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- ❖ **China's Space Prowess**
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La Viva Democracy

Installation of Hemant Soren as the new chief minister of Jharkhand has been welcomed by all non-BJP parties and hailed as a victory of democratic forces. Spectacular electoral victory registered by the JMM-led alliance in partnership with Congress and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) served an electoral blow to the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) which had been in power in the state until recently. Undoubtedly, the BJP had registered a stunning electoral victory in the Lok Sabha general election, including its number of seats won in Jharkhand, held in the recent past; nevertheless, it literally conceded defeat in the state assembly elections in Maharashtra and could save its government by aligning with JJP in Haryana. However, the outcome of the Jharkhand assembly polls is a different story altogether for almost all the parties that contested the polls.

Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) had contested 43 of the 81 seats and managed to win 30 seats with vote share of 18.72%, the Congress had fielded its candidates in 31 constituencies and could win 16 seats with a vote share of 13.88%. The RJD, also an ally of JMM-led alliance, contested seven seats and could win one seat, with vote share of 2.75%. On the other hand, the BJP had contested 79 seats but could win only 25 seats with a vote share of 33.37%. All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU), once an ally of the BJP, this time contested independently by fielding candidates on 52 seats but could win only two seats with a vote share of 8.10%. Interestingly, the Jharkhand Vikas Morcha contested all 81 assembly seats and managed to win three seats with a vote share of 5.45%. 5 seats were won by others with a vote share of 17.30%.

JMM-led alliance cobbling up 47 seats has been at the helm in Jharkhand with Hemant Soren as chief minister. The Mahagathbandhan in Jharkhand, comprising JMM, Congress and RJD is reminiscent of similar grand alliance in Bihar in 2015 where the RJD supremo Laloo Prasad Yadav succeeded in cobbling up the grand alliance of RJD, Congress, Nitish-led JD (U) and other parties against the BJP and came with flying colours in the 2015 state assembly elections. The hallmark of Jharkhand polls has been the contest between so-called national issues pioneered by the BJP's national leadership to woo the electorate and local issues of Jal, Jungle & Jameen (Water, forests and land) as advocated by JMM-led alliance. A remarkable aspect of the election campaign of the alliance was hectically active role of the JMM chief in most of the election rallies addressed either by the JMM or the Congress. Hemant Soren was present in all the rallies addressed by former Congress president Rahul Gandhi and his sister, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra.

Deciding not to split the tribal vote, even in some of its strongholds, Congress conceded these seats to the JMM and took the BJP head on in seats where tribals were in minority, and in urban constituencies. In comparison to the BJP's sustained focus on the scrapping of Article 370, Ram Mandir and CAA, Congress kept the spotlight on local issues, economy and jobs. Similar focus was maintained by other alliance partners – JMM and the RJD. While attributing BJP's defeat in assembly poll to strong anti-incumbency against the BJP chief minister and his arrogance as the two main reasons for the BJP's defeat, one political analyst from Jharkhand has stated that Hemant Soren, Congress and RJD for the first time changed their mindset of outdoing each other and sincerely worked for the victory of the alliance and their message percolated down to the grassroots.

Outcome of Jharkhand polls has lessons for all parties. For the BJP, it is no more invincible but now has become vulnerable when the Opposition gets united. And that the best aspect of Indian democracy is that it self-corrects runaway ambitions and restores the representative nature of Indian polity. For the Congress party has done well by adapting itself to local requirements and by aligning with state level parties it is going to be a net gainer. Mantra of grand alliance that worked in 2015 in Bihar and in 2019 in Jharkhand should further be strengthened to safeguard the democratic and secular values. Jharkhand has demonstrated La Viva democracy.

— BK

China's Threat in Space and Countermeasures

Pushpinder Singh Bath*

[China is rapidly improving its space-based intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, navigation and communication capabilities allowing for greater military support from space. Concurrently, it is also reportedly developing a counter-space programme to improve its capabilities to limit or prevent the use of space-based assets by potential adversaries. China could thus be graduating from viewing space as a 'source of information' to a "key battle ground". China's space capabilities have progressed to fight futuristic wars, in which the use of space is essential to seize and maintain the initiative. As China grows militarily and economically, its resultant space strategy is also likely to expand. India's response to the emerging strategic and military challenges posed by emergence of China as a space power will determine not only our capability to effectively meet the threat posed by China but also our ability to safeguard our critical strategic space assets.]

Space is the medium through which the world is heavily dependent for its day-to-day communications and data transfer which in turn drives the world activities from banking, global navigation to fighting a war. The key to fighting and winning modern wars lies in the ability to establish "information dominance" i.e., the ability to gather, transmit, manage, analyse, and exploit information and preventing an opponent from doing the same. Space plays an essential and growing role in achieving this objective.

Space - The Next Frontier

Surge in Space Activities: Military usage of satellites is no longer the exclusive domain of US or Russia. A large number of countries are now engaged in space activities. There has also been an increase in commercial space market both by national space agencies and private aerospace companies. This has led to a crowding of satellite orbits (Billing, 2017), particularly the geostationary and geosynchronous orbits.

Impact on Balance of Power: The emergence of China as a space power (Campbell, 2019) has impacted the erstwhile US-Soviet bipolar structure to a multi-polarised structure with China overtaking Russia not only in the sheer number of satellites but also in the funding of space and counter-space activities.

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Growing Importance of Space: There is an increasing necessity to utilise space for national security. Global challenges such as energy, environment, food and natural disasters have come to the forefront and pose severe threats to the international community. Space systems are being used extensively to solve these global challenges. As many countries have limited capacity, finances and technological know-how, there is an advent of a new era for space cooperation.

Risks in the Stable Use of Space: There is a move towards increased use of space for surveillance and military tasks which in turn is leading to militarisation of space (Pedreira, 2018) to protect own space assets and deny the use of space to the adversary. Quantum of space debris has also grown and there is a growing threat of Anti-Satellite (ASAT) attacks. There is; therefore, a necessity to cope with such risks and ensure stable use of outer space.

China's Space Strategy

In the backdrop of the space scenario discussed above and lack of effective international laws governing space activities, China has rapidly enhanced its space capabilities and is increasingly using its space prowess for military purposes. China's aspirations are driven by its assessment that space power enables the country's military modernisation and would facilitate the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to challenges US information superiority during a conflict. China has asserted sovereignty over much of the East and South China

Seas, as well as Taiwan and is engaged in a course of aggressive conduct to enforce those claims against its neighbours. China's space and counter space programmes are designed to support its Anti Access Area Denial (A2AD) strategy (Cordesman & Kendall, 2017) to effectively tackle likely US intervention in a potential conflict in this region.

Chinese strategists recognise that space capabilities are crucial to the PLA's transformation into an informationised force (Costello & McReynolds, 2018) as well as its ability to achieve information superiority during a conflict. They assess that space systems would provide effective battlefield communication, surveillance, meteorological predictions and precision guidance functions, rendering "space dominance" an essential component of realising "information dominance." To achieve this capability, PLA has developed a robust space infrastructure, which includes the following: -

- Space launch facilities.
- Launch vehicles.
- Telemetry, tracking and control facilities.
- Satellites with multiple sensor payloads.
- Counter-space capabilities.

Building Blocks of China's Space Programme

China's Space Launch Capabilities: China has four launch centres and a wide array of launch vehicles. This facilitates China to undertake at least three dozen launches (Freese, 2018) on an annual basis, which is comparable to US launch rates.

Satellite Tracking and Control: Space operations require a substantial amount of support from land-based infrastructure. Most of this support is provided by two control centres: the Xian Satellite Telemetry and Control Centre, China's main facility for controlling satellites and managing satellite data and the Beijing Aerospace Flight Control Centre, China's main facility for controlling human space flight and lunar missions. The Xian and Beijing control centres rely on a network of telemetry and tracking stations positioned throughout China (Global Security, 2018). To help alleviate coverage limits beyond China, it has built telemetry and

tracking stations in Namibia, Pakistan and Chile and leased access to stations in Kenya and Australia. China is having also recently constructed a sixth overseas telemetry and tracking station in Argentina. Additionally, China operates four Yuanwang class naval space tracking vessels, which serve as mobile telemetry and tracking stations.

Space-Based Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) Modernisation: China has shifted the emphasis of its C4ISR modernisation efforts from a terrestrial network of fibre optic cables, mobile radios, data links and microwave systems to space-based infrastructure. China had approximately 250 operational satellites in 2018. Majority of these satellites are owned and operated by Chinese defence organisations, including the PLA, the Ministry of Defence and various entities under the state-owned space industry conglomerates.

Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) Capabilities: China is fielding sophisticated satellites that feature Electro-Optical (EO), Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR), and Electronic Intelligence (ELINT) sensors. China's major military-relevant ISR satellites are the Yaogan, Gaofen, Shijian and Jilin constellations. The Yaogan series of satellites, serves as the core component of China's ISR architecture. The series is owned and operated by PLA (Chandrashekar & Ramani, 2018).

Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT) Capabilities: China's Beidou satellite navigation system caters for PLA's indigenous satellite navigation requirements. Beidou-1 was operationalised with three satellites in the year 2000. It had coverage only over China. Beidou-2 was operationalised in the year 2012 with 10 satellites. It had coverage over the Asia-Pacific region. Beidou-3 is presently underway. It is slated to be operationalised by 2020 with 35 satellites (Cozzens, 2019). It will have a global coverage and will end PLA's reliance on the US-owned Global Positioning System (GPS) while operating in any part of the world. Space-based PNT assets provide reliable and accurate navigation and targeting capabilities that PLA can employ to more effectively plan, coordinate and execute military operations and long-

range missile strikes. PLA can also apply precision timing signals to synchronise operations and conduct attacks from stand-off distances, thereby allowing PLA to avoid threat areas and defend against opposing naval forces from a position as far as possible from China's coastline.

China's Counter Space Strategy

China's counter space strategy (Aerospace, 2018) is coherently and asymmetrically designed to counter a far more technologically-advanced adversary like USA. During a conflict, China would employ a combination of "hard attacks", which use kinetic methods to cause permanent and irreversible destruction of a satellite or to ground support infrastructure and "soft attacks", which use non-kinetic methods to temporarily affect the functionality of satellite or ground systems. China is pursuing an array of kinetic and non-kinetic counter space projects. These have been discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

Direct Ascent Anti-Satellite (ASAT) Weapons: In January 2007, China tested a direct ascent kinetic kill vehicle against its own defunct FY-1C weather satellite. This was followed by two non-destructive ASAT tests in 2010 and 2013. These tests demonstrated China's ability to strike satellites in low earth orbits, where the majority of surveillance satellites of space-faring nations reside.

Co-orbital Anti-Satellite Systems: These systems consist of a satellite armed with a weapon such as an explosive charge, fragmentation device, kinetic energy weapon, laser, radio frequency weapon, jammer or a robotic arm. Once a co-orbital satellite is close enough to a target satellite, the co-orbital satellite can deploy its weapon to interfere with, disable, or destroy the target satellite. Co-orbital satellites also may intentionally crash into the target. These systems provide several advantages over direct ascent anti-satellite missiles, including their ability to target satellites in every orbital regime, generate less debris and limit escalation, as many co-orbital attack options are reversible and offer plausible deniability.

Directed Energy Weapons (DEW): China has been committing substantial resources towards research and development (R&D) of DEWs. These weapons can deliver concentrated energy in the form of lasers

or particle beams to damage or destroy the sensitive sensors onboard an adversary's satellite. In 2006, China is suspected to have fired a high-powered laser at a US satellite, resulting in a temporary degradation of its functionality.

Cyber Attack: The Chinese are also developing systems to degrade or damage data links that connect satellites to ground stations. Space dominance can be achieved if a key satellite of the adversary is shut down or it is unable to communicate at critical moments. It is indeed a preferable outcome, since attribution may be difficult and it is unlikely to generate any space debris. Therefore, PLA during a conflict would attempt to conduct cyber-attacks against satellites and the ground-based facilities that interact with satellites.

Ground Based Satellite Jammers: China also possesses a wide array of ground-based satellite jammers, which are designed to disrupt an adversary's communication with a satellite by overpowering the signals being sent to or from it. PLA may employ jammers to degrade or deny an adversary's access to navigation and communication satellites during operations.

Status Check of Space Prowess of Other Asian Space Faring Nations

In Asia, China has stolen a march over other countries i.e. India and Japan in developing space capabilities both in terms of launch vehicles and number of satellites. It has also developed and successfully demonstrated counter space capabilities. It also has a well laid out space and counter space policy, an elaborate command and control structure and an extensive industrial base backing this capacity building. Other Asian nations have been slow to catch up with rapid strides made by China in the space domain.

Japan: On April 1, 2016 the Office of National Space Policy released Japan's first national security-oriented space programme called *Basic Plan 4* (Kallender, 2016). The plan focuses on space as an important part of Japanese national security planning. It states that Japan must actively develop a national security space programme. The plan focuses on key space programmes to include information gathering satellites, reconnaissance satellite

constellations, development of space based maritime domain awareness capability, boosting Japan's space situational awareness capabilities and linking of Japan's space assets with that of US to support deterrence capabilities in the region.

India: India is yet to enunciate a space security policy which addresses the national security challenges and how it plans to counter the space threat from China. It has a very limited space based ISR capability with long revisit times and few military communications satellites. This skews our deployment and response mechanism and restricts maritime domain awareness in Indian Ocean Region. Our limited space assets are also vulnerable to denial of service attacks due lack of real time space situational awareness. While these space capabilities offer great advantages, they simultaneously create great vulnerabilities. Therefore, there is an urgent need to understand the nature of threat, carry out an impact assessment and plan countermeasures to bridge our vulnerabilities (Global Security, 2018).

Implications of China's Space and Counter Space Programmes

As Beijing rapidly expands its space capabilities, it allows PLA to better command and control its forces; track the military activities of adversaries and increase the range and accuracy of its ballistic missiles. China's emerging space capabilities are aimed at challenging US information superiority in a war. The success achieved by US in integrating space capabilities into its military operations has encouraged China to pursue a broad and robust array of counter space capabilities to deny, degrade, deceive, disrupt and destroy the adversary's space systems and their supporting infrastructure.

The emergence of potent Chinese counter space capabilities makes US military operations in Asia riskier than ever before and thereby its ability to come in support of Asian nations in times of conflict. On the other hand, we are also seeing a more belligerent China in South China Sea, Korean peninsula and Indian borders. It is likely that Pakistan will have full access to the data from the Chinese reconnaissance and surveillance satellites besides cooperation in other military applications of space.

Way Forward in Indian Context

Space systems are critical strategic assets that are expensive to develop and acquire. Therefore, India needs to articulate a coherent space and counter space policy with concrete goals. It needs to accept the developing threats and put in place a comprehensive space command and control mechanism for ensuring a robust protection measures to safeguard own space assets. It also needs to develop counter space capabilities for credible deterrence and preventing an adversary from using its asymmetric capabilities against our space assets. Some concrete steps that need to be taken have been described in the succeeding paragraphs.

National Space Policy: There is a need to articulate a National Space Policy and from that will flow the national space strategy. It needs to bring out clear objectives in space and counter space domains in the context of national security.

Increase Capacity: To meet the Chinese threat in space domain, we need to increase our launch rate which requires increasing the number of launch sites, develop a wide array of launch vehicles, increase the number of ground stations, develop sophisticated high resolution satellite sensors, encrypted satellite communications and a pool of space trained manpower.

Enhance Survivability of Space Assets: Carry out systems hardening, increased manoeuvrability, autonomous operation options, integrated organic attack reporting technologies and possibly on-board active defences.

Redundancy in Space Assets: Increase capacity to rapidly recover from space attacks by investing in reserve satellites either on-orbit or on ground and mobile control stations capable of seamlessly managing space operations in case of damage to primary control centres.

Space Situational Awareness (SSA): Knowledge of the space environment is essential for instituting measures to safeguard own space assets. Presently, open source data is being utilized, which is susceptible to induced errors. Development of indigenous real time SSA capability is essential to monitor suspicious activities by an adversary in space to safeguard own space assets.

Defensive Cyber Measures: Develop capabilities for jamming or spoofing the communication links used to command and control an adversary's co-orbital satellites.

Counter Space Capabilities: India has demonstrated its kinetic ASAT capability through successful conduct of Mission Shakti on 27 March 2019. However, there is a need to simultaneously develop non-kinetic ASAT capabilities in the realm of laser weapons and particle beams, which are non-attributable and obviate collateral damage owing to resultant debris. Therefore, there is a need to develop both kinetic and non-kinetic counter space capabilities to pose a deterrence and safeguard own space assets.

Collaboration with Friendly Nations: As our capacities are limited at the moment, there is need to collaborate with friendly countries with similar strategic interests in the region like US, France and Japan to improve situational awareness, launch capabilities, maritime domain awareness and work towards an international convention on non-militarisation of space and rule-based use of space.

Conclusion

China's rise as a space power has important national security implications for India. It also majorly impacts US, the net security provider in the region, which relies on its own space capabilities to assess and monitor current and emerging threats to national security and project military power globally. However, the emergence of potent Chinese counter space capabilities is making US military operations in Asia-Pacific region riskier than ever before, as it reduces the information dominance which US enjoys through space assets. India needs to accelerate the security dimension of its space programme and develop a cogent space strategy to deal with the emerging space threat from China.

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America's Afghan Conundrum

Madan Lal Sharma*

Afghanistan has been a dilemma for the great powers of the past as well as so-called superpowers of the Cold War era alongside the so-called sole superpower – the United States – in the post-Cold War era. The British fought three wars with Afghanistan but failed to subjugate it. Failure of military adventurism of the erstwhile Soviet Union in Afghanistan for over a decade from 1979 onwards culminated in its disgraceful exit and that is said to be one of the major factors contributing to the unraveling of the erstwhile Soviet Union.

In the aftermath of the gruesome tragedy of 9/11, the US troops have been fighting the 'terrorists' on Afghan soil for about two decades now. Recent revelations unveiled from the plethora of government documents obtained and exposed by the Washington Post show that top American officials failed to unfold the truth about the longest armed conflict in American history and had the clinching evidence that war could not be won. During the 18-year long war, more than 775,000 US troops have fought in Afghanistan since 2001, and 2,300 have died there and 23,589 wounded in action. This misguided war that is still dragging on inconclusively has cost the United States more than \$1 trillion.

There are no visible signs that the US and its allies are presently winning this war, rather the available evidence points in the opposite direction and the Afghan Taliban is gaining strength day-by-day. According to media reports, the on-again, off-again peace negotiations with Taliban started by the Trump Administration has thus far contributed little more than a transparent endeavor to wriggle out of this quagmire, despite President Trump's repeated promises of doing so. Recent media reports indicated President Trump's rhetoric of reducing American troops in Afghanistan by 4,000, bringing the total number to about 8,600.

Critics of American Afghan policy have for long been arguing that U.S. war efforts there were bound

to fall apart; nevertheless, senior civilian and military officials have been offering a different assessment, regularly issuing optimistic progress reports, while light at the end of the tunnel looked dim. Having burnt their fingers, now the US and its allies are signaling an inclination to end America's longest war unilaterally.

Some experts are of the view that Taliban's leadership is chock full of al Qaeda's patrons and allies and Taliban wants cessation of hostilities at its own terms and is reluctant to dance on the American tune. And Taliban's staunch stance has been the major dilemma for US foreign policy all these years. Despite the costs in blood and treasure, victory for US and its allies still remains elusive.

At the same time, situation in Afghanistan can always get worse. As one expert has opined, it may look tempting to leave, once that happens the Taliban will take over and Afghanistan will once again become, what Trump once described, a "laboratory for terror." Now the question is whether Trump really believes this or is simply saying it as a negotiating tactic. Undoubtedly, it seems good to demand assurances that Afghanistan won't become a safe haven for terrorists; however, even if the Taliban agreed to those terms, without U.S. troops in the country, there would be no way to enforce them. The bigger question is whether the Taliban can be trusted and will it cooperate with the elected government of Afghanistan, once the US troops leave the country.

Some critics opine that there is no reason to believe the Taliban won't just pick up where it left off in 2001, and dethrone the government in Kabul and enforce Islamic law. Even now, the Taliban continues to proclaim itself as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and some of its official documents. Available on its website recently warned Afghans before upcoming elections to stay away from political rallies and gatherings "that could become potential targets."

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The Taliban are looking for an opportunity to topple the 'admittedly imperfect government' in Kabul. One critic of US policy in Afghanistan has gone to the extent of saying that if US troops are to be

stationed in Afghanistan, their goal ought to be a permanent defeat of Taliban and if that is impossible, they should get out. Apparently, Afghanistan continues to be a conundrum for US foreign policy.



Populist politics and electoral gains in Tamil Nadu

M. Satheesh* & Dr. M. K. Stephensanvaseekaran**

[Tamil Nadu politics is known for populist election manifestos and freebies for a few decades. Both the Dravidian parties namely Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, (ADMK) who alternatively come to power in Tamil Nadu have set a trend of freebies and lucrative election promises and made it as a winning strategy. Now the trend is followed by almost all political parties in Tamil Nadu and incidentally, Tamil Nadu politics has reached a position where it seems that no party could contest an assembly election without an announcement of freebie in their election manifesto. This paper analyses such a trend in Tamil Nadu and tries to find the voters' mindset regarding these populist policies, populist electoral promises and freebies.]

Tamil Nadu politics and populism have become identical with each other for the past few decades. Any party which is in power or which tries to come to power cannot ignore populist politics and its dynamics. Announcing freebies and giving unrealisable popular electoral promises have become so common in today's Tamil Nadu politics in way that no one gets their eyebrows raised with any kind of announcement from any political party during election times.

This underlying force called as populism which drives Tamil Nadu's politics, dominates the nature of its political culture, the character of the political mobilisation and the dynamics of prevalent political clientelism in the state. Populism is defined differently by different political analysts. Narendra Subramaniam defines populism as "movements, parties and regimes which articulate the notions of a 'people' defined by social norms rooted in its history" (Subramaniam 1999).

Arun Swamy defines populism as "a doctrine that holds that ordinary people have been robbed of their due owing to no fault of their own. Undifferentiated populism charges the elite with both preventing just avenues for advancement and

forgetting their moral obligation to protect the poor" (Swamy 1996). Andrew Wyatt simplifies these definitions and gives a rather straight forward definition which defines populism as "an ideological construct that celebrates the importance of ordinary people, asserts that these people should not be divided by social hierarchy and justifies improvements in their welfare" (Wyatt, Populism and politics in contemporary Tamil Nadu, 2003).

The studies with regards to the populism in Tamil Nadu politics are numerous. The most famous study is done by Narendra Subramaniam in which he detailed how Tamil ethnic revival took place through the forces that emerged from the interaction of political parties and their competing populist policies in Tamil Nadu (Subramaniam 1999). Later he himself extended his study of populism to whole of India and analysed the nature of populism in the Indian republic and explicated the importance of populist policies in the mobilisation of the lower castes of India (Subramaniam 2007).

S. Narayan (2018) in his study, analyses the history of welfare activities and freebies in Tamil Nadu from the earliest years of governance. He fundamentally analyses how the Dravidian parties through their populist practices transformed the socio-economic condition of Tamil Nadu. He systematically shows the importance of populist welfare schemes in the social change of Tamil Nadu. In another important

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critical study, Andrew Wyatt analyses the different kind of populist appeals of both ADMK and DMK from 1990 to 2010 and finds that how these parties mask their weaknesses by giving freebies (Wyatt, *Populism and politics in contemporary Tamil Nadu* 2003).

In a study about availing freebies given by the various central and state governments in India, B.P. Singh concludes that caste ties and power plays a major role in availing freebies from government. He shows how dominant castes in a particular region avail the benefits of free schemes at the earliest and betray the people of the powerless caste groups (Singh 2016). All these studies have systematically analysed the freebie and populist politics with different lenses and have analysed the populist nature of election promises released during election times.

But these studies do not answer a simple and basic question that whether people of Tamil Nadu accept and expect populist policies and believe in these election promises. This study tries to address this research gap and try to check whether the people of Tamil Nadu accept the freebies and believe in election promises given by the different political parties before both the general elections and state legislative elections.

This study is divided into two sections. The first section deals with the populist policies mentioned in the election manifestos. It tries to understand the people's opinion about the electoral promises given by the major political parties. It also tries to understand the people's mindset about the role of Election commission of India in cross checking the feasibility of the electoral promises given by these parties. The second section deals with the opinion of people regarding the freebies given by the government in power.

For both the sections, the authors have travelled extensively across Tamil Nadu to collect the data for the survey undertaken. The sampling size is fixed as 600 and simple random sampling of 5.86 crore eligible voting population of Tamil Nadu has been done. The authors have made sure that almost all typical regions of Tamil Nadu are represented in the survey to understand the mindset of the overall public.

Election Manifestos and Election Commission

During the election campaign, the leaders and candidates of the political parties give a number of vocal promises, among which, most of them might even look as an unrealizable goal to the onlooker. Generally, before elections every party releases their manifesto. The Manifesto of the party, contains its promises and its vision for the socio-economic development of the people of Tamil Nadu at large for the next five years. It is envisaged to be a binding factor through which political parties commit themselves with people and seek vote in that behalf. Mostly the points in the manifesto are visualized as the aspirations of the people at large by the parties in their perception.

In other words, the political parties and their charismatic leaders try to manipulate the aspiration of the people align with their line of thinking. For example, in Tamil Nadu's assembly election, 2006, DMK party announced freebies like Television, Gas connection etc. and promised to cancel Agriculture loan from cooperative bank (DMK 2006) which was instrumental in their electoral victory. Even though DMK formed a comparatively better and a grand alliance with Indian National Congress (INC), Pattali Makkalkatchi (PMK), CPI, CPI(M), Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) than that of AIADMK's alliance of Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam; MDMK, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal etc. (Financial Times, 2006), there was a conspicuous lack of public discontent over the incumbent AIADMK government. In fact, there was a real possibility of AIDMK being re-elected based on their performance between 2001 to 2006 in office (Wyatt, *The enduring appeal of populist leadership in contemporary Tamil Nadu*, 2010).

All these could have resulted in a collateral damage for DMK, if not for the lucrative freebies announced by the party. Similarly, AIADMK party during their 2011 election campaign announced lucrative offers such as free Laptops, free Mixer and Grinder etc., (AIADMK 2011), which brought it to power. According to researchers and political scientists, these manifestos especially the freebies mentioned in them played a major role in these election victories. This trend of winning elections through populist appeals is prevalent not just in Tamil Nadu but all over the developing world (Kenny, 2017).

The authors travelled across Tamil Nadu to understand the people's mind-set about the election promises. It is found that more than half of the people (58.67%) surveyed, believed in the election promises given by the parties (see table 1) which is a staggering number. When we spoke with the people, we found that people believe that since it is the image of the party concerned most reputed parties do not give false promises. But few people were rational in understanding that few promises are actually unrealizable because there are lots of stakeholders for any public issue. This showed the maturity of the general public.

But mostly the people looked naïve and ignorant of larger public issues. Few people strongly believed

that it is definitely possible to do as said in the manifesto by the incumbent government in a very short period if they have the political will. Interesting fact which could be noted was that the rural-urban divide was clearly visible in their opinion. More than 2/3rd of the rural people believed in the election manifestos whereas only 46% of the urban people said that they believe in election manifestos released by major political parties. Some elder people even recollected how DMK's first chief minister Annadurai failed to keep up his election promise of 3 measures of rice for one rupee which he gave during 1967 election campaign.

Table: 1 Opinion of people regarding Election promises

S.No	Questions	Area of Respondent	Yes	No	Total
1.	Do you believe election Promises made by major political parties?	Rural	231	106	337
		Urban	121	142	263
		Total	352	248	600
2	Do you agree that ECI should validate implementing the election promises before election to help people choose good candidate in election?	Rural	245	92	337
		Urban	181	82	263
		Total	426	174	600

Source: Author's survey 2018

It was ironical when we could find that more educated people believed the election promises given by the parties (see table 2). Even though people don't generally believe all the promises of the political parties, they are found relatively obsessed with freebies.

Table: 2 Do you believe Election Promises?

Educational status	Yes	No	Total
1-5	19	22	41
6-10	84	56	140
11-12	70	34	104
Graduate and above	168	115	283
Not literature	11	21	32
Total	352	248	600

Source: Author's survey 2018

Elections in India are also a platform for the public to voice their resentment against a ruling party. By voting for other parties and helping to elect a different political party and government, citizens demonstrate that they possess ultimate authority. Because elections are a regular exercise which occurs every five years in India, the ruling parties are kept in check and made to consider the demands of the public. This works as a self-corrective system whereby political parties review their performance and try to appease the voters (Elections in India, 2015). To put a check on these lucrative election promises, the Election Commission sometimes asks all the parties to submit the manifestos to it and if needed they have to explain how the party is planning to meet its promises after winning the elections.

The ECI does this as a measure to check false promises from becoming apparent in the election campaign. For example, all major political parties

including ruling AIADMK and DMK in Tamil Nadu have promised lots of populist schemes in their respective election manifestoes of 2016 Assembly election. To this the ECI had sent notices to both these parties asking them to explain their plans regarding the financial management of the implementation of their envisaged schemes and programmes (Anuja and Sen 2016). It was first of its kind to have happened in Indian elections, even though such a practice is very old in American elections and elections of other developed western countries.

It also leads to another pertinent debate the ECI has the required resources to cross check the data provided by the political parties. Also, the legality of such an action of commission is in question. But in spite of all these, the action of ECI to ask the parties about financial management looks to be a good move, because, the constitution has categorically declared that the government should be a people's welfare government and hence it becomes an important necessity of the election commission to prevent the political parties from cheating the public. To a question whether ECI should validate every election manifesto and declare the possibility of implementing the election promises, more than 71% of the people have responded with a clear agreement (see table 1). The rural-urban divide cannot be seen in this question as the percentages were almost the same in both categories.

Freebies in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu has set a trend of giving freebies to common public. In the years of Kamaraj's government, freebies were given to the people to build their capacity in different ways. For example, free uniforms were given to the school students during his period (Kannan, 2019). The main reason behind this move was to stop discrimination in schools among children based on class and caste as lower caste people and poor people invariably failed to buy new uniforms because of extreme poverty. Similarly, free education was given to the students till standard XI in Tamil Nadu during Kamaraj's period (Venkat, 2014) which was a great achievement during those times. Many poor children benefited from these schemes, which was first of its kind in India during those times.

As the time passed by, the nature of freebies started to take a new form during DMK campaigns. First time, DMK party and its leaders started to give lucrative populist schemes during election campaigns which became very popular among the people. Anna famously declared during the 1967 election campaign that he will try to give 'three measures of rice for one rupee' but definitely give 'one measure of rice for one rupee' if DMK comes to power (The Sunday Indian, 2011). Even though it was spontaneously declared by Anna in an election meeting reacting to the press reports which claimed that incumbent Congress government challenged DMK on rice price, the promise was publicized all over Tamil Nadu by Dinathanthi, a famous news daily whose proprietor, Si.Pa.Aditanar's 'Naam Tamizhariyakkam' was in alliance with DMK.

This probably was the first instance where a political party gave unrealizable election promise to win an election. It is important here to note that DMK cannot fulfil its promise after coming to power as warned by the previous Congress government. These kinds of freebies still dominate the Tamil political scene as discussed earlier. Rice is given today at free of cost from June 2011 in all ration shops to eligible card holders (TNCSC 2019). All these things have started a debate among scholars and journalists alike. Few people claim that, people are made extremely dependent on the freebies for survival by the political parties and opine that most of the freebies are not useful to the public.

Few others stand in the opposite side of the spectrum and argue that the people who are against giving populist schemes do not know the exact socio-economic reality. The politicians on their behalf also justify the announcement of freebies by saying that they just try to satisfy the people's expectations. To cross check these discourses, the authors checked the expectation level of freebies among the general public. It is found that almost 2/3rd of the people expect freebies (see table 4). The expectation is high in urban areas (66.15%) than the rural areas (65.57%). Similarly, the expectation of freebies among graduates was a staggering 72.79% (206 out of 283) which are contrary to the normal perception (see table 4). This itself is a sure object of future studies where a graduated individual still expects freebies from governments for survival.

This indirectly questions our education system as well.

The reason of such an expectation still baffles any onlooker of Tamil Nadu politics. To a question whether freebies are helping their socio-economic development, more than 2/3rd of the people have responded with a yes (see table 3). When the authors spoke about this to the people, it is found that most of the people of Tamil Nadu are grossly unaware about the major economic and other development activities that are taking place in the state or about the financial requirements needed to do such major capital building and capacity building initiatives. Their orientation is akin to any other rational voter for whom their livelihood is paramount than any other thing in the world.

Their vision about the future capacity of their children is very less and limited. The authors found that the people's 'social imagination' to be very less that their vision does not go beyond the boundaries of their living place and their immediate needs. As a previous study has shown, lack of social imagination of the people will make people behave in a more self-interested way (DuraishKumar 2018). Hence, it is not astonishing to listen to people who think the colour television given by DMK, computers given by ADMK as a boon and encounter people who think that as their right. Many women during the interaction revealed that they are indirectly forced to rely on the freebies from the government as they don't get enough jobs and a good remuneration for their labour.

Table: 3

Do you expect freebies from ruling party?

Educational status	Yes	No	Total
1-5	23	18	41
6-10	87	53	140
11-12	57	47	104
Graduate	206	77	283
Not literature	22	10	32
Total	395	205	600

Source: Author's survey 2018

To a question whether the freebies should continue till the people's development reaches its optimum level, an astonishing number of people (80%) said in the affirmative (see table 3). Even many people who did not expect freebies also believed freebies should continue till all the people develop economically and socially. Even though they were found clueless when we spoke with them about their plans for socio-economic development, they were found extremely convinced that development should precede stopping of freebies.

Conclusion

Populist promises, policies and programmes will remain an integral part of Tamil Nadu politics for the next few decades. Tamil Nadu is regarded as one of the developed states in India. In spite of that people of state are unsatisfied with their socio-economic status. Many people believe freebies should continue till their socio-economic status reach an optimum level. Any politician will tell us that satisfying a mass is generally very tough in this era of social networking. The people's mind is found to be highly engrossed with the populist policies and programmes. They cannot think beyond that for their development at this point of time.

Even though few people recollect how the previous governments didn't fulfil their election promises once they came to power, many people still believe in election manifestoes and promises. All these things ascertain the fact that, people of Tamil Nadu expect and accept these populist policies as claimed by the politicians, which is the very objective of the research.

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Evaluating Higher Education in India

Dipen Saikia*

[The higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period, to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world. In a heavily science-based and technology-driven economy, it is the role of the higher education institutions and universities to provide for problem identification and problem solution through education combined with research. In India; however, many critics of the universities consider them to be institutions of learning and research separated from the main objective of meeting the economic and social needs of the people. The situation as a whole warrants radical changes in the public policy pertaining to the social sectors, rural economy, rural education, and higher professional education of the weaker sections both in the rural and urban sectors. Honest endeavours are required to develop and apply the public-private partnership (PPP) concept with new vigor.]

India is passing through a transformational stage where a traditional society is going to be replaced by a modern one and a developing nation is to be emerged as a developed and advanced nation, but here we should keep the fact in mind that “our progress as a nation can be no swifter than our progress in education”. Undoubtedly, India

possesses a highly developed higher education system which offers facility of education and training in almost all aspects of human creative and intellectual endeavours: arts and humanities; natural, mathematical and social sciences, engineering; medicine; dentistry; agriculture; education; law; commerce and management; music and performing arts; national and foreign languages; culture; communications etc., but it has been deteriorating on absolute as well as relative terms.

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At the aggregate level, India has emerged as the fourth largest economy of the world in terms of the world purchasing power parity income, but it has poorly regained its 105th position among 128 countries in UNESCO's Education Development Index.

The new challenge before India is to become a developed society by the year 2020, which requires that not only a vibrant economy driven by knowledge has to be ushered in soon, but also a new society, where justice and human values prevail, has to be created. Moreover, challenges in higher education are no longer only nation centric. They have already attained global dimensions, particularly after trade in services has been brought under the purview of the WTO regime. With the explosive growth of knowledge in the past century and with the development of handy tools of information and communication technologies as well as of other scientific innovations, competition has become a hallmark of growth all over the world. As a result, knowledge is not only going to be the driver of Indian economy, but also, it is going to permeate into all the strata of Indian society for a better quality of life and living conditions.

Therefore, India has to rise to the occasion urgently and reorient its higher education system to be vibrant, competitive, meaningful and purposeful; besides, there is absolutely no substitute to quality of higher education, although the country has been faced for a long time with the serious problem of meeting the quantity needs of our society. It is, therefore, essential that a careful balancing of the two is given priority to meet the twin requirements of the society in the foreseeable future.

Access to higher education and the broad range of services it can render to society is part and parcel of any sustainable development program in which human expertise and professional skills are required. It is the substrate on which research and development flourish, which is the ultimate guarantee of national self-reliance. It provides people with an opportunity to reflect on the political, social, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual issues facing the humanity.

At present, India has a total of more than 18,000 post-secondary institutions- more than 17,000 of

these are colleges offering mainly undergraduate degrees. There is no differentiation among the colleges, although a few have taken advantage of legislation that permits high-quality colleges to separate from their sponsoring universities and offer their own autonomous degrees. These colleges are recognized as more prestigious than the rest. India's international efforts lag behind those of other countries, especially China.

In 2008, approximately 2,00,000 Indians were studying abroad and 8,92,000 Chinese students were studying abroad. On the other hand, approximately 20,000 international students studied in India during the same year. India educates approximately 10% of its university-age population, while China enrolls about 22%. China is no. 1 in enrollments with more than 27 million enrolled students while India ranks third with 13 million enrolled students. Many of India's impressive number of engineering graduates, up to 75%, are too poorly educated to function effectively in the economy without on-the-job training (Altbach, 2009).

Quality amidst Quantity

Ensuring quality in the midst of quantitative expansion has always remained a challenge in the field of India's higher education policy. This is showcased nowhere better than in periodic attempts to encourage quality while at the same time facilitating a quantitative growth. One such area of tension and frustration has been the linking of quality of teaching and research in colleges and universities with salary benefits. This has not produced quality, but certainly produced distortions and tensions. In expanding higher education, we did not care for quality and thus, produced graduates who are not competent enough.

The present system of higher education does not serve the purpose for which it has been started. In general, education itself has become so profitable a business that quality is lost in the increase of quantity of professional institutions with quota system and politicization adding fuel to the fire of spoil system, thereby increasing unemployment of graduates, without quick relief to mitigate their sufferings in the job market of the country. So, the drawbacks of the higher education system underscore the need for reforms to make it worthwhile and beneficial to all concerned.

Undoubtedly, the higher education system in India has grown in a remarkable way, particularly in the post-independence period, to become one of the largest systems of its kind in the world. However, the system has many issues of concern at present, like financing and management, including access, equity and relevance, reorientation of programmes by laying emphasis on health consciousness, values and ethics and quality of higher education, together with the assessment of institutions and their accreditation. These issues are important for the country, as it is now engaged in the use of higher education as a powerful tool to build a knowledge-based information society of the 21st century.

In view of the shortage of quality teachers, creation of world class universities (as declared by National Knowledge Commission to establish 1500 universities) would remain an arduous task, if not impossible, at least during the 11th Five Year Plan period. With the overall degradation of value system in the Indian society, the teaching fraternity has also failed to maintain its decorum and is facing a steep fall in moral values. Subsequently, the concept of Guru has become obsolete today. Teachers suffer from serious lacuna in their character. Many of the teachers in colleges and universities are even facing the charges of sexual and moral harassment of their students. As a result, now-a-days, students no more feel secure in the presence of the teacher and such teachers, though very few, put a blot on the fair profession of teaching.

Over the past decades, we have devalued education in humanities, science and in engineering. Of the 32,000 M.B.B.S seats in India, less than half are in government colleges. The rest are in private colleges affiliated to state universities or deemed universities. The fees in most private colleges which are run by trusts headed by politicians are 1000-1500 times higher than in the government colleges. Over 7000 medical seats have been created in the country during the last five years with 75 per cent in private colleges. Most medical colleges in the country, both in government and private sector, have failed to keep abreast of technological advancements and new teaching methods (Kochhar, 2010).

The same worse situation is of Indian management institutions. More days and more hours of an Indian

MBA aspirant are consumed by classroom teaching, leaving little time for creative thinking. Indian Business schools are indulging in excessive teaching of compulsory courses and the students are given a very limited choice for selecting advanced level elective courses. This has resulted in faculty shortage & in low levels of research output and competence. The management institutions have become teaching shops and with the entry of foreign schools, it will be time for hundreds of business schools to migrate to the next emerging areas of easy profit (Bhattacharya, 2010). Similar kind of study by Dharur (2010) brings into notice the losing charm, interest and achievements of Indian students & Mathematicians in Mathematics.

Palshikar (2010) brings into notice the complexities, inefficiency, poor management and poor quality of higher education in India. The study points out the eligibility equality of Ph.D. degree and U.G.C (N.E.T) for the appointment of an assistant professor or lecturer. The study points out that Ph.D. is altogether a research whereas N.E.T is a theoretical subjective knowledge; thus, they cannot be treated equally eligible for the appointment of a lecturer. The author further says that educational policy makers, education administrators and the academic community are largely responsible for the inefficiency and poor quality of higher education in India. This reminds us of J. Frank Dobie's famous quotation: "The average Ph.D. thesis is nothing but a transference of bones from one graveyard to another"

Outside of a small elite sector, in "the real world" most jobs are obtained by investing social and/or economic capital in the form of bribes and commissions, networks, contacts, and "influence". To put it sharply, a degree is a legal necessity, while competence is a nice but inessential luxury. For example, affluent professionals well-endowed with social capital (doctors, lawyers, accountants, etc.) who wish to pass on their "family business" to the next generation would be willing to pay a high price for the requisite credentials, secure in the knowledge that competence can be developed on the job.

The educational practice has three most important components: its content, the methodology to deliver it to the students and the evaluation of their

receptivity. All the three are defective in the present education system in India.

Today, India's higher education policy is oblivious to the issue of knowledge production in Indian languages for the degree and post-graduation level. The U.G.C has apparently left this issue to the state governments, and state governments have chosen to ignore this core issue on which quality of the quantitative expansion of higher education depends. Research degrees, too, do not have adequate quality checks. Expect for luring teachers to research degree for the salary benefits, they only perform the function of offering a waiting room for jobless post-graduates. Therefore, the blame needs to be apportioned among educational policymakers, education administrators and the academic community at large. With the expansion of higher education, there is bound to be an explosion of spurious degrees, including research degrees.

“Our university system is, in many parts, in a state of disrepair. In almost half the districts in the country, higher education enrollments are abysmally low, almost two-third of our universities and 90 per cent of our colleges are rated as below average on quality parameters. I am concerned that in many states university appointments, including that of vice-chancellors, have been politicised and have become subject to caste and communal considerations, there are complaints of favouritism and corruption.....”

Dr. Manmohan Singh

Rural, urban and gender disparities must be kept in mind by policy makers in planning and implementing the higher education system. While quantity is important, say achieving, double digit percentage for higher education, quality is paramount. For making colleges and universities free from external interferences, there should be an apex institute which

would finance educational institutions depending upon their performance. It may also help in setting up of new institutions. There is an urgent need to revamp medical education in the country with uniform infrastructure, uniform minimum standards, uniform fee structure, a common all-India entrance test for the M.B.B.S & P.G and re-evaluation of both the private and government.

Thus, in conclusion, we would say that the higher education should continue to be subsidized by the Government in an adequate manner. For improving the quality in education, the role of public sector should be enhanced. Policies of higher education should be designed to strengthen indigenous research agenda. Policies of our country based on simplicity and sharing of facilities within and across institutions must be established and encouraged. To bridge the quality and quantity gap between private and government-run institutions, honest endeavours are required to develop and apply the public-private partnership (PPP) concept with new vigor.

The situation as a whole warrants radical changes in the public policy pertaining to the social sectors, rural economy, rural education, and higher professional education of the weaker sections, both in the rural and urban sectors.

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The Editor and Staff of the Journal
Wishes
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A Very Happy and Prosperous New Year

PRI & Development Empowerment

Dr. K. Madeswaran*

[Panchayats have been the backbone of the Indian villages since the beginning of the recorded history. Gandhiji's dream of every village being a republic or Panchayat having powers has been translated into reality with the introduction of three-tier Panchayati Raj system to enlist people's participation in rural reconstruction.]

The next important piece of legislation was the Bombay Village Panchayat Act 1920. Under this Act, the Panchayats was constituted into an elected body. Members were elected by adult male villagers and the Panchayat was entrusted with local functions, mainly of a civil nature. Panchayat was empowered to collect compulsory house taxes. The Bombay Village Panchayat Act 1920 empowered village Panchayats to take up various activities, including some social-economic functions and gave the power to heavy taxes and duties in order to increase their income.

After the reorganization of states in 1956, laws to introduce the Panchayat system in different states were gradually enacted. This process was almost complete in Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Madras, Mysore, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Bombay.

The 73rd Amendment to the Constitution in 1992 gave Constitutional status to the Panchayats as institutions of local self-government and also for planning and implementing programmes for economic development and social justice. The concept of Panchayati Raj seemed for a while in the years after Indian independence to have disappeared permanently into the mists of India's romantic past. In the late twentieth century, however, the notion has returned once more to the political agenda, for a variety of reasons: strategic, practical, economic, and ideology. This paper sets out to trace in brief the origins of the concept of Panchayat, offers some historical examples of the panchayat in use, and attempts an explanation as to why it should once again have assumed

importance in the minds of politicians, NGOs and administrators.

Backdrop of Panchayati Raj System in India

During the 1920s, Mahatma Gandhi made a strong plea for introduction of self-government in the villages with a view to improve their economy. He had pointed out that independence must begin at the bottom. Every village should be a republic or a Panchayat having full powers. The greater the power of Panchayats is the better for the people.

The aim was to foster democratic participation, to involve villagers in the development effort and to ease the administrative burden on the states. The subject of implementation of the Panchayati Raj was placed in the State List. In the initial years after gaining independence, no efforts were made for the setting up of the Panchayati Raj.

In January 1957, a team for the study of Community Projects and National Extension Service, headed by Balwant Rai Mehta, was appointed. The Committee observed "Admittedly, one of the least successful aspects of the C.D. (Community Development) and N.E.S. (National Extension Service) work is its attempts to evoke popular initiative. We have found that few of the local bodies at a level higher than the Village Panchayat have shown any enthusiasm or interest in their work and even the Panchayats have not come into the field to any appreciable extent."

The Committee asserted, "So long as we do not discover and create a representative and democratic institution which will supply the local interest, supervision and care necessary to ensure that expenditure of money upon local object conforms with the needs and wishes of the locality, invest it with adequate power and assign to it appropriate

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finances, we will never be able to evoke local interest and excite local initiative in the field of development.”

Recommendations of Balwant Rai Mehta Committee

The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee was a committee appointed by the Government of India in January 1957 to examine the working of the Community Development Programme (1952) and the National Extension Service (1953) and to suggest measures for their better working.

The recommendations of the committee were approved by NDC in January 1958 and this set the stage for the launching of Panchayati Raj Institutions throughout the country. The committee recommended the establishment of the scheme of ‘democratic decentralisation’ which finally came to be known as Panchayati Raj.

Establishment of a 3-tier Panchayati Raj system – Gram Panchayat at the village level, Panchayat Samiti at the block level, and Zila Parishad at the district level. This system was adopted by state governments during the 1950s and 60s, as laws were passed to establish panchayats in various states. It also found backing in the Indian Constitution, with the 73rd amendment in 1992 to accommodate the idea.

Some of the states like Maharashtra introduced a system which was drastically different from the system introduced in Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan. Some of the states created only one-tier viz. the Village Panchayats (Jammu and Kashmir and Kerala), while others created a two-tier system (Haryana).

Even in those states which created three-tier system there was difference attached to each of them. Even the level at which the three-tier system operates in different states differs. Despite these differences the basic pattern of the system is largely based on the recommendations of the Mehta Committee.

Ashok Mehta Committee (1977)

In this backdrop in 1977, the Janata government appointed a Committee with Ashok Mehta as chairman and was entrusted with the task of enquiring into the causes responsible for the poor

performance of Panchayati Raj Institutions. It was also asked to suggest measures to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions.

The committee suggested two-tier system of Panchayati Raj consisting of Zilla Parishads at the district level and Mandal Panchayats at the grassroots level as against three-tier system suggested by the Balwantrai Mehta Committee. The committee recommended constitutional protection to the Panchayati Raj Institutions and further decentralization of power at all levels.

The Ashok Mehta Committee Suggested:

- Reservation of seats for the weaker sections
- Two seats for women
- Adequate financial resources for the panchayats
- Requirement of Constitutional sanctions
- To extend people’s participation in developmental activities.

Due to the fall of the Janata government, the Ashok Mehta Committee recommendations were not implemented. Few states including Karnataka formulated new legislation on the basis of the recommendations of this Committee. Both the Committees overlooked the importance of panchayats as units of self-government. During the 1980s, two important Committees were appointed to look into local governments.

GVK Rao Committee in 1985 and Dr. L.M. Singhvi Committee in 1986. The GVK Rao committee recommended the revival of Panchayati Raj Institutions such as that greater responsibility of planning, implementation, and monitoring of rural development programmes could be assigned to them.

L.M. Singhvi Committee recommended that the Panchayati Raj Institutions should be constitutionally recognized and protected. New chapter in the constitution should be provided to define their powers and functions and free and fair election to be conducted through the election commission.

Committee recommended for the appointment of finance commission and all the rural development programmes are to be entrusted to the Panchayati

Raj Institutions by amending schedule VII of the constitution.

This mixed and generally unsatisfactory state of affairs began to change dramatically in 1985, when soon after Rajiv Gandhi became Prime minister, two committees were constituted. The first, under G.V.K. Rao was established to review the arrangements for rural development and poverty alleviation. It recommended the revitalization of Zilla Parishads, with the appointment of a District Development Commissioner as Chief Executive of the Zilla Parishad. The second committee, chaired by H.M. Singhvi, proposed the reorganization of Panchayati raj institutions and the setting up of effective village-level committees. Following this report, the Sarkaria Commission on Centre-State relations and a Parliamentary Consultative Committee also recommended that there should be a significant strengthening of Panchayati raj institutions.

A bill proposing an amendment to the Constitution, the 64th was therefore finally drawn up and presented to Parliament in May 1989. This bill proposed to make it legally binding upon all states to establish a three-tier system of panchayats at the village, intermediate and district level, each of them to be appointed by direct election and to enjoy a fixed tenure of no more than five years.

On 24 April 1993, the Constitutional (73rd Amendment) Act 1992 came into force to provide constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj institutions. [ix] This act was extended to Panchayats in the tribal areas of eight states, namely Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Rajasthan starting December 1996. Currently, the Panchayati raj system exists in all the states except for Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Mizoram.

Modern Indian government has decentralized several administrative functions at the local level, empowering elected gram panchayats. It is a basic, a first formal democratic institution at the village level. The chairperson of this unit is called as Sarpanch. It is the primary unit of local self-government. Gram panchayat is a cabinet of the village elders, directly elected by the adult citizens of the village.

Gram Panchayat Members

1. To supervise during office hours, the records of the Gram Panchayat after giving due notice to the Sarpanch.
2. To move resolution or question on any office bearer on matters connected with the administration of the Gram Panchayat.
3. To exercise inspection over all works undertaken by the Gram Panchayat.
4. To supervise all institutions working under the direction, management and control of the Gram panchayat.
5. To bring to the notice of the Sarpanch the irregularities if any, noticed during such inspection.

73rd Constitutional Amendment Act

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act was passed by the Parliament in April 1993. The Amendment provided a constitutional status to the Panchayati Raj Institutions in India and left no discretion with the State governments in several important matters pertaining to these institutions. Before the 73rd Amendment was made effective, Article 40 of the original Constitution provided for a Directive to the government to take steps to organize village Panchayats and endow them with the powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as the units of self-government. But, by mid-eighties it was realized that the said Directive was not sufficient to institutionalize Panchayati Raj in India.

Gram Sabha in Panchayat System

The Gram Sabha (GS) is the cornerstone of the entire scheme of democratic decentralisation in India initiated through the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution. Hence, the success or failure of the Panchayati Raj system largely depends on how powerful and effective the GS is at the decentralised level to fulfil the desires and inspirations of the people. Recognizing the critical role of the GS in village economy Gandhiji had said that true democracy could not be worked out by some persons sitting at the top. It had to be worked from below by the people of every village.

Later on, endorsing the view of Gandhiji, Jay Prakash Narain had said: "To me, Gram Sabha signified village democracy. Let us not have only representative government from the village up to Delhi. In one place, at least let there be direct government, direct democracy. The relationship between Panchayat and Gram Sabha should be that of Cabinet and Assembly". It is due to the importance of this institution at a local level that the Year 1999-2000 had been declared as 'Year of Gram Sabha' by the Government of India.

Article 243(B) of the Constitution defines the GS as a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to a village comprised within the area of the Panchayat at the village level. With regard to its powers and authority, Article 243 (A) of the Constitution says that the GS may exercise such powers and perform such functions of the village level as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide. It is in the light of this that State legislatures have endowed certain powers to this corporate body relating to the development of the village.

However, provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act 1996, Extension Act for short, has not only extended development, planning and audit functions to the GS but also endowed it with the management and control of natural resources and the adjudication of justice in accordance with traditions and customs.

But this is applicable in areas dominated by the Scheduled Tribes in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Gujarat and Rajasthan where it has not been made functional so far as elections to the Panchayats are yet to be held there in conformity with the Extension Act. It would have been better if the provisions of the extension Act were extended to the non-scheduled areas. But none of the States has taken any initiative in this regard except Madhya Pradesh and, that too, as late as in 1999.

Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA)

Village level democracy became a real prospect for India in 1992 with the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution, which mandated that resources,

responsibility and decision making be passed on from central government to the lowest unit of the governance, the Gram Sabha or the Village Assembly. A three-tier structure of local self-government was envisaged under this amendment. Since the laws do not automatically cover the scheduled areas, Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 or PESA is a law enacted by the Government of India to cover the "Scheduled areas", which are not covered in the 73rd Amendment or Panchayati Raj Act of the Indian Constitution. It was enacted on 24th December 1996 to enable Gram Sabhas to self-govern their natural resources. The Act extended the provisions of Panchayats to the tribal areas of nine states that have Fifth Schedule Areas.

The system of Panchayats envisaged in this Part aims at establishing strong and accountable systems of governance that will in turn ensure more equitable distribution of resources in a manner beneficial to all. The Union Cabinet of the Government of India, on 27 August 2009, approved 50% reservation for women in PRIs (Panchayati Raj Institutions). The Indian states which have already implemented 50% reservation for women in PRIs are Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. As of 25 November 2011, the states of Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan and Tripura also had reserved 50% of their posts for women.

Methodology

There are 51 Village Panchayats in Cuddalore block, out of those 6 Village Panchayats were chosen for the study. By using Simple random sampling, the area of the study was finalized, they are Pudukadai Village Panchayat, Nanamedu Village Panchayat, Karaimedu Village Panchayat, Thiruvananthapuram Village Panchayat, Gundu Uppalavadi Village Panchayat and Singirikudi Village Panchayat. Method of study is case study method because it leads to find out the contemporary and actual problem. Sources of data through interview schedule, periodicals, books and Governmental websites were used for this study purpose.

Conclusion

The term 'Panchayat Raj' is relatively new, having originated during the British administration. 'Raj'

literally means governance or government. Mahatma Gandhi advocated Panchayati Raj, a decentralized form of Government where each village is responsible for its own affairs, as the foundation of India's political system. His term for such a vision was "Gram Swaraj" or Village Self-governance. One of the greatest shortcomings of any Centre-sponsored rural development programme is its inability to 'trickle down' to the true intended beneficiaries or the poorest of the poor. The introduction of the Panchayati Raj system through the 73rd Amendment of the Indian Constitution tried to address this by prescribing a three-tier system of governance for the entire country, effective since 1993. The amendment mandates that responsibility, resources and decision-making authority be placed in the hands of elected local councils or panchayats.

The sample survey of villagers on the village constituency meetings across the state throws up some interesting observations. The meetings were

extremely male-dominated with low participation by women in spite of the provision that one-third of the members have to be women. Relatively affluent persons stayed away from such meetings since they did not perceive any direct benefits from poverty alleviation programmes discussed in such meetings, political minorities stayed away since they felt they wouldn't be 'heard', scheduled castes and tribes did not feel encouraged to participate since political leaders were often from the higher castes.

The women panchayat extension officers must be appointed and kept in charge of a group of gram panchayats. Since these extension officers are trained, they understand the difficulties of women members of the gram panchayat and guide them suitably. Besides, they can also create an awareness among rural women about significance of the panchayat raj bodies in the rural development, to bring out their active participation in development activities.



Political Empowerment of Women in India

Dilip Kumar. R* & M.V. Duraish Kumar**

[The role of woman in India for the better part of known history have been more domestic, than public. Though it is believed that in some stretch of historical era, women enjoyed equal status with men in India, the near history has full of unequal practices and impartial treatment towards women. Though currently women match men in all walks of life, her presence in political arena is found wanting. Thus, it is imperative to match presence of women in the political arena with that of men. As per the Inter-Parliamentary data 24.5% of women are in the National Parliaments across the globe. And, India with 14.36% of women representatives in lower house and 10.61% in upper house ranks 143 out of 190 countries in the presence of women in the national law-making body. Also, through these years the share of women contestants was only around 10%. This indicates that there isn't any great improvement in the participation level of women in the political process but only marginal involvement over the past 65 years. Only a change in the mindset of the political heavyweights, and a change in overall attitude of society towards the need for women's political empowerment can truly empower women in political spheres.]

The role of woman in India for the better part of known history have been more domestic, than public. Though it is believed that in some stretch of historical era, women enjoyed equal status

with men, the near history has full of unequal practices and impartial treatment towards women (Ahuja, 1999). Until the turn of 18th century it had to be noted that India was inhospitable for women. The coming of Rajaram Mohan Roy, E. V. Periyar and other contemporary reformist brought about a dramatic change in the social empowerment of women.

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Lately, the promotion of SHGs and the consequent economic independence of women paved the way for greater role for Indian women in their family development especially those in the lower strata of the society (Suguna, 2016). Though currently women equal men in all walks of life her presence in political arena had been found wanting. It is very much necessary for any section of the community to make their presence felt in the policy making bodies. Thus, the presence of women in the political arena is indispensable (Mishra, 1999).

Political empowerment

Political empowerment of women, in its simplest form, can be understood as the means of providing adequate opportunity for women to be represented in the policy-making process. It is the inclusion of women in the political institutions and giving them fair share of power thus far enjoyed by men. (Palanithurai, 2001). Thus, political empowerment can be understood as the presence of women in key decision-making institutions of a country. With respect to modern democracy where people elect their representatives; empowerment in political term means giving women free and equal opportunity to vote and fair and equal opportunity to contest in the elections. Besides this, the presence of women in ministerial positions and the number of years women held the position of head of the state and head of the government are also key indicator of women's political empowerment (Panda, 2002).

This paper would analyze the constitutional framework that support women empowerment in India and the level of actual political empowerment achieved with respect to women's representation in its national law-making institution i.e. Parliament, the proportion of ministerial berths held by women and the presence of women at the highest political offices in the country. Though this doesn't guarantee the actual empowerment in true sense; nevertheless, political participation and political representation of women in national legislature and ministerial council is a prerequisite for political empowerment of women. The study of these variables would shed light on the path that India travelled since independence with respect to political empowerment of women in our country.

Constitutional framework supporting political empowerment of women

The aspects that are enshrined in our constitution that assures political empowerment of women are as follows

- Equal Voting Right
- Equal Right to run for political offices
- Reservation of seats in local body elections

Equal voting rights and equal right to run for political offices

In India the voting right is conferred equally to men and women since independence. Article 325 of our Constitution states that "No person to be ineligible for inclusion in, or to claim to be included in a special, electoral roll on grounds of religion, race, caste or sex..." (Kashyap S. c., 1994) Thus ensuring all citizens can participate freely in the fundamental electoral process of the country irrespective of their religion race, caste and sex. Thus, India began its Independent journey by immediately giving women the right to vote. Besides this the constitution also guarantees absence of restrictions on grounds of gender for contesting political offices in our country (Kashyap S. c., 1994).

Women like men are free to contest any political office in our country from local body to highest political office i.e. President, as long as they fulfill all the requisite criteria regarding age, citizenship etc. This constitutional framework is the bedrock of political empowerment of women in our country. This guarantees an assured access to the women in the political field in our country.

Reservation in Local Body elections

Every democracy that truly claims to be democratic shall have a strong grass root self-governing institution. If democracy means "a government or the people, of the people and by the people" then that government shall be strong from bottom (D.N.Gupta, 2004). People from the grassroots level should have the right to decide their own policies through their representative at the local level based on their local needs. In order to strengthen this grass root democratic institutions and to give it

constitutional validity, the Parliament of India enacted the 73rd and the 74th constitutional amendment Act of 1992 (Kashyap S. c., 1994). These acts gave constitutional status for rural and urban local bodies, also provided for reservation of not less than one-third of the total number of seats for women (including the number of seats reserved for women belonging to the SCs and STs).

This system of decentralized democratic institution acts as a centre of planning and policy making at the lowest level based on the local needs. Thus, giving quota for women at the grass root democratic

institutions ensured participation of women in these institutions greatly and thereby enabling empowerment of women at grass root level (Pradeep, 2009).

Based on the above constitutional mandate, 20 of the Indian states has given 50% reservation for women in their local body election and there by increased the participation of women in these institutions (Joshi & Narwani, 2002). The presence of women in the local governments shall be considered as a stepping stone towards transferring the rightful share of power in the hands of women.

Comparison of Women's representation in National Legislature with the Global Trend

Table I: Representation of women in National legislatures of various nations

Rank	Country	Seats*	Women	% W	Seats*	Women	% W
1	Rwanda	80	49	61.25	26	10	38.46
2	Cuba	605	322	53.22	-	-	-
3	Bolivia	130	69	53.08	36	17	47.22
4	Andorra	28	14	50	-	-	-
5	Mexico	500	241	48.2	128	63	49.22
6	Spain	350	166	47.43	261	103	39.46
7	Sweden	349	165	47.28	-	-	-
8	Finland	200	94	47	-	-	-
9	Grenada	15	7	46.67	13	4	30.77
10	Namibia	104	48	46.15	42	10	23.81
11	South Africa	398	183	45.98	54	21	38.89
37	Nepal	275	90	32.73	59	22	37.29
38	Switzerland	200	65	32.5	46	7	15.22
39	United Kingdom	650	208	32	789	208	26.36
46	Germany	709	219	30.89	69	27	39.13
57	Afghanistan	244	68	27.87	68	17	25
67	Iraq	329	83	25.23	-	-	-
78	United States of America	433	102	23.56	100	25	25
100	Bangladesh	349	72	20.63	-	-	-
105	Pakistan	341	69	20.23	104	20	19.23
109	Saudi Arabia	151	30	19.87	-	-	-
132	Russian Federation	450	71	15.78	170	31	18.24
134	Brazil	513	77	15.01	81	12	14.81
138	Bhutan	47	7	14.89	25	4	16
143	India	542	78	14.39	245	26	10.61

Source: Inter Parliamentary Union open data.

India is one of the largest democracies in the world in terms of eligible electors has traces of democratic institution in its ancient history (Shastri, 1955). As per the Inter Parliamentary data (Parline, 2019) 24.5% of women are in the National Parliaments across the globe. And, India ranks 143 out of 190 countries in the presence of women in the national law-making body. This had to be accepted as a dismal performance from India. Almost all of our neighbouring countries like Nepal (37), Afghanistan (57), Bangladesh (100), Pakistan (105) and Bhutan (138) have actually fared better than India and it goes to show the lack of emphasis in our spirits regarding the importance of women empowerment.

The notable countries that had close to 50% representation of women in their respective highest law-making bodies are Cuba, Mexico, Spain, Sweden and Finland. Even the BRICS companions of India also fared better than India in the representation of women. On viewing the score of other nations, India should strive to equip more women with political power by bringing in necessary changes in its legal structure that would support participation of more women in the political process. Despite the fact that India was one of the earliest nation, to award voting rights to its women citizens, its poor show in sharing equal political power with women needs serious introspection into its cultural ideals that govern the society and determines the role of women in the society (Singh & Saxena, 1998).

Women's presence in Indian Parliament

Table2: Representation of women in Indian Parliament since 1952

Year	Seats	Women MPs	% of Women MPs	Seats	Women MPs	% of Women MPs
1952	499	22	4.41	219	16	7.3
1957	500	27	5.40	237	18	7.6
1962	503	34	6.76	238	18	7.6
1967	523	31	5.93	240	20	8.3
1971	521	22	4.22	243	17	7.0
1977	544	19	3.29	244	25	10.2
1980	544	28	5.15	244	24	9.8
1984	544	44	8.9	244	28	11.4
1989	517	27	5.22	244	28	11.4
1991	544	39	7.17	245	38	15.5
1996	543	39	7.18	223	20	9.0
1998	543	43	7.92	223	19	8.6
1999	543	49	9.02	223	19	8.6
2004	543	45	8.03	245	27	11.1
2009	543	59	10.86	245	22	8.97
2014	543	61	11.23	245	29	11.83
2019	543	78	14.36	245	26	10.61

Source: Election Commission of India website & website of Indian Parliament

The above table (Table 2) presents the representation on women in our lower house of the Parliament

since 1952. The year 2019 was historic in a sense that, the General Election has sent more women to the lower house of the parliament. In 2019 a total of 8049 candidates contested across the country and

out of which 724 were women. And the same figures for 2014 general election were 8163 and 636 respectively.

Party-wise representation of women in Lower house of the Parliament:

Table3: Party wise Representation of women in Lower house of Parliament after 2019 General Election

S. N.	Party Name	No of Women MPs	S. No.	Party Name	No. Women MPs
1	BJP	41	9	LJSP	1
2	AITC	9	10	NCP	1
3	INC	6	11	NPP	1
4	BJD	5	12	SAD	1
5	YSR Congress	4	13	SS	1
6	DMK	2	14	TRS	1
7	Independent	2	15	Apna Dal	1
8	JDU	1	16	BSP	1

Source: Election commission of India website & website of Indian Parliament

Out of the 78 elected women candidates 41 are from the ruling Bhartiya Janata Party, 9 from Trinamool Congress and 6 from Indian National Congress. While rest of the parties make up the remaining number, 2 independent candidates one each from Karnataka and Maharashtra had also won the

election this year. This shows a great disparity on party lines as to the representation of women in India. While the ruling party has a representation of about 52.56%, its main opposition INC and Trinamool Congress has 11.54% and 7.69% representation respectively. The left and its allies have not managed to get elected even a single women candidate. The regional parties too did not fair much with respect to sending women to the highest law-making body of our country.

2019 vs 2014 State-wise trend

In comparison to 2014 Lok Sabha elections the representation of women in 5 states has increased in 2019. These include Odisha (9.5% in 2014 and 33.3% in 2019), Gujarat (15.4% in 2014 and 23% in 2019), Maharashtra (10.4% in 2014 and 16.7% in 2019), Andhra Pradesh (8% in 2014 and 16% in 2019), and Jharkhand (0% in 2014 and 14.3% in 2019). Whereas on the other hand, many states have seen a dip in the representation of women in 2019 compared to 2014. These include West Bengal (28.6% in 2014 and 26.2% in 2019), Uttar Pradesh (16% in 2014 and 14% in 2019), Tamil Nadu (10.3% in 2014 and 7.7% in 2019), Madhya Pradesh (17% in 2014 and 14% in 2019), and Assam (14.2% in 2014 and 7.1% in 2019).

Moreover, many states and Union Territories did not have a single women representative in 2019. This includes the 8 states of Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Sikkim, and 5 union territories – Andaman and Nicobar, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, Puducherry.

**Women contestants across all Lok Sabha elections
Table4: Strength of women contestants in all Lok Sabha election**

Year	Males	Females	Total	% of Male winning	% of Female winning
1952	1831	43	1874	26.05	51.16
1957	1473	45	1518	31.7	60.00
1962	1915	70	1985	24.0	50.00
1967	2302	67	2369	21.3	44.80
1971	2698	86	2784	18.5	24.40
1977	2369	70	2439	22.1	27.10
1980	4478	142	4620	11.5	19.7
1984	5406	164	5574	9.2	25.60
1989	5962	198	6160	8.5	13.60

1991	8374	325	8699	5.9	12.00
1996	13353	599	13952	3.8	6.70
1998	4476	274	4750	11.2	15.70
1999	3976	278	4254	12.3	17.30
2004	5080	355	5435	9.8	12.30
2009	2514	556	8070	6.44	10.61
2014	7527	636	8163	6.39	9.74
2019	7321	724	8049 *	6.35	10.77

Source: Election Commission of India website & website of Indian Parliament

An analysis of the trends in contestants over the Lok Sabha elections (Table 4), the current parliamentary elections saw a 1.2% increase in the number of women contestants over the 2014 elections (2014-7.79:2019 -8.99). The increase in female participation from 43 in 1952 to 724 in the 2019 denotes a considerable increase in the amount of women participation in the national general elections. But all through these years it was only around 10% of the total contestants. This suggests that there isn't any great improvement in the participation level of women in the political process but only marginal involvement over the past 65 years. Though there is considerable presence of women in the local governments, the level in the presence of women in the national legislature continues to be poor.

Interestingly the winning ratio of the female candidates has been better than the male candidates. Though the ratio has declined over the years it was constantly better than the male contestants. This suggests that women are not seen as a weak force among the electors. It shows the trust of the electors to choose women and improves the hope for more women to contest. With the support of the political parties backed by government initiatives, more women can contest the forthcoming elections. This would bring more women in the political spheres of our country (Menon, 2001).

Allotment of tickets in 2019 elections

The Congress Party had given the maximum number of tickets to women candidates. Across India, it fielded 54 women candidates. It was closely followed by the ruling Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP),

which gave 53 women a chance to compete in the race to the lower house. Among the other key parties, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) fielded 24 women candidates, the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) 23, the CPI (M) 10, the CPI four, while the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) fielded one-woman candidate. And a total of 222 women contested the polls independently.

With respect to the ratio of female to total contestants, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) stands apart from the rest by giving an unprecedented one third of their tickets to women candidates. Nine of the 21 women TMC candidates won, while five of the seven BJD candidates were elected. However, other parties like the Congress and the BJP had nominated only 12.3% women. This is even worse with most regional parties which had given only a handful of tickets to women candidates, that too often relatives of male politicians.

The Naam Tamizhar Katchi (Unrecognized) of Tamil Nadu, though couldn't win a single seat, gave a share of 48.64% of their tickets to women candidates. This share is one of the highest in our country. Unless and until the political parties come forward unanimously in setting out a greater share of ticket in favour of women, the realization of political empowerment of women in our country would remain tough. A strong political will is surely needed in this regard.

Representation of women in Rajya Sabha

The representation of women in the upper house of our Parliament has hovered around 10% of the house since 1952. Considering the fact that the political parties have freedom to select the candidates of their choice in the upper house, it is pity to note that

women representation has been low in the upper house. In 2019 only 26 women occupied the upper house of our Parliament which is only 10.61% of the house. Moreover, this figure was even lesser than what it was in 2014 when women had strength of 29 in the upper house. Only once in our history the number of women in upper house had gone past 30, which happened in 1990 when 38 seats were represented by women (Rai & Spray, 2018).

Despite having a better chance to put forward equal if not more women in Rajya Sabha election, as it is not a direct election, all political parties have continuously failed to give adequate representation of women in the upper house of our Parliament. The political parties should arrive at a consensus to voluntarily allocate equal seats to women in upper house of the parliament. This can always be supported easily by the nature of election in place for the members of upper house (Kashyap S. C., 2004).

The other key element in analyzing the political empowerment of women is the presence of women in the ministerial positions (Table 5). After India attained independence, the ministry that took oath under the Prime Minister Nehru had a sole women minister. Ms. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur who took charge of health department at that time and was also instrumental in setting up the AIIMS (PolicyResearch, 1996). Since then women were part of the Union Council of Ministers holding few key portfolios.

When Indira Gandhi, the first woman who became the Prime Minister of India, one woman was appointed as the minister and during the third term of Indira Gandhi in 1980, three women were appointed as ministers. During the first non-Congress government, the council of minister was represented by a single woman. Again in 1991 during the period when P.V. Narasimha Rao was the PM, the council of ministers had a lone women minister. India had its highest representation of women in the union council of ministers in 1999 and 2017 under A.B. Vajpayee and Narendra Modi respectively. In both these instances 8 women held ministerial berth.

The current ministry which assumed office after the 17th Lok Sabha election in 2019, has only 6 women

as ministers including 3 cabinet ministers. Thus, out of the total 63 council of minister, women have a meager share of 4.76%. Though the BJP government has a clear majority in Parliament still it could not give an opportunity for more women to serve as ministers. This clearly suggests the unwillingness of the male-dominant political class of our country to share power with women (Stokes, 2005). All through these years, key portfolios were all held by male members while female in most cases shared the lesser key portfolios. With the appointment of first women as our country's finance minister in 2019, one can hope the scenario to change at least in the forthcoming decade.

Women as Head of Government and Head of State in India

The other variable in study of political empowerment of women is the presence of women as the head of state/government. India being a Parliamentary Democratic Republic country, the head of the state is its President who is elected indirectly by the elected members of Parliament and Members of all State Legislatures once every five years. The government of India is headed by the Prime Minister who enjoys the majority in the house of people. The Prime minister of India is real head of affairs of the country whereas the President is the nominal head of our country. The President shall act only on the advice of the council of ministers headed by the Prime Minister.

In India the first woman to become the Prime Minister was Mrs. Indira Gandhi. She first became prime minister in 1966 and headed the country for more than 14 years. Thus, becoming the second longest serving Prime Minister of India after her father Nehru. Since then no woman has decorated this top post in Indian Government. It has to be accepted that besides her courage and charisma, the political legacy she carried took her to that pivotal spot. And since then no women have come closer to occupy that spot in Indian politics. Hence being lonely case, it is not wise to consider it as a positive factor in the political empowerment of women in India.

With respect to the post of President, it was only in the fourth presidential election in 1967 that a woman - Manohara Holkar – attempted individually for the

first time(Jai, 2003). But she did not get a single vote in that election which was won by Dr. Zakir Hussain. The second woman candidate who contested the Presidential election was Gurcharan Kaur, who took on V.V. Giri in 1969. She finished fifth with 940 among 15 candidates. In 2007 Ms. Lakshmi Sahgal contested against Dr. Abdul Kalam and lost the election. This loosing jinx was broken by Dr. Pratibha Patil who was elected to this post in 2007.

The fact that 4 women were in fray for the Presidential elections and a single woman for the post of Prime Minister shows the harsh reality in Indian politics where women are seen and perceived as weak by their male counterparts. The unwillingness of the ruling party in most cases that won the presidential elections, to not consider women is clearly a suggestion that ours is still a male-centric political system (Sinha, 2000). Here women are not shared their rightful power in political spheres and were only given piecemeal arrangement in election. One can only hope for the situation to change in the coming years through the effective policy formulation and implementation that enables better representation of women in political power structure.

Conclusion

By studying the factors such as representation of women in national legislature, allotment of tickets by political parties, presence of women in union council of ministers and the presence of women as head of state and government, it can be concluded that the performance of nation with respect to political empowerment of women is very much average. At just 14.36% of women representatives in lower house and 10.61% in upper house is surely not the adequate representation of women for a country with almost half a billion of women population. Despite having a better winning ratio of women candidates in the previous election, (female 10.77 vs male 6.35 in 2019 election and female 9.74 vs male 6.39 in 2014 election) the unwillingness of the political parties to field equal number of women candidates in the election suggests a patriarchal culture of political parties.

Except for Trinamool Congress, Biju Janata Dal and Naam Thamizhar Katchi (not-recognised) rest of

the parties including the ruling BJP and Congress have only allotted less than 12% seats to women. With respect to ministerial berth held by women, India continues to perform average. Except in few occasional cases women always held key portfolios in most ministries. The number too was never on par with their male counterparts. Though the ruling party has a strong majority in the Parliament, presently it has just allotted only 9.52% of ministerial berths to women (6 out of 63). Despite an increase in number of women MPs, the number in the council of minister has gone down from 2017.

This clearly suggests that the quantum of political empowerment of women is clearly dictated by men. First their representation itself is a function of allotment pattern and secondly even if they win besides all the hardships, their inclusion in the council of ministers is not guaranteed. With respect to head of state and head of government, India cannot be proud of itself much with its sole Prime Minister and President.

Finally, one has to conclude that despite the good systemic arrangement in place, India continues to perform below par with respect to all key parameters that measures women empowerment politically. With the continuous failure of the political parties to pass the bill that proposed to provide reservation of seats in national legislature, only shows the lack of seriousness among the political fraternity in political empowerment of women. Beside the change in mindset of the political heavyweights, a change in overall attitude of society towards the need for women's political empowerment is warranted. Unless and otherwise all sections of the society act in consonance, the political empowerment of women in this country would continue to be a mirage.

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Empowering Tribal Youth through Media

Suresh Kumar* & Prof. M. Rabindranath**

[India is bestowed with the largest youth population in the world. Youth of India is most valuable asset for the country. They are capable to bring social and economic change, if provided better opportunities. Young people in India are considered to be essential to bring changes and pioneers of new ideas. Young generation of India was mostly born and grew up after the liberalization of Indian economy that was steered by our former Prime Minister, and economist, Dr. Manmohan Singh. This progress, witnessed a wide expansion of media and technology. Matter of the fact is our youth was brought up in the age of media pervasiveness. Consequently, people of this generation are more accustomed and consider media as a powerful tool to meet the need of information and empowerment in the globalized world. But there is still a segregation in using modern apparatus of Media among the youth according to their social and economic milieu. In the present scenario, in this age of globalization we cannot afford to commit a blunder by ignoring the potential of tribal youth in the process of human development. So, in the present study an attempt has been made to study the role and lacunas of media in empowering tribal youth of Gujjar community of Himachal Pradesh. The study elucidates how media is shaping the destiny of tribal youth in capitalizing the information and knowledge in terms of education, health, career and the demands of globalized economy.]

The present age is appropriately known as the age of information and technology. Youth around the world are better known as digital natives because of their convenience of adopting

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and using new media technology (Subrahmanyam & Smahel, 2010). Youth, who are digitally equipped with several devices of communication technologies are more informed and digitally proactive. Youth of present age believe in expressing ideas immediately to change and somehow, they are opinion leaders to the people.

Media is entirely omnipresent in the lives of youth. Among all the forms of media, social media is best and convenient medium and Face book, Twitter, WhatsApp etc., can be called the 'Favorite play' and 'Interesting book' of new generation. LaFrance (1996), categorizes the younger generation of the 1960s as the TV generation, the 1970s as video generation, while of the 1980s as the Nintendo generation, and those of the 1990s as the generation of Internet. (LaFrance, 1996; Shrestha Lucky, 2013)¹

Kaur, J. in *Social Media: Preceding the Human Life*, described that social media is means of connections among people in which they create, share, and exchange information and ideas in virtual communities and networks. So, the media experience of young generation is totally different from that of their ancestors. Media has a great role in empowering the youth as media is the powerful source of information. In the age of globalization to remain up-to-date, understanding of global as well local issues, learning of employability skills as per the need of the market demand is of paramount importance; and certainly, media is a powerful tool to meet all these complications and challenges of the present age.

India, which is a developing country, has a lot of diversity in terms of caste, class, demographical division, life-style, social and religious life and also in tribal life. Consequently, media expansion and uses is also different in India. Media has played an important role in empowering the tribes. Media has portrayed the sufferings, hardships of tribal people. Consequently, drawing the attention of government, private players to mitigate the problems faced by these people.

Empowerment of any unprivileged society can be ensured only by ensuring the empowerment of youth. If youth of an unprivileged society is educated, informed and enlightened; it will definitely give birth to an intellectual discourse with the empowerment of community at the Centre as a whole. To make it clear, empowerment of a marginalized community can be guaranteed through the empowerment of its youth. So, in the light of this argument, an attempt has been made to study the role and drawbacks of media in empowering the youth of Gujjar tribe of Himachal Pradesh.

Media and Tribe

The role of mass media is very crucial in ordering, rearranging, and conducting the life of the people. Media is an instrument of social change among the lives of the people in the entire societies. The major role of media is surveillance, entertainment, education, correlation and dissemination of information (Kumar, 2004). Though, media brings change in the day-to-day life, consuming habits, dressing, cultural traits etc. But that depends upon various and complex social and cultural milieu of the society. Tribal life is the unique feature of Indian civilization and various tribes have existed in India since time immemorial. They live a life far away from the commotion of metropolis in the serene hilly areas, dense forests close to the nature.

Since they are curtailed due to the geographical distances, their reach and access to the media like radio, Television, Internet, newspaper etc. is very restrictive. Folk media has proven a great asset among the tribes to disseminate message. Subramanian, Rama Mohan (2006) considers folk media as the best and appropriate way to deliver information among the tribes. But with the expansion of mass media and will of state and Central government to connect these people to the stream of development various initiative were taken.

With the Direct to Home Service (DTH) a great leap had been achieved in the direction of exceeding the barriers of distance, money, and education. As tribal people are innocent, illiterate and poor, media can help to create awareness among these people. Various policies and programs initiated by government can be better implemented with the help of media. Agriculture and rearing animals are the lifeline of tribal life. Media can help these people about better seeds in agriculture, creating awareness of better prices of their products in the market, better yielding breeds of animals etc. Thus, mass media plays a major role in bringing changes in the life-style of the people and improving their education, health, socio-economic status bringing them to the societal mainstream. Rao (1966), explains the influence of communication as a significant feature of development. Schramm (1964) finds economy and communication as the means of development of process. Thus, media has a great

role to bring the tribal communities into the process of development. Empowerment of tribe is the main concern of media by educating and informing them for the betterment of their lives.

Why Tribal Youth Empowerment is Necessary

Tribal people mainly live in the dense forests and difficult hilly terrains. The basic features of these communities are primitiveness, geographical isolation, distinctive culture, isolation from other communities of the world. When the founders of our democracy were writing the constitution, they were very much aware about the backwardness of these communities. Social, economic and educational development of these tribes was on the main agenda of the government. The main issue that was of paramount importance and the first step towards tribal empowerment was to promote the educational and economic conditions of these people ensuring their protection from all types of injustices and exploitation.

Constitution provides special representation to Schedule tribes in various political as well as other platforms, ensuring their participation in decision-making process. After Independence, educational and economic development of the tribes remained the agenda of all successive governments as the instrument of fighting exploitation of these subalterns in any form. Youth in every society play a pivotal role in molding the destiny of a nation and society to which they belong. Through centuries these tribal youth have been deprived of education as well as communication as a means of knowledge and power.

The process of development starts with the access of communication with external world. The programs and policies meant for tribal development cannot reach the destination without proper channels of communication. In the present scenario when the nation is experiencing paradigm shift towards digitalization, it will be unfair to not count the opportunities and problems of tribal youth in the process.

Gujjars in Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh is the land of diversity and this diversity makes it a colorful state. There are plenty of castes and tribes who live peacefully and make

this state rich in terms of culture. Main tribes of Himachal are named as; Bhodh, Gaddi, Gujjar, Jad, Kanaura, Lahula, pangwala and so on. Whatever, there is one similarity among all these tribes that is animal-husbandry, which is in the centre of their livelihood. Gaddis and Gujjars of Himachal Pradesh are pastoral communities who rear mulching animals to sustain their livelihood. Total population of Himachal Pradesh as per census 2011, is 6864602; among them 92547 are Gujjars. Gujjars in Himachal are nomadic or semi-nomadic as their profession demands. In winters, they walk down to the plain areas whereas in summers they climb up the mountains along with their animals in the search of meadows.

Gujjars of Himachal Pradesh are god-fearing and devotees of their religious beliefs. They derive strength and inspiration from these religious values and faith during their arduous journeys. Gujjars either follow Islam or Hindu religion in Himachal Pradesh. Gujjars who follow Islam are basically reside in Chamba and Kangra districts, whereas, Hindu Gujjars are found in Bilaspur, Mandi, Una and other districts. Due to illiteracy, poverty and difficult geographical terrain, they remained on the margin of the society. Majority of the Gujjar population live in rural areas of the Himachal Pradesh. Male population is dominating in comparison to females. Literacy is also very low among Gujjars. Total literacy rate of Gujjars is somewhere around 56% in the comparison of total literacy rate of Himachal Pradesh which is 84%.

Research Methodology

In this research study, researcher collected data through personal interviews and in-depth and focus group discussion among the Gujjar tribe youth. The area of the research was Kangra and Chamba districts of Himachal Pradesh. The respondents were Gujjar youth aged between 15 to 35 years. Some of them were school/college going students others were working in government/ private sector or practicing their traditional occupation of cattle rearing.

Research Objectives:

1. To find out the awareness level of Gujjar youth regarding the different media platforms, government schemes and their utility in the

capitalization of information and knowledge in the globalized market.

2. To find out the different hurdles being encountered by Gujjar youth in accessing the information and knowledge through Mass Media.
3. To make few recommendations and strategies to bring further improvement in these programs and highlighting the role of media in empowering Gujjar tribal youth.

Media and Empowerment of Gujjar Youth

While doing the present study it is found that media can be a vital source of the empowerment of Gujjar youth. The biggest problem among the community is the lack of education among the youth. Though, some NGOs as well as government are working painstakingly to improve the status of education among the Gujjars. Below are the some of the areas where media is proving a great asset among the Gujjar youth:

- Traditionally, Gujjars have been occupied with the cattle rearing for their livelihood. So, the older generation never paid any heed to the education of the children. But with the expansion of media and contact with the outer world, this attitude of the Gujjars is changing to a certain extent. While interacting with Gujjar youth they pointed out various difficulties they faced due to the illiteracy of their older generation.
- There is a mobilization of the profession, to a certain extent, among the Gujjars due to the education and media. While interviewing it was found that Gujjar youth is interested to work in government as well as private sector. After completion of schooling, most of the Gujjar youth desire to attain some professional and technical skills to meet the desires of other lucrative professions. They said that media is particularly helping them to know the current affairs, general awareness, downloading books, knowing about the job vacancies in the various govt./ semi-govt. organizations.
- Most of the Gujjar youth, who were interviewed were first-generation school and college going students among their families. If they get proper

education, they can certainly change their future generations. Through media, they get educated about the various social evils like child marriage, open defecation, illiteracy etc. They try to convince their older generation to shun these practices in order to live a better and prosperous life.

- Media has a very positive role in bringing political awareness among the Gujjar youth to a certain extent. Youth get to know the different political parties and their agenda for the development of the community. They realized that politics is the one of the powerful tools to bring the community on par with other communities of the state.
- Social media is the platform best utilized by the youth. They get a vital information about the day-to-day life, different world trends and issues through social media. They said that various groups and pages on Facebook and WhatsApp help them in the utilization of knowledge.
- The biggest problem being faced by the Gujjar youth in accessing the different media for their own betterment is the dearth of economic sources, most of the youth who are willing to access new media are unable to purchase the better technology. Majority of the Gujjars are rearing animals for their livelihood. Most of the times, they have to move far-off places in the search of meadows for their animals. Consequently, they cannot avail the facility of Television and newspaper most of the times. In their journey, they face the problem of electricity and signal which is somewhere the biggest hurdle for them in accessing the media throughout the year.

Suggestions

Tribal people are mostly deprived of the most powerful weapon of any development that is, 'Information.' During the study, it is found that Gujjar youth whether educated or semi-educated are deprived of information and education about their rights, different government policies etc., initiated by the government for their upliftment. The government, as well as Media, has a social and moral obligation to empower the tribal communities in India. lack of information among the tribal youth

about schemes and programs is the result of poor communication by media or Government.

During the study, it is found that Gujjar youth is lacking on many fronts like constitutional literacy, financial literacy, media literacy, computer literacy, political literacy, health literacy and so on. Thus, keeping in mind the needs of tribal youth Government as well as civil society should take the required initiative to make them more informed, more educated; consequently, more empowered in the globalized world; especially in the light of various initiatives by the government to make India a digital country.

In this direction, the first step required is to provide the suitable land tracts for their permanent settlements. More Gujjar Ashram schools should be opened in the line of three Gujjar Ashram schools already functioning in the state. Professional and vocational institutes should be opened, which would afford new avenues of employment for the Gujjar youth, apart from their traditional occupation of cattle rearing.

Conclusion

Any development in the community starts with the development of its youth. Skill development through education and media among the tribal youth is the need of the hour to make them self-reliant, confident and empowered. Without the participation of tribal youth in information and technology, we cannot envision a fair and equal society. Though pervasiveness of media has proved a blessing in the life of these marginalized communities and there seems a mobilization in their day-to-day life to a certain point. These are the people who are economically and socially backward.

Thus, there is a need for sincere efforts by government and civil society for their upliftment.

Education and information are the ladder of empowerment for tribal communities. Therefore, education, development of technical skills and expansion of information through media can make them self-reliant, confident and empowered in the real sense.

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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.

Effects of CT Activities on Flexibility of School Girls

K. Sutha* & Dr. D. Maniazhagu**

[Circuit training is a form of training that involves different prescribed exercises performed in a single circuit. This involves different muscle in a body. Flexibility is a range of movement in a joint. The flexibility may prevent injuries and improve the athlete's performance. The purpose of the present study was to find the effects of circuit training combined with different neuromuscular activities on flexibility of school girls. For the purpose, sixty school girls within the age of 12 to 14 years were selected as a subject. The results show that the circuit training combined with resistance band training produced greater improvement on flexibility than the other trainings.]

Circuit training is often erroneously portrayed as an intensive and stressful form of exercise, with a drill sergeant type in the middle of a circuit bellowing orders at weary recruits. Circuit training is a very versatile and adaptable mode of training that requires the performance of a series of carefully selected exercises. The exercise chosen can be used to develop specific components of fitness, specific skills for a particular sport, or for needs of a particular specialist population. They can also be adapted to suit a wide range of fitness levels and to build an individual or a team fitness level as they improve. The use of resistance bands and cords as a form of exercise is becoming increasingly popular (Lawrence, Richard, 2015).

Resistance band and cords are an effective complement or alternative to any strength and power training workout. (Brown, 2007) Rope jumping is one of only a few inexpensive, highly portable and easily learned fitness and sports training exercises that require the precise coordination of several muscle groups. The precise coordination must be attained and maintained during each rope jumping session. Jump rope training system builds on these unique mental and physical demands in ways that improve ability to perform and increase fitness (Buddy Lee, 2010). Flexibility is the ability to move

a muscle or group of muscle, through its complete range of motion. Lack of flexibility may predispose athletes to muscle and tendon injuries, while high flexibility may enhance the risk for joint dislocations and ligament strains. (Jay Hoffman, 2006)

Methodology

For the purpose, sixty school girls within the age of 12 to 14 years from ADW Government higher secondary school, Meenambakkam, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India were selected as a subject. They were randomly allocated to circuit training (n=15, CT), circuit training combined with resistance band training (n=15, CT-RB), circuit training combined with skipping rope training (n=15, CT-SR) and control group (n=15, CG). The experimental groups performed their respective activities for the period of 12 weeks. The three training groups were chosen as an independent variable and the flexibility was chosen as a dependent variable, it was tested by sit and reach test, scores recorded in centimeters. The pre and post test data were collected before and after the training program.

Results

TABLE-I

The Results of Analysis of Covariance on Flexibility of Experimental and Control Group

(Scores in Centimeter)

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Test setting		CT	CT-RB	CT-SR	CG	SV	SS	Df	MS Ratio	'F'	P value
Pre test	Mean	18.37	18.36	18.36	18.37	B	0.002	3	0.001	0.002	1.00
	S.D.	0.64	0.31	0.53	0.54	W	15.35	56	0.27		
Post test	Mean	19.77	23.67	21.38	18.32	B	236.5	3	78.85	*174.5	0.00
	S.D.	0.68	0.73	0.53	0.72	W	25.31	56	0.45		
Adjusted test Mean	Mean	19.77	23.67	21.38	18.32	B	236.5	3	78.83	186.1*	0.00
						W	23.29	55	0.42		

*The required table for the degrees of freedom 3 and 56, 3 and 55 is 2.77 at 0.05 level of confidence.

The table-I shows the pre, post and adjusted posttest mean values on flexibility of different groups.

The pre-test mean and standard deviation on flexibility of circuit training, circuit training combined with resistance band training, circuit training combined with skipping rope training and control group were 18.37+0.64, 18.36+0.31, 18.36+0.53 and 18.37+0.54 respectively. The obtained F ratio for pre-test is 0.002. This is lower than the required table F value of 2.77. Hence, the comparison is insignificant. The results indicate that there were no significant differences between pre-test means of selected groups.

The post-test mean and standard deviation on flexibility of circuit training, circuit training combined with resistance band training, circuit training

combined with skipping rope training and control group were 19.77+0.68, 23.67+0.73, 21.38+0.53 and 18.32+0.72 respectively. The obtained F ratio for post-test is 174.5. This is higher than the required table F value of 2.77. Hence, the comparison is significant. The results indicate that there were significant differences between post-test means of selected groups.

The adjusted post-test mean values on flexibility of circuit training, circuit training combined with resistance band training, circuit training combined with skipping rope training and control group were 19.77, 23.67, 21.38 and 18.32 respectively. The obtained F ratio for adjusted post-test is 186.1. This is higher than the required table F value of 2.77. Hence, the comparison is significant. The results indicate that there were significant differences among the groups on flexibility of selected groups.

The superiority effects among the groups were analyzed by Scheffe's Post Hoc Test. It is shown in table- I(a).

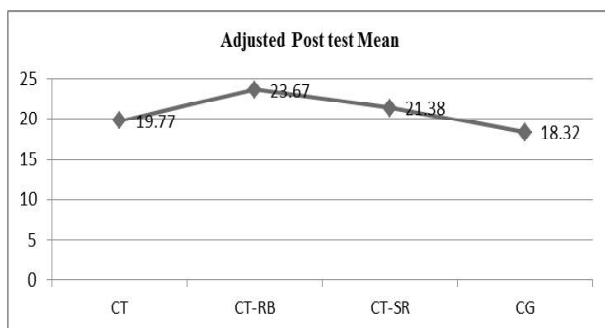
Table-I (a)
THE SCHEFFE'S POST HOC TEST ON FLEXIBILITY AMONG THE DIFFERENT GROUPS
(Scores in Centimeters)

CT	CT-RB	CT-SR	CG	Mean Differences	CI Value
19.77	23.67	—	—	3.9*	0.95
19.77	—	21.38	—	1.61*	
19.77	—	—	18.32	1.44*	
—	23.67	21.38	—	2.28*	
—	23.67	—	18.32	5.34*	
—	—	21.38	18.32	3.06*	

The table-I (a) shows the pair-wise comparison between the groups on flexibility.

The mean difference values for the comparisons of circuit training and circuit training combined with resistance band training, circuit training and circuit training combined with skipping rope training, circuit training and control group, circuit training combined with resistance band training and circuit training combined with skipping rope training, circuit training combined with resistance band training and control group, circuit training combined with skipping rope training and control group were 3.9, 1.61, 1.44, 2.28, 5.34 and 3.06 respectively. These mean difference values are higher than the confidential interval value of 0.95. Hence, above said comparisons are significant. This result indicates that, the groups produced significantly different effects on flexibility. The adjusted post-test mean difference values on flexibility of different groups demonstrated in figure-1.

Figure-1
ADJUSTED POST TEST MEAN
DIFFERENCE VALUES ON FLEXIBILITY
OF DIFFERENT GROUPS



Discussion On Findings

The twelve weeks effects of circuit training combined with different neuromuscular activities produced greater effect on flexibility. The best improvement was noticed in circuit training combined with resistance band training.

The present study findings are in line with the previous research findings. Kang, Lee, Park and Duk (2012) showed that twelve weeks of circuit weight training produced significant improvement in sit and reach test. Ahmad and Patil (2018) demonstrated that significant difference exists between the mean of experimental and control group of the selected

subjects on flexibility level. Maniazhagu, Soniya and Malar (2018) showed that the flexibility among the school girls was highly enhanced due to asana practice combined with neuromuscular drills and stretching exercise combined with neuromuscular drills. Ilbilge Ozsu (2018) revealed that six weeks of resistance band exercise produced significant gain on flexibility.

Conclusion

The results of the study demonstrated that there was a significant improvement on flexibility owing to the three training interventions. The greater improvement was noticed in circuit training combined with resistance band training than the other training groups. The second-best improvement was noticed in circuit training combined with skipping rope training than the circuit training. The circuit training produced significant improvement than the control groups.

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Skill Development Programme & Tribal Youth of Kerala

Regeena Augustine* & Greeshma Manoj**

[Investing in the youth is the best that can be instrumental in reaping good dividends. The need of the hour is to channelize the youth skills in a constructive way which can be achieved through the effective implementation of skill development programs launched by the government. Even though the government has come up with various skill development programs, there is a mismatch between the demand and supply of skill development in general and marginalized sections in particular. This is true also in case of tribal youth population. The Government of India has come up with various skill development programs for the rural youth and especially for the tribals as part of skill India program. The need of the hour is to understand whether these programs have actually reached the intended beneficiaries. This study tries to understand the awareness of the skill development programs among the tribal youth with reference to the Idukki District of Kerala.]

India is a dwelling place of several indigenous people who don't have much contact with modern world. In India, Tribes possess distinguished features and qualities which make them different from the main stream community. They have followed their life-style, culture, a unique pattern of kinship and reside in their own encircled society. The significant characteristics of the tribes are primitive traits, geographic isolation, distinct culture, shyness of contact and economically backward.

By and large, tribes are living in different geo-climatic and ecological conditions covering from forest and plains to hills and the area lack accessibility. All the tribes are not in same pattern of life and are at different levels of social, educational and economic development. Few of them are following a mainstream path of life. Whereas majority of them are still under the category of particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). These tribes are maintaining special features like pre-agriculture stage of technology, declining population, lack of literacy and minimum of economy. Due to lack of literacy and awareness, many tribal families are still living below poverty line. So that a good number of tribal youths are not channelizing their energy through effective pathway and failing to reap the fruits of mainstream development.

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By and large, the youth of every nation has a major role to determine its future. The empowered youth is the most powerful asset and strength of every nation. India enjoys the rich demography through which it can acquire high demographic dividend i.e., from the youth. India is a growing economy as well as walks towards befitting a 'knowledge economy' and hence it requires large pool of skill sets and skilled workers. India is one of the youngest nations in the world and can expect high demographic dividend.

As per the census of India every third young person come under the age group 10-24 years. It is quite significant to note that the youth population in India is 35.6 crore whereas the China's youth population is comparatively less with 26.9 crores¹. When investing on the youth is the best bet that can be helpful in reaping rich dividends, the need of the hour is to direct energy of the youth segment in a constructive way, which emphasizes on the effective implementation of various skill development programme undertaken by the successive governments.

In this scenario, in the 12th five-year plan India had given highest priority to the skill development. The National Policy on Skill Development was announced by the Government of India (2009) with a goal of making a workforce with strong skills and knowledge and accepted qualification framework which will help to enhancing competitiveness of India and to get decent jobs in the global market.²

Providing skill development training, the benefits accrue to enormous number of people.

Inclusive skill development is important to the sustainable economic growth³. Equity is one of the focuses of the Policy, which aims at affording opportunities of skilling for geographically or socially disadvantaged and marginalized population (<http://pib.nic.in>). According to the erstwhile Planning Commission, to capture the demographic dividend, it is essential to enhance productivity through proper skill development programs and inclusion of all sections of the society, particularly the tribal population in the country. Tribal population are identified as most marginalized group of the society and it is essential for all-round socio-economic development. The Skill India targets at upgrading the various skills of tribal youth in traditional and modern vocations and support them with appropriate employment⁴.

India now encounters severe challenges such as scarcity of highly skilled labour and the educated workforce who are not employable with less job skills. There is a challenge to make equilibrium between demand and supply side of skills. To achieve the target in demand side, create more employment opportunities, whereas to meet the supply side, make ready the people according to the demand including infrastructures, adequate training, appropriate mix of skills, education, quality of training, modern curricula etc.

Given the fact that tribal population is a major segment in Kerala's population, it is important to understand whether the skill development program implemented by the government has actually reached out to the intended beneficiaries. In the given context, this study is an attempt to understand the awareness of skill development among the tribal youth in the Idukki district of Kerala.

Skill Development Schemes for Tribes in Kerala

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yoj-na (PMKVY) and Aajeevika is launched recently. Umpteen skill development programmes were launched by Government of India with the objective of capacity building through skill up-gradation, promote self-employment and entrepreneurship-oriented training programme for boosting skill development for youth, farmers, entrepreneurs and women. Support

to Training and Employment Programme (STEP) intends to provide skill training and competencies to women to help become self-employed. Other schemes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training for Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM) etc., are giving to train youth and rural entrepreneurship to provide decent livelihood⁵.

Gothrajeevika

It is launched to bridge the skill gaps among the tribals in all fourteen districts of Kerala. This is a sustainable livelihood generation scheme for scheduled tribal community, better known by the name 'Gothrajeevika'. It aims to provide training in skill development and promote the beneficiaries to self-employment initiatives basically by forming societies/ventures. The trainings are organized in decentralized manner and hence held in the premises of tribal locations. The resources, raw materials, service and co-ordination for each training session is made available under the tutelage of Centre for Management Development.

Various categories of training are offered under the programme, such as dress making, carpentry, construction, driving, plumbing, wiring and masonry. The training is offered in areas most accessible to beneficiaries. Food and travel allowances are free for the beneficiaries in all categories (except for driving) during training programme.

Assistance for self-employment and Skill Development Training to ST Youths

The tribal department is intended to support ST families for attaining a decent sustainable livelihood by providing support for individuals and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for self-employment. It will be path to mitigate the intensity of unemployment among tribal youth in the state.

Vanbandhu Kalyan Yojana (VKY)

It has been launched by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India for integrated development and welfare of tribal population of India. The scheme proposes to bring tribal community of the country at par with other social groups and bring them in overall progress of the country.

Kerala State Development Corporation for SC/ST Ltd. - TSP (State Share 51%)

The scheme is sponsored by Central Government and contribution of share capital is released to the State Development Corporation for SCs & STs in the ratio 51:49 between State Government and Central Government. The corporation ensures finance for employment-oriented programme covering diverse areas of economic activities.

NRLM (National Rural Livelihood Mission)-TSP (60%CSS & 40%SS)

Though the scheme is sponsored by the central government, it is operating under the nodal agency, Kudumbasree Mission of Kerala with the objective of implementing large number of micro enterprises.

Deen Dayal Upadhaya Grameena Kalyan Yojana (DDUGKY)

DDUGKY is a scheme launched by the Ministry of Rural Development to ensure the agenda for inclusive growth through creating productivity and skills of the rural youth particularly from tribal families. It is giving more training for ST people in Idukki district. The nodal agency is Kudumbasree Mission.

Literature review

Okada (2012), highlighted the opportunities for young population in India to develop their various skills as well as the challenges which they encounter from the different experiences of Karnataka. Small fractions from financially sound middle classes receive good education and training as well as getting well-paid employment in the organized sector. Large majority of youth who are from economically and socially disadvantaged groups get very limited education and less opportunities to vocational training in the unorganized sector. In reality, India suffers from limited access to education and skill training, shortage of skilled workers, greater mismatches in the labour market and high rate of school drop-outs. India should utilize the advantage of 'demographic dividend'. India's youth must be skilled with knowledge to contribute and compete with national and international level⁶.

Munisami (2015) observed that the impact of different programme related to the skill development

offered by the State and Central governments for the tribal population was fraught with several backdrops. He projected few important developmental schemes implemented for tribes in Andhra Pradesh. There is no shortage of schemes but still there exists lack of management of various schemes. He noticed that lack of awareness of the various programme stretched by the government for the marginalized people. Hence the shortage of beneficiaries is compounded⁷.

Ambily (2018), analyzed the effectiveness of various schemes launched by Kerala government. These schemes are intended for social and individual development of the tribes. Vanabandhu Kalyan Yojana, MGNREGA, Jananidhi, Pradhan Mantri Grameen Awas Yojana, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana are social development schemes. The study found that the major works in the tribal area are less skilled works. Hence serious attention needs to be focused on imparting training to get skilled labour works⁸.

All the schemes implementing by the government are for the promotion of inclusive growth. Skilled strategies for skill training for the medium and small enterprises would provide enhanced employment in the informal sector in Asia which in turn would lead to increased standard of living. Skill training governance programmes are to be increased in the labour market and this may lead to more workforce participation and through which increase in employment opportunities can be envisaged. This situation decreases the susceptibility of employment and enhances social changes.

A suitable skill strategy is the prominent factor for profitable economy as well as the inclusive growth of the downtrodden⁹. Skill development and productivity are linked to each other. Skill development is a major driver to reduce poverty through progressive productivity, employability and promoting sustainable enterprise development and inclusive growth¹⁰. An appropriate skill strategy for the tribal groups is imperative with their ecosystems. The OECD survey of adult skills portray an incentive of the OECD which will lead the policy makers, researchers and governments to gather some information to review the skill training¹¹.

In this study it is pointed out that every Government has to take action in three areas such as creating

relevant skill, activating skills and putting skills to effective use. Firstly, the supply is to be sufficient to meet the demand. Secondly, adopt measures for the individuals to continue actively in the labour market as well as the workers who left the job, ensuring the incentives to enter/ return into the labour market. Thirdly, Governments and the policy makers are to follow the individuals by observing that the skills are utilized progressively. Unused skill is likely to reduce the return, whereas innovative skills are to be included in large extent.

This study highlights knowledge of tribal people about various schemes of government. As per the analysis, some of the respondents are aware but still now many are far away from information regarding the awareness of the multiple schemes. This study also reveals that the individuals who are already the beneficiary of the schemes again enjoy the benefit but the needy one never come under the beneficiary target. The authorities are not paying much attention on this matter¹².

The reviewed studies have tried to understand the various aspects of skill development programs at all India level. But there is hardly any study to understand the awareness of the skill development programs among the tribal Youth in Idukki district regarding various skill development programs that are implemented to increase self-employment, job opportunities through various departments etc. In the given context, this study is an attempt to understand the awareness of the skill development programs among the tribal youth in the chosen study area.

Methodology

This study is based on primary data which has been collected with the help of semi-structured questionnaire. The respondents were selected using the stratified random sampling from 4 panchayats. Vannappuram and Poomala panchayaths are less developed tribal settlements where as Marayour and Kanthaloore are less developed tribal settlements. The selected sample size is 70. The data were collected with individual interviews with tribal youth. The interviews are quite formal and open-ended.

The current tribal skill development programs in Idukki are: -

Gothrajeevika, DDUGKY, PMKVY, Vocational Training, Assistance for Self-Employment, Skill Development for Youth etc.

Result and Discussions

Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

The indicators of socio-demographic profile provide a summary of the available survey which are gender, age, marital status, employment, education etc.

Table 1: Gender of the Respondents

	Frequency	%
<i>Male</i>	30	43
<i>Female</i>	40	57

Source: Field Survey (2019)

Table 2 shows that 57 percent of the respondents are females and the male respondents are 43 percent.

Table 2: Age of the Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	%
<i>15-20</i>	17	24
<i>21 -25</i>	29	42
<i>26-30</i>	8	1
<i>31-35</i>	9	13
<i>36-40</i>	7	10

Source: Field Survey (2019)

It can be inferred from the table 3 that 42 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 21-25 followed by 15-20 age group with 24 percent. Percent of the respondents are under the age group of 31-35 followed by 26-30 and 36-40 age group with 11 percent.

Table 3: Religion of the Respondents

	Frequency	%
<i>Hindu</i>	67	96
Christian	3	4

Table 3 shows that 96 percent of the respondents are Hindus, followed by Christians (4%).

Depicts that the majority of the respondents have completed high school (32%). 24% of the respondents have completed higher secondary. An equal percentage of the respondents have also completed under-graduation. It is also noteworthy that there was only one respondent who is illiterate.

Indicates that 70 percentage of the respondents are married and 30 percentage of the respondents are un married.

That majority of the respondents (51%) were not aware about the various skill development programs and only 30% of the population were the beneficiaries of the various skill development programs. But among the respondents, 52 percent believed that these programs have helped them to get employment

Depicts that 50 percent of the respondents are unemployed. 24% of the respondents were engaged in business. 14% of the respondents were engaged in service sector, whereas 9% of the respondents were working in agriculture sector. It is important to note that 3% of the respondents had started entrepreneurship jointly.

Depicts that out of the 70 respondents, 36 respondents were not even aware of the skill development programme and 34 respondents were aware of skill programme. It is important to note that the 28 respondents were not even aware of skill development programme from the unemployed category. There was a significant association between nature of employment with awareness of various skill development programme of Central/state govt. offered to tribal population.

Summery and Conclusion

This study has been done in order to understand the awareness of the various skill development programs among the tribal youth in the Idukki district of Kerala. According to this study, many skill development programmes are launched by the successive governments for the tribes to help them get employment in Central/state governments. The findings of the study show that many of the respondents were not even aware of the various skill development schemes of the state and central

governments. Some of the beneficiaries of the programs could not start employment because of the unavailability of the tools. Those people were waiting for tools and equipment. Even though there are so many programs, the study shows that most of the tribal youth are not aware about this and thereby, they still remain unemployed. Hence the government should take some measures to create awareness about these programs among the tribal youth.

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Tourism Development in Mayudia Pass in Arunachal Pradesh

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[Arunachal Pradesh – the land of rising sun is situated in the north-eastern corner of India. The state of Arunachal Pradesh, practically the gateway of the Indian Union from the east, came up in its present administrative and territorial form in 1957 when the Tuensang division was excluded and merged with the present Nagaland state. In ancient times, it was known as “Seres” or “Serica” (Upper Assam) of the kingdom of “Pragjyotisha” or Kamrupa (Assam). In the medieval times, it was known as “Saucer” (Upper Assam) or “Uttarkul” (North Assam). Hence, during the British period, it was known as “a hidden land”. Later on, by 1913, Arunachal Pradesh was known as North East Frontier and by 1953, it was known as North East Frontier Agency (NEFA). It was on 10th January, 1972 that the Government of India renamed the erstwhile NEFA to Arunachal Pradesh and was given a Union Territory status. Later on, with the changing socio-economic and political development in the country, Arunachal Pradesh was declared as a full-fledged state on 20th February, 1987 by the Government of India having its capital at Itanagar in the Papumpare district.]

Arunachal Pradesh is situated between Latitude 26°28’N and 29°30’N and longitude of 91°30’E and 97°30’E and covers an area of 83,743 sq. kms. It is the largest state of north east India in terms of territorial extent and is surrounded by Bhutan to the West, Tibet and China to the North, Burma (Myanmar) to the East and Assam and Nagaland to the South. It covers nearly 2.5 per cent of the geographical area and about 0.1 per cent of the total population of the country.

Basically, Arunachal Pradesh is a tribal dominated state with a population percentage (62.22%) of

tribals. Racially the ethnic groups of the state belong to the Mongoloid stock. The Khamptis, the Mishmi, the Singphos, the Tangsas, the Noctes etc., belong to Palaeo-Mongoloid branch whereas the Adis, Nyishis, the Galos, the Akas, the Apatanis, the Monpas, etc. belong to Tibeto-Mongoloid branches. Further, the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh have a rich cultural heritage. On the basis of socio-cultural heritages, they may be put into two broad cultural groups. The first group consists of tribes such as Sherdukpen, Monpa, Khowa, Memba, Khamba, Khampti and Singpho who profess Buddhism. The second group consists of Nyishi, Adi, Galo, Apatani, Mishmi, Tangsa, Nocte and Wancho who profess animism or nature worship

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(Donyi-Polo). Besides, some tribes are converted and accepted professing Christianity with the changing society of Arunachal Pradesh.

There are 25 administrative districts in Arunachal Pradesh having Siyomi being the youngest district. The population of the state is 13, 82,611 (approximately) as per the 2011 Census with a density of 17 persons per sq. km. The literacy rate of the state stands at 66.95% with a male literacy rate of 73.69% and female literacy rate of 59.57% as per the 2011 Census. It is interesting to note that Arunachal Pradesh has achieved stupendous feats of success in educational expansion in the last two and half decades i.e. (1990-2018).

Rationale of the study

Arunachal Pradesh is a hotspot of tourist destination. The natural beauty of the state attracts several tourists from different parts of India and even from abroad. There are many tourist destinations in Arunachal Pradesh like The ItaFort in Itanagar, Papum pare district, Malinithan, Lower siang district, Tawang Monastery in Tawang district, Golden pagoda in Namsai district, Namdapha National Park in Changlang district, Stillwell Road, in changlang district, Parshuram Kund in Lohit District, Mayudia pass in Lower Dibang valley district, Mechuka in Si-yomi district etc., that attract the tourists from India and abroad. The eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh is having several tourist spots. Recently with the opening of the longest bridge of India connecting Dhola in Assam to Sadiya has opened new vistas of tourism in Arunachal Pradesh. Lower Dibang valley district is known for its historical tourist spots namely Bhisimnagar, Mayudia Pass, Salley Lake, Mehao Lake etc.

A Brief Introduction to Mayudia Pass

The Mayudia Pass is known as Kashmir valley of Arunachal Pradesh. It is a hill resort 56 kms away from Roing, the district headquarters of Lower Dibang valley. It is situated at an altitude of about 8711 feet amidst sky-touching snow peaked mountains of the Himalayas, lush green forests with snow looking like a white carpet and breath-taking landscapes. Heavy snowfall at this area is witnessed between November to April every year. The curvy road of 56 kms provides the tourists feel like paradise

of beauty. There are huge numbers of tourists coming to this part of the world, especially in December to March every year.

Mayudia pass can be reached throughout the year by road by via Roing to Anini, the district headquarters of Dibang valley district. It is a tourist destination that helped the people of the region economically sound and providing opportunities of employment. With the communication process being speeded up by the state and central governments recently like the opening of Dhola Sadiya Bridge over the Brahmaputra River, tourist flow to this place is very high. Therefore, it is the need of the hour to facilitate communication to this place for which the study is undertaken by the investigator.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the present study:

1. To study the historical implications of MAYUDIAPASS.
2. To study the topography of the place.
3. To study the economic implications of the place.
4. To study the ways and means of easy communication to the place.
5. To identify the strategies by which tourism can be promoted.
6. To find out the role of district administration and community members in facilitating tourism development of the place.

Scope and Limitation of the study

The scope of the present study is limited to the study of Mayudia Pass in Dibang valley district of Arunachal Pradesh. The study is limited to collection of oral testimonies from local people by conducting survey through interview techniques.

Research Design and Methodology

For the completion of this piece of research work the investigator has followed a normative survey approach. The design of the study falls under the survey design under descriptive research.

The Background of Mayudia Pass

The present names of *Mayudia pass* traces back to a number of historical definitions and narratives. The most common derivatives have been found from the secondary sources that once upon a time a Nepali girl named *Maya* came to visit this place along with her family members. During her visit there was heavy snowfall and the roads were too skiddy. Her family members were enjoying the white carpets of the roads, trees and other things. All of a sudden, they saw that Maya is skidding down towards one stiff area of the place exactly where the Hoarding of Mayudia Pass is placed today. The people around and the family members tried to rescue Maya but they failed. This incident had let people not to come to this place because in tribal society there are taboos that if somebody dies in an untoward way, he may become a devil. However, to make this place famous the local people named this place after that Nepali girl Maya and it became *Mayudia Pass* at an altitude of 8711 ft.

There is also another narrative about the historical implications of the place. The place of Mayudia pass has several sky-touching mountains. One of the mountains name is *Mayu* which is at an altitude of 8711 ft. This *Mayu* mountain range is always snow-peaked throughout the year. The villagers of nearby villages often came to this place along with the tourists from outside. The present name Mayudia has come from this *Mayu* Mountain because local people say that the *Mayu* mountain is there since a long period of time. Euphorically in common narratives MAYUDIA named after the Nepali girl Maya does not have any significance as this may be a myth.

Secondary Sources

The secondary sources are those sources which comprise government reports, reports of the district statistical office, pamphlets, journals, magazines, studies conducted by consultancy agencies etc. So far as secondary sources are concerned, the NGOs also play an important role. The student unions of Idu mishmis, the cultural and literary society of Idu Mishmis and other NGOs were helpful in the process of data collection regarding the origin of the Mayudia Pass. Besides, the deputy commissioner office of lower dibang valley and the circle office of Hunli cooperated a lot in the process of Data collection.

Topography

This region is a southward extension of the great Himalayan mountain range in the Indo-China border. The topography of Mayudia pass comprises a number of rocky mountains crisscrossed with each other. It is an area where heavy snowfall is witnessed in the month of November to March every year. It is located 56 kms away from Roing in Arunachal Pradesh at the Indo-China border above 2655m above sea level (8711 ft). It is a suitable tourist place to witness the magic of snowfall. Mostly evergreen tropical forests with snowfalls were seen over here.

Weather

Weather condition of the Mayudia Pass area remains different in different seasons. As a tourist spot it is one of the coldest areas of Arunachal Pradesh. The weather condition is conducive mostly in the month of December and January as there is very less rainfall. In the month of October and November also the weather remains good. Because of the autumn season, dew, winter and spring seasons, the area remains cloud free. But in summer season and rainy season the narrow roads are blocked due to heavy landslides and skiddy roads. It is desirable for the tourists to visit the place in between November to March every year looking from the safety concerns.

Climate

As far as climate of the Mayudia pass is concerned, it remains almost cloudy every day due to high altitude. Sometimes during heavy snowfall, it is difficult to breathe properly. The temperature sometimes goes down to -3 degree Celsius. Normally the temperature ranges from 8 degree Celsius to -3 degree Celsius. Due to the dampness in the climate there is no agriculture practiced here. The density of population in this area is scattered and the lowest 5 per square kilometer.

The Mayudia pass region is sparsely populated. Small business pockets are there in the remote localities. However, the spot is hard to reach destination before five years. Now it can be reached in all weathers due to construction of highway from Roing to Anini via Mayudia pass. The tourist flow has given new opportunities of business outlets such as opening up of food stalls, restaurants, huts apart from private residential accommodations. There is only one Govt IB which is not sufficient for the tourists to stay and to halt there for days together.

Nearby villages like Tiwarigaon, Kebali etc., are much benefited because these village areas have horticulture products like pineapples, oranges and other fruits which are sold by the local people. Besides, the tourists purchase local handicrafts made of wood and bamboos, local costumes etc., which have enhanced the level of economy of the people of the region.

In the same way there are small shops being opened up due to the tourist flow to the area. The *idu mishmi* people along with people having business establishment nearby Roing township are economically much benefitted due to speedy communication. The transport system of the state government and private agencies are now having good income due to Mayudia pass. The district administration is also benefitted by issue of ILPs to outside persons and indirectly raising the revenue for the state government.

Employment for Local Tourist Guides

The Mayudia pass has given new employment opportunities for the local youths to become tourist guides. There are many people who come from national and international level to visit this place. A good knowledge about the history of the place and fluency in Hindi and English language can provide ample opportunities of employment for the local youths. Therefore, tourism development in this area has economic viability both for the local inhabitants and for the youth of nearest districts.

Revenue Generation for the State Government

The state government of Arunachal Pradesh department of Tourism is taking special steps to make Arunachal Pradesh a tourist hub. The Mayudia Pass is one of these tourist destinations that has increased the government's revenue collection to a large extent. Every day there are thousands of tourists coming to visit Mayudia Pass after the opening of *Dhola Sadiya Bridge*, the longest bridge of India. The district administration issues ILPs to outsiders and collects significant revenue on a daily basis. Besides, the vehicles coming from outside the state of Arunachal Pradesh pay their taxes out of which revenue is raised. Indirectly when people come to visit the place the guest houses, hotels, restaurants, small shops etc., sell their items and

raise their income and the government gets taxes. In toto, the government is very much benefitted from the tourism development industry, especially from the Mayudia pass. Hence, the economic implication of the place is significant.

Major Findings of the study

The present study was conducted on the importance of tourism development in Arunachal Pradesh with specific reference to the Mayudia Pass. The following were the findings of the study:

1. The Mayudia pass is one of the vital tourist spots that attracts the tourists from every nook and corner of India. It is found that the topography of the terrain near Mayudia pass is very stiff and skiddy. Most of the time it is covered with snow and it is a hard to reach destination for the tourist in rainy season because of landslides.
2. The communication facility to the place is only the roadways and small vehicles like cars, Tata Sumos and light motor vehicles. Heavy vehicles like buses cannot move on the roads as it is very narrow and the conditions of the road are very poor.
3. The weather condition is not always predictable. Sometimes one can feel three seasons on the same day like summer, rainy and winter.
4. The minimum facilities like residential accommodation, public toilet facility, drinking water facility etc., are very poor here.
5. The facility of food stalls, restaurants and other facilities are very poor here.
6. The attitude of the local people is very good. It's a good sign of tourism intent.
7. The security measures are very poor and this is an accident-prone area because of skiddy surface.
8. There is no proper parking place. Most of the time it is jam-packed with vehicles as the road is very narrow in both sides.
9. The Mayudia pass does not have proper facility of telephonic communication. Only BSNL telecommunication can be made. Other operators are not providing any facility of telecommunication.

10. The Mayudia pass does not have the facility of guides who can help outside people to know much about this place.

Recommendations of the study

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

1. It is found that Mayudia pass is a very hard to reach destination with skiddy surfaces and snow-covered surfaces. Hence, it is recommended that the district administration should take appropriate steps with the BRO, GREF and other central level agencies like NHAI and the PWD department of Government of Arunachal Pradesh to build all time approachable roads to the place. Further, the local people should also be sensitized to extend their helping hands in clearance of the snow covers as and when needed.
2. It is found that the communication facility to Mayudia pass is very poor. Hence, it is recommended that the department of tourism should appraise the PWD department and other central agencies to have better coordination for the early completion of the road. Besides, in both sides of the road there should be proper barricades for preventing vehicles from accidents. Road safety measures in the form of instructions should be given at all curves and dangerous zones.
3. It is found that weather condition of the place is unpredictable. Hence, it is recommended that the tourism department should provide booklets, advertisements through hoardings about the suitable touring time and necessary precautions to the tourists for adapting to the naturally changing weather.
4. It is found that there is very poor accommodation facility, drinking water facility and public toilet facility etc., hence; it is recommended that the government should construct a greater number of guest houses for accommodating the outside passengers. Besides, safe drinking water facility should also be made available by the government with local administration taking the initiatives. Public toilet facilities should be established in such places

- because there are no such facilities available here.
5. It is found that there is lack of proper food stalls and other facilities. Hence, it is recommended that there should be good hotels and food stalls at the Mayudia pass. Every time most of the tourists depend on the hotels at Roing for their lunch and dinner.
 6. It is found that the attitude of the local people towards the tourists is very good. It is a good sign of promoting tourism. Hence, it is recommended that the local people should help and cooperate with the tourists so that tourism development and economic development of the locality and the state can be made possible.
 7. It is found that there are very few security measures for any untoward incident. Hence, it is recommended that the district administration should take necessary steps with the help of NDRF personnel towards ensuring security of the tourists.
 8. It is found that there is no proper parking place at Mayudia Pass. Hence, it is recommended that there should be proper parking place for the easy movement of the vehicles and to avoid traffic jams. Hence, a parking point may be earmarked by the administration at some place near Mayudia pass.
 9. Telecommunication is very poor at the place. Hence, it is recommended that Telecom operators like Airtel, Vodafone, Jio etc., should erect their towers here to expedite telecommunication along with BSNL.
 10. It is found that there is lack of Tourist guides at Mayudia Pass having adequate knowledge about the history of the place. Hence, it is recommended that the local youths should be trained properly to act as tourist guides in this area and get economically benefitted.

Implications of the Study

The study has implications for a number of people such as *local people, tourists, businessmen, local Youths, local police, local district administration, state government and media people*. The following are the implications of the study.

The study has implications for the local people that they should show good behaviour and hospitality to the tourists coming from outside, should cooperate them by all means, help them to find different ideas about the place and tell them about the stories associated with the place.

The study has implications for the Tourists that they should know about the weather and climatic conditions of the place, be aware of different rules and regulations of visiting the place, understand the dos and don'ts of the place, avoid themselves from taking intoxicants of any types during journey, be very well behaved to the local people and maintain self-security measures for themselves.

The study has implications for the businessmen that they should install food stalls, small shops, restaurants in the area to fulfil the needs of the tourists and can earn their livelihood, make themselves economically benefitted and help the tourists in having an easy and smooth visit to the place.

The study has implications for the local youths that they should help the tourist by telling the history and geography of the place, should act as guides and earn some emoluments and remain employed, undergo training in tourism management and help the tourists as far as practicable.

The study has implications for the local police and local district administration that they should undertake special measures for the construction of wide roads to the place, keep on supervising the works already in progress, take steps to have better security measures at the place, evolve strategies to have a parking point at the place, construct more number of guest houses at the place, facilitate information through advertisements and

propagandas in media and through hoardings, take special steps to have water facility, toilet facility and other facilities and coordinate with all other departments for promotion of tourism.

The study has implications for the state government that it should take all necessary measures for the promotion of tourism in the area by solving all bottlenecks of development.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that tourism development in India is the largest service sector that accounts for 6.23% Of the GDP. Arunachal Pradesh is very much viable given the conditions that the state government and the local people come forward for the same purpose. The Mayudia Pass has great historical, economical and sociological implications. The present study would provide insights for the planners, administrators and state government officials to take appropriate measures for promotion of tourism in Dibang valley district in particular and Arunachal Pradesh in general.

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Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction (Part-II)

Dr. Ruchika Bhateja* & Dr. Sangeeta**

Respondents were asked to give their level of perceived service quality delivered by banks selling life insurance products on Seven-point likert scale ranging from 1 - strongly disagree and 7 - strongly agree, containing five factors with 41 items to measure perceived service quality. The present study takes a different view with regards to operationalization of customer satisfaction (Sureshchandar *et al.* 2001). Customer satisfaction measurement should include same items as included in service quality measurement. The same respondents were also asked to indicate their level of satisfaction on seven-point scale 1 for highly dissatisfied and 7 for highly satisfied on the same five factors containing 41 items.

For the present study, Sureshchandar *et al.* 2000 empirically validated service quality structured instrument containing 41 items has been adopted to explore the customer's perceived service quality and customer satisfaction. From customer's point of view five critical factors were identified by Sureshchandar *et al.* 2001 namely:

1. Core service or service product;
2. Human element of service delivery;

3. Systematization of service delivery: non-human element;
4. Tangibles of service – services capes and
5. Social Responsibility.

The same five factors posited for customer satisfaction measurement as used for service quality emphasized by Sureshchandar *et al.* (2000, 2001) in order to investigate the link between service quality and customer satisfaction.

1. Results and discussions
 - a. Whether bancassurance customers' takes service quality and customer satisfaction as two separate concepts or not?

In order to test difference between service quality and customer satisfaction across five factors namely, core service, human element, systematization of service delivery, tangibles of service delivery and social responsibility, paired t-test has been carried out. The paired t-test executed for both private and public sector bank's respondents separately.

Table 1.2 Paired sample test between service quality and customer satisfaction

S. No	Factors	Private banks					Public banks				
		Mean	Std. Dev.	t	Df	Sig.	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	df	Sig.
1.	Core service or service product	.16343	.64344	4.752	349	.000	.05119	.77143	1.216	335	.225
2.	Human element of service delivery	.06252	.37854	3.090	349	.002	.11415	.41244	5.073	335	.000

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3.	Systematization of service delivery: non-human element	.10286	.51240	3.755	349	.000	.13442	.54609	4.512	335	.000	
4.	tangibles of service (services capes)	.03238	.60907	.995	349	.321	.022	.63631	.643	335	.521	
5.	Social responsibility	.06082	.55458	2.052	349	.041	.06930	.069	30	2.484	335	.013

Note: 5% level of significance

The results tabulated in table 1.2 indicate that bancassurance customers' take differently perceived service quality and customer satisfaction on core service, human element, systematization of service delivery and social responsibility as t-values vary significantly ($p < 0.05$) in case private sector banks except for tangibles of services. Customers of public sector banks have a slightly different view as reported by their t-values in table 1.2. There is a significant difference ($p < 0.05$) between service quality and customer satisfaction with respect to human element, systematization of service delivery and social responsibility but customers found no difference between service quality and customer satisfaction on core service and tangibles of service delivery because p-values are greater than 0.05.

The correlation between service quality and customer satisfaction have been computed with respect to five factors. The results are computed in table 1.3 revealed that all correlations are statistically significant at 0.01 level. Moreover, the correlation between service quality and customer satisfaction is reasonably high across all the factors both in case of private and public sector banks. Increase in one factor leads to increase in another factor. Therefore, there exist dependencies between service quality and customer satisfaction. Banks in order to improve customer satisfaction for bancassurance insurance distribution channel should focus on improving their quality of service delivered to customers.

Conclusion

Poor penetration and declining income of banks necessitated banks and insurance companies to choose bancassurance. The investigated relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction revealed that though both the constructs are highly

correlated, indeed there is a difference in perceived service quality and customer satisfaction. Therefore, it becomes necessary for the bancassurance service providers to take two constructs i.e. service quality and customer satisfaction separately. On the other side, the results from the correlation, illustrated a significantly high correlation between service quality and customer satisfaction both in private and public sector banks across all five dimensions namely core service, human element, systematization of service delivery, tangibles of service delivery and social responsibility. Service quality and customer satisfaction though independent to each other but are closely related, implying increase in one factor leads to increase in another and *vice-versa*. Still the nature between the two is surrounded with uncertainty.

Indian customer is more sophisticated in terms of getting fulfilled his/her financial needs from a single service provider, bancassurance presents immense opportunities before insurers as well as bankers. Bancassurance service provider should ensure that high service quality is to be provided to its customers so that customer satisfaction could be maximized.

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Educational & Health Aspects of Banjara Girls

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[The healthcare of teenage girls helps to reduce maternal and infant mortality, which are serious in India. Further, the awareness on the menstrual and reproductive health for teenage girls helps to control Reproductive Health Problems and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs). When the health of teenage girls is analysed, it is found that, the teenage girls living in rural areas are facing many problems during menstruation. Due to lack of education, many of the misconceptions about puberty have led to reproductive health problems. Banjara tribe is a most neglected social ethnic group in Karnataka. Banjaras are living Thandas, which includes 100-200 small huts at the outskirts of villages and towns and there is no essential infrastructure such as schools, health centres, roads, transportation facilities, sanitation facilities, etc., in these Thandas or Banjara settlements. As such, majority of Banjaras are illiterates and unaware about the importance of education, health, hygiene and nutrition. Even Banjara girls are facing problem of gender inequality and many of the social evils such as female foeticide and selling of female babies and infants are prevailed in few of the Thandas of Kalaburagi (Gulbarga) district of Hyderabad-Karnataka region. So far, none of the studies were made to address the problems of Banjara teenage girls in education, health, hygiene and nutrition. Hence, it is suggested for compulsory education for Banjara teenage girls and mass awareness camps to be organized by NGOs and voluntary organizations on importance of girls' education, health, nutrition and hygiene in Banjara Thandas.]

The health status of the people is the wealth of a nation and nutrition is one of the most important pre-requisites for good health. Child malnutrition is a wide spread public health problem having international consequences because good nutrition is an essential determinant for their well-being. The nutrition of infants and young children are causing great concern among social scientists and planners these days, since child is the chief victim of interplay of nutritional, educational, socio-economic and health factors that cause malnutrition.

Healthcare of Teenage Girls

Traditionally, women bear primary responsibility for the well-being of their families. Yet they are systematically denied access to the resources they need to fulfil their responsibilities, which includes education, health care services, job training, etc. For young girls in India, poor nutrition, early childbearing and reproductive health complications

compound the difficulties of adolescent physical development. Women's reproductive health is largely influenced by their health status during infancy, childhood and adolescence. Compared with boys, the adolescent girls' health, nutrition, education and development are more neglected which has adverse effect on reproductive health.

Most girls are not adequately aware of their increased nutritional needs for growth (especially increasing their food intake to meet calorie demands of pubertal growth) resulting in girls that are underweight and of short stature. Adolescent girls face more problems than boys, largely due to socio-cultural factors. They are deprived of adequate health care, good nutrition and opportunity for schooling (Sharma, et al, 2009).

Adolescents or teenagers are the best human resources. But for many years, their health has been neglected because they were less vulnerable to disease than the young children or the very old. Their health attracted global attention in the last decade only (Kalhan, et al, 2010). Adolescent girls are backbone of healthy and progressive family and thus future builders of positive health of community.

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Adolescence is a crucial part of life. During this period, adolescents gain up to 50% of their adult weight, 20% or more than that of their adult height and 50% of their adult skeletal mass (Neyamul, et al, 2013). To attain healthy reproductive outcome and efficient physical activity nutritional status of adolescent girl is valuable.

One way to break the inter-generational cycle of malnutrition is to improve the nutrition of adolescent girls prior to conception. The vicious cycle of malnutrition, if not broken, will go on resulting in more and more severe consequences (Afeework Mulugeta, et al, 2009). Nutrition is the cornerstone of socio-economic development and that nutritional problems are not just medical problem but multifactorial with roots in many other sectors of developments such as education, demography, agriculture and rural development (Park, 2013). According to NFHS-3 malnutrition level are higher in adolescent girls as almost half of the girls i.e. 46.8% in age 15-19 years are undernourished. Among women who are thin, almost half (45 percent) are moderately or severely thin. Nutritional problems measured in NFHS-3 are particularly serious for rural women.

In general, adolescent girls are the worst sufferers of the ravages of various forms of malnutrition because of their increased nutritional needs and low social power (Choudhary, et al, 2009). Unfortunately assessment of nutritional status of adolescent girls has been the least explored area of research particularly in rural India (Shiva Ramakrishna, et al, 2011). Socio-cultural factors, peer influences, craze for trendy foods; mood; body image; and extreme changes in the lifestyle, and food habits of adolescents in recent past have affected both their nutrient intake and needs (Joshi, et al, 2014).

The transition from childhood to adulthood occurs during adolescence period which is characterized by major biological changes like physical growth, sexual maturation and psycho-social development. During this phase of growth, the girls first experience menstruation and related problems which is marked by feelings of anxiety and eagerness to know about this natural phenomenon. In families with financial constraints, the female child is more likely to be neglected. Poor iron intake or diet having poor bio-

availability of iron from typical cereal based diet causes infections like malaria, hookworm infestation and blood loss through menstruation. They do not get the appropriate knowledge due to lack of a proper health education programme in schools (Baliga, et al, 2012).

Now, India is moving towards lot of advancement in the field of education, employment, health etc. but still there are communities who belong to rural areas still deficit in mentioned fields for women where they daily fight for their rights, for their education & other social taboos. Similarly, out of so many issues one is menstrual practices, hygiene & lack of awareness to it along with the non-availability of sanitary pads to rural women. As menstruation is physiological process which starts at sexual maturity in females. But, surprisingly especially in rural India it is misunderstood as a phase of transition of girl into womanhood. In rural areas is taken as unique thing for females which is unclean & dirty. It is socio-cultural factors, beliefs & taboos due to which female population bound to follow false practices even without having complete knowledge about it.

Adolescent girls from rural areas badly affected by these cultural factors in rural areas. It is very clear where almost 85% of the rural female population consider menstruation as most dirty thing happened which is only because of lack of menstruation awareness. In some rural areas, women know about the mentioned practices & hygiene, but they are bound to follow unhygienic ways of absorbent due to the non-availability of sanitary pads in their concerned locality. Substantial knowledge towards menstruation in rural areas could also be seen in negative attitude of parents & related issues in discussing it. Most of the woman & girls has incomplete & inaccurate knowledge about menstruation physiology & hygiene. Good menstrual hygiene will contribute in women & girls' development by gender equality & empowerment (Tiwari, 2018).

Poor protection and inadequate washing facilities during menstruation may increase susceptibility to infection, with the odour of menstrual blood putting girls at risk of being stigmatized. If the vaginal aperture is inadequate among teenage girls for

menstrual flow, a blockage and build-up of blood clots is created behind the infibulated area. This can be a cause for protracted and painful period, increased odour, discomfort and the potential for additional infections. It is assumed that the risk of infection (including sexually transmitted infection) is higher than normal during menstruation because the blood coming out of the body creates a pathway for bacteria to travel back into the uterus. Certain practices are more likely to increase the risk of infection.

Most girls are ignorant about the physiology of menstruation and therefore the first experience of menstruation is of fear, shame and disgust. A fear inculcates in the adolescent girls that they will sin if they break these taboos. For these reasons, girls' attitudes and expectations about menstruation became very negative. This leads to self-objectification, body shame not only in developing countries but also in western countries like the United States (US). Correct information and education regarding menstruation and reproductive health to adolescents is still a big challenge in India and in most of the developing countries. In both rural areas and urban slums, adolescents remain uninformed or very little informed about these issues. The educational system also tends to be ambivalent about sex education. Teachers often find the topic embarrassing or shameful and hence tend to avoid such issues; as a result of which young people tend to rely on peers and mass media for information (Garg, et al, 2012).

Hygiene-related practices of young girls during menstruation are of considerable importance, as it has a health impact in terms of increased vulnerability to reproductive tract infections (RTIs), interplay of socioeconomic status and menstrual hygiene practices are noticeable. Today millions of women are sufferers of RTIs and its complications and often the infection is transmitted to the offspring of the pregnant mother. Women having better knowledge and safe practices regarding menstrual hygiene are less vulnerable to RTIs and its consequences. Therefore, adequate knowledge about menstruation, right from childhood may escalate safe practices and help in mitigating the suffering of millions of would be mothers (Kamaljit, 2012).

Reproductive Tract Infections (RTIs), which has become a silent epidemic that devastates women's life, is closely interrelated to poor menstrual hygiene. The use of rags and old clothes is a rule rather than exception in rural areas of India. Rags and old clothes that are unclean increase the chances of RTIs including urinary, vaginal and perennial infection. Very often, serious infections are left untreated and may sometimes lead to potentially fatal toxic shock syndrome. Untreated RTIs are responsible for 10–15% of fatal wastage and 30–50% of prenatal infection. Increasingly RTIs are also linked with the incidence of cervical cancer, HIV/AIDS, infertility, ectopic pregnancy and a myriad of other symptoms (Garg, et al, 2012).

Banjara Teenage Girls

The Banjara is an ethnic group among larger populations in any society with a unique culture and common characteristics such as physical features, common language, habits, cultural homogeneity, unifying social organisation and habitats in the same territory. The Banjaras prefer not to mingle with other people and live in small settlements in the outskirts of a town. These settlements are referred to as Thandas. In case of Banjara tribe, the education, healthcare and nutrition are denied at many parts of India. There is also many of the social stigmas such as female infanticide, selling female babies, female foeticide, etc., are prevalent among Banjaras in most backward areas.

Their homes usually consist of one small room and no opening except the doorway. A Thanda usually has less than 500 houses. Schools in a Thanda offer education up to class VII. If a child wishes to study beyond, he/she will have to go to a town nearby. Medical care is available at a nearest town at least 5 km away. The basic amenities are minimal. Cooking gas and stove are non-existent instead women use wood and clay stoves. The females carry and store water for household needs from a pipe once a day or whenever the water supply is available. Mostly poor, illiterate, they are very hard working and lead a difficult life. They are said to have a sharp memory with numbers despite their illiteracy. Traditionally the occupation of this nomadic tribe was cattle herding and over time they slowly moved into agriculture and trade.

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