THIRD
CONCEPT

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THIRD CONCEPT

An International Journal of Ideas

Third Concept aims at providing a platform where a meaningful exchange of ideas can take place among the people of the Third World. The attempt will be to communicate, debate and disseminate information, ideas and alternatives for the resolution of the common problems facing humankind. We welcome contributions from academics, journalists and even from those who may never have published anything before. The only requirement is a concern for and desire to understand and take the issue of our time. Contributions may be descriptive, analytical or theoretical. They may be in the form of original articles, reactions to previous contributions, or even a comment on a prevailing situation. All contributions, neatly typed in double space, may be addressed to:

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INSIDE

Editorial

Political Twists & Turns

Current political developments obtaining in some states of India demonstrate that an array of new twists and turns is taking place in different forms in these states and these entail the potential of impacting national political narrative in a big way. Parting of ways of old allies and coming together of ideologically poles apart groups against the present dispensation at the helm at the Centre is a new development. Widening of chasm between Shiv Sena and the BJP in Maharashtra after a hiatus of three decades over the issue of sharing power in the state has brought Shiv Sena in alliance with Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), with both these latter parties having been arch rivals of Shiv Sena. Perhaps it is the issue of sharing of power in Maharashtra and the objective of keeping the BJP at bay that has spurred these ideologically poles apart parties to join hands in Maharashtra.

What has happened in Maharashtra is likely to be replicated in the Jharkhand that is going to polls very soon. In Jharkhand, the BJP is contesting elections of its own and its erstwhile allies are also contesting the assembly polls of their own. One should not read too much in the wake of Maharashtra developments and become euphoric about BJP's decline because this party has the potential of staging "Kamal Operation" as it did in Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Manipur and Sikkim. Concurrently, Maharashtra also demonstrates that BJP could not successfully replicate its Operation Kamal despite the initiative undertaken by NCP's Ajit Pawar.

Appellation of Modern Chanakya was conferred upon Amit Shah, former president of the BJP and now Union Home Minister in Modi Government, in the wake of BJP's electoral juggernaut since 2014 Lok Sabha elections till March 2017 when the party wrested power in UP registering a landslide win. The year 2018 witnessed the BJP losing power in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. Aggressive nationalism, publicity blitzkrieg and massive money power helped the party wrest power at the Centre once again with increased number of seats in the Lok Sabha in May 2019. In the wake of Supreme Court decision on Ayodhya dispute, the BJP is not in a position to evoke emotive issue of Ram temple anymore and with the abrogation of some provisions of Article 370 and Article 35-A of the Indian Constitution, another emotive issue to hoodwink the gullible masses has gone out of the electoral planks of the BJP.

Shiv Sena that had contested the state assembly elections in Maharashtra in alliance with the BJP in October this year tried to dictate its terms in extending its support to the BJP which was not in a position to form the next government of its own. Shiv Sena which had been an ardent proponent of aggressive nationalism and Hindutva had to tone down its aggressive posture in order to enter into an alliance with Congress and the NCP in Maharashtra. People seem to have become fed-up with aggressive nationalism and Hindutva after the Ayodhya verdict and abrogation of Article 370 and they have become more concerned with socio-economic issues that directly impact them.

The BJP under Modi-Shah duo is a new BJP different from Advani-Vajpayee era BJP and there has been a complete transformation of the party where larger-than-party size image of PM Modi has eclipsed the image of the old BJP. Even the RSS is no more in a position to dictate its terms to the transformed BJP, rather it has seemingly become a spokesperson of the policies of Modi government. For Congress it is existential crisis and it has to yield its erstwhile ideological stance and accommodate regional satraps to recover its pan-India identity. Similarly, regional satraps like Shiv Sena, NCP, Samajwadi Party and the Left parties are seemingly under transformation to find a space in the national politics. Reluctance of the BJP leadership to reconcile to the ground realties, even after having exhausted its armoury of aggressive nationalism and Hindutva, entails vast potential for the Opposition to fill the space that BJP may vacate in the poll-bound states of Jharkhand, Delhi, Bihar and UP in coming months. Deliverance on promises is a sure way to be at the helm and non-performance leads to downward slide albeit more rapidly.

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Appraising China's Space Programme

Pushpinder Singh Bath*

[The launch of mankind's first artificial satellite, Sputnik I, by the erstwhile Soviet Union in 1957, spurred China to develop its own space capabilities. As is the case with most space-faring nations, the ballistic missile programme of China laid the foundation of its space ventures. Mao adopted 'Project 581'in 1958 with the intention of placing a satellite in space.]

A nation having emerged from the shackles of struggles and political turmoil, China's space journey has had distinct shades of political, economic and social influences in the last century. The evolution of China's space programme progressed in various stages as described below.

Initial Breakthrough, 1956-66

China's first missile and rocket technology institute was established in 1956. After a bilateral agreement signed in October 1957 between USSR and China, the Soviets provided substantial assistance to China in developing rocket technology. Though, the Soviets withdrew the support in 1960, the Chinese were able to gather considerable knowledge about the Soviet R-1 and R-2 missiles[1]. Though mired with initial failures, the Chinese could manage to launch their first indigenous missile in 1966, thus proving their expertise in rocket technology. It was also the time when the 'Fifth Academy' for missile research was established. Despite the famine years of 1959-61, missile programme continued to get state support at the highest level in the initial years.

China Sets Foot in Space, 1966-76

Though the cultural revolution strongly affected the socio-political fabric of the country, China continued to remain focused towards space. Zhou Enlai emerged as a major supporter of Chinese ventures in space and in 1967 he re-mustered the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) and placed it under the control of People's Liberation Army (PLA). This very step was a landmark in China's Space history as all its space missions now had a military flavour. With his continued patronage, China launched its first satellite Dong Fang Hong (The East is Red) on 24 April 1970. It was a communication satellite launched at an altitude of 2000 Km. By this time four other countries, Soviet Union, United States, France and Japan had launched their own satellites making China fifth in this domain.

Space Recess, 1976-86

The focus of Deng Xiaoping was on building up China's economic and social infrastructure. While military space ventures receded due to lack of patronage, those accruing economic benefits continued. In August 1978, Deng Xiaoping said, "*As far as space technology is concerned, we're not taking part in a space race. There is no need for us to go to the moon.*" However, Deng still continued to push for modernization programmes. These programmes indirectly benefitted the space sector especially in telecommunications and remote sensing. In April 1984, China placed its first communication satellite into geosynchronous earth orbit (GEO). Concurrently, China also commenced the development of LM-4 rocket in order to launch its meteorological satellites into sun synchronous orbits. The setting up of China Great Wall Industrial Corporation (CGWIC)[2] in 1985, enabled China to develop and market its home-made satellites and launch vehicles overseas.

China's Golden Period in Space, 1986-2006

The next twenty years had in store some of the most remarkable achievements of China in Space. In 2000, China launched one of its most

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* PhD Scholar, Dept. of Defence and Strategic Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala.

ambitious missions, Beidou-1, their first satellite navigation system consisting of a constellation of three satellites. In 2003, under 'Project 921', China became the third country to undertake manned mission to space. China's first manned mission was launched by employing Shenzhou-5 spacecraft in 2003. The success of Chinese 'Taikonauts' set the stage for undertaking the ambitious '863 Proposal'[3], which was a three-pronged approach towards building a space station, developing a heavy launch vehicle and a space transportation system.

Strategic High Ground, 2006 Onwards

In 2006 China in its military pamphlet 'The Science of Campaigns' identified Space as the new strategic high ground. Accordingly, China commenced nurturing the development of dual-use technologies and PLA's doctrines were aligned to the idea of '*local wars under informationised conditions*'. China tested its direct ascent Anti-Satellite (ASAT) weapon in January 2007. Launched from Xichang Satellite Launch Centre, the ASAT missile destroyed a defunct Fengyun-1C weather satellite in Low Earth Orbit (LEO). The experimental test not only established China's Space prowess, it also brought to fore China's inclination towards militarisation of space.

In spite of worldwide condemnation, China did not put to rest its kinetic kill missions even after its defamed 2007 ASAT test. In 2010, it carried out an in-orbit manoeuvre apparently bumping two of its own micro-satellites[4]. In 2012, the Chinese spacecraft Shenzhou-9 docked with Tiangong-1 space station setting the stage for sustained human presence in space in future. With its ambitious space station project in mind, China continued to make giant leaps in launch vehicle technology. Currently, China has developed a wide array of launch vehicles to meet its requirements of launching satellites in LEO and GEO orbits.

China operationalised its Beidou-2 Satellite Navigation System with 10 satellites in 2012 and is progressing towards completion of Beidou-3 system with 35 satellites by 2020. Beidou System

and China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are expected to be enmeshed into a composite package with transshipment, and vehicle tracking along the proposed routes being enabled and controlled through space.

Some of the niche technologies in which China has achieved considerable breakthrough include the development of "*Kuaizhou*" (quick vessel) space launch vehicle, Launch on Demand (LOD) capability, laser-based radars for satellite tracking and space-assisted ballistic missile defence capability[5]. Towards this effort, China in 2010, successfully intercepted a ballistic missile at mid-course using a ground-based missile. On 15 September 2016, the second space station, Tiangong-2, was placed into orbit. Tiangong-2 would continue to remain in orbit until the launch of Tiangong-3 in 2022. On 05 June 2019, China successfully carried out a ship-based launch of its Long March - 11 (LM-11) space rocket in Yellow sea[6].

China's Evolving Space Policy

China's space policy has gradually evolved over the years. Initially, China was not keen to take part in a space race and was focused towards peaceful utilisation of space. However, with the identification of space as the new strategic high ground and with the economic might to support its space ventures, China's space policy has gradually evolved over the decades. In August 1978, Deng Xiaoping had said, "*As far as space technology is concerned, we're not taking part in a space race. There is no need for us to go to the moon.*"

The White Paper '*China's National Defence in 2000*' had this to state about China's military usage of space, "*Such activities as the testing, deployment or use of weapons, weapon systems or their components should be banned in outer space, in order to prevent the militarisation of and an arms race in outer space. At present, there are intentions, plans and actions to pursue unilateral military and strategic superiority in and control of outer space. They are not only real but also growing. Therefore, it is realistic and urgent that the international community*

takes effective measures to stop such negative developments."

The Science of Campaigns[7], China's official military pamphlet of 2001 had described space as an essential part of fighting future wars. In its 2002 defense White Paper[8], China stated, "*At present, outer space is faced with the danger of weaponisation and protection of outer space from weaponisation and an arms race has become a very urgent and realistic issue. The international community should negotiate and conclude the necessary legal instrument as soon as possible to prohibit the deployment of weapons in outer space and the use or threat of use of force against objects in outer space, so as to ensure peace and tranquility therein.*"

In 2004, Hu Jintao laid down the "*new historic missions*" for PLA which included space security as one of its missions.[9] In 2006, just prior to the ASAT test, *The Science of Campaigns* in its new edition stated, "*the space domain daily is becoming a vital battle-space. Space has already become the new strategic high ground.*" The White Paper 'Space Activities in 2006' identified that the aims of China's space activities are national security, protection of her rights and building up comprehensive national strength[10]. It further stated that "China considers development of its space industry as a strategic way to enhance its economic, scientific, technological and national defense strength as well as a cohesive force for the unity of Chinese people, in order to rejuvenate China."

Even the Chinese ASAT test in 2007 was justified by China as a mere response to US' withdrawal from the ABM Treaty in 2001 with the aim of demonstrating its capability against US satellites[11].The Defence White Paper of 2015 for the first-time designated space as a military domain. In 2016, the White Paper 'China's Activities in Space[12]' laid out China's space vision as, "*To build into a space power in all respects, with the capabilities to make innovations independently, to make scientific discovery and research at the cutting edge, to promote strong and sustained economic and social development, to effectively and reliably guarantee national security.*"

The Defence White Paper of 2019[13] states "Space is a critical domain in international strategic competition." Thus, China's policy has gradually evolved with the realisation that dominance in space shall prove vital to winning wars under informationised conditions.

China's Space Organisation

Strategic affairs are controlled by three major organs in China viz Chinese Government, PLA and Chinese Communist Party (CCP). These three organs control a number of agencies related to space that have inter-linking functions. In order to coordinate decision making on very sensitive issues, China usually forms a Leading Small Group (LSG) which harmonises a coherent view amongst the three organs and serves as an oversight body. It comprises key officials from Chinese Government, PLA and Chinese Communist Party (CCP). An LSG is likely to have been constituted for formulation of coherent policies on space also.

China has nurtured a successful civil-military interface for growth in space industries. While the strands of civilian control over the executive agencies involved in research, development and production are strong, there also exists a cross linkage with the PLA. The running of space launch centres and Telemetry Tracking and Control (TT&C) Centres rests completely in the hands of General Armaments Department (GAD) of PLA.

Civil Vertical of Space Organisation

The civil organisation related to space in China includes the State Council, Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT), Chinese Academy of Science (CAS), State Administration on Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence (SASTIND), China National Space Agency (CNSA), China Aerospace Corporation (CAC),China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC) and China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC).

The State Council, being the highest government body, has the final word on acceptance and

funding of new space projects. It plays a major role in planning the National Long-Term Science and Technology Development Plan and Five-Year Plans. It is involved in the planning the research and development (R&D) of high-end technology, development programmes and formulation of white papers on space[14]. Under the State Council are the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST), Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS). Their roles are described below: -

a. MOST works out the national R&D strategies in the field of science and technology. It sponsors projects with niche technologies which may benefit both civil and defence industries. Currently national science strategy for the period 2006-20 is in vogue.

b. MIIT regulates industrial planning, policy and standards. Subordinate to MIIT is the State Administration on Science, Technology and Industry for National Defence (SASTIND), an administrative body for China's defence and aerospace industry.

c. CAS is the governing body of establishments related to space science and remote sensing. It has institutes under it like the Shanghai Institute of Optics and Fine Mechanics, Institute of High Energy Physics (lasers), Institute of Remote Sensing and Digital Earth (RADI), National Space Science Centre (NSSC), National Astronomical Observatories of CAS (NAOC) and Shanghai Institute of Micro-systems and Information Technology.

In 2008 the Chinese government created SASTIND by dissolving the erstwhile Commission of Science, Technical and Industry for National Defence (COSTIND) which functioned under the State Council and used to oversee the administration of defence industry[15]. SASTIND the new body so created is an administrative body for China's defence and aerospace industry. It is engaged in policy making and allocation of funds for research programmes. It has two subordinate agencies viz the China

National Space Agency (CNSA) and the China Aerospace Corporation (CAC). Their roles of various agencies are described below: -

a. CNSA is responsible for enforcement of policies and regulations related to China's space activities. It is also responsible for international collaboration and technology exchange programmes. However, it should not be considered as an umbrella organisation for all space activities in China. It should rather be viewed as an organisation created to meet China's international obligations.

b. CAC is mandated to exercise control over China's aerospace industry. In 1999, the CAC was restructured and two new agencies were created. These are the China Aerospace Science and Technology Corporation (CASC) and China Aerospace Science and Industry Corporation (CASIC).

c. CASC is a conglomerate of about 130 companies. These companies are engaged in research, design and development of space technologies and systems. This includes fabrication of satellites and launch vehicles. CASC is also involved in development of strategic ballistic missiles with technology co-opted in launch vehicles. It also produces AD equipment, ship to air missiles, UAVs and surface to air missiles[16]. CASC comprises the CGWIC and eight major complexes known as academies.

d. CASIC at its core is a defence development agency for conventional weapons. A conglomerate of 140 companies, the CASIC has factories and research institutes under it. It is state owned and funded and deals with short and medium range ballistic missiles, cruise missiles[17], aerospace electronics and aerospace equipment. While it primarily deals with defence equipment, its technologies and products, components and evaluation services for software are also used by space industry.

Military Vertical of Space Organisation

Military Space organisation includes the Central Military Commission (CMC), General

Armaments Department (GAD) (to incl China Satellite Launch and Tracking Control (CLTC)) and General Staff department (GSD).

The General Armament Department (GAD) of PLA functions under the Central Military Commission (CMC). It carries out the management of R&D and production of defence equipment which include spacecrafts and launch vehicles. Under GAD is the China Satellite Launch and Tracking Control (CLTC) which directly controls China's four launch Centres at Jiuquan, Xichang, Taiyuan and Wenchang[18] and the TT&C network. With the exception of lunar exploration programme (managed by SASTIND, a civil body), GAD is in control of China's all major space ventures. This includes patronage to China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) which manages China's human spaceflight programme. The other functions of GAD include the following: -

a. Formulating defence and space procurement/acquisition policies.

b. Administering China's space programme.

c. Exploring technical solutions and overseeing defence industrial R&D and manufacturing.

The General Staff Department (GSD) acts as the headquarters of PLA and is responsible for the military's day-to-day operations, planning, training and mobilisation. It is the consumer of space products and collates demands of PLA's field formations. The GSD's role in China's space enterprise is to provide operational tasking to China's remote sensing, meteorological and communication satellites. Space related roles of various departments of GSD are as under: -

a. First Department, responsible for obtaining meteorological data.

b. Second Department, responsible for obtaining imagery intelligence from satellites. It is collected by the Technology Reconnaissance Bureau (TRB)[19].

c. Third Department, responsible for signal intelligence.

d. Fourth Department, responsible for the Electronic Counter Measures (ECM) and Radar management. Its space related tasks include jamming of adversary's satellite communications and GPS signals.

e. The Satellite Navigation Office which has a Surveying, Mapping and Navigation Bureau. It is responsible for the management of Beidou satellite navigation system.

f. Informatisation Department, responsible for satellite communications[20].

Second Artillery is involved in direct ascent kinetic kill missions and operation of mobile satellite launchers. It has now been transformed into the PLA Rocket Force.

On 31 December 2015, the PLA commenced its eleventh major reorganisation. This has resulted in transforming key military organisations which control China's space activities. It also led to the formation of PLA Strategic Support Force (PLASSF) and overhauling the organisational set up for undertaking space ventures in China. Since this reorganisation is currently in a transitory stage, detailed information on the subject is shrouded in secrecy. Major reforms which may affect the space organisations in China are discussed in succeeding paragraphs.

Creation of PLASSF and Reforms in Space Organisation

Soon after the Defence White Paper of May 2015 designating space as a military domain, China announced major military reforms related to its organisations and structure in December 2015. These military reforms resulted in China creating five services i.e. People's Liberation Army (PLA), People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF), People's Liberation Army Rocket Force (PLARF) and People's Liberation Army Strategic Support Force (PLASSF). The reforms envisage replacement of the general staff department (GSD), the general political department (GPD), the general logistics department (GLD) and general armaments department (GAD) with 15 new functional departments placed directly under

the CMC. PLASSF has been created in order to carry out the integration of strategic capabilities. Formed by the merger of three domains i.e. space[21], cyber and electronic warfare (EW), the PLASSF will thus be the nodal agency for conduct of China's informationised wars. Commenting on the creation of PLASSF, XiJinping stated, "*It is a new type of combat force to maintain national security and an important growth point of PLA's combat capabilities*".

Overall, the role of PLASSF is likely to include technical reconnaissance, electronic warfare, space-based warfare, innovation and missile R&D. PLASSF is envisaged to have two major organisations i.e. the Space Systems Department (SSD) responsible for conducting space operations and the Network Systems Department (NSD) responsible for cyber and EW. The space related functions of GSD and GAD are likely to be transferred to SSD. No concrete evidence exists as to whether units in Second Artillery responsible for direct ascent kinetic kill missions and mobile satellite launchers have been subordinated to PLASSF. Further, the CMSA has not been placed under PLASSF. China has rather raised a new department called Equipment Development Department (EDD) to meet the developmental needs of its armed forces and CMSA has been brought under EDD.

It is; however, nearly certain that satellite launch and control centres have been brought under control of PLASSF[22]. As a result, it is likely that the purpose of PLASSF is to launch and manage China's space-based Command, Control, Communication, Computer, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) sensors. It is possible that the PLASSF also has counter space units of PLARF (erstwhile Second Artillery) under its command.

PLASSF is primarily staffed by army personnel but is expected to support operations of all three services. Further, President Xi Jinping on raising of PLASSF urged for civil-military integration which points to the fact that PLA will be prepared to even integrate civil entities into its folds.

China's Space Architecture

The China Satellite Launch and Tracking Control (CLTC)[23] is responsible for satellite launch operations. It comprises launch centres, Telemetry, Tracking and Control (TT&C) centres and launch vehicles. Details of these have been discussed below.

Launch Centres

China has four launch centres as under: -.

a. *Jiuquan Launch Centre:* Situated at the southern edge of Gobi Desert in Kansu province, the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre is also known as Base 20. The facility has three launch pads and can place satellites in LEO. From Jiuquan, China launches most of its Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) satellites and spacecraft involved in human space flight missions. It has also been developed for testing of surface to air and surface to surface ballistic missiles.

b. *Taiyuan Launch Centre*: Also known as Base 25, this site is in Shanxi Province, Kelan county. From Taiyuan, China primarily launches meteorological, resource sensing and scientific satellites in LEO. The site has one launch pad. It has also been developed as a missile testing site[24].

c. *Xichang Launch Centre*: Also known as Base 27, the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre is located in Sichuan province of southern territory of China. Used primarily for launching satellites in geosynchronous earth orbit (GEO), the centre has to its credit launch of some of the most prestigious missions like lunar orbiting probe and the DF-21 ASAT test conducted in 2007. From Xichang, China primarily launches commercial and communication satellites.

d. *Wenchang Launch Centre:* It is located on Hainan Island. It is used to launch heavy satellites and modules for the manned space programme. The launch centre's closer proximity to the equator can increase launch payloads by 10-15 percent.

Telemetry, Tracking and Control (TT&C) Centres: The TT&C Centres not only control and monitor China's satellites, but also enable China to track and target adversary's satellites. Such a capability can greatly augment China's ASAT operations in a conflict. TT&C operations are conducted primarily by two TT&C centres. These are Xian Satellite Monitoring and Control Centre (XSCC) and the Beijing Aerospace Command and Control Centre (BACC). Details are as under:-

a. XSCC, also known as Base 26 is a satellite control facility located at Weinan near Xian. It exercises command over geographically distributed stations which carry out TT&C tasks for satellites in LEO, GEO and experimental orbits. It also controls three land based mobile TT&C stations.

b. BACC acts as the nerve centre for space flight testing and manned space flight missions. It is also responsible for TT&C of Shenzou missions. It exercises control over various TT&C stations located inland and abroad. It also controls the four Yuanwang TT&C ships in the Sea of Japan (YW-1), southern tip of South America (YW-2), Atlantic Ocean (YW-3) and Indian Ocean off Australia (YW-4).

Launch Vehicles: China has developed various types of launch vehicles to launch satellites in various orbits like LEO and GEO. Based on *Dong Feng* intercontinental ballistic missile are the Long March (LM)-2C and LM-2D[25] rockets which remain China's most commonly used launch vehicles for launches in LEO. The LM-4B and 4C provide for medium lift capability to China in LEO. The LM-2F is used to launch heavy satellites in LEO. It has earlier been used to launch the Shenzhou spacecraft. The LM-2F/G has been used to launch unmanned modules of Tiangong-1 and Tiangong-2 space stations. The LM-3, 3A, 3B and 3Care used to launch medium and heavy satellites in Geostationary Transfer Orbit (GTO).

The LM-2D and LM-2F can also be used to place light and medium satellites in GTO. In the LEO, China can lift 25 tons of payload with LM-5Band 13 tons with LM-7. In the GTO, the LM-5 is expected to carry 14 tons. The LM-11 which made its maiden flight on 25 September 2015[26] is expected to be China's largest solid-fuelled rocket and will enhance China's launch on demand capability during conflicts. China has also been developing '*Kuaizhou'* (Quick Vessel) series of launch vehicles, based on DF-21[27] missile. Similar to LM-11, the Kuaizhou also provides China the launch on demand capability. To this effect, China launched Kuaizhou-1 (KZ-1) in September 2013.[28] China currently can launch a maximum payload of 25 tons in LEO and 14 tons in GTO.

Conclusion

China's journey to becoming a space power has been a constant struggle since its inception. But its rapid success is attributable to political patronage and national vision. From a modest beginning to its current pedestal, China has moved through the most awe-inspiring journey in the domain of space. China is now moving steadily to meet all essential elements of its stated policies of winning '*local wars under informationised conditions'*. It has also realised that harnessing the global space industry will bring not only commercial benefits but also accrue strategic gains. Having identified space as a strategic high ground, China is fast evolving into a space super power.

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Goethe's Paths to Cosmopolitanism

Dr. Javed K. Shah*

[*Johann Wolfgang von Goethe was a German poet, playwright, novelist and philosopher. As the prominent author of his time, he always supported the notion of world literature. He took great delight in picking up the literary gems all over the world. The effect of the play "Sakuntala" was too strong on him. It was through Schopenhauer that Goethe obtained the Buddhist influence for his writings. In 1814, he got acquainted with the works of fourteenth century poet of the Middle East, Hafiz. It seems that he was looking for universally accepted human values and elements. In order to achieve cosmopolitanism of literature, he tried to efface the differences of character, culture and traditions of the nations.*]

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (August 28, 1749 – March 22, 1832) was a German poet, playwright, novelist and philosopher. His influence upon Germany was second only to the Protestant Reformation leader Martin Luther (1483 - 1546). In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Goethe was the supreme poet in the Western world. For Karl Viëtor, this great man was "among the few geniuses of the first rank to have appeared in Western civilization. He [Goethe] was the last Titan of the literary world…" (Preface vii). Philosophers, from Hegel to Wittgenstein, were also influenced by Goethe's thought of organic ontology.

As the prominent author of his time, he always supported the notion of world literature. In a conversation with Eckermann, which was held on January 31, 1827, Goethe stated that the "epoch of world literature is at hand and everyone must try to hasten its approach". On the one hand he was known as the "Sage of the West" (qtd. in Bhatti 195), and on the other hand his engagement with the Orient is clearly evident. Writers like Shakespeare, Fielding, Swift, Sterne, Richardson, and Goldsmith were great source of inspiration for him. Likewise, he was influenced by the plays of Kalidasa, Gitagovindam of Jayadeva, Divans of Hafiz, and Buddhism.

As Ehrlich (2000: 28) mentions: "Goethe tried to connect the East and the West in such a way that modern Europe would profit spiritually and thus reconcile the material and spiritual claims on man through agreement and rapprochement."

He took great delight in picking up the literary gems all over the world. Basham (2005: 19) asserted that "Goethe borrowed a device of Indian dramaturgy for the prologue to 'Faust'…" The effect of the play "Sakuntala" was so strong on him as he wrote in his October 9, 1830 letter to Chezy that he made "impossible attempt to bring it … on the German stage.". It is noteworthy that in 1791, he came across the German translation of the play by Georg Forster. In response to this reading he composed a poem on Sakuntala which is available in Eastweek's translation in English:

And all, by which the soul is charmed and enraptured, feasted, fed?

Wouldst thou the earth and heaven itself in one sole name combine?

I name thee, O Sakoontala! And all at once is said. (qtd. in Das, 2000: 5).

Goethe's idea of universal literature exerted a powerful influence on Rabindranath Tagore (May 7, 1861 – August 7, 1941) who was the eminent creative artist of early twentieth century India. Tagore was the first non-European author who obtained the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. The use of colloquial language into Bengali literature was his remarkable achievement. As many of his poems had been translated into English, he became immensely popular in the

* Asst. Prof, Dept of English, SNA Govt College, Kohka-Neora, Chhattisgarh.

Western world. It is important to note that he appropriated the Goethean concept of world literature. In his 1907 lecture at the National Council of Education Tagore asserted:

"Just as this earth is not the sum of patches of land belonging to different people, and to know the earth as such is sheer rusticity, so literature is not the mere total of works composed by different hands…. From this narrow provincialism we must free ourselves; we must strive to see the work of each author as a whole, that whole as a part of man's universal creativity, and that universal spirit in its manifestations through world-literature" (Tagore, 1973:88).

In Bangla, Tagore called World Literature as "Visva-Sahitya". In fact, Tagore drew his inspiration from this German writer Goethe. In 1878, when he was at the age of seventeen, he contributed an article "Goethe's o tahar Pranayinigan" to the Bengali Journal 'Bharati'. There is a striking resemblance between Tagore's famous poem "Urvashi" and Goethe's idea of das Ewige Weibliche. For Goethe, who formulated the proposal of World literature, the Orient was the source of various kinds of knowledge. Friedrich Rückert, a critic, held him up to ridicule as Manfred Stassen translated these lines in English: Als der West war durchgekostet, hat er jetzt den Ost entmostet. [When upon the West he ceased to dine, / He turned the journey East to wine.] (qtd. in Majumdar, 2000: 87)

It was through Schopenhauer that Goethe obtained the Buddhist influence for his writings. Buddhist idea of liberation from rebirth fascinated him. The central notion of Buddhism is to trivialize worldly lives. Das aptly remarks: "Goethe's… reading of Schopenhauer's 'The World as Will and Idea' (1819) might have given him impression that the highest wisdom of… the Buddhists was life-negating" (Das, 2000:8). Goethe was well-aware of the ten great steps of life and wisdom, which begin with the bestiality and go upward to the state of the Bodhisattva.

In his poem "The God and the Bayadere", he depicted God's embrace of an unrighteous person. In "Paria-Trilogy", a lower being mingles with a higher entity and, thus, the enlightenment of both these persons becomes possible. When Goethe observed: "We all suffer from life", he suggested another great idea with the Buddhist background.

The tradition and literature of the East always proved effective elements in Goethe's life and his writings. In 1814, he got acquainted with the works of fourteenth century poet of the Middle East, Hafiz. As Viëtor (1949: 220) affirmed: "From his youth he had had an interest in the culture of the Middle East…. The Koran he had studied as a young man, and among the dramatic fragments of his early period was one intended to celebrate Mahomet as a religious genius."

The Viennese Oriental scholar, Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall, translated the poems of Hafiz from Persian to German. When Goethe went through these poems, a new world appeared on the horizon. This poet from Shiraz in the South of present-day Iran, who was "another Voltaire" for Goethe, inspired him to create "West-Eastern Divan". This great poet prepared him to rise above the moment into the realm of timeless entity. According to Goethe, he could find God and his works in the East which represented the land "of revelations, prophecies, and promises". As he composes:

God is of the East possess'd

God is ruler of the West;

North and South alike, each land

Rests within his gentle hand. (274)

Goethe elegantly combined the new and old imaginations and actuality in the poems of Divan. In constructing the vivid sense of imagery, the Orientalists as he witnessed, were far behind the Greeks. However, the amalgamation of modern west with the easy style of the Persian writing is clearly evident in his poetry. The Divan got completed in 1819 when Goethe was in his seventieth year.

For some critics, Goethe was interested in Kalidasa and Sakuntala because he was concerned about the possibility of "world

theatre" which he had conceptualized. In fact, he was not involved with the ancient Indian civilization. His involvement was with the world in which we live. It is evident in the following lines of "Faust" that emphasize:

Employ the sun and moon, do not hold back,

Use all the stars we have in stock,

…………………………………

The whole creation, far and wide

Move thoughtfully, but fast as well

From heaven through the world to hell (1963:234)

According to Goethe, Hindu artistic ideals were more formless and too abstract in comparison with the ideals of the Hellenic world. However, in "Sakuntala" he found the "reflection of his own belief in the unity of life" (Das, 2000: 8).

He made every effort to fulfill his ambition of "world literature", where "one flock be assembled under one shepherd" (Viëtor, 1950: 194-5). It seems that he was looking for universally accepted human values and elements. In order to achieve cosmopolitanism of literature he tried to efface the differences of character, culture and traditions of the nations. According to him, universal can be visible in the individuals. In "Goethe The Thinker", Viëtor (1950) records that "In every particular item, be it historic, mythological, fabulous… one will see that universal element shining through all nationality and personality." For some critics, his idea of world literature originated from his "Faust" which is actually a German theme but narrates the destiny of the whole mankind.

Goethe was well aware of the Indian philosophy. It is not beyond the possibility that he felt an attraction for the concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam which inculcates an understanding that the whole of humanity is one family. And as the 'Europe's last universal man", he saw that universal literature is essential for the welfare of humankind.

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Globalisation and Rights of Women

Dr. Dipen Saikia*

[The paper proposes to discuss the links between globalisation and the gendered dimensions of Human Rights. It also gives an overview of what the forces of globalisation have in store for women in India and proposes several policy recommendations for facilitating the empowerment of women.]

Over the centuries and from different places, including the women's movement itself, there have been voices which identify 'woman' as factor that can turn the tide. Mao Zedong quotes that women hold up half the sky. Gandhi felt that women held the key to a just and peaceful world and gave them a moral stature higher than that of men. But despite these claims women worldwide have not been able to become that political presence that can command attention to its ideas.

International Woman's Day, marked on 8th March every year is a major day of global celebration of economic, political and social achievements of women. Human Rights belong to women too by virtue of their being human encompassing political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms. Article 14 of the Constitution of India says that no person will be denied equality before the law. Article 42 states that women should be provided just and human work atmosphere and maternity relief. But much to their surprise women are not even aware that they have any rights in a man's world.

In the 1970s when the concept of Women Empowerment was first invoked by women's organizations, it was explicitly used to frame and facilitate the struggle for social justice and women's equality through transformation of economic, social and political structures at the national and international levels. In addition, it recognised the importance of women's agency and self-transformation.

* Associate Prof., Dept. of Pol. Sc., Moridhal College, Moridhal, Assam.

During the UN's Decade for Women (1976-85) women's groups from across international boundaries came together to discuss the impact of development on women in developing countries. Feminism is the main foundation of these goals which essentially wanted to address and resolve the pressing issue of domination over the lives of women around the world.

Globalisation has created a tremendous impact on the lives of women in developing nations. But it is a double-edged process as far as women are concerned. On the one hand, majority of women in India and other developing countries find themselves stripped off the benefits of social security. On the other hand, there are possibilities of better education facilities and opportunities at the transnational level which are very attractive. It is however necessary to understand that effective development process acts as agents of change as well as beneficiaries. In the globalisation process, it is only through full understanding of the plight of women, that the government can prepare proper strategies to empower women and bring them into the mainstream developmental process.

Globalisation is a phenomenon that is greatly affecting society at large. It is, in fact, a combination of the free exchange of goods, services and capital. The term has been used as early as 1944 and Theodore Levitt used it for the first time in an economic context. But now it has become an umbrella term referring to a variety of industrial, informational, trade, social, technological, cultural and political inter-relationships. It has led to increasing integration

among and incorporation of people and firms around the world.

This accelerated integration is due to three aspects. The first is the fast and important progress in the fields of Information and Communication Technologies. Globalisation is primarily linked to revolution is ICTs. It is as Scott Lash and John Urry (1994) believe that this revolution is the "gigantic leap forward in the reach and scope of circulation sphere." The second is the radical changes affecting the geographical landscape. It is generally associated with the shrinking of the world. It has created an image of the world as a network of highly interconnected places in which space is overcome. Manuel Castells (2000) calls it, "deterritorialised network society."

The third is the dominance of an ideology of market-led regulation initially applied to economic and financial exchanges and now growingly applied to a variety of other sectors of human activities including the social and political sectors like health, education, water supply, human rights, etc. Globalisation can be defined as "a complex economic, political, cultural and geographic process in which the mobility of capital, organisations, ideas, discourses and people has taken a global or transnational form" (Moghadam 1999).

Literature on globalisation, in general, by both the so-called advocates and opponents of globalisation is abundant. However, the critics of globalisation lay much more stress on its impact on Human Rights, particularly of women, poor people and of the developing countries. Their analysis and conclusions are usually supported by facts and figures drawn from international reports and statistics to prove that Human Rights have been adversely affected by globalisation.

They usually relate one or the other aspect of Human Rights to one or the other aspect of globalisation, such as impoverishment, and lowering standards of living, increasing inequality, discrimination, deprivation of satisfaction of basic needs such as food, clean water and housing, illiteracy, etc. and explain these facts by globalisation in general through making comparison between the state before globalisation (usually before the 1990s) and after it, such as stating that "progress in reducing infant mortality was considerably slower during the period of globalisation (1990-98) than over the previous two decades . . ." So, both the advocates and critics of globalisation agree on the fact that Human Rights are in some way or the other adversely affected by globalisation.

It is necessary to examine the underlying basic assumptions of both the Human Rights agreements and the globalisation agreements, which are contradictory as far as Human Rights are concerned. The Right to Education (according to Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948) has been adversely affected by the privatisation policies and the turning of education into a profit generating enterprise in the developing countries. Due to the reduced governmental expenditure on education, the quality of public free education has suffered a lot affecting women's education.

Women all over the globe encounter varied powers over the ages: their powerlessness and dependency on men-folk, poverty at home, insufficient advancement facilities, patriarchy and social pressures, class/caste/race-based discrimination, social constraints, inadequate access to resources and above all their own inherent fears. It becomes difficult for women to attend educational institutions established by investors offering better but much more expensive quality of education. However most developing countries still suffer a high rate of women-illiteracy.

Globalisation can be a major event of prosperity provided it is supported by adequate national policies and conducive social, political and economic environment. Socially, the majority of women is still tradition-bound and is in a disadvantageous position. Since globalisation is

opening up the economy at a very high speed, without the required policies to provide the much-required safety net, women who have been involved with production in the traditional ways have to cope with numerous problems and yet try to avail of the opportunities which an open economy promises.

In the wake of globalisation, there is an enormous amount of rethinking going on across the globe on women's issues. Feminists have made and are making valuable contributions to this quest right now. Their literature states their long-term goals of achieving women's equality, dignity, freedom of choice through women's power to control their own lives within and outside the home; and removing all forms of inequality and oppression through the creation of a more just, social and economic order, nationally and internationally (Bunch and Carrillo 1990).

Besides Feminists, numerous national and international agencies have drawn attention to gender-related dimensions of Human Right issues - the most important being the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) adopted in 1979. In 1993, forty-five years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted, and eight years after CEDAW entered into force, the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna confirmed that women's rights were human rights. That this statement was even necessary is striking - women's status as human beings entitled to rights should have never been in doubt.

And yet this was a step forward in recognising the rightful claims of half of humanity in identifying neglect of women's rights as Human Rights violation and in drawing attention to the relationship between gender and Human Rights violations. In 2006, the *Women's Human Rights and Gender Unit* (WRGU) was established. The work of which flows from the special role that the High Commissioner for Human Rights can play in legal standard setting with respect to the gender inequalities that exist in accessing justice.

Besides feminists and national and international agencies, initially it is the working-class women who have been responsible for drawing everybody's attention towards their rights and plight since 8th March 1857. The first ever International Women's Day was observed on 28th February, 1909 in the US. The idea of having an International Women's Day was put forward at *the* turn of the 20th century amid rapid world industrialisation and economic expansion that led to protests over working conditions. By urban legend, women from clothing and textile factories staged one such protest on 8th March 1857 in New York city. These women established their first Labour Union in the same month two years later. More protests followed on 8 March in subsequent years.

In 1910 the first International Women's Conference was held in Copenhagen by the second International and an 'International Women's Day' (IWD) was established. Furthermore, on the eve of World War I, women across Europe held peace rallies on 8th March 1913. In the West, IWD was commemorated during 1910s and 1920s but dwindled in subsequent years. It was revived by the rise of feminism in 1960s. In 1975, which had been designated as the International Women's Year, the UN gave official sanction to and began sponsoring IWD.

In India, IWD holds a lot of significance. The Government of India in response to the Conference held by the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in 2000, declared the year 2001 as the 'Year of Women's Empowerment.' The 'national document' which the Government of India had prepared with the intention of promoting women's development, highlights the importance of three strategies which are (1) obtaining greater political participation of women (2) income generating schemes for women and (3) increasing female literacy level. The purpose behind the 73rd Constitution Amendment Act, 1993 was to assure the empowerment of women.

Through these processes globalisation prospects of Higher Education and Quality Education have become feasible for those women who can afford them, economically and socially. With the changing attitude towards women, especially in the urban areas, women enjoy more egalitarian set of gender relationship. Augmentation of women's movement through exposures at the international level will help bring about major changes in the economic, social and political lives of women. While progress has been made in some areas, many of the challenges and obstacles identified in 1995 still remain.

It can be concluded that Human Rights for women are assumed to be attainable through different points of departure, including political mobilisation, consciousness-raising and education. In addition, changes where and when necessary, in laws, civil codes, systems of property rights and the social and legal institutions that underwrite male control and privilege, are assumed to be essential for the achievement of women's equality. Successful enjoyment of Human Rights and empowerment strategies also require the direct involvement of women in the planning and implementation of projects.

The current economic and socio-political maladies along with increasing violence against women and children are attributed to the failure of male-oriented polity. Representation of women in higher bodies of political authority has been considered a pre-requisite for the success of democracy at the grass-root level. However, the need for accountability and sense of commitment on the part of the elected women representatives in stressed. This requires a higher degree of awareness among women regarding health, literacy, gender and other relevant social, economic and political issues.

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

Conceptualizing Social Exclusion of Dalits in India

Dr. Deepan Das*

[India is one of the worlds's most unequal societies, where the problem of discrimination and exclusion based on one's identity persists in many fields in the country. Particularly, when we think of disadvantage and discrimination in India, we think almost invariably of caste-basted exclusion, leaving unaddressed many other critical areas. Education, employment and health are important part of human life and need to be protected and provided by the state to all its citizens irrespective of caste, creed, race or religion. As a remedial measure to address this problem social protection measures need to be taken up by the state. It analyses the situation of Dalits, who still do not have access to opportunities and resources and are in the lowest ebb in the human development indicators. Furthermore, this Article investigates the legal issues relating to caste in India to determine what can be done to limit its effect. It is largely attributed to the State 's informality, besides the lack of commitment by the civil society, towards the cause of socio-economic and political development of the Dalits. The end result is that the Dalits are kept away from participating in the development debate which is considered to be a stumbling block in their integration with social framework of the Indian society.]

Social exclusion has several dimensions. It exists in various spheres and in many forms. Race and caste have; however, dominated the discourse on social exclusion. In its simplest understanding, social exclusion is lack of access to resources and consequent inability to utilize them. It is further accentuated by denial of opportunities which enhance access to resources and their utilization. It can, therefore be experienced by anyone who is in a position which is vulnerable to such impeding conditions. Thus, besides caste and race, religion, age, gender, social position and occupational hierarchy-are all potentially volatile to social exclusion. Stratification of human populations occurs at various levels and in many forms. It has a reflection of power dynamics which exist between people and also between population groups.

This drives some caste and religious groups to be more advantaged as against others. The young and the elderly population are likely to be less equipped as compared to the adults in the sphere of work. The elders may be the dominating persons within the household; making the young and the adults vulnerable. Similarly, the gender roles are likely to put women at certain disadvantages *vis-à-vis* men. Superimposing this with lack of access to education and employment; other incomes; land ownership and political participation- all are drivers to accentuate social exclusion.

The concept of social exclusion has its origins in France. The former French president of the European Commission, Jacques Delors, promoted this concept in connection with the poverty programmes of the European Union in the beginning of the 1990´s. Since then, social exclusion has become of major concern in the European Union and outside. The main thrust on the concept of social exclusion in the region of its origin has been for poverty alleviation and thus for addressing unemployment, low income, poor jobs, homelessness, poor health, low qualifications and leaving school early, gender inequalities, discrimination and racism, handicaps, old age, divorce, drug abuse and alcoholism and to be living in a deprived socio-economic area. Most of the debate has therefore, surrounded the labour market.

* Asst. Prof. in Pol. Sc., R.G. Baruah College, Guwahati.

Social exclusion is a universal phenomenon which has existed over time and space. However, in India, social exclusion has been predominantly used in understanding caste-based discrimination. Caste is a unique determinant of social exclusion in the Indian Sub-continent. There are various forms of social exclusion experienced by the Dalits in different spheres. Historically, the Dalits were deprived of education; right to possess assets; and the right to possess weapons to protect themselves. The code of conduct that deprives them of these rights- Manusmriti- was written three thousand years back.

Amartya Sen draws attention to various meanings and dimensions of the concept of social exclusion. He draws a distinction between situations where some people are kept out (or left out), and where some people are included (forcibly) on deeply unfavourable terms. The two situations are described as "unfavourable exclusion" and "unfavourable inclusion". Sen argues that it is important to distinguish between 'active exclusion' — fostering of exclusion through deliberate policy interventions by the government or by any other wilful agents (to exclude some people from some opportunity), and 'passive exclusion', which works through the social process in which there are no deliberate attempts to exclude, but nevertheless may result in exclusion from a set of circumstances.

He further distinguishes the "constitutive relevance" of exclusion from that of "instrumental importance". In the former, exclusion or deprivation have an intrinsic importance of their own. For instance, not bring able to relate to others and to take part in the life of the community can directly impoverish a person's life, in addition to the further deprivation it may generate. This is different from social exclusion of "instrumental importance", in which the exclusion in itself is not impoverishing but can lead to impoverishment of human life.

Constitutional Provisions

The Indian Constitution guarantees all citizens basic civil and political rights and fundamental freedoms. In addition, the Constitution has special provisions prohibiting discrimination based on caste. These provisions are found under the Right to Equality (Articles 15, 16, and 17), the Right Against Exploitation (Article 23), Cultural and Educational Rights (Article 29:2), and prohibition against disenfranchisement in elections based on one's religion, race, caste or sex (Article 325). Articles 330 and 333 permit Union and state legislatures to reserve seats for members of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (indigenous people or Adivasis) based on their population in each constituency.

Article 338 mandates the creation of a National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to monitor safeguards provided to them. Finally, Article 341 makes possible the governmental identification of different subcategories of Scheduled Castes in relation to each state. The list of Scheduled Castes or subgroups within the Scheduled Castes, published by the president through public notification, is deemed final.

Legislative Enactments

India has passed various laws to protect the rights of the Scheduled Castes to fulfill the constitutional provisions pertaining to them. These include the Protection of Civil Rights (Anti Untouchability) Act (1955); the Bonded Labour (Abolition) Act (1976); the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act (1989) and Rules (1995); the Employment of Manual Scavenger and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act (1993); and various land reform laws to redistribute community land to the landless. Finally, to monitor enforcement of some of these laws, the Central (i.e., federal) Government established the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and the National Human Rights Commission in the early 1990s.

Prosecution of Offenders

India's criminal justice system has been negligent in its conviction of persons who violate the rights

of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. In 2005, there were 31,840 alleged criminal incidents reportedly committed against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, as defined by the IPC and Special Laws. Although the charge sheet rates for crimes against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were similar to the national means, the average conviction rates for offenses against Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were 29.8% and 24.5%, respectively, compared to national rates of 42.4% for IPC crimes and 84.5% for Special Law Crimes.

Police personnel act with impunity, as evidenced by the fact that 61,560 complaints were alleged against police personnel in 2005. Only 225 police personnel were tried during that same year and 97 police personnel were actually convicted (National Crime Records Bureau, i.e.). Unfortunately, the protection of Dalits' human rights fails in practice due to the impunity of higher caste groups and police corruption.

Education Programme

In the wake of the passage of the 86th Amendment (2002), India initiated the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) (also known as Education for All [EFA]), to achieve the mission of Universal Elementary Education (UEE). The basic goal of SSA is to create quality community owned elementary education schools for children 6–14 years of age with universal retention by 2010, with a special focus on girls, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other disadvantaged groups.

According to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, India's touted SSA program is not effective for Dalit children due to discrimination.

Moreover, teachers maintain discriminatory attitudes and practices (NCDHR, 2006). In one such incident in 2001, the officiating headmaster of a government secondary school in Rajasmand, located in the north western Indian state of Rajasthan, committed suicide as a result of the harassment and beatings he received at the hands of school staff and teachers. Some media reports indicate that Dalits are still forced into degrading occupations, such as manual scavenging, bonded labour, and child labour. Dalits who are not forced into degrading occupations are discriminated against by means of lower wages, longer periods of unemployment, and fewer opportunities for work.

Dalits have more difficulty getting hired by others because business owners normally prefer to hire those from their own caste. Some Dalits are excluded from crop processing, residential construction, and restaurant work. Dalit agricultural laborers earn less money on average, work less often, and are paid later than non Dalit workers. In nonagricultural positions, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other backward castes (e.g., Sudras or lowest caste group) work fewer days and earn a lower daily wage than higher caste labourers (NCDHR, 2006.

There are instances where Dalits are not permitted to draw water from common wells and hand pumps; separate utensils are used to serve them in tea and food stalls, they are not allowed entry into the temples and Dalit children are made to sit at the back of the classroom. The situation is even worse in rural areas where the majority of the population and Dalits reside. The constitution of India grants Dalits certain privileges that include reservations in education, government jobs, and government bodies; and protection against caste-based discrimination. However, the upper caste people have been demanding the withdrawal of these Acts by rendering the argument of meritocracy and on the ground of the misuse of these Acts. Despite these provisions and assumed 'misuses', Dalits are subjected to atrocities and social exclusion by the dominant castes in order to maintain their caste superiority and display the power dynamics.

Rise in the incidence of violence against the Dalits is also attributed to the increasing level of awareness and assertion among them. Therefore, social exclusion is related to lack of access to services and goods offered by societies. Social and religious groups appear to accentuate social exclusion by denying certain opportunities pertaining to social and religious practices and

access to services and resources. Caste-based exclusion percolates through various opportunities for enhancing access to resources-education, health care and work. Thus, social exclusion can be understood through three basic tenets of complete and partial exclusion; and unfavorable inclusion.

Gross Injustice Occurs Every Day in India

Recently, a small village in Bhandara district, Maharashtra, was the focus of attention when four members of a Dalit family were slaughtered on September 29, 2006. The victims were stripped naked, dragged from their hut to the village plaza 500 meters away, and hacked to death by an entire village of upper-caste Indians. So far, all political parties and the local administration have covered up the matter. More than a week after the gruesome killings took place, no member of the legislative assembly (MLA) or members of parliament (MP) from Bhandara had visited the village. Two MLAs from Nagpur, ostensibly sent by congress higher-ups, visited Khairlanji, but did not make any noise. Not a single villager's statement was recorded. The local village police and village administrative authorities worked hand-in-hand with the killers.

Another recent event in the village of Kadkol, Basavanabagewadi Taluk, Bijapur District, was reported by *The Hindu* on October 21, 2006. Families from 93 scheduled castes were boycotted by upper-caste landlords as a punishment for drinking water from a public tank. The families, made up mostly of landless labourers' and including hundreds of children, reached starvation. The landlords felt their water supply was polluted by the untouchables drinking from it. This is not a one-village event or a onetime event; it takes place 24/7/365 across India, yet the Indian government does not protect and safeguard Dalits from such oppression.

Conclusion

From the empirical evidence it becomes clear that caste-based exclusion and discrimination of Dalits in the past and its continuation in the present (through residual traditional attributes) continues to be one of the main reasons for their lower human development and higher deprivation and poverty.

The approach of Indian policymakers to overcoming discrimination and addressing social exclusion include such policy interventions as legal enforcement of anti-discrimination laws, reservation and preferential and general empowering measures that form part of anti-poverty programmes. These polices have brought about positive changes, but the rate of improvement has not been fast enough to reduce the absolute level of deprivation and the gap between the excluded group of scheduled castes and tribes and other advanced sections. The continuing exclusion-induced deprivation of disadvantaged groups of SCs indicates that addressing social exclusion is often much more difficult than addressing poverty.

Social and cultural sources of exclusion (in economic, civil and political spheres) are rooted in informal social structures and institutions of caste and untouchability covering not only the private but public domain governed by the State. In this context, the inclusion of excluded groups is different from the social inclusion of materially deprived people. Poverty, even when broadly defined as exclusion from the means necessary for full participation in the normal activities of society, is largely a question of access to resources and services. The social exclusion of groups or individuals within that group is foremost a denial of equal opportunity, respect and recognition of the right to development.

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Participation & Role of Women in PRIs of Kota

Dr Jaishree Rathore* & Aarti Sharma**

[The present study was conducted on the sample of 74 women respondents from 155 Gram Panchayats of Kota District. Area sampling method have been adopted for selecting the sample from different gram panchayat. Interview schedule was used to collect primary sources from the respondents. Analysis revealed that the awareness and constitutional knowledge of women is sound. Women's play a significant role in politics and administration and develop their knowledge and skills with participation in the PRIs.]

The Panchayati Raj System is a South Asian political system which is found mainly in the nations of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal. It is the ancient system of local government in the Indian sub-continent. The word *raj* indicates "rule" and *Panchayat* indicates "assembly" (*ayat*) of five (*Panch*). Traditionally panchayats consisted of astute and respected elders chosen and accepted by the local community. However, there were varying forms of such assemblies. Traditionally, these assemblies settled controversy between individuals and between villages.

Structure of PRIs in India

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are such important political originations in India that have come to epitomize the establishment of grassroots democracy and to ensure people's increased participations in political system of the country. Panchayati Raj Institutions, the grass-root units of local self-government, have been considered as an instrument of socio-economic transformation in rural India. Involvement of people at the grassroots level is the most important means of bringing about socio-economic development. The Panchayat is seen as a means of empowering people and involving them in decision-making process.

Local governments being closer to the people can be more conducive to local needs and can make better use of resources. The democratic system in a country can be ensured only if there is mass participation in the governance. Thus, this system of democratic decentralization is popularly known as Panchayati Raj in India, which is considered as an instrument to ensure democracy and socio-economic transformation in the society. Panchayati Raj System is an age-old domestic politico-administrative institution in India. It owes its origin to the different traditional patterns of governance.

* Associate Prof., Dept of Sociology, Govt. Arts College, Kota.
** Research Scholar, Dept of Sociology, Govt. Arts College, Kota.

Panchayati raj system has been in vogue in many states of India and Rajasthan is said to be the first state in India to adopt this system in Nagaur district on 2 October 1959. During the period between the 1950s and 60s as laws were passed in this regard, this system was adopted by many other state governments as well to establish panchayats in their respective jurisdictions. Panchayati Raj is a three-tier system – village is first level, block or janapad as second level and zilla or district as the third level.

Women's Participation and Role

Undoubtedly, women constitute more or less than half of the population of India; nonetheless, their involvement in politics is insignificant compared to men. Many psychological, social and physical factors hold women back from active political involvement. This is very true as far as the state and national level politics is concerned. A democratic country cannot progress if energies of its half population are confined to the kitchen only. In independent India, the Constitution certified gender equality through various provisions and regulation. It was assumed that these rights would spur women's participation in politics. However, this aspect cannot be viewed in isolation from the general position of women in the society where despite their vast numerical strength, women have continued to occupy a marginalized position in the political system.

Admittedly, women's participation in politics has been increasing at a rapid pace; nevertheless, still it is not satisfactory and more needs to be done. They are also denied chances to participate in the administration, even in the making of decisions that affect their life and welfare. Though Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi had believed that women had a positive role to play in the reconstruction of society and the recognition of their equality was an essential step to bring about social justice.

Participation by women in the independence movement had a direct impact on the political and social elite, including women. When the constitution for free India was being adopted,

women like Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Hansa Mehta, Renuka Roy, Durgabai Deshmukh etc., took part in the constitution-making process. In the Constitution of India, there is guarantee of equality and dignity of the individual and it provides the fundamental rights for women, especially with regard to political and legal equality and also guarantees non-discrimination in employment.

Objectives

1. To know about Panchayati Raj Institution.

2. To find out Empowerment in Panchayati Raj.

3. To appraise participation and significant role of women in PRIs.

Methodology

For the purpose of present study, both primary and secondary sources have been used. Primary sources, which form the basis of this study, were collected by observation and interview schedule. Secondary sources have been culled from various books, journals and libraries. Various government departments have been also helpful for secondary sources such as Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department, Jaipur office, Zilla Parishad, Kota, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Jaipur.

The data was collected by the researcher from field. In order to select respondents from different villages, Area Sampling Method has been used. Simple statistical tools were employed in the research while undertaking tabulation and analysis of the data.

Research study area are District Kota in Rajasthan which has 155 Gram Panchayat. From 155 Gram Panchayat researcher selected 74 elected Mahila Sarpanchs from area Sampling method.

To understand participation and significant role of women in PRIs, the Researcher analysed the age, education, caste, family income, awareness level and comparison between educational and economic plans and the outcome is presented in the following tables:

Age-wise classification of respondents is shown in Table -1

Table No. 1

Age-Wise Classification of Respondents

S.No.	Particulars	Number	%
1	Young Age 47.30	(18-35)	35
2	Middle Age (35-50)	20	27.02
3	Aged - (Above 50)	19	25.68
	TOTAL	74	100

The analysis of the above table leads to the conclusion that 35 Mahila Sarpanchs, who accounted for 47.30%, belonged to 18-35-year age-group, 20 Mahila Sarpanch who constituted 27.02%, belonged to 35-50-year age-group and only 19 Mahila Sarpanch, who comprised 25.68%, were from the age group of above 50 years. Researcher concludes from the above table that maximum (42.30%) Mahila Sarpanch had belonged to 18-35-year age-group and minimum 25.68% were from the age group of above 50 years.

Educational qualification of Respondents is shown in Table- 2 as follow.

Table No. 2

Educational Qualification of Respondents

S.No.	Particulars	Number	%
1	Illiterate	00	00
2	Secondary	38	51.36
3	Sr. Secondary	20	27.02
4	Graduate	10	13.51
5	Post Graduate	6	8.11
	TOTAL	74	100.00

Table No. 2 shows that 38 Respondents had secondary-level education and constituted 51.36% of the total respondents. 20 Respondents had studied up to Senior Secondary level and they accounted for 27.02%, and 10 Respondents had education up to Graduate level and they comprised 13.51%. Only 6 Respondents, constituting 8.11% of the total number, had studied up to Post-Graduate level. It emerges from the above table that more than half (51.36%) of Mahila Sarpanchs had studied up to Secondary level and the minimum (8.11%) Mahila Sarpanchs had studied up to Post-graduate level.

Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of their caste is shows in table-3 as follows -

Table No. 3

Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of their caste

S.No.	Particulars	Number	%
1.	Upper Caste	30	40.55
2.	OBC	10	13.51
3.	Schedule Caste	15	20.27
4.	Scheduled Tribes	19	25.67

The analysis of the above table leads to the conclusion that 30 Mahila Sarpanch who constituted 40.55%, belonged to Upper Caste, 10 Mahila Sarpanch who comprised 13.51%, hailed from other-backward-class. Besides, 15 Mahila Sarpanchs who accounted for 20.57%, were from Scheduled Castes and only 19 Mahila Sarpanchs, consisting 25.67%, were from Scheduled Tribes. It reveals that maximum (40.55%) number of Mahila Sarpanchs had from Upper Castes and minimum (13.51%) Mahila Sarpanchs were from Other Backward Class.

Source of income of the Respondents' Family is shown in Table- 4 below.

Table No. 4

Source of Income of The Respondents' Family

S.No.	Particulars	Number	%
1.	Agriculture	33	44.60
2.	Govt. Job.	10	13.51
3.	Private Job.	17	22.29
4.	Animal Husbandry	14	18.92

The Table No. 4 shows that 33 Respondents who are 44.60% of the total number, were from Agriculture and 10 Respondents, comprising 13.51%, were employed in government jobs. 17 Respondents who accounted for 22.97% were engaged in private jobs and remaining 14 Respondents who comprised 18.92%, were engaged in Animal Husbandry. It is revealed from the above table that maximum number (44.60%) of Mahila Sarpanchs' family income source was agriculture and minimum (13.51%) number of Mahila Sarpanchs reported government job was the source of their family income.

In this study the awareness level of the Respondents about the Panchayati Raj is shown in the Table No. 5 as follows –

Table No. 5

Awareness Level Of The Respondents Above The Panchayati Raj

S.No.	Particulars	Number	%
1.	Knowledge of the Panchayati Raj Act. 73rd Amendment.	09	12.16
2.	Sources of Income of Panchayats.	36	48.65
3.	Power & Works of Panchayats.	18	24.32
4.	Seats Reserved for women in PRIs.	11	14.87
	TOTAL -	74	100.00

The analysis of the above table leads to the conclusion that 9 Mahila Sarpanchs who formed 12.16% of the total number, were aware about knowledge of the Panchayati Raj Act. 73rd Amendment. 36 Mahila Sarpanchs who consisted 48.65%, were aware about sources of Income of Panchayats and 18 Mahila Sarpanchs who accounted for 24.32% reported that they were aware about power and working of Panchayats. Only 11 Mahila Sarpanchs who comprised 14.87% of the total number informed that they were aware about reservation of seats for women in PRIs.

Comparative study about educational and economic plan at village level is shows in Table No. 6 as following –

Table No. 6

Comparative Study About Educational And Economic Plan At Village Level

S.No.	Particulars	Number	Percentage
1.	Indira Awas Yojana	15	20.27
2.	Janani Surksha Yojana	35	47.29
3.	National Pension Plan	08	10.82
4.	Illiterate women Training Camp	16	21.62
	TOTAL -	74	100.00

It can be discerned from Table- 6 that 15 Respondents who accounted for 20.27%, informed that they were working on Indira Awas Yojana and 35 Respondents who formed 47.29%, reported that they were working on Janani Suraksha Yojana. However, 8 Respondent comprising 10.82% stated that they were working on National Pension System and remaining 16 Respondents who accounted for 21.62% told that they were working on Illiterate women training

Camp. It becomes discernible from this table that the conclusion of above table that majority (47.29%) of Respondents was working on Janani Surksha Yojana and minimum 8 Respondents (10.82%) Respondents were working on National Pension System.

Conclusion

Emerging trends from this study make it discernible that the awareness and legal knowledge levels of women in PRI's are increasing. It also emerges that the participation of women in PRI's is sound and they play various roles in family as well as society. It is also revealed that increasing number of women in PRIs are also aware of educational and economic empowerment and they are working on governmental schemes such as Janini Surksha Yojana, Indira Awas Yojana, National Pension System etc. They have now become more active and are seemingly aware o the fact that higher education level of. women have empowered them through Panchayati Raj. They have come to possess enhanced knowledge at technical, economic, political and administrative levels and empowered women can better understand international, national and local level issues.

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Perspectives on Higher Education in India

Manohar Lamani* & Dr. Banasode C C**

[*Education is one of the significant tools to bring desirable change in our life, especially the higher education is considered as an essential pillar for overall development of any nation in terms of social, economic and political aspects. In India higher education expanded very rapidly in the last six decades after independence. Presently, India is the country which is consider with the largest higher education system in the world in terms of number of institutions and is one of the major contributors in the process of economic development of India. There are several Indians around the globe that are well-known for their potentiality and good skills and techniques. At the launch of first five-year plan in 1950-51, there were 28 universities in India today we have 785 universities and the state with most universities is Rajasthan with 73 universities and in India there would be 1000 universities by 2020. In this research paper, an effort has been made to discuss the present situation of higher education and by analyzing various data to identify the key issues, to provide possible suggestions in order to bring some semblance of change in India's higher education.*]

Globalization and privatization are imposing new challenges but the nations are still entangled in solving the basic problems of accessibility to higher education for all. Higher education is very important for a developing country like India. Higher education in India has experienced phenomenal expansion since independence. India has produced scientists, engineers, technologists, doctors, teachers and managers who are in great demand

* Research Scholar, Dept. of Social Work, Rani Channamma University, Belagavi.
** Asst Prof., Dept. of Social Work, Rani Channamma University, Belagavi.

all over the world. Now it is one of the top ten countries in the world with enormous industrial and technological capacities; owing to the significant contribution of manpower and tools provided by higher education, especially, technical education.

India has already entered into the era of knowledge explosion. It has proved its tremendous potential by its performance in nuclear and space domains. It is fast emerging as a reckonable power in the realms of space, satellites and other offshoots of scientific knowledge. Higher education provides opportunities to the people to reflect on the critical social, cultural, moral, economic and spiritual issues facing humanity. Higher education provides specialized knowledge and skills to the people.

In next few years, India will have world's largest set of young people. While the correlation between people and higher education is not up to the mark, the increasing youth population can be a great asset if potential employability is brought to fruition. Conversely, if we fail to provide education and employment, then it will open a downside gate for Indian economy. Education is an essential tool for achieving sustainability.

The Education Commission 1964-66 described the role of education in social and economic transformation through a statement- the destiny of a nation is shaped in its class rooms. Education creates human capital which is the core of economic progress and assumes that the externalities generated by human capital are the source of self-sustaining economic process. India has failed to produce world class universities like Harvard and Cambridge. According to the London Times Higher Education (2009)-Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University rankings, no Indian university features among the first 100.

Objectives of the Present Study

1. To examine the development and present scenario of higher education system in India.

2. To identify emerging issues of higher education sector in India.

3. To provide possible suggestions for improving quality higher education.

Research Methodology

The present study focuses on extensive study of secondary data collected from various national published reports, newspapers, University Grants Commission (UGC) reports, publications from various websites which focus on various aspects and issues related to Indian higher education system.

Indian Higher Education System

After independence, Indian government had adopted policy of welfare state and provided facility of educational services to the people of the country. In India, education has been a joint responsibility between the Central and state governments. The Department of Higher Education lies within the purview of Ministry of Human Resource Development in the Union government. Over past seven decades, India has covered a long distance on the path of expanding the institutional capacity in higher education.

TABLE 1

Growth of Higher Education Institutions in India (As on 31st March, 2015)

S. No.	Type of Institutions	Number
1	Central Universities	46
2	State Universities	329
3	Private Universities	205
4	Deemed to be Universities	128
5	*Other Institutes	03
	Total	711

Source: UGC Annual Report (March 2015)

Table-1 shows the impressive growth of university-level institutions in the country. Undoubtedly, this is an impressive number of higher educational institutions; nonetheless, India requires not only quantitative but also qualitative

institutions of higher education because not a single Indian university is listed in the top 100 universities of the world.

TABLE 2

Students Enrolment: Faculty-wise: 2014-2015

S. No.	Faculty	Total Enrolment	Percentage to Total
1	Arts	9945700	37.41
2	Science	4675043	17.59
3	Commerce/Management	4357108	16.39
4	Education	1215442	4.57
5	Engineering / Technology	4326316	16.27
6	Medicine	1069911	4.02
7	Agriculture	207756	0.78
8	Veterinary Science	28017	0.11
9	Law	444613	1.67
10	Others	315531	1.19
	Total	26585437	100.00

Source: UGC Annual Report 2014-2015

Table-2 shows that in the year 1950 the country had just 25 university-level institutions and this figure had gone up to 711 in 2015, even though the students' enrolment ratio has gone up.

Emerging Issues

The rapid expansion of higher education system in India has brought several issues in the present that are as follow:

Issues related to Quality

Indian higher education system is confronted with issues pertaining to quality and in many institutions and universities problems of faculty, poor quality of teaching are prevalent. There is lack of innovative methods of modern teaching and no serious attention is paid to hammer out up-to-the mark curriculum in different streams.

Privatization

Private educational institutions are mainly unaided and entail high cost. However, the situation is not so simple. Private education providers, in the interest of maximizing profits, have every incentive to 'minimize costs' by compromising on the quality of education provided in their institutions. Last but not least, quality of teaching staff is one of the significant issues for higher education sector to sustain in the future. Earlier, they were committed to their students to their subjects and to their profession. Today, high salaries are available but the commitment is less. Thus, it is the need of the hour to free the higher education system from unnecessary constraints and political interference.

Status of Higher Education in India

Even though the system of Higher Education in India is third largest in the world; nevertheless, it is faced with many issues like:

i) Access to the higher education system is still restricted to a small portion of the society;

ii) Low public expenditure on HE as percentage of GDP;

iii) Large rural-urban divide in access;

iv) Shortage of faculty and poor infrastructure; and

v Need for focusing on well-concerted action plan in Higher Education keeping in consonance with emergent requirements.

Issues related to Research

Research and higher education are complimentary to each other but there is an inadequate and diminishing financial support for higher education from the government and from society. Moreover, India's higher education institutions are poorly connected to leading research centers. So, this is another area of issue related to higher education in India.

Other Issues

Besides the above issues, some other issues include academic reforms in the way we operate imparting education in universities and colleges, the issues related to the regulation of the higher system through various regulatory councils by the Centre, the internalization of the higher education, issue of public- private partnership and similar other related issues.

Suggestions and Conclusion

Although higher education in India has expanded very rapidly in the seven decades after independence, yet it is not equally accessible to all. Till today a large section of the population remains illiterate and a large number of children do not get even primary education as a result of which this has resulted not only in the exclusion of a large population from contributing to the development of the country fully. Our higher education system has not been able to change its organizational structure and form. Under these circumstances, it is necessary we need to implement the reforms in the higher education system and also bring forth new factors of

production, namely knowledge, skills and adoption of digitalized education in the most efficient and dynamic way. Emphasis needs to be focused on promoting inclusive growth in higher education.

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Growth Pattern of School Children

Dr. Sandip K. Mandal*

[*The present study is an attempt to compare the growth patterns among children aged between 10 to 12 years in respect of boys and girls in the state of West Bengal. The study was conducted in the year 2014 involving 14 government-aided schools of West Bengal where n= 600 six hundred children were chosen by systematic random sampling method. The willing students of the schools having roll no. 1, 6, 11, 16, 21—— were considered as a subject if they did fulfill the age criteria of the study. Age was recorded in completed years. Data were analyzed with the help of SPSS method. The mean ± SD values of three growth parameter; that is, height, weight and BMI were stated in the table of descriptive statistics in respect of gender on group wise. Inter -group comparison (t-test) of Height (cm) and weight (kg.) according to gender were Significant where p< 0.05.On the basis of findings, the growth pattern among children was differ in respect of boys and girls .Height and weight, but not the BMI had difference between the boys and girls. Girls were superior to boys in height and weight.*]

In modern age, there has been a surge of interest and more awareness in the growth pattern of children among physical educationists, scholars and others like psychologists, physiologists, physicians, coaches, etc., (Gallahue, 2003).The growth patterns of children are mainly of two types: a) Cephalo-caudal and b) Proximo-distal sequence (Sharma, 2000). Brabant and Jose (1983) conducted a study of anthropometric measurements of Brazilian and American school children. The subjects taken for this study were 2342 boys and girls enrolled in a public-school system in Brazil and America during 1982 school year. The study revealed that height and weight increased at approximately same rate and girls were significantly taller and heavier than boys during adolescence. American girls and boys were taller and heavier than Brazilian boys and girls.

Rarick and Smoll (1981) reported from their study on childhood age subjects and adolescents that height, weight and physique showed relatively stable. Growth slows from 7 to 12 years of age and increased from childhood years to seventeen years.

* Asst Prof., Dept of Physical Education, Vivekananda Mahavidyalaya, Hooghly.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are to compare the growth patterns of children in respect of boys of 10-12 years age group and it is also for the girls 'group in the state of West Bengal. The researcher is attempting to find out the growth pattern of the children within the age group.

Hypothesis of the study

The statement of the hypothesis of the present study is that "Analysis of growth pattern regarding school children".

Materials and method

The sample consisting of 300 boys and 300 girls in the age category of ten, eleven and twelve years were selected for the study. The number of subjects for each group was 50 boys and 50 girls for any age group. The Subjects were selected from four different districts as Nadia, South 24 Parganas, Kolkata and Howrah of West Bengal in India. In selecting a subject for the study, a systematic random sampling procedure was followed. The willing students of the schools having roll no. 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, were considered as a subject, if they did fulfill the age criteria of the study. The criterion measure of Growth Pattern variables was as (a) height, (b) weight and (c) body mass index (BMI). The dates of birth of

the subjects were collected from their school admission registered and then it was considered in completed years. The measurements of growth pattern variables were as follows:

Test Used	Variables Measured
1. Vertical height (cm)	Height
2. Body weight (kg)	Weight
3. BMI (kg/m2)	BMI

Results and discussion

The comparative statistics of growth variables in the form of mean and standard deviation (SD) were stated in table-1 for the study.

Table-1

Comparative statistics of growth variables in respect to gender

Age & Gender			10-year group Mean ± SD	11-year group Mean ± SD	12-year group Mean ± SD
Height(cm)		Boys (N = 100X3)	136.95 ± 8.61	138.51 ± 7.82	142.86 ± 7.60
		Girls (N = 100X3)	136.82 ± 8.21	140.99 ± 8.15	146.73 ± 6.53
Weight(kg)		Boys (N = 100X3)	29.66 ± 7.83	31.53 ± 6.72	35.06 ± 7.94
		Girls (N = 100X3)	29.72 ± 7.95	32.92 ± 7.99	38.24 ± 9.18
BMI(kg/m2)		Boys (N = 100X3)	15.66 ± 3.06	16.31 ± 2.52	17.08 ± 3.17
		Girls (N = 100X3)	15.72 ± 3.20	16.69 ± 3.52	17.65 ± 3.58

Table-2

Mean±SD and t-value of growth variables in respect to gender

Variables	Gender	Mean±SD	Mean diff.	S.Error	t-value
Height(cm)	Boys	139.44±8.25	2.073	0.447	4.637*
	Girls	141.51±8.66			
Weight(kg)	Boys	32.08±7.82	1.520	0.454	3.392*
	Girls	33.62±9.08			
BMI(kg/m²)	Boys	16.35±2.98	0.340	0.180	1.889ns
	Girls	16.69±3.52			

$t0.05^{598}=1.96$; *Significant at 0.05 level; ns=not significant

Height

The obtained t-value of 4.637 was greater than the tabulated t-value (t 0.05 598 = 1.96) are significant (p< 0.05) for difference between two groups in height. The girls group was taller than the boys group as per the data. According to the data, the girls were taller in height than the boys.

Researchers like Malina (2003), Eiben et al. (2005), Little et al. (2006), Nasiriana (2006), Parvin (2012)

and Kolekar et al. (2013) observed that boys of the same age group were higher in height than the girls. Height of boys was more than girls during 9-12 years but during 10-13 years girls were found to be taller than boys (Kolekar & Sawant, 2013). In 7-12years age group, Iranian male children were observed to be taller after 11 years of age, prior to that age; female children were taller (Bayat et al., 2012). In the Bengali population of same age group, height of girls was superior than boys, as was observed by Nayek (2005).

Weight

The obtained t-value 3.392 were greater than the tabulated value (t 0.05 598 = 1.96) are significant (p< 0.05) for statistically acceptable difference between two groups in weight. According to the data, the girls group was heavier than the boys group. It was revealed on population that the Indian children were lighter than the other population, as reported by Hebbelinck (1972).

BMI

It is revealed from table-2 that the girls were heavier in BMI than the boys. But there was no significant difference in BMI between male and female subjects of this study as (t=1.889, p>0.05). Difference in growth pattern observed to be existed between boys and girls (Khazaei, 2012). These study findings collaborate the study of the other researchers in terms of the growth pattern in relation to gender.

Conclusion

The study was confined to the growth pattern variables of children of 10-12 years of age. On the basis of data analyzed and findings of other researchers, it can be surmised from this study that height and weight, but not the BMI, had differed between the boys and girls. Girls were superior in height and weight than boys.

Recommendations

i. A longitudinal study with proper supervision is needed to obtain more accurate result for this kind of study.

ii. Similar study may be conducted with locality classification like hill, plane and other geographical variations; and

iii. Further studies should be conducted on the basis of different cultural background.

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Evaluating quality of distance education in IGNOU

Dr. Nainar. B*

[*India has chosen to implement simple, inexpensive yet innovative Information and Communication Technology (ICT) solutions which have improved administrative efficiency and quality of education delivery to thousands of students. Due to the use of information and communication technology (ICT) today, distance education is able to provide cost-effective, user-friendly and quick Student Care/Support Services to all its students, irrespective of their geographic location. Use of ICT has also enabled distance education to keep manpower investment and administrative expenses low. Although student strength grew to huge numbers, nonetheless, ICT-based practices have provided a viable alternative solution rather than scaling up manpower.*]

The effective use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education definitely improves the quality and delivery of education and quality of student care services. It also lowers administrative costs and overheads. It provides tremendous flexibility and convenience to students. Just as much as it is important to develop and implement innovative ICT solutions for education, it is equally important to create and build business process to support such initiatives. Unless such business processes are created and old ones discarded, one cannot bring about significant change in overall efficiency of the organization and quality of education.

Status of ICT in IGNOU

India has chosen to implement simple, inexpensive yet innovative Information and Communication Technology (ICT) solutions which have improved administrative efficiency and quality of education delivery to thousands of students. Due to the use of ICT today, distance education is able to provide cost-effective, user-friendly and quick Student Care/Support Services to all its students, irrespective of their geographic location. Use of ICT has also enabled distance education to keep manpower investment and administrative expenses low. Although student strength grew to huge numbers, ICT-based practices have provided a viable alternative solution rather than scaling up manpower. It is important not to lose focus while implementing ICT solutions.

Objectives

- To identify training needs of different target groups already involved and those expected to get involved in open distance education;

- To build up a resource base of up-to-date information, training materials, courses and expertise, and make such resources available whenever needed;

- To develop training strategies and training materials to meet the various needs of different types of individuals and distance teaching/training at IGNOU;

- To promote research in Open and Distance Education at the fundamental, experimental and application levels in order to constantly enrich the training programmes and management processes and meet the challenges of the expanding educational environment;

- To respond to the needs of dynamic systems of education and development using information and communication technologies.

Methodology

The study adopted both exploratory and descriptive methodology. Both primary and secondary data is utilized for this study. The

* Research Officer, JnNURM –BSUP wing, Dept of Bus Route Roads, Corporation of Chennai.

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primary data is collected from the field with the help of unstructured questionnaire. Both open and closed ended questions are used for collection of data from the field. Since the universe of the study is the total students in IGNOU, which is 1.05 lakh in the year 2019, the Probability Proportionate to Size (PPS) sampling method was used to select the respondents. A sample size of 300 is chosen from the universe of 1.05 lakh of students in all regional Centers at IGNOU. The Southern Regional Center has been divided into 5 sub zones for administrative purposes. Out of the 5 sub zones 4 sub zones were selected for the present study using PPS method randomly.

Result and Discussion

Attainment of literacy level is an important indicator of a community's social and economic status. As per the National Health Policy 2012, 35 per cent of the country is illiterate. Students are the main targets for imparting information relating to basic principles of healthcare. The present study in the select population in Chennai city showed that 32 per cent or 96 respondents were illiterate. And the number of respondents who were illiterate from all the four zones far outnumbered the other literate persons. And there was a greater number of illiterates in south or Santhome Zone than other three zones.

The presence of a greater number of private schools than government and corporation schools in the vicinity of the select Metro Corporation area appears to be the reason for the greater level of illiteracy among the slum dwellers due to poverty. Though the number of government or corporation schools may be adequate, the improper maintenance of the schools along with inadequate professionals to provide education and ill-treatment meted out to the students gives out wrong signals as to its attendance thus leading to closure of the school in due course of time.

Table – 1 Literacy level of background in IGNOU Students.

ZONES	Zone 2	Zone 4	Zone 7	Zone 10	Total
P.G. Degree	24	25	17	30	96(32.0)
U.G. Degree	11	13	05	25	54(18.0)
Diploma Courses	11	18	11	32	72(24.0)
P.G. Diploma	04	13	10	32	59(19.7)
Certificate & Skill Development Courses	03	03	04	09	19(6.30)
Total	53	72	47	128	300(100.00)

Note: Figures in brackets represents percentage; Survey Results conducted during the present study.

Household Income

The purchasing power gained by the economic activity ranges from mere food finder to huge sums of finance to fund luxurious living. At least one third of the same population did not reveal their true income. Though income of the family is camouflaged by the respondents, after much initiation, 160 of them or 53.3 per cent of the total respondents said that their earnings were between Rs.3000 to 6000. Respondents having an income more than Rs.6000 included income of the other members of the family or the respondent was employed in the public or private sector.

Table – 2 Household Income of select areas households in IGNOU Students

Income Group	Zone 2	Zone 4	Zone 7	Zone 10	Total
Below Rs. 5000	13	15	12	36	76(24.3)

Rs. 5000 and Rs. 6000	31	40	21	68	160(53.3)
Above Rs. 7000	31	40	21	68	160(53.3)
Total	53	72	47	128	300(100.00)

Source: Survey conducted, 2018. Note: Figures in brackets represents percentage.

The income of the slum dwellers ranged from less than Rs.5,000/- to more than Rs.7,000/- per month. The study also revealed that there were dwellers whose income was Rs.52,000/- per month. Therefore, it can be said that income, though one of the many criteria for living in Chennai city, is not the main one. The comparison between the income level and the reason for residing in the slums did not have any significance. The study showed a chi-square value of11.345 and P-value of 0.5 for the same.

Income level sometimes makes the slum dweller to forgo treatment, particularly when it is the health of the women which is at stake. Though women are considered the head of the family, it is the husband or the father who may be the patriarch of the family. The level of the income decides the importance of the health of the women. The study found that for the health problems like urinary infection, sexually transmitted disease, menopause, etc., very few respondents approach for treatment and care.

Technological Features of the Innovation

Online Assignments

The first area of concern for the institute with regards to the large student enrollment was evaluation. In many distance education institutes in India, it is seen that students submit all assignments and exams in the traditional paper back mode. However, in distance education sector, since the number of students is large, the corresponding number of assignments and exams to be evaluated is also very large. In the case of IGNOU, each student submits on an average 20 assignments and an equal number of exams over a period of two to three years. With yearly enrollment figures running into about 60,000 students (per Regional Center), IGNOU faced a huge challenge to evaluate about 1,00,000 assignments and 1,00,000 exams submitted over two to three years.

Furthermore, the quality of evaluation and monitoring of evaluation faculty that is spread all across India became an extremely difficult task. It was also seen that students resorted to malpractices such as copying or replication of answers while submitting such paper back assignments. These problems were compounded due to the large number of students and equally large number of faculty who were required to be retained for evaluation purposes. IGNOU decided to introduce Objective Assignments which were based on a "random test generation" model.

On Demand Examinations

In line with the online assignments, IGNOU may also decide to introduce On Demand Examinations for its students in future. The On Demand Examination system allows students to attempt an exam whenever they feel they are prepared to do so. The IGNOU web portal also provides an online 'Exam Booking System'. This system provides the student to select a date, time and location for attempting an exam as per one's convenience. The student is able to print his Hall Ticket and attempt a proctored exam at any of the IGNOU designated exam centers across India and in other countries as well. Due to the On-Demand examination facility, students do not have to wait until semester-end. As a result, students tend to appear for exams through-out the academic year thus distributing the examinations evenly across all months.

Every student attempts about 15-20 exams over 2 academic years. As a result, every academic year almost 4,00,000 to 5,00,000 exams are attempted by all IGNOU students (each batch). The On Demand Examination facility has enabled IGNOU to manage thousands of exams in an efficient manner, at the same time maintaining quality of assessment. Both these systems, namely Online Assignments and On Demand Examinations have provided a completely flexible and convenient testing environment for the students.

Student Support Service Cell

One of the important activities in Distance Education is to provide Student Support Services. This area is often neglected in many institutes. When student enrollment increases the first area which needs to be scaled up (for manpower) is Student Support Services. Furthermore, hiring trained manpower to handle student queries is not an easy task in India especially in the education sector as mid-level personnel find high-paying, lucrative jobs in the growing IT sector. IGNOU may decide that to manage large student numbers, it should create effective Student Support Services by using ICT practices rather than proportionately increasing administrative staff strength. Thus, IGNOU may setup a Student Care Department, enabled with home-grown ICT solutions. This department consists of two sections –

● Dedicated Student Call Center.

● E-Communication Center.

The home-grown ICT solution is called Student Information System (SIS). The data from SIS is displayed under 'Student Center' of the IGNOU web portal, which is a sophisticated portal providing students' with access to many online services.

Dedicated Student Call Center

It is seen in many distance learning universities that when students call up with some query, they get transferred from one department to another before their query is answered. In distance education institutes this problem is compounded due to large number of students and comparatively lesser administrative staff. A simple query results in serious student grievance if not handled properly at the right time. The Dedicated Call Center enables students to address their queries to trained Call Operators. The call operators not only have complete know-how of various academic and administrative policies but are also trained on handling 'customers' in this case 'students.'

This customer-centric approach has greatly enhanced the image of the institute amongst its students. Further, various departments of the institute are not required to spend time from their daily work in answering student calls. This has in turn increased their efficiency at work. Periodic training programs are arranged for call operators on various areas such as policy matters (e.g. Fee policies, enrollment policies, admission cancellation policies etc.), how to deal with aggrieved students and when to escalate such calls to the Call Center Team Leaders or Head, how to provide accurate information over the telephone without consuming too much time etc.

E-Communication Center

During the earlier years after its inception, IGNOU could have observed that since the students are geographically dispersed and away from the campus / main office, they tend to send their queries using snail mail or post. It was extremely difficult to reply to thousands of student letters received each day. More difficult was to track the student letter as it went from one department to another within the institute and the delays caused at each stage. Ownership of such delays was also an issue. IGNOU was unable to keep a history or record of student issues and create any kind of MIS reports out of such student queries as there was no automation in handling student letters. It was decided to setup an E-Communication Center where Communication Assistants would handle student queries received via email with a guaranteed response time of one business day. Students were encouraged to send their queries via email.

IGNOU@Edu

IGNOU@Edu is a worldwide program run by Microsoft, which has enabled IGNOU to give students a host of cutting-edge communication and collaboration tools; tools which will help them to express themselves and increase their avenues in collaborative learning with students and the faculty. IGNOU@Edu is the ultimate suite of applications - *mobile, desktop and web-based* - to help students to collaborate on campus and create a community that lasts a lifetime, though.

Microsoft Live E-Mail

A 10 GB Mailbox for all students and alumni, branded with IGNOU and domain name (e.g.: Reg2017XXXXX@student.ignou.net). Email groups can be easily created and managed.

Microsoft Live SkyDrive

Students can have easy exchange of Personal Learning Content, Presentations, and Case Studies through an online storage with 25 GB space.

Placement Cell

IGNOU is one of the very few distance learning institutes that offer placement assistance to students by acting as a facilitator. Many renowned companies such as Wipro, Infosys, TCS and many others have placed IGNOU students. IGNOU has created on line Yahoo group where any student who has yahoo email id can register free of charge to this group and get latest updates regarding placements. This is a unique, creative, educative, supportive group and encourages students to apply for placement opportunities with varied corporate sector.

Faculty Chat Sessions

IGNOU may also introduce faculty chat sessions shortly wherein students can avail the benefit of faculty interaction. These sessions will be pre announced via the IGNOU web portal so that maximum students can take advantage and are able to interact with an expert faculty and clear their doubts or address academic queries.

Conclusion

They effectively manage large number of students without compromising on quality and without scaling up staff strength proportionately. They train existing staff on required IT skills and obtain trained manpower from time to time. They motivate and create a positive attitude in existing staff members and academic faculty members in order to train them on the use of ICT, e-learning, online teaching etc., and also gather management support for introducing and implementing IT solutions and online learning components as part of the education delivery model of IGNOU. They develop, purchase and implement appropriate IT solutions only where necessary and ensure proper fund allocation by controlling unnecessary costs associated with implementation of expensive IT solutions.

Recommendations

- The ICT implementations at Symbiosis have resulted in higher student-satisfaction ratio.
- lowering the drop-out rate amongst distant learners enrolled with the institute
- Accurate tracking of student data related to academics, fees, administration etc.

- Ability to provide real-time, accurate MIS reports to management on various aspects of academics, administration and finance
- Ability to provide relevant data to assist management in taking key strategic and policy decisions from time to time
- Create dynamism, robustness and scalability in the systems and processes.
- Self-paced learning environment providing ultimate convenience and flexibility to students.
- Lowering costs / overheads associated with manpower, administration, evaluation, dispatch and postage
- Enhancing learning experiences of students & creating a virtual community of students
- Effectively managing large number of students without compromising on quality and without proportionately increasing manpower.

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Awareness of MGNREGA Provisions in Tamil Nadu

C. Chinnaraj* & N. Prasanna**

[The paper analyses the awareness of MGNREGA provisions among MGNREGA workers in Villupuram, Salem and Tirunelveli Districts, Tamil Nadu. Results show that Provisions like Minimum Wage and Equal wage to Men and Women have considerably reached in all the districts. Rest of the MGNREGA provisions have poorly reached. The main reasons for the lack of awareness among the respondents were illiteracy, lack of involvement in attending the Gram Sabha meeting and non-involvement in newspaper reading.]

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) is an Act which guarantees the provision of 100 days of work to unemployed households in their own locality within an entire accounting year and ensures that the participating members will receive the government declared price rate after completion of the assigned work per person day. This Act originated from the flagship programme of the UPA Government in September, 2005 as "National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP)". Later it was renamed as Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (MGNREGP) in 2009 and the same became an ACT in 2010. It addresses the challenges of poverty and unemployment.

The MGNREGA assures 100 days of job especially for socially disadvantaged groups like women, SCs and STs. Previously, the workers were very poorly paid, but MGNREGA has increased the local wages also at par with MGNREGA wages. The ST population has shown keen interest in MGNREGA works. It gives special provision to employ the aged and the differently-abled. This is the only programme to provide equality in wages for men and women. It has eliminated work contracting and middlemen.

The payment of wages is done through banks and post offices, to prevent corruption. Transparency is brought about by creating workers' muster rolls, etc. The social audit is an important activity under the scheme, which ensures accountability. Overall, this scheme provides sufficient level of wages to the people by undertaking activities like improving the availability of resources in the rural areas such as water conservation and harvesting, irrigation provisioning and improvement, renovation of traditional water bodies, land development, drought proofing and flood control and conserving them.

It is also observed by studies conducted by Hazra (2009), Nidheesh (2009), Yadav (2009), Dalapathi (2010) and Azeez (2012) that after the implementation of MGNREGA, migration is slowing down, productive assets are being created and the power equations are also changing. MGNREGA gives much priority to the poorest sections of society especially women, SCs and STs. It is also observed that the increased level of women participation will lead to a decline in distress migration and an improvement in food consumption among certain families.

Now, all this has been possible as MGNREGA, with its legal framework, provides a shift from a government providing approach to an entitlement-based approach (Goswami and Dutta, 2014). The strength of MGNREGA is primarily the provisions it envisages for the rural people. Provisions such as minimum wages, equal wages for men and women, work to be given within 15

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* Research Scholar, Dept of Economics, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli.

** Asst Prof., Dept of Economics, Bharathidasan University, Tiruchirappalli.

days, unemployment allowance, work to be given within five kilometers (otherwise additional payment to be made), one-third of workers to be women, four facilities at worksite, compensation for injury, ex-gratia payment for death, work allotted through Gram Panchayat Notice Board/ Member/ Friends/ neighbours/ others and dated receipts for application of work. MGNREGA workers can use the above provisions only if they are aware about the same, which would help in further strengthening of this progamme. Hence, this study aims to analyse the awareness of MGNREGA provisions among MGNREGA workers in Villupuram, Salem and Tirunelveli Districts of Tamil Nadu.

Research Design

The MGNERGP was implemented in three phases in Tamil Nadu. The first phase was implemented in 2005-06, the second phase was implemented in 2006-07 and the third phase was implemented in 2008-09. For the present study, Villupuram district was chosen from first phase, because person days of employment generated for women under MGNREGA was very high in this district. Tirunelveli district was chosen for second phase, because, successful completion of 100 days of employment was very high and Salem district was chosen from the third phase under the criterion, percentage of ST MGNREGA beneficiaries was high. Under the same criterion, two blocks were selected from each district, viz., Kalrayan Hills and Kallakurichi blocks from Villupuram district; Kuruvikulam and Nanguneri blocks from Tirunelveli district; Attur and Ayothiyapattinam blocks from Salem district. Two Village were chosen from each block under the criterion, distance from block headquarters (near and away).

Both primary and secondary sources were used for the study. The sample size was fixed at 720 respondent households, i.e., 240 respondent households from each district based on 95 per cent confidence level and 6.32 points confidence interval for large populations. Based on this 60 respondent households were selected from each of the four villages in each of the three districts. The data collection was carried out during the year 2012-14. The study adopted the percentage method for analyzing awareness level of the MGNREGA provisions among MGNREGA workers.

Results and Discussions

Results have been classified into the awareness of the provisions in MGNREGA of the respondents in the villages near the block headquarters, villages away from the block head-quarters, blocks and districts respectively. In the villages near the block head-quarters, it can be seen that the awareness of the respondents regarding the minimum wages is in the range of about 53 to 77, but in Therku Kuruvikulam it is just 11.67 per cent. Similar level of awareness can be found only in Kelakkadu among the villages away from the block headquarters. In the remaining villages away from the block headquarters, awareness level ranges between 38 and 47 per cent.

At the block level, the awareness regarding minimum wages ranges between 31 and 64 per cent. It can also be observed that there is much variation between the blocks in Villupuram district, i.e., Kallakurichi (50.83 per cent) and Kalrayan Hills (64.17 per cent) and also variation between the blocks can be found in Tirunelveli district, i.e., Kuruvikulam (30.83) and Nanguneri (51.67) whereas the variation between the blocks in Salem district is less (Attur - 58.33 per cent, Ayothiyapattinam - 61.66 per cent). At the district level, the awareness regarding minimum wages is around 41- 60 per cent in the three districts. Overall it can be observed that much variation can be found between the two types of villages and between the blocks in Villupuram and Tirunelveli districts.

In terms of awareness regarding equal wages for men and women except Kelakkadu, Paithur, Therku Kuruvikulam and Senbagaramanallur, all the villages have more than 65 per cent awareness level. The top spot is taken by Karadichitur with 98.33 per cent. Among the areas that have less than 65 per cent awareness regarding equal wages, Kelakkadu seems to be lacking far behind with an awareness level of about 50 per cent.

The awareness level in Paithur, Dhalapathi Samudram and Palankottai is not much of a concern as all have an awareness level of close to 65 per cent. In the blocks of Villupuram and Salem districts, all seem to be doing well with regard to the awareness regarding equal wages for men and women with the awareness level ranging from 68 per cent to 97 per cent.

Here again it can be noted that the variation between the blocks in Villupuram district is much higher than the variation between the blocks in Salem district. In the blocks of Tirunelveli district, awareness falls below the 60 per cent mark, with Kuruvikulam registering 50 per cent and Nanguneri registering 59.17 per cent. At the district level, Villupuram and Salem districts show somewhat high and equal level of awareness regarding equal wages for men and women with a level of 82 per cent. But, only 55 per cent of respondents in Tirunelveli district were aware of equal wages for men and women. The awareness regarding equal wages for men and women seems to have reached much strongly than any other provisions in MGNREGA in Villupuram and Salem districts, while Tirunelveli lags behind in this regard.

The awareness regarding the provision that work to be given within 15 days of demand has reached to only about 40 to 48 per cent of the respondents in the three villages near the block headquarters namely, Neelamangalam, Ammampalayam and Poovanur. Two villages, namely, Aladipatti and Palankottai away from the block headquarters also fall in the same range. At the block level, Ayothiyapattinam and Kuruvikulam fall in this range. And at the district level Villupuram, Salem and Tirunelveli districts can be classified with the range 29 to 41 per cent, but Villupuram falls at the lower end of the range with 29.17 per cent.

The awareness regarding the provision of 'unemployment allowance' is very poorly received in all the 12 villages. And hence, the same is reflected at the block level and district level. The same goes for the provisions 'Ex-gratia payment for death and disability (insurance)', and 'work allotted through GP/Notice Board/Member/Friends/Neighbors/Others'. The awareness among workers about the additional payment that has to be made in case of the work being more than 5 kms away from their residence is also poor. MGNREGA workers from Therku Kuruvikulam and Palankottai Villages in Kuruvikulam block, Tirunelveli, district travelled more than 5 kms to reach the work place. Though the MGNREGA work place is less than 5 kms away from the workers' residence, there is Prosopis Juliflora (Veli-karuvai) forest on the way between the work place and the workers' residence making it a risky route, particularly for women.

Workers also had to carry working tools (i.e., spade, crow bar, iron basket, water for drinking and digging). This is a dry region, surface of which is very hard to dig, compelling the workers to use water as a working tool to make work easier and to complete the task given by MGNREGA officials on time. Workers demanded a free-vehicle to reach the work place safely and easily, but that demand was not met. So, MGNREGA workers hired a vehicle (Tractor) at their own expense to reach the work place with a contribution of Rs.10 by each worker. Even though few workers had their own two-wheeler, they preferred a common vehicle so as keep the travel cost low.

The awareness regarding the provisions of 'one third of workers to be women', has reached the respondents in the range of about 40 to 60 per cent in the villages near the block headquarters, while the range is around 6 to 9 per cent in two villages, which are located near the block headquaters, namely Therku Kuruvikulam and Dhalapathi Samudram. The range is about 30 to 46 per cent in the villages away from the block headquarters, except Palankottai and Senbagaramanallur, which were having awareness level of nine per cent and one per cent respectively. At the block level Kallakurichi and Ayothiyapattinam have awareness regarding one third of the workers to be women at 55 per cent and 45 per cent respectively.

Kalrayan Hills and Attur have an awareness level of about 35 per cent in this respect. Kuruvikulam and Nanguneri have an awareness level of 18 per cent and six per cent respectively. Here also the variation seems to be high between the blocks in Villupuram district. At the district level Villupuram and Salem districts range from 40 to 45 per cent. Villupuram district has an awareness level of 44.58 per cent and Salem district has an awareness level of 39.16 per cent in this respect. But, Tirunelveli district has

only 12 per cent level of awareness which is very less compared to the other two districts.

With regard to the provisions of four facilities at the work site, Neelamangalam from among the villages near the block headquarters and Aladipatti from among the villages away from the block headquarters have awareness level in the range 41 to 51 per cent. All other villages have around 10 to 20 per cent awareness level in this respect with the exception of Kelakkadu, Dhalapathi Samudram and Senbagaramanallur which fall below six per cent awareness level in this respect. At the block level Kallakurichi block has the highest level of awareness at 43 per cent with regard to the provision four facilities at the worksite.

Again, at the block level it can be noted that the variation between the blocks in Villupuram district is much higher than the variation between the blocks in Salem and Tirunelveli districts. At the district level Villupuram and Salem districts having similar levels of awareness in this respect with about 25 per cent. But, Tirunelveli has just 12.82 per cent awareness level in this respect.

The awareness regarding the provision for injury has reached about 35 to 63 per cent of the respondents in two villages near the block headquarters namely, Poovanur and Neelamangalam, while the other villages, namely, Ammampalayam, Pudhupalapattu and Therku Kuruvikulam fall in the range about 4 to 20 per cent in which Dhalapathi Samudram stood last with 3.33 per cent awareness level. In the villages away from the block headquarters, the awareness regarding the provision of compensation for injury has reached about 10 to 33 per cent in four villages namely, Paithur, Aladipatti, Karadichitur, and Palankottai while in Kelakkadu and Senbagaramanallur none of the respondents have awareness regarding compensation for injury.

At the block level, it can be seen that there is much variation between blocks in Villupuram district namely Kallakurichi and Kalrayan Hills which have awareness levels in the range 10 to 48 per cent, and the same is reflected in Salem district with Attur and Ayothiyapattinam ranging from 12 to 26 per cent. Kuruvikulam and Nanguneri blocks in Tirunelveli district have awareness level ranging between two and 21 per cent. At the district level

there is 20 per cent variation between Villupuram, Salem and Tirunelveli districts. Tirunelveli district has 9.58 per cent of awareness level which is very less compared to the other two districts. Overall, it can be observed that except Neelamangalam, rest of the villages' awareness levels regarding compensation for injury is poor.

Regarding receipt of dated receipts for application of work, none of the respondents in Tirunelveli district were aware of such provision. In the villages near the block headquarters except Poovanur (11.66 per cent), the other three villages in Villupuram and Salem districts seem to have an awareness level of 45 to 55 per cent in this respect. In the case of villages away from the block headquarters Karadichitur has an awareness level of 67 per cent, while the remaining three villages have about 22 per cent awareness level in this respect.

At the block level Kallakurichi (56.67 per cent) and Kalrayan Hills (38.33 per cent) in Villupuram district seem to have better awareness level compared to Attur (33.3 per cent) and Ayothiyapattinam (16.67 per cent) in Salem district. At the district level the same is reflected, i.e., Villupuram has an awareness level of 47.50 per cent, whereas Salem has an awareness level of 25 per cent in this respect. The main reason for the lack of awareness among the respondents was illiteracy, lack of involvement to attend the Gram Sabha meeting, non-involvement in newspaper reading, etc.

Conclusion

Provisions like Minimum Wage and Equal Wage to Men and Women have considerably reached in all the districts that have been studied. Rest of the MGNREGA provisions have poorly reached the workers. However, awareness in villages and blocks in Tirunelveli district have much poorly reached compared to the other two districts and also MGNREGA workers in Tirunelveli district took additional efforts to continue MGNREGA, particularly in Kuruvikulam block. The reason is that the region is very dry, so the process of converting agricultural land to non-agricultural use has gathered momentum over the last decade. One striking feature in this block is the setting-up of wind mills, which allows the land owners to generate revenue without agriculture.

Also, without industries, additional employment opportunities are less and hence, considerable number of workers depended on MGNREGA work in Tirunelveli district. It can also be seen that some villagers have started to migrate to Kumily in the state of Kerala as they get employment in the pepper gardens. However, agriculture is the mainstay of livelihood to majority of villagers. Linking MGNREGA work with agricultural work may help address these problems. The central government has started taking note of this process, but the idea has not reached the grass roots.

Moreover, the grant under MGNREGA is only for perennial crops. The extension of grants to other crops under MGNREGA needs to be considered. Overall, the reasons for the poor awareness are illiteracy and the inability of most of the MGNREGA workers to attend the Gram Saba meetings. In Tirunelveli district, MGNREGA workers reported that Panchayat office was not easily reachable as the size of the village panchayats are large (10 villages in Palankottai panchayat). So, the Government has to take additional steps to spread awareness in such areas with the help of the local authorities.

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Towards a Healthy Rural India

Bheemaraya T.* & Dr. R. Gudagunti**

Health is a big experiment for the Indian nation and more particularly it is a challenge in rural society where 70 percent of India's population is residing. More particularly and it is a fact that the India's villages are not well equipped with good healthcare facilities, both in terms of staff and infrastructure and medicines. In the present article an attempt is made to analyse the need for improving healthcare facilities of rural India.

Research indicates that the healthcare requirements of individuals of rural society are diverse from individuals in urban society, and rural society frequently faces the problem from a deficiency of access to healthcare. These dissimilarities are the outcome of geographic, demographic, socioeconomic, workplace, and personal health factors. For instance, numerous rural societies have a large section of aged persons and children. Out of which limited number people of working age (20–50 years of age), in such societies have a high dependency ratio.

The individuals living in the rural community due to agricultural economy background tend to have low socio-economic background and the level of education is also comparatively lower one. Apart from this, these people normally are associated with tobacco and other alcoholic habits as such. Comparatively higher mortality rate could also have been observed in the rural society. Most determinant factor in the health aspect is the economic status of the individual, poverty is at its highest rate in the rural society which is considered as one of the important social determinants of the health in the society.

* Research Scholar, Dept of Sociology Gulabarga University, Karnataka.
** Associate Prof., Dept of Sociology Govt. Degree College Shorapur.

In various reports and the studies, it has been opined that no standard definition has been identified to consider an area as rural and they mentioned that the standard of identifying an area as rural varies in the same country within a specified period also (Pong 2001, UNS 2014).

The study considered that some people in rural areas normally have less access to healthcare than their urban counterparts. Less number of medical doctors, very rare or sometimes no mental health programs and healthcare services in rural society and at the same time the preventive or the precautionary measures are also very less in number. In all, lack of healthcare facilities in the rural society has forced them to go for unconventional method of medical care for their ill health situation.

Apart from the modern measures of medical care such as taking the help of mobile phones, Internet facilities are also very low. In spite of the efforts made by the government to attract the medical practitioners towards rural society by offering additional financial rewards and sometimes making it compulsory to serve in the rural society, the outcome is very poor (Rourke 2008).

The research conducted in Canada indicates that the ruralites or the people living in the small towns get the medical facilities comparable to half of their counterpart at urban community. One of the significant findings of this study is that the rural people have to travel 5 times more than their counterparts at urban centers to get the medical aid. (*Ng, E.; Wilkins* 1999). In another study the researcher has mentioned the differences between urban and rural societies healthcare facilities. Such as the urbanites have easy access to the specialists like dentists, eye specialists and such other specialized medical healthcare they can access easily. Ambulance

facilities, blood and urine tests for everything the rural people have to move to the cities. (*Halseth, G.; Ryser, L* 2006).

In another study the author has mentioned that the gap between rural and the urban society with regard to healthcare facilities is due to difference in the financial investment. They prefer to invest in the higher population area. It is significant to note that only 10 percent of the rural population in China has medical insurance, whereas their counterparts in the urban community had 50 percent during 1993.

The same is the situation when it comes to the government expenditure on health, during 1990 in China about 20 percent of money meant for public health was spent in rural society and at the same time about 70 percent of money meant for public health was spent on the urban community. (*Brant, S.;2006*). In a study in United States of America during 2006, it was revealed that number of patients had been shifted to urban healthcare centers for further necessary treatment. (*Kindermann, D; 2006).*

The above review indicates that the situation pertaining to the rural health care is almost same in both developing and the developed countries.

Reality of Healthcare in Indian Villages

Obtaining proper health facilities is the fundamental right of every citizen of the country, and it is true in respect of the rural population and more particularly to the rural women. The reality on the field is that there is poor quality of healthcare facilities in relation to infrastructure and even poor supply of basic healthcare medicines to the rural healthcare centers. It directly contributes to the poor health status of the 70 percent of the rural population and women in particular.

India's major population lives in villages, where the situation of medical amenities is shocking. Considering the picture of ugly realities there is an awful necessity of innovative practices and actions to ensure that quality and suitable healthcare touches the underprivileged corners of the Indian villages. However, number of

procedures and courses are actuality run by the Government but the realization and success of these plans is disputed owing to gaps in the enactment of such policies.

The health care status of the rural India indicates that the number of Primary Health Centers (PHCs) in rural society are less in figure out of which nearly 10 (8) percent of the primary health centers do not have medical staff and qualified doctors. In any hospital the services of supporting para-medical staff are very much essential. It is significant to note that nearly 40 (39) percent of the rural primary health care centers do not have the lab technician posts. At the same time about 20 (18) percent of the primary health care centers do not have the pharmacist posts. This is the introductory profile of the rural health care centers in India.

The number of maternal deaths in India and more particularly in rural India is high. It's because of poor healthcare facilities in the rural parts of India. It's very difficult for the rural people to even depend on private healthcare centers due to its costly affair and those private hospitals are also confined to only several healthcare basic facilities and not having larger advanced medical equipment.

Towards a Healthy Rural India

Though it is considered that getting the health care facilities and such other health related matters are the prime rights of every citizen of the country. It is to state that availability of the medical qualified staff to treat the citizens of the country and other facilities is to reach up to only 60 percent of the population. More than 70 percent of the Indian population lives in rural India, the health care facilities provided in rural India in terrible condition. Looking into the intricate realities of the rural health conditions it is very much essential to take necessary steps towards improving the rural health conditions of the disadvantaged population of the rural society. Nevertheless, number of programmes are being implemented by the governments due to loopholes in the implementation of these policies, the success and the competence is doubtful. Apart

from this another fact related to rural health care is the insufficient number of health care centers in rural India. Still more worst situation of the rural health care center is that among the existed rural health care centers nearly (10) that is 8 percent of them are without doctors, nearby (40) 39 percent of them are functioning without lab technician post, the most important key post is the pharmacist post in any hospitals, it is significant to note that, about (20) 18 percent of the PHCs in rural society are running without pharmacist post. This horrible situation of the Primary health center in rural India has caused for a greater number of maternal deaths in the rural India. It is recognized here that rural society in India is disadvantaged of maternal health care facilities. Most of the private sector hospitals are established in the urban centers and even than they are not furnished with dangerous and emergency situations. Moreover, they are not affordable by the rural poor people.

Practical Situation of the Rural Healthcare

It is worth mentioning here as to why the rural population go for the traditional or local health care facilities. The answer for this is very simple. Due to non-availability of the proper health care facilities in the rural society, and within the available facilities, most of them are with low quality, poor standard of healthcare services, the rural people are compelled to go to the locally available healthcare facilities as their first choice. The data on the dependency of the population of India on healthcare facilities indicates that an overwhelming majority of the population in India, that is, more than 90 percent of them depend on the private healthcare facilities in rural India and whereas it is about 70 percent in the urban centers. The problematic aspect of this is that most of them cannot afford to pay and get health services from private healthcare centers.

Above all, the population in the rural society are ignorant with regard to the health aspect, the poor awareness among them is one of the important drawbacks of the healthcare facilities in the rural parts of the India. At the same time, there is inadequate concern of the workforce involved in the health care facility at rural India. It is here very much essential to fix the responsibility of the workforce involved in the rural health care services so that it can contribute for the reduction of the mortality in the rural regions of the county. It could be observed here that in the recent years some of the organizations are coming forward to give health care facilities in rural India.

Technology for Rural Healthcare

Number of associations and the group of people functioning together with the government agencies and the non-government agencies to improve the healthcare facilities in rural parts of the country. More than two third of the population in India are using the mobile network services, by using these mobile network facilities and the utilities the medical care facilities at the rural India can be improved. This effort may reduce the gap in the medical care facilities in rural India. Improving the mobile services extensively, the larger proportion of the rural population can be reached with regard to the healthcare facilities. By utilizing this new technology one can improve the quality of healthcare and channel the gaps in healthcare services in rural India.

Improving Healthcare on the ground

Some of the organizations involved in the health care services are adopting mobile technology in some of the health care schemes. More particularly in the projects like safe motherhood and in such other health schemes this technology has been successfully used. By this way the health care facilities at the rural society level and more particularly about mother care, services have been upgraded.

Uses of this technique

Creates awareness among rural women about their health care schemes,

Lapses in the rural health care should be easily understood,

Updated health care facilities should be extended to all.

Comprehend the contemporary situation of health facilities.

Recognize main problems that public are facing while pursuing health care amenities.

Evaluate the conditions of PHC arrangements and its accessibility to nearby villages

Here it is necessary to take the opinions of the people of the region to improve the existing health care facilities. This will help to find answers to the problems of the public in general and rural society in particular.

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Problem of Encroachment on Forest Land in Himachal Pradesh

Dr. Baldev Singh Negi*

[*Out of the total geographical area of 55.67 lakh hectares in Himachal Pradesh the gross cropped area is about 9.51 lakh hectares. With a net area sown of approximately 5.38 lakh hectares, the cropping intensity stands at 176.6%. About 81% of the total cultivated area in the state is rainfed with a gross irrigated area of 1.87 lakh hectare and net irrigated area of 1.06 lakh hectares. Encroachment of forest land for cultivation and other purposes continues to be the most pernicious practice endangering forest resources throughout the country including Himachal Pradesh. The state government of Himachal Pradesh has introduced The Himachal Pradesh Conferment of Proprietary Rights (in certain cases for small and marginal farmers on the Government Land Rules, 2017. The present paper is an effort to study the legality of said land rule to deal with the encroachment problem in the state.*]

Forests are the storehouse of the rich biodiversity and constitute the essential life support system besides being a source of timber, fuel, fodder and medicines etc. They ought to be recognized as water reservoirs, natural source of soil nutrition, soil creators and soil binders. But the variety of encroachment in the name of development and other activities has posed a great threat because of which the forest cover area is getting squeeze day by day.

Encroachment of forest land continues to be the most pernicious practice endangering forest resources throughout the country. Statistical information compiled by Ministry of Agriculture during early 1980s revealed that nearly 7 lakh hectares of forest land was under encroachment

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* Faculty, School of Development Studies, Himachal Pradesh University Shimla.

in the country about a decade back. This is despite the fact that prior to 1980, a number of States had regularized such encroachments periodically and approximately 43 lakh hectares of forest land was diverted for various purposes between 1951 and 1980, more than half of it for agriculture. The decisions of the State Government to regularize encroachments from time to time seem to have acted as strong inducement for further encroachments in forest areas and the problem remained as elusive as ever for want of effective and concerted drive against this evil practice.

In Himachal Pradesh, defined forest area is 66%, as per the National Forest Policy, area under tree cover is only at about 23%, which is far less than the target of 50% set by the State Government. The status of encroachment on the forest and other government land is quite high. There are 11240 cases of encroachments in this small state in which there are being encroached by 12701 encroachers. Out of the total there are 11240 people who encroached the forest land less than 10 bighas and 1461 people have encroached the forest land more than 10 bighas (www.hpforest.nic.in).

The government of Himachal Pradesh proposed the land rules, 2017 in exercise of the powers conferred by section 163-A read with section 169 of the Himachal Pradesh Land Revenue Act, 1953 (Act No.6 of 1954), the Governor of Himachal Pradesh proposes to make the following draft rules, by repealing the Himachal Pradesh Regularization of Encroachments (in Certain Cases) on Government Land and Disposal of Government Land Rules, 2002, for carrying out the purpose of the Act and the same were published in the Rajpatra, Himachal Pradesh, for the general information of the public in the month of April, 2017. This rule legitimizes the encroachments up to five bigha to those individual farmers who possess the land less than ten bighas.

People for Responsible Governance (PeRGo) understanding

A society called People for Responsible Governance (PeRGo), registered under the Himachal Pradesh Societies Registration Act, is trying to establish rule of law with the help of provisions under the Constitution and different laws legislated by the Parliament and the State of Himachal Pradesh such as: HP Land Revenue Act, Forest Conservation Act, HP Public Premises Act, HP Panchayati Raj Act contains disqualifications for elections, Article 14, Article 39 b, Article 51 A, Article 48 A, Scheduled Tribes and Traditional Forest Dwellers Act and HP Village Common Land Act.

The endeavour of Society (PeRGo) is to establish the rule of law, upholding the constitutional values and make the people aware about their rights and duties. The present issue of removal of encroachments upon the forest land as well as other lands owned by the state government is an effort in the same direction.

The Himachal Pradesh Conferment of Proprietary Rights (in certain cases for small and marginal farmers) on the Government Land Rules, 2017 are bad in law as it legitimises the encroachers to encroach the forest land up to 5 bighas if the encroachers are having landownership less than ten bighas.

The PeRGo, has been arguing the case in the Hon'ble High Court of Himachal Pradesh with brief submissions of which are as given below:

- That it is settled law that a State is trusty of all the natural resources including lands and forests and it is duty bound to protect all these natural resources including removal of any encroachment made thereupon by the offenders.

- That by virtue of the present rules those persons, who have specifically violated the provisions of Himachal Pradesh Land Revenue Act, 1953, Himachal Pradesh Public Premises and Land (Eviction and Land Recovery), Act, 1971 and Forest Conservation Act, 1984, are being rewarded by the proposed regularization of the encroachments.

- That the proposed regularization of encroachments shall encourage lawlessness where the people will be rewarded for

violation of the law by conferment of proprietary rights upon them.

● That the law-abiding citizens, who did not violate the law and did not encroach upon the government land shall be watching helplessly as to what was their fault in not having encroached upon the government land.

● That the proposed regularization of encroachments by virtue of Himachal Pradesh Conferment of Proprietary Rights (in certain cases for small and marginal farmers) on the Government Land Rules, 2017, is contrary to the Rule of Law, which is the basic feature of the Constitution of India.

● That if at all the State is so serious about allotment of land to needy persons then it may frame rules for allotment of land to poor/ landless people of the state giving first preference to those, who had not violated the law and did not encroach upon the land of the State.

● That the Applicant intends to assist this Hon'ble Court in determining the original controversy in dispute. It shall be substantiating its submissions, inter-alia, on the grounds as given in the preceding paragraphs.

Therefore, the intervention into the matter with respect to legality of Himachal Pradesh Conferment of Proprietary Rights (in certain cases for small and marginal farmers) on the Government Land Rules, 2017, on the mentioned grounds is required. The major causes in the backdrop of rampant encroachment are flaws in the available laws, political slackness in enforcement of laws and nexus between few business and political houses. Therefore, in given situation 'the judiciary' is the hope to common masses to save the major natural resource called as '*Jal*, *Jungle* and *Jameen*'.

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Resettlement of Displaced Tribals of Lalgarh

(West Bengal)

Dr. Amorjit Saikia*

[India is a secular country where people from different castes and creeds are living according to their choice. After independence, though India has shown remarkable progress in science and technology but this development has failed to change the life style and living fashion to certain segments of our population. The tribal people (8%) of total population are peace-loving and they live in forests or in the waste land, their process of life also depends upon the productivity from natural resources. They are recognized as tribals and accordingly their rights are protected in our Constitution.]

Though the majority of our population is progressing and their life style has been changed, the condition of the tribals remain unchanged. Though Government of India initiated adequate steps to the tribal development later it took U-turn because of changes in policies for modern development and industrialization process. The scarcity of lands due to mass population has left no other option with the government other than to use the instrument for encroachment of land and using natural resources for the development.

Lalgarh in West Bengal is not exception to witness all these episodes. It is located in Binpur1 Subdivision West Midnapore Dist. in West Bengal. 57% of total population are scheduled tribes and they live in nature in symbiotic relation with ecology and environment and their livelihood security depends upon the production from forests, ponds etc. Deforestation of about 4500 acres of land in Salboni for the industrialization process which left these people insecure for their survival resulted in protests and violence in Lalgarh.

The state was ruled by the Communist party for three decades; they were miserably defeated in establishing new factory or re-opening of old factories and rising rate of unemployed youths in the State was a promising issue for vote banks which was understood by Marxists late. They were in hurry to start new factory in Singur, Nandigram, Salboni etc., with hope to regain the popularity with ulterior motivation to occupy 13th assembly. But this strategy was not accepted not only by intellectuals of Kolkata but also other marginal segments especially peasants, tribals etc., which was proved in the ballot boxes on June 13 and finally legends were forced to step down and new light of hope had risen.

The development model which had been adopted by the state government in Lalgarh where more than 57% of total population are tribal, embedding the new economic policies of liberalization, privatization and globalization in using natural resources, particularly lands, forests and rivers was a serious question for the native people leading their natural life, thereby for their survival. The state government invited industrialists like Jindal and Santosa (Indonesia) for making Special Economic Zone (SEZ) deforesting around 4500 acres of land and also encroached about 500 acres of tribal lands in absence of original land owners, using an instrument which was devastating for the environment and also had a devastating impact on their health.

The last resources for their survival have been taken away in the name of development project where these people have no role to play, they will remain unemployed due to lack of requisite skills for the modern industries, pushing them to the brink of hunger and acute malnutrition. The

* Associate Prof., Dept of Sociology, Margherita College, Tinsukia, Assam.

majority of the people now divested and displaced from their lands. According to Marx, in a capitalist society an alienated man lives in an alienated nature and he performs estranged labour and the product of his labour becomes alien to him.

Philip (1991) discussed the land alienation of tribals and its impact on their socio-economic structures starting from the agrarian changes. The Rio de Jenerio (1992) declaration on environment and development by the UN conference proclaims that state should regularize and duly support indigenous people's identity, cultures, interest and enable their participation in the achievement of sustainable development. Roy (1995) suggests that the impact of displacement and other form of deprivation on subaltern women and men, one has to begin by looking at the traditional social structure of subaltern groups. InternationalLabour Organisation (2002) suggested that government must consult with indigenous and tribal people within their country on development projects and other activities affecting them.

Objectives

- to determine the rift between stakeholders and people of Lalgarh in the process of Industrialization.

- to assess the role of State Govt

- to examine the livelihood securities of tribal people

- to assess the role played by the tribal community for protecting the natural resources in the way of violation

- to examine the impact of the violence in the affected areas.

Methodology

Non-participant observation methods were applied for collection of primary data in the tribal community in Lalgarh area to ascertain their livelihood condition. Interview guide and a focus group discussion taking 10 people in a group was a useful method to collect the data. Secondary data like Govt. reports, newspaper and media reports are also used in this study.

Findings

The underlying hope that the development would finally reach the poor tribals was getting belied day- by- day. There was a wide lag between the needs of the tribals in Lalgarh and state's own vision of development which was often dictated by the ruling elites and corporate. All-round development of the tribals is the need of the hour. The state which had the responsibility for providing protection, itself became an interested party. This movements of tribal people against their forced displacement and the corporate grab of their resources is being sought to be violently crushed by the use of police and security forces and state and corporate funded and armed militias.

The state violence has been accentuated by Operation Green Hunt in which a huge number of paramilitary forces are being used mostly on the tribals. The militarization of the state has reached a level where schools are occupied by security forces. The local peace-loving people other than tribals are also being victimized by the police and administrations.

This has led to a total alienation of the people from the state as well as their loss of faith in the government and the security forces resulted in supports from Maoists. Now changes have taken place in the state politics, the new government has come with various promises for these people. The resettlements and rehabilitation in Jangal Mahal are the first priority to them accordingly in the recent past various welfare schemes have been announced with the hope of to regain peace in that area, and that is yet to be seen.

The debt-burdened State first needs to make the solid economic base to overcome the fiscal deficit. The Jangal mahal people are in a great hope to access their demands in an urgent manner which may be a challenge for new government. The Maoists and Communist have a similar ideology but different instruments to apply may also work in stern conditions if the delivery modalities of announced packages belated on due

course of time is a serious thought to regain the peace and harmony in that region.

Suggestions

Considering the above scenario, the following suggestions may be incorporated in policy formulation: -

The path of violence never brings success and that message must be communicated to tribal people so that they can understand the message properly with the view to get rid of violent path and to come forward to discuss all their issues on the negotiating table with Govt. authority. All demands may be scrutinized at an appropriate level in the Govt. organization. An open mind discussion may be highly solicited.

The modality for implementations of the system needs to be discussed in the presence of all the affected population and channel of supervising the work progress may be strengthened in such a way so that tasks may be completed without any further delay and hindrance. Though Government. of Bengal has done much to improve the quality of life of Adivasis offering various schemes but much needs to be done. The voice of grass-root people should be listened to carefully so as to solve the vexing issues. Health and education are of prime importance now-a-days. Breaking down these systems arrest the development of the society and paralyses the complete systems that needs to be attended in an emergency manner.

Public and private sectors are the main composition in the present world that helps to create more jobs both in public and private sectors with the speedy implementation of the systematic method. Human Rights Commission must be strong enough to protect the rights of tribal in that region where they are subjected to harassment either by the local authorities or common people. The deprivation of tribal groups to benefit a Private company could shake the faith of tribal people in the loss of land which may have serious consequences for the security and wellbeing of the people of entire country

Conclusion

The reality is that all these struggles represented the genuine interests and aspiration of the lower level people those are oppressed and suppressed by the capitalists/industrialist. Here in Lalgarh the conditions of tribals are no exception. These indigenous people have a unique cultural identity.

However, they are getting step-motherly treatment from the government without recognizing their indigenous status, neglected them in terms of development and denied their rights and justice. Corruptions, negligence and poor capacity to solve their issues among local politicians and administrators impeded development in the region. Police atrocities on tribal in this region continue to be unabated.

Therefore, they feel most vulnerable and have lost their hope in the democracy thereby adoption of the path of violence. Gun-battle against these people may not be appropriate to address their genuine issues. The government must understand the ground realities so that appropriate mechanism can be adopted to solve their problems once for all.

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Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Dr. Ruchika Bhateja* & Dr. Sangeeta**

[Service quality and customer satisfaction are two important concepts, particularly in-service marketing. Conceptualization of service quality and customer satisfaction is prolonged issue. The theoretical issues are concerned with their origin, definition and their distinct behavior. The empirical issues are related to their measurement, incomplete model, measurement difficulties in gap model etc. The present work intends to cover whether bancassurance customers' takes service quality and customer satisfaction as two different constructs and whether the two constructs are associated to each other or not? Survey questionnaire was adopted from Sureshchandar et al. (2001) measuring service quality and customer satisfaction on five dimensions including core service, human element, systematization of service delivery, tangibles and social responsibility. By using paired t-test, it was analyzed that bancassurance customers' take differently perceived service quality and customer satisfaction on core service, human element, systematization of service delivery and social responsibility in case of private sector banks but public sector bancassurance customers' have a slightly different view. In public sector banks, a significant difference (p<0.05) between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to human element, systematization of service delivery and social responsibility was found. Pearson's correlation test was incorporated to check whether service quality and customer satisfaction are associated to each other. It was observed that though both the constructs are different but highly associated to each other. The study implied that service quality is an important driver for higher customer satisfaction level in bancassurance.]

Banks all over the world ae facing intense competition due to globalization, improved technology, new entrants, innovative products, changing customer preferences and new regulations. To deal with these challenges, banks leverage with insurance products resulting into bancassurance, to improve service quality and customer experience. Traditionally, insurance products were offered mainly through agency channels but after the establishment of Insurance Regulatory Development Authority (IRDA, 1999) and privatization, insurance sector is flooded with many distribution channels like brokers, bancassurance or corporate agency etc.

Opening up of doors in insurance sector on one side enhanced market competition but on the other side; it pressurized the insurance companies to select appropriate insurance distribution channels so that their market penetration, profits, service quality and customer satisfaction could improve. Therefore, both banking and insurance companies realized, only fittest will survive. The idea of integrating banks and insurance services came up with the emergence of "bancassurance".

Universalization of banking services and diversification of insurance services became possible with the bancassurance; where insurance services are being offered under the roof of banks. Bancassurance or Bank Insurance Model (BIM) emerged after Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA) passed Corporate Agency' regulations in October 2002 notifying all scheduled commercial banks to undertake insurance business (https://www.irdai.gov.in/).

Insurance regulatory development authority (IRDA) and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) coupled together baking and insurance service, to penetrate uninsured market by utilizing wide

* Asst Prof. of Commerce, Government College Israna, Panipat.
** Asst Prof. of Management, Maharaja Agrasen University, Baddi (H. P)

banking network. For this, needs of the customers should be catered as expected by them and should ensure customer satisfaction. Hence, service quality and customer satisfaction became a key factor for bancassurance survival.

Services are characterized as intangibles, heterogeneous, production and consumption are inseparable; therefore, perishable. Quality is doing a particular task in a specific way but its intangible nature makes its measurement a little multifarious. Service quality is defined as a long run attitude (Sureshchander *et al.*, 2001) and it may occur at multiple levels in the form of core service, tangible environment, human element, convenience, empathy etc. (Seith *et al.* 2008).

Customer satisfaction is widely accepted as a key factor for successful marketing base. Customer's post purchase expression about liking or disliking after experiencing the services is customer satisfaction (Woodside *et al.,* 1989). Every marketing activity always starts and ends with the customer. Therefore, their satisfaction and the quality of being served is the ultimate solution to a marketer success.

Literature review

Customer satisfaction is transaction specific, whereas service quality is a long-term over-all attitude (Boltan and Drew, 1991; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Oliver, 1993). Service quality is multidimensional concept (Choudhury, 2015). Quinn's 1992 paradigm clinches that, consumer satisfaction and service quality play an important role in the consumers' purchase intentions and it was also emphasized that service quality should be treated as internal component of strategic marketing behavior (Taylor, S. A., 1993). Customer satisfaction and service quality are inter-related. The higher the service quality, the higher is the customer satisfaction (Munusamy et al. 2010).

Although, conceptualization of service quality and customer satisfaction is distinctive but their operationalization is slight misty (Sureshchandar *et al.* 2001). The idea of single item scale by Cronin and Taylor (1992) is failed by Bitner and Hubert (1994) by their four-item scale of overall

customer satisfaction measurement model and Oliver (1981) multi-faceted customer satisfaction scale.

Reliability, assurance and responsiveness were the three most important elements of service quality expectations by the customers (Newman and Cowling, 1996). The customers desire these three-quality dimension: reliability, assurance and empathy. It has been also observed that core service failure, impolite behavior of staff and indifferent attitude of the staff are three major disappointers among customers (Verma, 2015). Therefore, banks need constant assessment and reassessment of customer's perceived banking service quality in order to meet their expectations (Gani and Bhat 2003).

Insurance markets are characterized by incomplete and asymmetric information between insurance companies and consumers (Cummins and Doherty, 2006; Eckardt, 2007). Technical service quality (TSQ) plays a critical role in determining customer satisfaction; therefore, managers should focus on service quality as a priority (Maddern *et al.*, 2007).

Perceived service quality of life insurance services is a multi-dimensional second-order construct consisting of the primary dimensions of service delivery, sales agent quality, tangibles, value and core service (Mittal, S., Gera, R., & Singhvi, S. R. 2013).

Bancassurance is taken as highly responsible in providing insurance services by the customers. Customer's age, education, marital status and family size have a significant impact on their perception towards bancassurance responsiveness (Singh, R. 2015).

Customers found to have optimistic experiences about bancassurance channel when buying life insurance. Ease of buying, reliability and responsiveness, accuracy, maturity benefits, after-sale services and stock related information are seven core factors that affect customer's buying experience with bancassurance channel (Choudhury, 2016). Bankers enjoy more trust levels than insurance agents (Kumari, H.T., 2012). Now, banks are the leading way to

distribute insurance policies of private insurers. Gradually, the share of individual agents in insurance premium income (which is the core distribution force of the insurance industry) has declined. Banks are the dominant channel for distribution of life products in Europe and they are too, growing their share in Asia. (The Times of India, April 18, 2016).

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to address:

1. Whether bancassurance customers take service quality and customer satisfaction as two separate concepts or not?

2. If so, whether service quality and customer satisfaction are associated or not with respect to bancassurance?

First set of hypotheses

H1: there is no significant difference between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to core product.

H2: there is no significant difference between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to human element of service delivery.

H3: there is no significant difference between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to systematization of service delivery.

H4: there is no significant difference between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to tangibles of service delivery.

H5: there is no significant difference between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to social responsibility.

Second set of hypotheses

H1: there is no significant association between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to core product.

H2: there is no significant association between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to human element of service delivery.

H3: there is no significant association between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to systematization of service delivery.

H4: there is no significant association between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to tangibles of service delivery.

H5: there is no significant association between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to social responsibility.

Research Methodology

Design: the present study is descriptive research as the study aims to get insight into the unique relationship between perceived service quality and customer satisfaction in context to bancassurance channel of insurance distribution. The study is confined to National Capital Region (NCR) and its adjoining cities/Towns of Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The customers of top ten public and private sector banks of India were approached personally to study their perceived service quality and customer satisfaction. The sampling procedure used for the study was snowball sampling because of non-availability of accurate data. About 700 bancassurance customers life insurance products of top ten Indian public and private banks were approached personally. 686 completed the questionnaire correctly. The high response rate is due to the personal contact approach.

Table: 1.1 Respondent descriptive

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Private	350	51.0	51.0	51.0
	Public	336	49.0	49.0	100.0
	Total	686	100.0	100.0	

(.....Contnued the Next Issue)