. They have a play period daily, and we provide them healthy diet plans too." Another teacher responded,

"We encourage them to eat green vegetables, fruits, drinking sufficient water, milk in daily life and to avoid fast foods."

Today life is full of stress. Teachers discussed strategies to reduce stress,

"I recommend them to take a deep breath in and hold it for five seconds then relax your mood and mind, ask them to watch their favorite show or talk to the friends, go for a walk, do yoga and leave the place where you were studying for some time." Another teacher said,

"I always try to use simple methods to teach them and focus on less homework, more classroom practice and encourage learning by doing approach." A teacher replied,

"We develop the habit of punctuality in them and build their confidence, encourage them to make their plan and schedule to cover up the syllabus in time and follow it sincerely." One teacher said:

"I make them understand difficult concepts using audio-visual aids to reduce the study stress so that they can cover the topic on time."

Students do have problems in life other than studies. Teachers can help students overcome such situations by solving their problems. By doing so, they inculcate the value of love, cooperation, and value of social relations in them. They responded,

"We motivate students to be calm, encourage one-to-one talk and involve them in evaluating possible solutions, analyze the facts and solve the problem with an optimistic attitude." Other said,

"I talk to them personally and always be ready to help whenever they need, but if anything serious is going on, we bring it to the notice of school authority. Some of their problems we solve with the help of parents in a parent-teacher meeting."

A healthy student-teacher relationship is required for effective teaching and learning. SVM school teachers have some ways to create good relations with their students. They responded,

"I use to keep friendly relations and aware them towards balanced relationship." Other said,

"We are taking individual counselling sessions from time to time. We understand and respect the needs of our students." She further narrated,

"We use inspiring words, give importance to students' participation, be fair, and always stay calm. We believe in emotionally balanced relationships with our students."

In today's life, self-discipline is decreasing (N. Rajkhowa, 2014). so response received to the question 'how they are creating self-discipline in their students? And they responded,

"We respect students feeling and guide them about self-discipline. We are doing this by karam yoga, pranayama, dhyaan, etc. We are teaching them biographies of great personalities." Others said,

"By giving live examples of successful persons, awaking them about the small tips to keep self-discipline, label them as a team A, B, C, giving rewards or appreciation cards for the positive response, praising and by peer mentor."

SVM School has a disciplinary committee for handling conflict situations between students. But before sending them to the committee, teachers try to solve their conflict by taking them in confidence. Some teachers responded on this,

"I listen to them and promote detailed discussion upon the conflict…. Praise young minds in front of others so that they could have the confidence to sort solutions together." Another said,

"I tackle mischievous behavior by love and affection and always try to be calm….take a deep breath." Another said,

"I use to channelize their energy by giving them responsibilities such as monitoring, notebook collection, extra worksheets, etc." Another responded,

"Story telling method is good in inculcating values like love, affection, responsibility, confidence, etc."

Teachers are inculcating environmental, social, and moral values by using these strategies:

"We organize cleanliness drives such as hand wash, street cleanliness….awareness through public speaking, debate, discussions…always pick the paper lying in the corridor or class to be a role model." Another teacher said,

"Regular celebration of Swachta Diwas…'doing attitude'….assigning some cleanliness duties…motivating them to help their parents at home." One teacher narrated,

"By use of dustbin, green for organic and yellow for non-organic waste….involvement of students in the cleanliness drive." Another stated,

"I always tell them to spend some time with their grandparents….showing respect to school group D-employees, conductor, drivers….greeting the teachers by Namaste….through guru varta."

Different co-curricular activities may play an important role in value inculcation. According to a teacher,

"Cleanliness drive in neighborhood areas, visit old homes or orphanage….planting trees on birthdays…habit of sharing and caring….Involvement of students in different activities such as Van

Mahotsav, Swachta Campaign, save water save the earth, teach sensitivity towards nature." She further said,

"Geeta, Ramayana, Panchtantra stories are good sources we are using for value inculcation."

Discussion

This study provides insight that SVM School is inculcating values in students by using four general strategies as:

a) Providing a conducive environment

b) Organizing activities and program

c) Active leadership role of principal

d) Teaching strategies of school teachers.

The study finds that the school environment influences the moral behavior of students, as supported by various other studies. (Lahey, 2004; Gross, 2010; Njoku, 2015). School authorities understand the value of creating a conducive environment for fulfilling the desired aims of the institution for value inculcation in students (Brugman, et al. 2003; MacNeil, et al. 2009). Many studies prove that school climate evokes a positive spirit and motivates the students and teachers to learn positive emotions (Freiberg & Stein, 1999; Cobb, 2014). Another strategy of SVM School is to run moral education programs and organize various value-based activities (Njoku, 2015). They ensure the regular involvement of each student in these activities. The Moral education programs run by the schools under the supervision of Ramakrishna Mission are very effective in value inculcation. Many studies also support the role of value-based programs for building students' moral attitudes and behavior (Schultz, 2001; Riedel, 2002; Williams et al., 2003). Teachers act as role models for the students that help to build character (Thomson, 2002). Teachers are using various strategies based on school philosophy. These strategies are storytelling (Ramayana, Panchtantra, Geeta), Karmyoga, Pranayama, Shraddha,

Dhyana, Mantra Ucharan regularly, Discussion, Drama, Nukkd-Nattak, Debate, Role-Playing, etc. Audio-Video aids are utilized for more effectiveness. From time to time, competitions like poster making, article writing, painting competitions, slogan writings, quizzes, exhibitions, etc., are also organized, which are the source of motivation and encouragement in learning manners. Value-based co-curricular activities are part of the daily routine. Teachers believe that awareness of balanced and positive relationships (Cardwell & Flanagan, 2003) with students, planning constructive activities and ideas, listening to them carefully without discrimination, punctuality, repetition, calmness, praise, and rewards are necessary for value inculcation. This study throws light on leaders' role in inculcating values. Various studies emphasized the role of principals in building strong relationships among school members for unique culture and values within the school (Sergiovanni, 2000). School leaders bring faculty and staff together to reach the vision and inspire them to achieve the school goals (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Herbert & Elizabeth, 2011). The principal of SVMS personally takes an interest in value culture development in school. His values are the same as institutional values, which are necessary for the appropriate disciplinary climate in school (Branson et al., 2015). School management and principal believe in Ramakrishna Mission and are adapting their strategies of value inculcation. With the inspiration of school management and RKM leaders, the principal takes initiatives for organizing various workshops, activities, and programs for students and teachers for value inculcation (Bhardwaj et al., 2015). So these strategies flow from RKM management to principals, from principals to vice-principals, from teachers to students, which helps create value-based school environment/culture (Herbert & Elizabeth, 2011; Finnigan, 2012).

Conclusion

SVM School is inculcating values through various strategies based on Hindu traditional values. These strategies positively influence students and can be applied in other schools for value inculcation. The limitation of this

study was that it only investigated value inculcation strategies used by the SVM School only. A study with a large sample size is required to construct guidelines for other schools. The author also suggests further research of the positive effects of such strategies on the living standards of former students.

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