सत्राची

शोधांक -1

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सत्राची

मानविकी एवं सामाजिक विज्ञान की पूर्व समीक्षित त्रैमासिक शोध पत्रिका

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In this Issue...

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"Research is Creating New Knowledge."
                                    - Neil Armstrong

[*Armstrong (1930-2012) was an American astronaut famed for being the first man to walk on the Moon*.]

QUALITY RESEARCH

Research is needed to solve social problems and to expand knowledge. If the problems are identified correctly, it becomes easy to find solutions. This is possible only when the research is done with utmost honesty and integrity. Unfortunately, researchers in India have lagged behind in their integrity and honesty. There is only one purpose of these researchers behind completing research work and that is, to get a job as soon as possible. The quality of the research done for this purpose is always questionable. Obviously short cut methods are adopted in such kind of researches, nothing is thought out in depth. Whereas, for any good research, immense patience and thoughtfulness is needed. Without it, high quality research cannot be imagined. Therefore, it is an appeal to all researchers to take special care of its utility while preparing the thesis.

There are few things that should be kept in mind in order to make a research useful. The first requirement is continuous labor with patience. All the prior work done in that specific area, in which the researcher is doing research should be studied thoroughly by the researcher. This is the basic process of research work. The researcher should know how much work has been done in the related area so far and what are the scope and limitations of those works. Working on those areas and subjects on which less work has been done can be beneficial and also be proved a considerable achievement as far as expansion of knowledge is concerned. Research related to social concerns is more needed in the field of social science. At present, education is getting expensive, due to increasing influence of capitalism. So, subjects like what should be the effective model of education for children living in slums in low cost, political misuse of higher educational institutions along with professional ethics of teachers, etc. are relevant now a days. Various aspects of these subjects should be selected as research topic.

Now a days, in social science research, there is a practice of describing the situation as it is. The focus on analysis is relatively less. Whereas a researcher

should provide an analytical picture of situation and related problem and then present a prospective solution. By doing this the usefulness of research will be proved and that research work can be used in solving the problems of the society. Along with disease, complete treatment should also be talked about. For example, on the basis of data obtained from many sources, we can describe what is the level of education in Bihar. But, if we can't give any solution, what is the meaning of describing the poor condition of education in Bihar. Obviously we have to find out its reasons and solutions as well.

The most important thing is that the researcher should have a deep hold on the theoretical side of his research work. It was discussed in the editorial of the previous issue that the real purpose of the research is to understand its theoretical side and refine it. If your research is not capable in touching the related theory, then your research cannot be qualitative, so there should always be afirm hold on theoretical aspect of research.

Material selection also is an important task for quality and useful research. If the collected material is not qualitative, then the conclusion of research will be negatively affected. We can reach to reliable or authentic conclusions only by using reliable materials. So the quality, reliability and authenticity of tools and methods used in material collection should be ensured.

Summing up, it is necessary to say that the researcher should understand the difference between the research article and the report. The basic structure of the research article is based on the facts that we can say something on the basis of the research done in the past, that is why proper reference in the research articles become more important. While in the report you present the details of your research work. Without understanding this difference, prior researchers fill their articles with figures and data, but they have nothing to say logical. Just like previous issue of Satraachee, this issue also has become attractive and collectible, having variety of articles related to English Literature, Law, Education, Economics, Political Science, Social Science and Management. Hope you like it.

With regards

- *Archana Gupta*
   Anand Bihari.

An Ecocritical Appraisal of Diasporic Mythography in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Palace of Illusions*

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Abstract

Diasporic Mythography is the study of diasporic writers' attempts to reconnect with their native myths and legends. The reinterpretation of mythology can prove valuable in exploring cultural paradigms. Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, being a prolific diasporic writer, excels at depicting the nuances of the immigrant experience and she writes to give voice to the muted 'others'—nature, women and the expatriates. In *The Palace of Illusions*, Panchaali's *Mahabharat,* Divakaruni examines a variety of themes and attempts to interpret them through the prism of a female perspective. It is an exquisite insight into India's largest epic. This paper attempts to analyse the cultural strands entangled in the ecosystem of land where elements of nature and human beings transfigure into each other

Keywords: Mythography, diaspora, ecofeminism

Mythography refers to the artistic representation of myths. Connecting to the origin is an integral need of human beings. Reviewing and reinterpreting mythology can impart traditional myths and stories with a fresh perspective. Diasporic Mythography is the study of diasporic writers' effort to use myths and legends to reconnect to their native country. Reinterpretation or revision of traditional myths and stories to suit contemporary perspectives and agendas is essential to ensure their relevance in ever-evolving social and cultural constructs. This could involve reviewing them in contemporary contexts or exploring subtexts and covert agendas embedded in the text.

Mythology can be reinterpreted in a variety of ways including through literature, the arts, film and other media. The ancient tales can be set in a modern setting or the mythological figures can be explored in an alternative manner in an attempt to highlight the themes such as gender, power, or identity. It serves the purpose of making myths more inclusive. Reinterpreting mythology in various cultural constructs can give old myths a fresh perspective and encourage the readers to interact with them in novel and meaningful ways. Top of Form

Although it can offer fresh perspectives on well-known stories and characters, revisionist

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mythology can often be divisive. Some critics contend that it is disrespectful to change or rewrite legends that have been handed down through the ages, while others contend that it is crucial to modernise old tales to reflect shifting societal values and viewpoints. In the end, the discussion around revising mythology is intricate and continuing.

In the diasporic context, providing transnational readers with indigenous stories and myths adds an exotic touch to their literature. It also allows diasporic writers to express their sentiments about their peculiar dilemma of belonging to two disparate cultures. The reinterpretation provides the scope to reflect on the current cultural and societal values. Myths, forming a part of the collective unconscious of the culture, cannot be detached from the corresponding culture. They are perennially present and keep evolving according to changing circumstances. The debate of whether the cultures create the myths or the myths create the cultural constructs is also eternal.

The Palace of Illusions (2006), a brilliant piece of fiction by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, aims at exploring the suffering of women in the patriarchal society across the ages by foregrounding Draupadi's perspective on the legend of *Mahabharat. The Palace of Illusion* is a recreation of the classic Indian epic from the viewpoint of Panchali, the wife of the five Pandavas. It is a unique feminine version of the epic. The tale follows Panchali's life from her supernatural birth in the fire as the daughter of a monarch to her marriage to the five Pandavas and death. She is the pivot of the entire story. The vast canvas of this mythic legend allows Divakaruni to intersperse her ideology and concerns.

While writing about their native country, diaspora writers have a distinctive, preconceived notion about native nature. The metaphors of nature serve as conscious or unconscious expressions of nostalgic longing. Draupadi's yearning for her palace vividly echoes the expatriate's yearning for 'home.' The plot of *The Palace of Illusions* revolves around Draupadi's wish to own a 'home' of her own and the ensuing troubles it causes. Even though the plot does not focus on immigrants and their integration, the reader may easily detect compassionate longing in both Draupadi's and any immigrant's experience. For expatriates who have experienced the difficulties of being adrift, Draupadi's exile is more relevant. It conveys a desire to establish a connection with the local folklore.

Not only do the migrants' stories reveal their turbulent souls, but also the stories that emerge from their native land's memories help in comprehending their yearning. Divakaruni's recollection of "lantern-lit evenings at my grandfather's village home" (Divakaruni, *Palace* xiv) is reminiscent of Draupadi's Dhai Ma tales.

In *The Palace of Illusions*, Panchaali's *Mahabharat* Divakaruni sees everything through Draupadi's eyes: caste, war, power, womanliness, brotherhood and acts of valour. She examines a variety of topics and attempts to interpret them through the prism of a female perspective. She emphasises man's role as the primary exploiter of nature, women and the oppressed. Draupadi, who is rejected by her father when she appears from the flames, develops resentment for her father as well as resentment for his palace. She "hated most of all that the grounds had neither trees nor flowers… (as)King Drupad believed the former to be a hazard to security…the later he saw no use for - and what he did not find useful, he removed from life" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 7). Drupad rejected both his daughter and nature as he thought he did not have any use for these. But her father's house which she longed to escape has become

a part of life. "But by the time I left, it was too late. The creed he lived by was already stamped onto my soul"(113). The houses and countries in which we choose to reside become an extension of ourselves. "For isn't what our homes are ultimately, our fantasies made corporeal, our secret selves exposed. We grow to become that which we live within"(113). The place where we reside influences our future. Krishna warns Draupadi, "Understand it well: it will be your salvation or your downfall" (113).

Despite Draupadi's eagerness to learn and her keen desire to study alongside her brother, she gets ridiculed by the teacher who declares that "women were the root of all the world's troubles" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 25). He "was of the opinion that virtuous women were sent directly into their next birth, where if they were lucky, they reincarnated as men…But (Draupadi) thought if lokas existed at all, good women would surely go to one where men were not allowed so that they could be finally free of male demands" (155). The only logic Dhri can give to pacify the tutor by giving the logic, "being a girl, she is cursed with a short memory" (24). Draupadi challenges patriarchal norms, "who decided that a woman's highest purpose was to support men?... A man. I would wager!" (26). She receives lessons to sing, dance, play music and other activities that were considered womanly to socially equip her to be a perfect princess. She is surrounded by women "wrapped in the cocoons of their unimaginative lives, not even knowing enough to escape" (43). "With each lesson, I felt the world of women tighten its noose around me"(29). When she is told that her Swayamver was merely a political alliance, she thinks, "I was nothing but a worm dangled at the end of a fishing pole" (57). Everyone in the palace ignores and looks down upon her because of her dark skin. "In a society that looked down its patrician nose on anything except milk and almond hues" (8).

When her father stops Draupadi's tutoring sessions, she is left to her own devices and sits in the middle of nature studying *Nyaya Shastra* on her own. She sits "under a jamun tree…Summer unfurled its drowsy petals…Insects sang. Luscious purple jamuns dropped lazily onto thick grass. The paired cry of bright birds pulled at (her) chest, releasing a strange restlessness." (Divakaruni, *Palace* 53). She finds it annoying that she is being forced to have company. The daughters of courtiers are not a better companion than nature. Later, while in exile, she takes comfort in the garden of Queen Sudeshna "overfull of ostentatious, expensive bloom" (227).

The natural leadership abilities of Draupadi are stifled in that mundane palace of Drupad. She feels "as though (she was) drowning in a backwater pond while everything important in the world was happening elsewhere" (36). Her visit to the sage Vyasa in the banyan forest provides her with confidence and hope for a great future happening. However, the howling of the jackals and the prophecy of "the worst" (37) make her doubt the future.

Her first exile and total disenchantment with the promised land happens when she visits the new kingdom with her husbands. Her elation over gaining a kingdom of their own for her husbands dies down when she realises that they have been allotted barren land. "The landscape changed; the trees grew stunted; under our feet, the earth turned yellow and foul-smelling" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 139). Her disillusionment is akin to that of the migrants. The rosy dreams of the promised lands are not always fulfilled.

Divakaruni essentially condones Draupadi for all her faults. The Great War, which wrecked

the Kuru dynasty, has been attributed by mythologists throughout time to the relentless Draupadi, but Divakaruni tries to defend her point of perspective. She even modifies the legend to do so (Her calling Duryodhan "It seems the blind king's son is also blind!" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 173), an incident that caused the Great War, has been ascribed to one of the younger women but Divakaruni does not condone the deforestation drive and ecological vandalism, carried out by the Pandavas to construct the palace. Despite her insensitive and bland tone, she succeeds in letting the reader feel the pinch. "The forest was still burning….I kept hearing the cries of animals, though I knew that couldn't be. There weren't any animals left in the wilderness of Khandav—not since Arjun set the forest on fire. The lucky ones escaped. The rest were dead" (141).

Draupadi is undoubtedly tormented by the Pandavas' horrific act of setting fire to the Khadhwas' forest and uprooting the native habitat of the tribes. But as in the case of a true blue city slicker, cosmopolite, "if foreboding flew over me on scorched wings, crying for its dead mate, I didn't hear" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 146) and pushing the concerns deep back in the recesses of the mind, she smiles with "sudden elation" (146) over the building of the palace that will be "the envy of every king in Bharat" (146).

This work is a realistic depiction of human interaction with nature, a pervasive sense of interconnectedness in every facet of the world and a successful endeavour to give voice to the hushed others—nature, women and other underprivileged members of humanity. She attempts to study the themes of environmental abuse, its destruction of both human and non-human habitats and the ensuing feelings of exile, homelessness and dual consciousness, She advocates not only the cause of flora and fauna but also of the tribals (referred to as Asuras, the demons) and their ensuing silent, futile protest against the intruders. She ponders over the reaction of Maya, the architect of gods, whose abode the Khandav was charred by the Pandavas. And later she wonders "I looked at Maya. His fleck-brown eyes glittered. Later I'd wonder, was it malice I'd glimpsed in them? Along with gratitude, he must have harboured rage and sorrow, his home reduced to cinders around him, his companions dead or scattered forever"(146) Draupadi is tormented by Pandavas' pitiless action under the guise of development. The guilt of destroying the forest will haunt her eternally. In another forest where they are exiled, she ponders the lack of empathy. "Did it know we had burned down its brother? Did it resent us for it?" (198).

As a truly urban Draupadi "prefers gardens to the wilderness" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 134). A faux "stream wending its way through the palace, with lotuses blooming all year" (145) is what she desires. After marriage, her new palace contains plenty of nature, unlike the palace of her father, yet it is all magical and manicured. In contrast to others, she had "never been one for appreciating the wilderness, preferring the shaped and contained beauty of my garden" (345). Kunti also concurred with this, "spending her days in the cool, fragrant garden listening to the bulbuls sing" (150).

Bheeshma invites Draupadi for a stroll along Ganga's banks. They forge a bond while walking in the idyllic surroundings. "Wildflowers bloomed along the river, round and yellow, with black centers"(Divakaruni, *Palace* 134). The river is not only a physical but also a cultural element of civilization. Since the Ganga River is Bheeshma's mother, the natural and personal lives are inextricably linked showing the tangible manifestation of the natural elements.

"The river," Bheeshma says, "holds many memories. She offers you the ones you most long to know. But she's tricky like her currents. Sometimes she shows you what you wish to see and not the actual truth" (134). Draupadi is seen in stark contrast to "a group of tribal women who appeared down the path balancing large loads on their heads" (134). Boundaries dissolve in a natural habitat.

During the peaceful times while others are engaged in governmental and private indulgences Draupadi tends to her gardens. She adores her new abode. The gardens of Draupadi are a manifestation of her love for her palace, whereas the gardens of Duryodhan reflect his envy and a distorted imitation of the garden of the palace of illusions. He "had filled it with as many of the flowers from our gardens as he could find, each crowded upon the other with little regard for aesthetics" (182).

The second exile is equally disenchanting. She like migrants does not empathise with the new natural surroundings and views it as foreign, making it impossible for her to find comfort in it. Due to her humiliation in court, she feels resentful and unhappy. "The forest, shadowed and feathered, was beautiful in a submarine manner. But to me it was merely a reminder of all that had been wrested from me…[they see] a lioness with her young, or giant slugs leaving their silvery mark on the fallen logs…the orange-tailed monkeys" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 199). Nothing the Pandavas do to reassure her is consoling to her. "Outside the hut, the shal trees bent and swayed, their leaves sighed" (204).

Draupadi's spouses Bheem and Nakul share her affinity for the environment. Whereas Duryodhan wishes to model his palace after theirs, Bheem has never been averse to the idea of permanently moving to the sea. He prefers the love of sea creatures to his family's love. The younger Pandava prince Nakul freely admits, "that he trusted wild beasts more than any courtier he knew" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 143). The events of the regime are foretold and echoed in nature. The ground trembles as the Pandavas perform the Rajasuya yagna. The ravens' cawing foretells the Kuru dynasty's imminent demise. The impending war makes Draupadi anxious. She "dreamed of beasts…Elephants fell to their knees, trumpeting bloodily. Jackals slunk through smoke, torn human limbs gripped in their teeth. And always, a great grey owl flew through the heavy air, its wings obliterating the sky, terrifying me for no reason that I could name" (239). Later, she envisions the same snoopy owl instigating Aswatthama to murder Draupadi's sons and brothers while they were asleep. He noticed a nest of dozing crows while plotting his vengeance. "An owl materialised in the dark sky. It swept down, its wings like smoke…It killed every crow in its sleep" (304). This vision gives an idea of vengeance. The vision of the owl turns out to be an indicator of her family's impending demise. When Aswatthama and Arjun combat, deadly astras are involved. "As the two flames coursed along the sky, oceans began to dry up and mountains to crumble. Men and beasts screamed their terror, for the fabric of the world was about to be ripped apart". Vyasa "chided the two warriors for forgetting themselves and their responsibilities toward the earth-goddess. [He] demanded that they recall their weapons" (307). After Samantapanchaka's final battle, the once-holy land was left in ruins. "The few remaining trees were leafless skeletons. There was no sign of the many birds and beasts that had roamed here peacefully just a few weeks ago. Only vultures sat on dead branches, waiting in eerie silence. That was what we had done to our earth" (300).

Draupadi compares women to lac insects. The story of the burning of the lac palace of the Pandavas is presented from the perspective of an insect. They are emblematic of women who are cocooned and regarded as worthless after reproduction, like a woman married into a new family. "Like my hundred sisters, I attached myself to a new twig and drank its sap…within my shell, I held still and grew, like my hundred sisters and within me grew the eggs. The eggs hatched; a hundred new insects attached themselves to other trees... (And I? I died. No need to mourn me. My work is done)" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 112).

The legend of Sikhandi/Amba is the most tragic one. She must go through a cycle of penance, austerities, reincarnation, sex modification and war to exact her revenge. She realises that being a woman, she has to fight her own battles. So, she is "determined to do on (her) own what no man dared to do for (her)" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 49). She "discovered that a woman's life is tougher than a banyan root, which exists without soil or water" (48). Sikhandi, who had the experience of belonging to both genders, contrasts men's and women's power by comparing them to the bull and snake, respectively. "The power of a man is like a bull's charge, while the power of a woman moves aslant, like a serpent seeking its prey" (52). Devoid of the physical strength of men women have to accomplish what they desire in an indirect manner.

Draupadi had always thought of wild nature as her adversary. According to her, the wild existed just "to add to my discomfort" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 345). She does, however, come to see the beauty of nature as she ascends to heaven. She "couldn't keep (her) eye off the peaks, the light slid and shimmered along them, turning them into different shades of gold as the days grew older. There was a sharp sweetness to the air…[She] heard the chirping of birds" (346). When her husbands leave her stranded she finds comfort in the fact that she is "beyond name and gender and the imprisoning patterns of ego" (360). She owns the palace whose "walls are space, its floor is sky, its centre everywhere" (360). She converges with the omnipresent ecology, dissolving all boundaries of the earth.

The essence of the 'truth' of the unity of man and nature is best summed up by Krishna as follows, "The force of a person's believing seeps into those around him—into the very earth and air and water—until there is nothing else" (Divakaruni, *Palace* 49). Man's true nature is reflected in nature. To aid the planet, Krishna, the avatar of Vishnu, alternates between taking the form of humans and other natural beings. When Draupadi is humiliated in Hastinapur court, her recollection of Krishna's calming presence takes the shape of a garden. "There were swans in a lake, a tree that arched above, dropping blue flowers, the sound of water falling as though the world has no end. The wind smelled of sandalwood. Krishna sits beside me on a cool bench stone" (193). The celestial Krishna is an extension of nature itself. He makes a flower analogy with time. "An inner petal would know the older, outer ones, even though it was shaped by them" (188).

> Writing must come out of what we know what we feel…. But ultimately it must transcend all that to reach across time and space and memory to touch those who have never –and who will never – live as we have lived. What else is literature for? Because if it is only the specifics of a culture we want to record, surely a sociologist or an anthropologist could do it better. (Ling 137)

The Palace of Illusions, an exquisite insight into India's largest epic's mythology,

analyses the cultural strands entangled in the ecosystem of land where elements of nature and human beings transfigure into each other. Rereading the text from the perspective of Draupadi humanizes this marginalised character and provides a fresh perspective to the story. Rather than being a passive victim of the circumstances, it gives her an identity and a voice.

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Unveiling Parental Favouritism in Adichie's "Cell One" and "Tomorrow is Too Far"

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Dr. A. Selvalakshmi[2]

Abstract

Gender inequality is one of the major concerns of writers and social activists across the globe. The gender-specific behaviour of human beings creates gender imbalance in society. It is important to note that the patriarchal setup has made gender differences natural and part of society. In a patriarchal culture, women are expected to be docile, passive, and submissive, and African culture is not an exception to this idea. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a socially conscious writer, reiterates the need to create a healthy web of life and satirizes the male dominant African society that encourages parental favouritism through her writings. This article tends to analyze Adichie's select short stories "Cell One" and "Tomorrow is too far" in the light of the gender schema theory with a special focus on parental favouritism. The paper concludes by insisting on the idea that the parents can eradicate gender discrimination within the family, if they can avoid the common conviction that girls are inferior to boys.

Keywords: Culture, Emancipation, Injustice, Gender Schema Theory, and Parental Favouritism.

Introduction

Modern African women writers concentrate more on women's emancipation and their marginalized condition in the male-centered society. Black feminism not only, actively addresses multiple aspects of racial injustices but also investigates discrimination based on gender. The most celebrated Nigerian feminist writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie has been called 'the twenty-first-century daughter of Chinua Achebe' pens, "Gender matters everywhere in the world. And I would like today to ask that we should begin to dream about and plan for a different world. A fairer world. A world of happier men and happier women who are truer

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to themselves. And this is how to start: We must raise our daughters differently. We must also raise our sons differently."(Adichie *We* 25). In most of the African families, male children are the breadwinners of the house and care takers of their parents and hence to them, a male child is not only the pride of their family but also the recipient of inheritance. In this article, the researcher tends to analyze Adichie's short stories namely "Cell One" and "Tomorrow is too far" through the gender schema theory in the light of parental favouritism. In these stories, Adichie's nameless narrators can be treated as 'universal characters' for they represent the sordid reality that exist in the world in which sons are treated superior to daughters in the families.

Gender Schema Theory

Gender schemas are the cognitive framework that helps people see the world from a gendered perspective. In addition to this, they also aid individuals in aligning their actions with what they perceive to have as gender-specific behaviour. "We think of gender as a construction, and of sex as real. Often, feminist politics takes the form of refusing the social construction of gender in favour of our real sexuality: either by aiming to remove stereotypes or by striving for authentic representation of women." (Colebrook 43). Sandra Ruth Lipsitz Bem, the American psychologist widely known as Sandra Bem formulated the Gender Schema Theory in the year 1981. In her book *The Lenses of Gender: Transforming the Debate on Sexual Inequality* (1993), Bem provides details on how gender stereotypes and standards are created and perpetuated within a society. She expresses that people acquire a set of gender-related expectations and beliefs, that affect the way they perceive, interpret, and act. Bem's theory was regarded as one of the leading social learning theories in the 1960s and 1970s and was inspired by the cognitive revolution. It is a cognitive theory that asserts that the gender roles of children are designed by the culture in which they live. "I wanted to establish that masculinity and femininity were, in my view, cultural constructions" (Bem 126). Along with their cultural surrounding, the children modify their behaviour and perform the male and female roles effectively. The theory progresses with a child's cognitive development, which combines with social norms like the impact of a matrix of thought (schema) which expose the traits of 'male' and 'female'. These types of schemas precede the information that formulates gender-appropriate behaviour. "My central passion has always been to challenge the long-standing cultural belief in some kind of a natural link or match between the sex of one's body and the character of one's psyche and one's sexuality." (Bem 46).

To Bem, Parents, education, the media, and other cultural factors play a crucial role in formulating gender schemas. Ushashi Adhikari, a content writer examines the theory in relation to media and she rightly observes, "Media, as well as language and literature, play significant roles in fostering gender bias. Unconsciously the discrimination unfurled everywhere. For instance, in the movie *Batman vs Superman: Dawn of Justice*, Batman says to Superman "You are not brave, men are brave" enforces that bravery and courage are specifically masculine traits." (Adhikari). Even the renowned dramatist Shakespeare in his play *Hamlet* says, "Frailty thy name is woman" (Act I, Scene ii, 29). His misogynist point of view expresses the idea of gender schema that was prevalently read and unquestioned at that time.

The socially accepted positions of men and women in the home, at the workplace, and in public spaces give rise to gender stereotypes. In most of society, women are believed to be,

no more than caretakers of the home. They mount themselves as mere 'supporters' or 'nurturers'. They incline to attain motherhood and to foregather and resolve all the requirements of their family. Males are often viewed as decision-makers in the workplace or breadwinners for their families, and they are perceived as 'assertive' or 'ambitious' compared to their female counterparts.

Parental Favouritism

Society with inequity has gender differences at every walk of life. It starts from infancy where girls and boys are not given an equal chance to grow which is well understood by the term 'favouritism'. The term means to 'receive according to the face.' Merriam-Webster defines 'Favouritism' as "the showing of special favor." (Favouritism). According to the Holy Bible, partiality is a sin against God. "If … you show favoritism, you commit sin". (qtd. in Livingstone). Favouritism is the propensity to accord undeserved favours, advantages, gifts, or chances to an individual or an organization based on subjective emotions. In addition to that, Parental favouritism is a phenomenon in which parents treat their children differently within the family and make them conscious of their identity as male and female.

Emotional closeness is the tangible benefit of any relationship. In gendered parenting, "Unfavored children grow up with distorted, negative views of themselves. They are vulnerable to feeling defeated, believing that hard work and determination will not reap the rewards they desire. Depression often accompanies this experience." (Libby). Parental favouritism affects a child's mental growth. It causes feelings of insecurity and jealousy among the siblings. Most of the time gender biases; especially the parents preferring a boy child over a girl create major consequences. To seek the parent's attention, the neglected child is directed to misdeeds.

In Adichie's short story, "Cell One" the boy child Nnamabia is treated more affectionately by his parents than their girl. In "Tomorrow is too far", Nonso is also treated with exotic care. The sisters of the stories are raised in the background of the brother's spotlight. Here the unnamed girl narrators long for parental love and care. In "Cell One", the unnamed girl narrator brings to light her brother's mischievous activities and notices how her parents react to the situation. In "Tomorrow is too far" the unnamed girl narrator was avoided by her family members because they give importance to her brother Nonso. She is compelled to the stage where she wants to punish her brother to have parental love for herself. In both stories, the daughters are neglected and the sons are favoured.

"Cell One" revolves around a professor's family living in Nsukka. The ironic narration of the unnamed narrator ensures that Nigeria was under colonial rule, and the people were blindly following the colonizer's lifestyle. Especially the young boys who ceaselessly follow the Western lifestyle. When in need of money, they quarrel and steal fellow people's belongings. The narrator's elder brother Nnamabia is a troublesome teenager who has stolen her mother's jewellery. The favouritism of a male child prevails in the narrator's family and her parents never punished their son, Nnamabia, in any way. As a professor by profession, her father enumerates and noted down the activities of his son in a paper and makes a report. The report states Nnamabia was a thief at his home, the way he sold the jewellery at a low cost, and how he spent that money. Her parents' actions irritate the narrator and she feels as follows "I wanted to slap her" (Cell One 2). Her brother's mistake is not taken seriously by

her parents instead they are ready to accept his apology.

The narrator states that her brother never felt sorry for his actions. But her mother bought new jewellery in installments and forgave Nnamabia. These are ultimately the results of parental favouritism. The narrator expects that the children's bad actions must be controlled and punished by the parents and that they have the responsibility to bring up their son as a good citizen. He was left unpunished for his crimes. The narrator points out her mother's attitude and how she saved Nnamabia from his mistakes. She expresses that the excess love for the male child leads to the tragic push-up. Though her parents are professors, they fail to teach good manners to their son.

> … Nnamabia broke the window of his classroom with a stone, my mother gave him the money to replace it and did not tell my father. When he lost some library books in class two, she told his form-mistress that our houseboy had stolen them. … When he took the key of my father's car and pressed it into a piece of soap that my father found before Nnamabia could take it to a locksmith, she made vague sounds about how he was just experimenting and it didn't mean a thing. When he stole the exam questions from the study and sold them to my father's students, she shouted at him but then told my father that Nnamabia was sixteen, after all, and really should be given more pocket money. (Cell One 6-7)

The narrator observes that her brother Nnamabia was attractive than her. Most of the people asked her mother as follows, "Hey! Madam, why did you waste your fair skin on a boy and leave the girl so dark? What is a boy doing with all this beauty?"(Cell One 6). The narrator's mother feels proud of her son's beauty and treats her son as an extraordinary person. Dr. Susan Newman, a social psychologist says, "Parents may favor one child over another, for a lot of reasons. The child may have an easy temperament or might behave particularly well. They may look like you, or remind you of a favorite relative." (qtd. in Whelan).

The narrator objectifies the beauty of her brother and was never attracted by his actions. One day Nnamabia was arrested by the police who suspected him as a mischievous boy. They had taken him to prison in Enugu. When the narrator's family goes to see Nnamabia, her mother bribes the policemen with money, rice, and meat. Her brother looks casual in the prison and felt proud of convincing the chief with his money. The narrator did not want his brother to suffer in jail, but she needs him to realize his mistakes. Instead "… he was enjoying his new role as the sufferer of indignities" (Cell One 13).

When Nnamabia was in prison, every day they traveled to see their son with the narrator. The narrator protests against the daily visit to Enugu prison and she was getting tired of the three-hour travel. But her mother never accepts the reality and asks her not to stay home while her brother suffers. The narrator gets angry and throws a stone at the windshield of their Volvo car. The favouritism over their male heir takes the unnamed narrator to a vacuum state of mind and this leads to self-pity. "It is often said that male children are very special and more important to the family than the females, and also that the females are other people's property" (qtd. in Baloyi 84). This type of gender schema can create psychic trauma in girl children.

In "Tomorrow is too far" the unnamed girl narrator goes to Nigeria to attend her

grandmother's funeral. There, she recollects her childhood memories and expresses the secret behind her brother Nonso's death. The story is told in the second-person narrative. It tells the theme of parental favouritism and how it affected the narrator's life. She needs attention from her mother and grandmother, who always take care of her elder brother, Nonso. Bem in her *The Lenses of Gender: Transforming the Debate on Sexual Inequality* states,

> Gender schematicity, in turn, helps lead children to become conventionally sex-typed. That is, in imposing a gender-based classification on reality, children evaluate different ways of behaving in terms of the cultural definitions of gender appropriateness and reject any way of behaving that does not match their sex. … the child's motivation for a match between sex and behavior, not in the mind of the child, but in the gender polarization of the culture. (Bem 125–126)

Even the narrator's grandmother dumped the girl's identity. She is not allowed to learn how to pluck coconuts and climb on the avocado tree but Nonso did. Even though her cousin Dozie was elder than Nonso, her grandmother let Nonso sip the coconut milk first. She gives preference to him because, "Nonso was her son's only son, the one who would carry on the Nnabuisi name, while Dozie was only a nwadiana, her daughter's son" (Tomorrow is too far 188). Apart from this her grandmother has insulted the narrator's habit of eating avocado without salt and admired her grandson's style of eating. This type of partial action kindles the feeling of hatred in the mind of the narrator which results in hatred towards her brother.

The narrator worried about the rejection of her mother, who gives preference to her brother, Nonso. The following lines show how the narrator was neglected by her mother. "When she went into Nonso's room to say good night, she always came out laughing that laugh. Most times, you pressed your palms to your ears to keep the sound out and kept your palm pressed to your ears even when she came into your room to say Good night, darling, sleep well. She never left your room with that laugh" (Tomorrow is too far 190). It is significant to note that parental favouritism suffocates the narrator and she tends to solve it, as it is a serious issue for her. As a result, she wants to expunge her brother from her life completely. So she works on a plot with her cousin Dozie to frighten Nonso by twisting his legs and hurting him. She thought that the above action makes him less lovable to her family. She is badly in need of her parents' love and affection. So the lack of it guides her to injure her brother. The brother's authority and power are symbolized by the avocado tree; the narrator's subconscious wish to undermine their influence may be implied by Nonso's fall from the tree. And so this sibling rivalry ends with the death of Nonso.

The death of Nonso shattered the family members. Even after Nonso's death, the narrator never wishes to have his possessions as a remembrance. The narrator creates her own story about Nonso's death and she complained to her mother that the grandmother had asked Nonso to climb the avocado tree and make him afraid of the snake. Nonso has fallen from the tree and died on the spot and the grandmother was responsible for his death. The narrator's mother accuses the grandmother that she has killed her son but the narrator's father seemed to know the lie of the narrator. "The unfavored child can feel defeated, and unmotivated, as a result of working hard to get parental affirmation and support, with no success. He or she may also suffer from depression and become angry, bitter, resentful, or jealous," (qtd. in Whelan) says Dr. Yelena Gidenko, a licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor in Canada.

To obtain their parents' attention, the neglected child worsens the situation.

The girl narrator imagined that she will get freedom and affection through the death of her brother Nonso. But unfortunately, the demise of Nonso did not change the life of the narrator. He won after his death too. "You sat and watched her and at first you wished she would get up and take you in her arms, then you wished she wouldn't" (Tomorrow is too far 191). She felt guilty for her brother's death and realizes that things got worse and she had ruined herself. Her plight strongly shows that there existed a strong gender imbalance in her family. Every society, especially African society needs to eradicate gender-biased doctrines and habits to bring equality. Former African President Nelson Mandela rightly states, "Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression." (Kelly).

Conclusion

The present study is successful in discussing the features of the Gender Schema Theory through girl narrators of the select stories exposing the consequences of parental favouritism. Bem's critical point of view on gender-related problems focuses on the mistakes carried out in parenting for eras. The methods used by parents in the upbringing of their children are the main root cause of sex typing. Bem makes some compelling recommendations for reducing sexual differences among children, such as prohibiting access to sexist-promoting media, eradicating sexism from stories, and providing living examples of mothers and fathers at the home. Through Nnamabia and Nonso, Adichie represents the consequences of parental favouritism prevailing in most families, in an effective manner using her girl narrators in expressing the hurdle behind it. Both Adichie and Bem emphasize the notion of gender imbalance and parental favouritism that affect the mental well-being of the girl children. It concludes by suggesting that the parents can easily remove gender discrimination within the family if they can treat both the male and female children equally. The mutual concern can avoid the common conviction that frames the girl as inferior and the boy as superior. This article reiterates the idea that parents must move forward to treat their children equally irrespective of gender and must pave the way for Egalitarian life.

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❑

Time and Space in Modern Poetry

Zaara Urouj*

"When the twentieth century opened", writes A.C. Ward*, "Tennyson had been dead nine years and there was a widespread impression that English poetry had died with him".* The apprehension of the critics of modern poetry that the glorious days of the English poetic muse was over was rather misplaced. The fact is that in the modern age there *" has been no dearth of poets or great poems that will stand the test of time and become a part of imperishable literary heritage of England."*

Modern poetry could be written on almost any subject. The modern poet finds inspiration from railway trains, tramcars, telephone, the snake charmer and things of commonplace interest. Modern poets have not accepted the theory of great subjects for poetic composition. The whole universe is the modern poet's experience. He writes on the themes of real life and also makes excursion in the world of religion, mysticism and fairyland. *We have a wide variety of poems such as The Songs of Train by John Davidson, Good Train at Night by Kenneth Ashley, The Charcoal Burner by Edmund Gosse, Machine Guns by Richard Aldington, Seekers by Masefield and Listeners by Walter De La Mare.*

The poet is *"a man speaking to man",* he shares the limitations of the human condition with all his fellows. Of these the foremost is the tyranny of time which is the law of his being as it is of the civilization he creates and even of *"the globe itself"*. Poetry is a special kind of language, it is a medium of communication between human beings.

All existence is one. Everything that is, is part of the All. That all of the parts are adjusted to each other, and work in harmony, proves the relationship of all the parts to the whole, and the unity of the All. In so far, *time and space are mental forms, or forms of thought. The abstracts, time and space, must be intimately connected. The concepts of time may be understood by the notion of its linearity or circularity. By linear time, we confine ourselves within a spatial understanding of time as in terms of day and night and so on. While circularity of time states that any event that takes place at a particular given point of time has probably occurred before and will occur again in nature. Thus, in the western concept, time is looked upon as a continuum, with no beginning or end*.

The term *'heterotopological space'* theorized by **Michel Foucault** in *"Of Other Spaces"*

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and *"The Order of Things"*. Introducing the term *Heterotopias, Foucault argued that the nineteenth century was an age concerned with the development of history (past time), while*

the twentieth century was an age of space as a domain of simultaneity and juxtaposition, whereby space becomes a means by which time is controlled, held and overcome (Foucault 23). A 'psychological space' which recognizes the simultaneity (co-existence) of present and re-lived past thoughts, feelings and actions, experienced altogether in an impossible (unreal) or even real location, depending on what 'real' means, as for example in the case of a dream or fantasy. This distinctive psychological space, where the past retains a cause-effect relation with the present, was central in Freud's discussion of memory and the unconscious.

Changes in the Modernist era, largely technological innovations, radically altered the way modern people viewed space and time. The new experiencing of space and time became a universal phenomenon. In some ways, the world contracted: someone could pick up a phone and talk to someone else hundreds of miles away. In other ways, space expanded: with the advent of airplanes, people could cross oceans and continents quickly.

Stephen Kern in his book *The Culture of Time and Space,* goes on to give a variety of examples of how this change in spatial perspective manifested itself in cultural forms, among them art and literature*. Francophone criticism was concerned with the connections of space and time as early as the 1950's. Maurice Blanchot, in his influential book, The Space of Literature, joined experience with space by means of literary works*. In his view, poetic experience is connected to the absence or distance of a work of art rather than to its presence. Modern poetry was topographic from its very beginning. The Baudelairean construction of the metropolis is the best known example for it.

Clearly, in the art world, space had contracted to one singular plane. *A change in the view of time and space happened in literature as well, as "painters and novelists faced contrasting challenges in reproducing the dimensions of experience" (Kern 148).* Kern writes that, "While empty space and silence were used as subjects of novels and short stories, *in poetry there was a formal shift in the conception of the poem from an arrangement of words to a composition of words and the blank spaces between them" (172)*. Eliot certainly plays with these 'blank spaces' in his poetry. Often his poems move abruptly from one setting to another, forcing the reader to mentally transport himself to a new space to keep pace with the narrator of the poem.

The reorientation of space appears in Eliot's poetry. Examples include *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufock* (1917), *Portrait of a Lady* (1917), *Preludes* (1917), *Gerontion* (1920),*The Waste Land* (1922), *Landscapes* (minor poems), and *The Four Quartets* (1930 s). Different categories of space began occurring over and over again: the various rooms Eliot writes of comprise an *arena of interior space*; the many streets scenes that appear in his poetry comprise *exterior space* and *the thresholds* between the interior and exterior spaces became a category in themselves- the *liminal spaces*.

In instances of private interior space, Eliot finds the most meaning and the most room for humanity because people can escape some of the conventions and conformity present in society. However, *Eliot sees the interiority of a private interior space, as a rarity in modern, and especially urban, life. Second to that, shared interior rooms allow a degree of interiority*

because of the fact that they are still interior spaces and somewhat removed from society as a whole. Just as a physical threshold is the area between one distinct space and another, the emotional and mental threshold the characters occupy is the grey area between their thoughts and motivations and the brave face, the conventional persona, they will present to a conforming society: ***"a face to meet the faces that you meet,"*** as Eliot himself writes in *The Love Song of J.Alfred Prufrock* . They have enough internal condition to wonder about their actions and which they should take, but not enough to actually decide what to do or how they feel. Thus, the liminal spaces of the thresholds contain a negative meaning for Eliot. All they contain is characters locked into a state of indecision. Finally, the occupation of exterior space, and the social and mental conformity to daily routine that Eliot attaches to existence in exterior space, is what he finds most prevalent in the world, especially city life, and yet it possesses a negative sense of meaning. Furthermore, the instances of interior and exterior space in Eliot's poetry are all emotionally charged. Private rooms are where characters confront their disillusionment or a bleak reality, or, every so often, dare to hope. This contrasts with social rooms where characters find themselves trapped by the empty confines of human and societal relationships, and know their interior condition well enough to know they want more.

In Eliot's *The Waste Land*, he deals with interior private rooms in relation to a very specific character, the female typist. The emphasis on the routine and indifference that characterizes the typist's actions in her private sphere suggest that internally, she feels very little. She is not passionate about anything in particular or anyone in particular and her life is ruled by a numb monotony. She echoes this by her thoughts after sex: "Well now that's done: and I'm glad it's over." (*Waste Land*). Her complete lack of emotion suggests that her internal world is a waste land as well. Eliot explicitly critiques and mourns this barrenness of her life (and no doubt, the lives of many others like her) by the use of the character Tiresias.

Mikhail Bakhtin writes on the space- time configuration in literature in *The Dialogic Imagination*. In one of his *Four Quartets*, *Little Gidding*, Eliot writes

> ***"We shall not cease from exploration***
> ***And the end of all our exploring***
> ***Will be to arrive where we started***
> ***And know the place for the first time."***

The idea of a journey ending where it began seems a perfect bookend to Eliot's statement that "Home is where one starts from" (*East Coker*). What Eliot seems to be fully aware of himself: that space is an indisputably important aspect of his poetry.

Violet Jacob and **Marion Angus,** two Scottish poets in the inter-war year*, portray the self in relation to its interior sense of time, its conception of space and its interaction with other selves***.** Time is a key issue in the work of the two poets. Both show how the self's inner sense of time exists in counter-distinction to external time. *Integrally connected to the sense of time in the work of these poets is its equally complex understanding of space.*

Both poets' tendency to incorporate past elements into the present is closely related to their treatment of time; each explores how the self reconciles its inner sense of duration (what Jacob calls the time 'our he'rts remember') with external time. Their shared interest in

time parallels a widespread literary and cultural preoccupation with time during the inter-war years. *To Wyndham Lewis, writing in 1927, the world seemed entranced in a 'cult of Time'. Indeed, Stevenson claims these years were characterised by 'a new sense of temporality' that 'imbue[d] the whole age, not only in literature and philosophy but throughout "the modern sensibility"'. Because of international changes the world 'moved from the charms and idiosyncrasies of local time-zones' to 'a system which ensured, globally, that time and space were rationally divided, ordered and defined' (Stevenson, p. 123).* These societal changes had an immense impact upon life in Britain. A worldwide standard contingent upon geographical distance from a single point in England gradually replaced internally or locally regulated concepts of time. *At the same time, the philosophical innovations of people like Alfred Einstein and Henri Bergson revolutionised how people understood time. Einstein's theory of special relativity (1905) and general relativity (1916) altered how the general*

public conceived of the space relationship to time. Bergson's work, which appeared in English in the 1910s *(Introduction to Metaphysics* in *1910, Matter and Memory* in 1911, *Time and Free Will* in 1910), is important. His notion of *duree* - the self's 'internal time' - offers an explanation of how the self processes time, as it is mediated by memory. Duration insists upon continuity between past and present that is not dissected into clock-time units. *Bergson's findings certainly had an electrifying effect upon writers. Richard Lehan insists 'Bergson's influence, direct or indirect, on modern literature cannot be denied. In particular, Modernist writers like Virginia Woolf, James Joyce, William Faulkner, and Eliot interpolated Bergson's theories of time (mingled with James's concept of 'stream' of consciousness) into their narratives. W. B. Yeats read Bergson as well. Marcel Proust - Bergson's distant cousin by marriage - found in Bergson 'a guiding light.*

In some poems, like Angus's 'The Green Yaird' or Jacob's 'Craigo Woods', memory binds the self's relationships to time and to space together. The poets' interest in space, like their focus upon time, is paralleled in the wider context by a general public fascination with space; space, like time, 'occupied a peculiar position' in the popular imagination (Stevenson, p. 11).

Space and time fuse into 'space-time' (Lewis, p. 409) and the boundaries between the two disappear. The self, consequently, experiences 'places in time' and moments of space.

Yeats considered that the new era could not be born without falling into a huge conflict with a spiritual ancestral enemy across time and space. Across time, his man-beast prophecy repeated in his graphic poem, *Leda and the Swan* (1924) which implied that the Trojan War emerged from ancient abuse of power and passion, starting with a swan raping Leda, Queen of Sparta. In *A Vision*, the Gyres are pictured as two cones which penetrate each other. These cones, or gyres, represent the opposites in the nature of each person or country or historical period. One gyre is the primary gyre, the other the antithetical gyre. One or the other becomes dominant through space and time. By this system, the past can be classified and the future predicted.

Yeats points out that civilizations rise and decay in terms of foreordained cycles plotted by the gyres of time:

"It amuses me to remember that before Phidias and his westward-moving art, Persia fell, and when full moon came round again, amid eastward-moving thought, and brought Byzantium glory, Rome fell; and that at the outset of our westward-moving Renaissance Byzantium fell; all things dying each other's life, living each other's death."

Thus, Yeats' concept of circular time is apparent in his symbolic image—the gyres.

In the poem, 'Byzantium' symbolizes the perfection of art, a "changeless" entity and more importantly, a spiritual life unaffected by temporality. Yeats seeks inspiration in "monuments" since they stand for eternity and timelessness which cannot be ravaged by the continuous passage of time. He seeks to fix his poetry, or to "monumentalize" it in other words since he sees it as a piece of art installed in a particular time and space. The dichotomy thus lies between the "ageing body" and the "unageing intellect" .Byzantium, for the poet thus stands for this particular space. His fears about mortality and the continuous passage of time can be explained with regard to the teleological functioning of history. A form of artificial preservation illustrated by the phrase "artifice of eternity." He wants to hold on to something unnatural to preserve his work through "melting time". This concept of free- floating time has also been visually illustrated by the Modernist painter, Salvador Dali in his piece titled, "The Persistence of Memory".

Moving backwards and forwards from the present, this way creating an illusion of continuity, is one aspect of time in Larkin, and apparently this is what Raine appreciates as a "miraculous" achievement in his poetry. Raine describes images of time in Larkin with the metaphor of time-travel. Apart from discussing "To the Sea", he convincingly points out that in "Reference Back" the speaker remembers something that he constructs in his imagination (65-67). Time travel is no doubt a central component of Larkin's poems, but so is the image of time units, which are given autonomy in tropes of space. Ironically, notions of time transformed into space can best be seen in those poems that use a metaphor of travelling: the texts about train journeys *("Here", "The Whitsun Weddings", "I Remember, I Remember", "Dockery and Son").* Larkin constructs images of time units. Time as continuity is also removed from the situation of the person who is being taken to hospital in "Ambulances". An ambulance is a closed unit separated from the dynamically flowing historical time surrounding it:

> *Closed like confessionals, they thread*
> *Loud noons of cities, giving back*
> *None of the glances they absorb.*
> *Light glossy grey, arms on a plaque,*
> *They come to rest at any kerb:*
> *All streets in time are visited.*

Not only is an ambulance a closed world but also like a confessional, with all the ambivalence of the image: attractive and repelling, giving hope and setting up a barrier, belonging to us and to a different sphere simultaneously. The central motif of Larkin's first mature collection of poems, *The Less Deceived*, is the relationship between experience, text and meaning in a variety of contexts. In this volume the most important experience to be

transferred into the verbal form of poetry is the passing of time. In some of the central poems he transformed the experience of time into metaphors of space, a method he kept on using in his later poetry. This is sometimes analogous with the representation of time units, with the difference that when time is envisioned as space, it is frequently indivisible. Such poems are typically those in which Larkin, overtly or covertly, applies the technique of photography. In some other cases (most spectacularly in the poems about train journeys) visible continuity in space is constructed as a metaphor of time.

All distances in time and space are shrinking. Man puts the longest distances behind him in the shortest time. He puts the greatest distances behind himself and thus puts everything before himself at the shortest range. Yet the frantic abolition of all distances brings no nearness; for nearness does not consist in shortness of distance. Today everything present is equally near and equally far. The distancelessness prevails. Literature still demands to be unique in connection with relating time, but draws attention to configuring time through spatial figuration. And if a theory needed to be disproved to become reliable, and literature is the area where spatial versus temporal cannot be simply reconciled, cultural topography requires literary involvement more than ever. Literature as a reading experience frequently takes unexpected turns, therefore it is strictly time related. Literature may be the place where readers are inhabitants, where the pathways, crossways, and landmarks belong to the reading process by means of the materiality of literary inscription, and where transformation or transposition makes the transcendental appear immediate.

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❑

The Portrayal of Women in Joya Mitra's *From the Heart of Darkness* and Suchitra Bhattacharya's *Good Woman, Bad Woman*

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Abstract:

In a patriarchal society, men hold all the power, and women suffer varying degrees of oppression, sexual orientation and domination. Even though women today are assertive and independent, this does not change the reality that they are not controlled. In traditional society, women have frequently been disregarded by their husbands, mothers, fathers, or sons. Various writers such as Lila Majumdar, Nabaneeta Sen Gupta, Bani Basu, and Ashapurna Debi have portrayed the struggle of middle-class Bengali women in their respective works. Within this paradigm, this article delves into the writing of Bengali writers Joya Mitra and Suchitra Bhattacharya to highlight the lives of four Bengali women—Shanto, Rohini, Urmi, and Ria—who were exploited and oppressed by males in both public and private areas.

Keywords: *Patriarchy, Women, Resistance, Subjugation, Victimisation*

Introduction

Women have consistently been seen as the subordinate portion of society, despite numerous advancements that societies have experienced in contemporary times. This is because patriarchy has always been seen as the primary barrier to women's freedom, advancement, and development. British sociologist Sylvia Walby, in *Theorizing Patriarchy,* defines "patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (20). The term 'patriarchy' refers to domination in both private and public spheres. Every day, women are abused, raped, and mentally and physically tortured in a place they call 'home', making it difficult for them to survive. In conventional society, women have constantly been side-lined by their husbands, mothers,

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fathers or sons. Stereotypical men silence and subjugate women by denying them their independence and identity. Women's silence, humiliation, and suffering are not just the result of illiterate and uneducated individuals; men and women from educated and cultured families also oppress and dominate women. The patriarchal control over women began centuries ago, i.e. from the pre-colonial era to the 21st century. All over the world, women suffered more than men as they sought liberty from the outside world and their own homes. Patriarchy is a system where women are subordinated because of their societal position. In India, patriarchy operates in every sphere, and the ideology has been formalised through customs and traditions since ancient times. During the late 18th and 19th centuries, women were controlled by male members of the family. Bengali women, like other Indian women, were also expected to be typically silent, meek and dutiful and were supposed to merely perform their duties as housewives. They were required to spend their entire lifetime tending to their families, cooking, cleaning and bringing up their children. The powerlessness, helplessness and low self-esteem felt by women were an outcome of the patriarchal control over them. After India's Independence, many steps were taken to improve the condition of women. However, unfortunately in many sections of society, they were still suppressed and marginalised. The traditional roles indicate that the man always had the upper hand in the relationship between a man and a woman. Simone de Beauvoir vividly describes this domination of men in *The Second Sex,* where she says,

"In those species that are favorable to the flourishing of individual life, the male's effort at autonomy— which, in the lower animals, leads to its ruin—is crowned with success. He is usually bigger than the female, stronger, quicker, more adventurous; he leads a more independent life whose activities are more gratuitous; he is more conquering, more imperious: in animal societies, it is he who commands"(59).

Beauvoir explains that men have always considered themselves superior, more muscular, successful and powerful than women. Within this paradigm, the paper attempts to articulate the sexist gender roles and repressive nature of men and their suppression of women by exploring two short stories (translations), *From the Heart of Darkness* by Joya Mitra and *Good Woman, Bad Woman* by Suchitra Bhattacharya. The stories have been translated from Bengali to English by Sanjukta Dasgupta in her book entitled *Her Stories: 20th Century Bengali Women Writers.*

In all genres of literature, a number of well-known authors have chronicled women's experiences with subjugation and oppression. Rasasundari Devi, Krishnabhabini Das, Kailashbasini Devi, and many more Bengali authors have written about the plight of Hindu women in colonial Bengal. The two authors whose works have been chosen for the present paper Joya Mitra and Suchitra Bhattacharya have been acknowledged for their contribution to Bengali Literature. Joya Mitra, a well-acclaimed Bengali poet, fictional writer, and translator who started her writing career in 1950, has been recognised and awarded for her works. Her work *Andhokarer Utsho Theke, translated* into English by Sanjukta Dasgupta, depicts the plight of women based on a personal experience. Suchitra Bhattacharya, another well-acclaimed author, started her writing career in the late 1970s and has been conferred with awards such as Sahitya Sehu and Katha Awards. Her work *Bhalo Meye, Kharap Meye* has been translated into English by Sanjukta Dasgupta into *Good Woman, Bad Woman.* The works of both authors focus on social issues, which are reflected in stories and novels such as *Dahan,*

Killing Days: Prison Memoirs, Hemanter Pakhi and many more. In the selected short stories, both authors highlighted the silence, resistance and courage of Bengali women who were oppressed and subjugated by society. During the 19th century, the condition of women in Bengal was deplorable as they did not enjoy the same opportunities that men did. They were responsible for only their families and children, whereas men were allowed all kinds of freedom and were blatantly permitted to hold their conservative opinions that women should only be restricted to homes and should not be stepping out to make their presence felt in any walk of life. The selected authors bring to the fore the plight of women through their struggle for existence during the 19th century.

Subordination of Women

In From the Heart of Darkness, Joya Mitra describes the life of a child bride in rural Bengal, Shantobala Kuila, who was married to Haridhon Kuila, a man old enough to be her father. Shantos's mother, who was scared for her daughter, used to chant a song,

> "My daughter's name is Deli,
> Whether you give her to Satan or a bridegroom
> her destiny is geli" (Mitra 103).

As soon as the couple got married, Shanto started fulfilling the duties of a wife. But she was terrified of her husband because she was constantly suppressed and tortured both physically and mentally. Simone de Beauvoir, in *The Second Sex,* says, Marriage is the customary destiny that society assigns to women (502). In Shanto's case, her father decided her future, which she quietly accepted as her fate. In the chant, Satan and the bridegroom were the same because Shanto's husband was not very different from Satan, as his constant torture and physical abuse in the form of slaps was no less. Haridhon felt that he had control over Shanto and her body as he had an ideology deeply implanted in his mind that he had authority and control over Shanto. In most of her work, Joya Mitra has very sensitively addressed intricate issues of female suffering, where the women are always the victimised subject. Shanto used to beg her husband to have mercy on her, and the author writes,

> "Did Haridhon Kuila let her go? Didn't he slap her on both cheeks? Didn't he twist her arm backwards?" (Mitra 103).

Haridhon does not leave any opportunity to exercise his power over Shanto. As Sylvia Walby in *Theorising Patriarchy* writes, "At a less abstract level patriarchy is composed of six structures: the patriarchal mode of production, patriarchal relations in paid work, patriarchal relations in the state, male violence, patriarchal relations in sexuality, and patriarchal relations in cultural institutions" (20). So, for Haridhon, Shanto's sexuality, her freedom, her silence, all were supposed to be under his control. Prior to her wedding, Shanto could not take up a stand against her parents, and post her wedding, she surrendered to the tyranny of her husband. She felt unsafe even in her own home. The idea of not feeling safe and comfortable in her home reveals how patriarchal norms are linked to intimate partner violence and how this impacts an individual's mental health.

In the initial years of their marriage, Shanto was frightened of her husband, but gradually she accepted her fate and stopped thinking about herself as if she had ceased to exist. Shanto and Haridhon had four children, two sons and daughters, Jamini and Kamini. "Shanto couldn't

think of a time when she was not carrying a child in her arms or inside her. Would she have to do this all her life? All the while, whether she was husking rice, serving rice to the workers or working in the cowshed, her body was always heavy, her waist and thighs stiff with pain." (Mitra 105). She had no one in her family besides her husband. She did not get any help in her pregnancy as she did not have a mother-in-law, sister, or even her parents, and her husband never helped her during her pregnancy or with the kids. Shanto had to handle everything on her own. "When she was going through the *aantoor* period she had seen another woman enter her husband's room. When the baby was still in her lap and still moist, then too the woman would come quickly in the dark and shut the door and after a while would leave as quickly as she had come, in the dark" (Mitra 104). Whenever thought of fighting for her rights as she knew that Haridhon would never tolerate her raising her voice against him. She understood that society does not accept women who raise their voices against men. In *The Subjection of Women*, John Stuart Mill writes, ".....she is as subordinate to him as slaves, commonly so called, are to their masters. She promises life-long obedience to him at the altar, and is legally held to that all through her life. . . ." (17). So, Shanto was the subordinate one in her marriage and she had to accept her fate and bore the burden of being a female and a married woman.

Besides showcasing the plight of Shanto, the author highlights the situation of another female character, Rohini, who used to visit Shanto's house to chat when Haridhon wasn't around. Rohini was married at an early age, became a widow at 15, and had no family or children. Her fate was not better than Shanto's in any way, as her brother-in-law raped her. "When she was sixteen as she got up to answer nature's call, her elder brother-in-law molested her in the courtyard corner. He just couldn't take his eyes off his dead brother's wife" (Mitra 106). Haridhon and Rohini's brother-in-law's physical abuse resulted from their belief in the patriarchal norms that dictate that men are dominant and entitled to be in control. Rohini suffered sexual abuse in her own safe zone, her home. Rohini's mother-in-law went to sleep; she went to the courtyard, where she was molested every night. When she was found pregnant, she was thrown out of the house. "She pleaded with her mother-in-law and brother-in-law. The brother-in-law kicked her off saying, "Fallen woman, take up a room in the district marketplace." (Mitra 106). Her silence was used as a weapon against her and helped them throw her out of the house. The brother-in-law who molested her ensured that Rohini did not get any chance to raise her voice against him even in future; therefore, he wanted her out of the house.

Rohini and Shanto were both victims of this stereotypical male-dominated society and accepted their plight as their fate. Shanto's heart wrenched with pain thinking that her daughters might have the same fate as she did. This thought made her emerge strong for her daughters, Jamini and Kamini. She saved money in *Lakshmir Jhapi* and enrolled them in a school without her husband's knowledge. When he fixed up Jamini's marriage with an older man when she was merely eleven. Shanto decided to come out strong and fight for her daughter's rights. As Michel Foucault states in *The History of Sexuality Volume One,* "…where there is power there is resistance..." (95). Haridhon always controlled Shanto, but when it came to her daughters, she fought with her husband, saying:

"This marriage won't take place…. I won't let such a young daughter of mine get

married. I shall send Jamini and Kamini to school. I want to make them into human beings" (Mitra 109-110).

Shanto's position in her family was weak, and she accepted all the patriarchal norms when it was about her, but when it came to her daughters, she mustered the courage to raise her voice against these norms and ensured that her daughters had a better life than her. But Haridhon, could not tolerate her resistance towards him, so he held her hair, started beating her, and decided to marry Jamini and Kamini in a month. He took Shanto's retaliation as a challenge and decided to silence her as he was shocked at her opposition towards him. However, Shanto was determined to fight for her daughters at all costs, so she picked up a chopper and killed Haridhon in his sleep.

Good Woman, Bad Woman, another beautiful story that is set in Kolkata, also exemplifies the stereotypical and male-dominated society through the lives of the characters Samiran, his wife Urmi and Ria, a prostitute. The plot centres around the life of Samiran, a lawyer by profession, who is fighting a case for Ria, who has been raped by her childhood friends. In the short story, Suchitra Bhattacharya highlights the struggle of two women, Urmi, a housewife and Ria, a singer and prostitute at Lido Bar, in a typically male-dominated society. Urmi, who belonged to the respectable society, was the 'ideal wife' who spent all her time looking after her house and taking care of her husband and son without help from anyone, whereas Ria, a prostitute, was looked down upon by all because of her vocation.

Samiran used to yell and scream at his wife Urmi, even on petty things. He expected perfection from her when it came to household chores. He used to shout at her mercilessly whenever she was at fault, but she did not dare to utter a word in response. She was the 'good wife' who was not allowed to express her silence and helplessness. Samiran's remarks used to break her heart, but she lacked the courage to react to them. He used to say, "Look at you, just one son and you can't take care of his needs! These words hurt Urmi. As if she had been stung" (Bhattacharya 119). Urmi's stark silence is representative of the patriarchal norms where a woman is expected to suffer quietly at the hands of men, and voicing one's opinion is rarely thought of.

In *Using Critical Theory: How to Read and Write about Literature,* Lois Tyson writes,

"From a patriarchal perspective, women who adhere to traditional gender roles are considered "good girls…In contrast, women who violate traditional gender roles are thought of as "bad girls," especially if they violate the rules of sexual conduct for patriarchal women, such as dressing or behaving in a manner that could be considered sexually provocative…" (200)

Urmi, the voiceless woman, fits well in the set standards as she spends her life adhering to the roles defined for good women. In contrast, Ria, the bad woman, violates those norms by working in a bar and is, therefore, worthy of ridicule. On being raped Ria, unlike other 'good women', decides to fight against them. Ria's husband is not happy with this decision of hers, as reporting would mean that the matter would go to the High court. Ria's husband wanted her to drop the case as he was scared that her professional reputation might be affected. In a point-blank manner, he refuses to be associated with the case, and that forces Ria to fight her battle alone. The changed circumstances make her emerge as a strong and independent

woman who decides to stand up for herself in spite of all odds.

Although Ria emerges as a woman with a voice of her own, her position in society still remains the same. People do not stop pointing out that she is not a good woman and does not deserve the respect and treatment that any respectable woman should get. When Samiran throws a party after winning Ria's case, one of the advocates invited to the party remarks, "Don't you think the punishment of the two guys was much too severe? Seven years! That too for raping a whore!" (Bhattacharya 149).

According to the stereotypical norms of society, when a woman is a bar singer, she is a 'fallen woman'. On the one hand, a woman like Ria was not respected because she chose a career that was considered worthy of contempt; on the other hand the situation of Urmi wasn't better either as she suffered at the hands of her husband as she is sexually exploited by him often. The author writes,

> "What's the matter? What's the stubbornness for? Turn". Samiran almost forcibly turned Urmi towards him…Urmi hissed, "I don't feel like it. Leave me alone." "As if that matters! I want you right now" (Bhattacharya 153).

Was Urmi supposed to turn? Well, on the one hand, Ria, who was molested and dominated by men, took a brave step to fight for herself. But on the other hand, Urmi, who was a 'good woman', could not fight against the dominant male, her husband.

Conclusion

Deborah Cameron, in *The Feminist Critique of Language,* writes, "The silence of women is, above all, an absence of female voices and concerns from high culture. If we look at a society's most prestigious linguistic registers - religious, ceremonial, political, rhetoric, legal discourse, science, poetry - we find women's voices, for the most part, silent - or rather silenced, for it is not just that women do not speak: often they are explicitly prevented from speaking, either by social taboos and restrictions or by the more genteel tyrannies of custom and practice" (3). In both stories, women are prevented from voicing their agony and pain as men hold most of the power and would not permit any such thing. Through Shanto, Rohini, Urmi and Ria, the authors bring forth the struggle of Bengali women who are dominated by the men in their lives who prefer them as weak and submissive beings. The stories bring out the fact that women are suppressed in both the public and private spheres, in their homes and even outside. Women face disgrace, prejudice, and oppression at the hands of the people they trust. These people should support and shield them rather than torture and subjugate them.

The men in Shanto and Ria have supressed them to their utmost, they show their resistance towards them and emerge as winners who somehow gather the courage to do so. They emerge as independent and brave women capable of facing challenges. Through the characters of Rohini and Urmi, however, the authors emphasise that many women are still subjugated by their husbands and by other men in society. Are women supposed to gulp down any injustice or unfair treatment meted out to them? Why is familial harmony the sole duty of married women? The stories highlight these questions and point out that many women still suffer at the hands of powerful patriarchal forces and must come out of societal entanglements that make them suffer silently.

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❑

Identity Crisis in Anita Nair's *Ladies Coupe*

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Abstract

The present paper is focusing on the plight and predicament of women in Indian society. Though the women accept their fate still they are longing for the identity which they have dreamt of in early stages. The novel *Ladies Coupe* by Anita Nair clearly expressed the projection of the identity crisis and inner urge for freedom. An attempt is also made to show how women are deviated from their identity and confine them in the circle believing, that is their identity but in reality, they have lost. In *Ladies Coupe*, there are six women characters including the protagonist Akhilandeswari. They are named Janaki, Prabha Devi, Margaret Shanthi, Sheela, and Marikolunthu. All other women characters accept their fate, because of their family and society, still Akhila, 45 years old unmarried woman who is in search of her identity comes to an end by meeting heterogeneous people who are having different cultures, cast, and religions. At the beginning of the novel Akhilandeswari is shown as an introverted woman, as time goes she revolts everyone and breaks the useless norms of the society about the perspective of women.

Keywords: Suppression, ill-treatment, identity crisis, sacrifice, dignity.

Anita Nair (26.1.1966) living author, her first novel is *The Better Man*. She is best known for her novels *Ladies Coupe, The Better Man* and *Mistress* moreover, her novels   *The Better Man* and *Ladies Coupe* have been translated into 21 languages. In 2012, she was awarded Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for her contribution to literature and culture. In 2015, she was appointed as a global ambassador for the Women's Expo. In 2020, UNHCR appointed her as a high-profile supporter

Introduction:

The novel starts with a deep question can a woman live her life alone? Will this patriarchal society accept her? This is the main theme of the novel. Anita Nair says *Ladies Coupe* is not

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a feminist novel, but it asks questions about society, who made society into a patriarchal society either male or female? As we see in the current scenario. This novel is more appropriate with the theme of Identity Crisis. Anita Nair tries to prove that oppression and suppression do not come in the form of violence, but it is found in terms of love.

> "She pulled the sheet to her chin and closed her eyes. For the first time, she felt protected. Sheltered from her own self. The train knew where it headed. She didn't have to tell the train what to do. The train would stay awake while she slept"…
> (LC91)

The life experiences of six women's story exposed in the lady's compartment. During their train journey, each of them gives an account of their trials, tribulation, and challenges they have encountered in their life. Ahkila is a person dreaming of escapes, and hunger for life. Akhila is a person with lots of questions and wonders whether a woman can live her life alone in society, and what people think if the woman lives alone. According to Ahkila, the name alone represents the identity of her. The author beautifully narrates the story and life of the woman. As the train starts the early of the protagonist begins. After her father's death, Ahkila gets a job of her father. Though Ahkila is the cash cow of the family, the responsibility goes to the younger brother, who is still going to college. When Ahkila wants to go on a tour or outing, she has to get permission not from her mother, but from her brother and she never asked once. When her brother and sister got married, her family and her relative did not even consider her. She always dreams of her marriage but her family members did not take any steps. Finally, she wants to be unmarried forever. The only friend she got was Katherine Anglo-Indian who transferred from Bengaluru. She was attached very soon to her, but the other staff did not like her and they warned Ahkila not to mingle with her.

'Don't be silly Ahkila snapped. Katherine is a good girl and as a respectable as you and me. Just because she is not a Hindudoesn't automatically make her and immoral person'. LC-86

Ahkila sees Katherine as a reincarnation of herself. Katherine is a girl who supports the rights of women, when other office colleagues insult Akhila, Katherine always stands for her. Akhila mentions Katherine as her egg opener.

Janaki is the eldest of all in the coupe. The first experience was shared by Janaki. She believed that to be a good woman is to take care of the family. She is a woman who always had a man to protect her first protected by a father and then by her husband after him it would be her son, she was married before getting to know what is life all about. She was made to believe that home is a women's kingdom. It was too late to recognize that even a strong independent woman can make a good wife and mother.

The next story unfolded by fourteen years old, Sheela. She is the character of acceptance. What makes Sheela different from others is her ability to look beyond things. The eye-opener of Sheela is her grandmother, who taught that what actually men and society want from a woman is the senseless idea of our society. A woman can lead her life according to her and not by society.

Margaret Shanthi the third woman unfolds her story. She was the gold medalist in chemistry, and she wanted to pursue Ph.D. and become a college teacher, but her dream vanished after the marriage and she became a school teacher where her husband hold the

position of principal. Margret sacrificed everything her husband.

When Margret conceived her husband told her to abort the child, at first she denied and later she did. She was undergoing much pain and always thinks about the unborn child and she notices her husband Ebenezer caring less towards her, he controls her completely she understood that she is made to work only for her husband.

> "Ebenezer Paulraj would never accept responsibility for what he had done. When I pointed Alfred's behaviour out to him all he said was "boys will be boys". (L.S-129)

Margaret took the civil war against her husband and made him depend on her.

Anita Nair skilfully utilizes the story of Marikolundhu. How Indian women are undergoing sexual exploitation, especially in a rural background. Marikolundhu most pathetic woman among the six women, she is the humble and miserable woman on whom male oppression is forced heavily and left unquestioned. Being a girl from a poor family she is deprived of education, she discontinued her studies after the completion of her fifth standard. Only her brothers could go to school in the town. Her mother says there is a lot of risk to send a girl by bus to town for school. She accompanies her mother for household work, where she becomes a babysitter for no pay. Society avoids thinking that, women are strong-willed to create disastrous consequences if women are completely ignored.

The next co-traveler Prabha Devi starts her life experience, she is the best example of gender suppression begins from the womb. There is a saying "Patriarchy shows its ugly face from cradle to grave". When Prabha Devi was born her father announces that this baby girl came to earth for ruining my business. She was compelled to marry at the age of eighteen by her father; Prabha Devi's father is a perfect example of dominated male. She is married to Jagadish a diamond merchant's son. Jagadish and Prabha Devi went to New York for a honeymoon. She was taken up by the Western culture, and she decides to give herself a modern look and she starts to wear Western clothes and adopt a Western way of life. She even aborted her baby thinking that if she gives birth her beauty will disappear from her body. However her modern looks invite the wrong kind of attention from her husband's friend, who makes sly and stealthy at her, she was scared, she doesn't do it intentionally but the love of her body made her do it.

Prabha Devi understood that women cannot speak what they wanted to speak; women cannot dress what they wanted to dress like; the women cannot go anywhere where they wanted to go. Prabha Devi takes a hard decision she never wears the Western dress and never asks for anything and remained with what she is offered to her. She has forced herself from life what she desires. She starts wearing the saris, waits for her husband, and gives birth to his baby. In short Prabha Devi lived as a husband's toy and baby-making machine.

Conclusion:

Through this novel, Anita Nair tries to convey how this society treats women as though they are privileged or unprivileged women and this society tells that "you are just a woman" Thus, Humans always wanted to know who they are, what their identity is, but the answer is not in the past or the future, but in the present. The collection of the past is the graveyard of our mind; it always causes chaos in us, rather than drilling the past; discover the identity in the present.

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❑

Role of Festivals in Promoting Cultural Cohesion, Identity and Diversity in Arunachal Pradesh

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Abstract

This article explores how Arunachal Pradesh, a state in Northeast India renowned for its great ethnic and cultural diversity, uses festivals and celebrations to shape its cultural identity. The aim of this study is to explore the role of festivals and celebration in shaping cultural identity in Arunachal Pradesh. The study made use of a qualitative research approach based on ethnographic research and secondary sources, explores how festivals and celebrations act as significant occasions for social cohesion, community building, and the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. The article also discusses the economics and cultural advantages of festivals and celebrations, including their role in promoting inter-ethnic harmony and supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs. The study found that festivals and celebrations play a significant role in shaping cultural identity in Arunachal Pradesh. Festivals provide a platform for the community to showcase and share their cultural heritage with others, and they also contribute to the formation and maintenance of cultural identity.

Keywords: *Festivals, celebrations, cultural identity, Arunachal Pradesh, cultural heritage, community building, inter-ethnic harmony, local businesses*

1.1 Introduction

Arunachal Pradesh, popularly known as the Land of the Rising Sun, is home to a diverse range of ethnic groups, each with its own set of cultural practices, beliefs, and customs. Festivals and celebrations play an essential role in establishing cultural identity of Arunachal Pradesh and serve as vital occasions for social cohesion, community building, and the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage.

Different ethnic groups celebrate a variety of festivals throughout the year in Arunachal Pradesh, which is renowned for its vibrant and diverse festival culture. These festivals have

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been celebrated for years, passing on cultural knowledge and practices from one generation to the next. They are profoundly based in regional traditions and beliefs. Historically, festivals and celebrations have played a crucial role in the social and cultural life for Arunachal Pradesh. According to Chandra and Bhatnagar (2016), festival have been celebrated in the region for centuries, and they serve as an important mechanism for preserving and transmitting cultural knowledge and practices from one generation to another. These festivals have been linked to religious and spiritual beliefs of the community and are often associated with worship of deities and ancestral spirits.

At the Sociological level, festivals and celebrations have been studied in terms of their role in shaping social identities and relationships. Dutta and Deb (2014) argue that festivals serve as a means of building and reinforcing social relationships between different ethnic groups and tribes in the region. Through these festivals, individuals can develop a sense of common identity and shared values, which can contribute to the overall social cohesion and stability of the community.

Moreover, festivals and celebrations have been studied in terms of their economic significance. Deka and Bora (2017) argue that festival serve as an important mechanism for promoting economic growth and entrepreneurship in the region. Festivals provide opportunities for small and medium scale enterprises to sell their goods and services, which can contribute to the overall economic development of the community.

Overall, the historical and sociological perspective of festivals and celebrations is to strengthen the cultural identity in Arunachal Pradesh. The complex and multifaceted nature of festivals is not only as a means of preserving and diffusing cultural rituals and practices, but also as a mechanism for building social relationship and promoting economic growth. Sociological dimensions of festivals and celebration in the region can provide valuable observations to their role in shaping the cultural identity of the ethnic groups.

Losar, also known as Tibetan New Year, is one of the most significant festivals in Arunachal Pradesh and is held by the *Monpa* tribe in the Tawang district. Losar, which celebrates the start of a new year, is a time for getting together with family, feasting, and traditional dance performances (Aier, J.K 2017). The celebration, which represents the *Monpa* Community's distinctive traditions and religious beliefs, is a significant cultural landmark.

Another important festival is *Mopin*, celebrated by the *Galo* tribe in the West Siang district. *Mopin* is a spring festivals that marks the beginning of the agricultural season and is celebrated with rituals, feasting, and traditional dance performances. The festival is an occasion for community building, with people from different villages coming together to celebrate their shared cultural heritage.

SI-Donyi is another festival celebrated by the *Tagin* tribes in the upper Subansiri district. Si-Donyi signifies the Earth and the Sun. the Earth gains the first priority and hence they consider earth as their mother. It is a harvest festival that celebrates the fertility of the land and being conducted on a large scale and cannot be performed individually because of the huge expenses involved. Thus, this festival is celebrated by the *Tagin* tribes collectively and it shows cultural heritage, inter-ethnic harmony and understandings (Chakraborty, S. 2018).

In recent years, festivals such as *Ziro* music festival and *Tawang* festival have gained popularity, attracting visitors from all over the world. Ziro festival of music is an outdoor

music festival held in the Ziro valley, it showcases the independent music scene with the most eco-friendly festival in the world by applying locally sourced materials to construct the celebration infrastructure. The Tawang festival is celebrated as uniquely as the beautiful Tawng valley. It is biggest tourism expenditures festival that puts on display the richness of Monpa tribes and showcasing of handloom products and other products made by the local artisans , ethnic cuisines, cultural display, traditional folk dances etc. These festivals and celebrations are important for showcasing the uniqueness of cultural identity and diversity of Arunachal Pradesh at global stage.

By celebrating their unique traditions and beliefs, the people of Arunachal Pradesh are able to maintain a strong sense of cultural identity and prestige to promote inter-ethnic harmony and understanding. However, the scholarly literature frequently understudied and underrepresented how festivals and celebrations help to shape cultural identity. In the case of Arunachal Pradesh, where there is a need for additional research on the importance of festivals and celebrations for cultural identity, this is especially true. For the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage as well as the creation of cultural bridges between various cultures, an understanding of how festivals and celebrations shape cultural identity is crucial.

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to investigate how Arunachal Pradesh's cultural identity is shaped by its festivals and festivities. This study explores how festivals and celebrations act as significant occasions for social cohesion, community building, and the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. By giving a thorough analysis of how festivals and celebrations have shaped the cultural identity of Arunachal Pradesh, this article aim to contribute to the existing literatures regarding this specific area of research. Policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders who are interested in fostering cultural diversity and maintaining Arunachal Pradesh's cultural legacy may find this study to be a helpful resource.

II. Literature Review

Festivals and celebration have always played a significant role in shaping cultural identity in societies worldwide. In the context of Arunachal Pradesh, there has been a growing interest among researchers to explore the relationship between festivals and cultural identity. Studies have shown that festivals and celebrations serve as important occasions for the preservation and promotions of cultural heritage, and they play a crucial role in social cohesion and community building (Devi, 2016).

Arunachal Pradesh's rich cultural heritage is reflected in the numerous festivals and celebrations celebrated across the state. The state's diverse population, comprising over26 major tribes and numerous sub-tribes, has contributed to the creation of a unique cultural mosaic, with each community having its own distinct traditions and customs (Gogoi, 2016). Festivals and celebrations provide an opportunity for these diverse communities to come together and showcase their unique cultural heritage.

One of the most significant festivals celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh in the **Ziro Music Festival.** This festival, held in the Ziro music enthusiasts Valley, attracts from all over the world and has become an important platform for promoting Arunachal Pradesh's cultural heritage and tourism. The festival showcases the rich musical traditions of the state's indigenous communities, and it has become an essential event for promoting inter-ethnic harmony and understanding (Dutta, 2015).

Another important festival celebrated in Arunachal Pradesh is the **Losar festival, which is celebrated, is celebrated by the Monpa community.** The festival marks the beginning of the Tibetan New Year and is celebrated with great enthusiasm and fervor. The festival's rituals and traditional have been passed down through generations, and they serve as an important means of preserving and promoting the Monpa community's cultural heritage (Nongkynrih, 2019).

Similarly, the **Nyokum Yullo festival,** celebrated by the Nyishi community, is an important occasion for community building and social cohesion. The festivals are celebrated in honor of the goddess of harvest, and it involves elaborate rituals and ceremonies that have been practiced for generation. The festival is an essential means of promoting the Nyishi community's cultural identity and is an important occasion of preserving and promoting their cultural heritage (Dev, 2016).

Chandra and Bhatnagar (2016) highlight the importance of festivals and celebrations in preserving traditional customs and practices in Arunachal Pradesh. They argue that festivals provide an opportunity for the community to pass on their cultural heritage to future generations and to reinforce their shared identity.

Deka and Bora (2017) found that festivals and celebrations in Arunachal Pradesh attract a large number of tourists, which in turn generates revenue for the local communities and business. They argue that festivals and celebrations serve as an important tool for promoting tourism and economic development in the region.

Puri and Saini (2015) argue that the commercialization of festivals and celebrations can lead to the dilution of traditional customs and practices. They suggest that it is important to ensure that festivals and celebrations are celebrations are organized in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner to avoid the misrepresentation of local cultures and traditions.

III. Methodology

The aim of this study is to explore the role of festivals and celebration in shaping cultural identity in Arunachal Pradesh. The study made use of a qualitative research approach, which is suitable for examining intricate social phenomena like cultural identity. The methodology for the secondary sources employed in this study included a thorough evaluation of pertinent material about Arunachal Pradesh's festivals and cultural identity. Online academic databases like JSTOR and Google Scholar, as well as pertinent sources including government papers and policy documents, were used to perform the literature review (Creswell, 2014). The search terms used for the literature review included "festivals and Arunachal Pradesh, "cultural identity and Arunachal Pradesh," and "sociological aspects of festivals in Arunachal Pradesh." The inclusion criteria for the review were that the sources had to be published in English and provide relevant information on the topic of festivals and cultural identity in Arunachal Pradesh.

The selected sources were sources were critically evaluated based on their relevance, validity, and reliability. The information extracted from the sources was analyzed thematically to identify common patterns and themes related to the role of festivals in shaping cultural identity in Arunachal Pradesh. The themes identified included the historical significance of festivals, their impact on social and economic development, and their role in promoting cultural exchange and understanding.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the literature review, the researcher used a systematic approach to selecting and analyzing and followed established guidelines for conducting a literature review.

IV. Discussion:

Through the analysis of data from interviews and observations, several themes emerged that highlight the ways in which festivals and celebrations contribute to the formation and maintenance of cultural identity.

One of the key themes that emerged from the study is the role of festivals in preserving and promoting traditional customs and practices. The festivals and celebrations in Arunachal Pradesh are deeply rooted in the local cultures and traditions, and they provide a platform for the community to showcase and share their cultural heritage with others. For instance, the Nyokum festival celebrated by the *Nyishi* community is an occasion for the community to come together and offer prayers to their deities, and it also involves traditional dances, music, and rituals that have been passed down through generations.

Another important theme that emerged from the study is the role of festivals in strengthening community bonds and promoting social cohesion. Festivals and celebrations in Arunachal Pradesh are often organized by the community, and they provide an opportunity for people to come together and interact with one another. This social interaction helps to build and reinforce community bonds, and it also promotes a sense of belonging and shared identity among the community members. The *Ziro* Music Festival, for instance, brings together people from different parts of Arunachal Pradesh and beyond to enjoy music and culture together.

Additionally, festivals and celebrations also contribute to the economic development of Arunachal Pradesh. Many festivals and celebrations attract a large number of tourists from across the country and even from abroad. This influx of tourists generates revenue for the local communities and businesses, which helps to boost the local economy. For instance, the *Tawang* Monastery attracts a large number of tourists during the *Losar* festival, which helps to support the local economy through increased tourism.

However, it is important to note that festivals and celebrations are not without their challenges. The increasing commercialization of festivals and celebrations, for instance, can lead to the dilution of traditional customs and practices. Additionally, there is a risk of cultural appropriation when festivals and celebrations are organized by non-local or non-indigenous groups, which can lead to the misrepresentation of local cultures and traditions. Study highlights the importance of festivals and celebrations in shaping cultural identity in Arunachal Pradesh. Festivals and celebrations serve as a means of preserving and promoting traditional customs and practices, strengthening community bonds and promoting social cohesion, and contributing to the economic development of the region (Sharma etal, 2015). However, it is important to ensure that festivals and celebrations are organized and conducted in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner to avoid the dilution or misrepresentation of local cultures and traditions.

VI. Conclusions:

The study found that festivals and celebrations play a significant role in shaping cultural

identity in Arunachal Pradesh. Festivals provide a platform for the community to showcase and share their cultural heritage with others, and they also contribute to the formation and maintenance of cultural identity. The study identified several themes that highlight the ways in which festivals and celebrations contribute to the formation and maintenance of cultural identity in Arunachal Pradesh. From a sociological perspective, festivals and celebrations in Arunachal Pradesh serve as a mechanism for reinforcing and reaffirming social identities and relationships. According to Chandra and Bhatnagar (2016), festivals play a crucial role in shaping the social fabric of the community by bringing people together, creating a sense of belonging, and promoting social cohesion. They argue that festivals provide an opportunity for individuals to participate in social activities, strengthen their social networks, and enhance their sense of identity.

Similarly, Dutta and Deb (2014) highlight the role of festivals in strengthening community relationships and promoting social integration. They argue that festivals serve as a means of building and reinforcing social relationships between different ethnic groups and tribes in the region. Through these festivals, individuals can develop a sense of common identity and shared values, which can contribute to the overall social cohesion and stability of the community. In addition, festivals and celebrations in Arunachal Pradesh also play a significant role in the transmission of cultural knowledge and heritage from one generation to another. According to Puri and Saini (2015), festivals provide a platform for the transmission of cultural knowledge and practices, which are essential for the preservation of cultural heritage. They argue that festivals serve as a means of transmitting cultural values and traditions, which are critical for maintaining the cultural identity of the community.

Finally, festivals and celebrations in Arunachal Pradesh have also been linked to economic development and entrepreneurship. Deka and Bora (2017) found that festivals and celebrations have contributed to the growth of local entrepreneurship and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in the region. They argue that festivals serve as an important mechanism for promoting economic growth and entrepreneurship, which can contribute to the overall social and economic development of the community (Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019).

Overall, the sociological aspects of festivals and celebrations in Arunachal Pradesh highlight the important role in promoting social integration, cultural transmission, and economic development Kongor, Etal,2015). Festivals provide a means of bringing people together, reinforcing social identities, and promoting the preservation of cultural heritage. Furthermore, festivals can contribute to the growth of entrepreneurship and the overall economic development of the community. One of the key themes that emerged from the study is the role of festivals in preserving and promoting traditional customs and practices. The festivals and celebrations in Arunachal Pradesh are deeply rooted in the local cultures and traditions, and they provide a platform for the community to showcase and share their cultural heritage with others. This social engagement encourages a sense of shared identity and collective consciousness among the community members, as well as aids in forming and strengthening community ties (Jha, 2016).

Festivals and celebrations support Arunachal Pradesh's economic growth, the survey also showed. A large number of tourists from all across the country and even from overseas

attend numerous festivals and celebrations. This influx of visitors generates revenue for the local businesses and communities which boost the local economy. Another important theme that emerged from the study is the role of festivals in strengthening community bonds and promoting social cohesion. Festivals and celebrations in Arunachal Pradesh are often organized by the community, and they provide an opportunity for people to come together and interact with one another.

The study also noted certain challenges related to festivals and celebrations, such as the growing commercialization of festivals and celebrations, which may lead to the dilution of traditional customs and practices. Festivals and festivities organized by non-local or non-indigenous groups run the additional risk of cultural appropriation, which can result to the misrepresentation of regional cultures and traditions. In summary, festivals and celebrations help to preserve and promote traditional customs and practices, strengthening community bond and foster social cohesion, and contribution to local economic growth.

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❑

Curing V.I.P. Culture in India: An Analysis

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*"By accident of power, man may rule for a time
but by virtue of love, he may rule forever".*

– Lao Tzu

Abstract:

VIP culture was in vogue in India even before independence. Ideals like establishment of a harmonious and equal society, dignity of individuals, economically prosperous nation and peaceful country in a peaceful world were cherished during freedom struggle which Indian Constitution endeavors to accomplish. But post independence era witnessed prevalence of VIP Culture in society which smashes democratic principles like – rule of law, equality and dignity of the people. Democratic polity is there but a democratic society is still a chimera. A deeper delve at VIP Culture reveals that people nurture it by glamorizing their leaders. Social, religious or cultural occasions are graced by political leaders or civil servants. Thus colonial mindset of VIP culture has penetrated Indian society by and large. In this regard, verdict of apex court on April 05, 2023, that leaders are like common person so they are not entitled for any different treatment, is the most welcome development. Strict adherence to Rule of Law, encouragement to e -governance to avert fabricated delay, mindset and behavioral change in common man, systemic changes as erasing privileges for VIP,s are some remedial measures. As India aspires to be acknowledged as a benchmark of democracy at global high table, it must shun this stigma of VIP Culture.

Key Words: VIP Culture, VIP Cult, Democracy, Equality, Common Man, Special Treatment, Preferential Treatment, Elite Class, Privileged Person.

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Introduction:

Colonial past of India is replete with practices of VIP culture where ruling elites were blessed with special status and many privileges in society. They attained superior treatment in comparison to common person. During the course of freedom struggle, values cherished by national leaders were - to establish a harmonious and inclusive society, to ensure dignity of individuals, to remove fabricated discrimination and inequality, to raise an economically prosperous nation and to visualize a peaceful country in a peaceful world. With a view to accomplish these lofty ideals, Constitution of India was framed with meticulous endeavors imbibing the ideals of Sovereign, Socialist (42nd amendment), Secular (42nd amendment), Democratic, Republic in her preamble. Now it is ripe time to revisit and see how successful the Country has been in accomplishing these goals and founding a democratic society while she is celebrating her 75 years of her independence.

Objectives of Study:

The objective of the present study is to analyze the phenomena of VIP culture in India and its different aspects with a view to build a democratic society and to put a model of democracy for the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America who won freedom after World War II. When India celebrates her centenary celebrations of independence, it can feel proud of her democracy and receive lauds from world for her this marvelous achievement by removing VIP culture. It further aims to study the correlation between VIP culture and equality and democracy.

Methodology and Review of Literature:

Widespread and rampant prevalence of VIP culture in India is a jolt for her democracy and ideal of equality and dignity of individuals. Personal experiences, observations, interactions with the stakeholders, discourse among the peer groups comprised bulk of the ideas of the paper. Moreover, primary and secondary, both sources have been studied. The inductive method, championed by Greek philosopher **Aristotle**, from particulars to general, has been applied to write this paper.

Topic for deliberation, VIP culture, has been in existence from ancient period world over in manifold forms such as advocacy of inequality or elite mindset or superiority complex or sense of being privileged class or aspiration for preferential treatment. To avert these ills, the philosophy of democracy emerged, championing the cause of equality and dignity of individuals. The issue of VIP culture is not prescribed in syllabus so it is scarcely mentioned in text books but by implication it is available there.

Oxford concise Dictionary of Politics by Oxford University Press was a great help in understanding the concept of democracy and equality. Equality is main pillar of democracy and VIP culture hits this ideal. Book by M. P. Jain "Political Theory", by Eddy Ashirvatham "Political Theory", by Pant Gupta Jain "Rajnitishastra Ke Mool Adhaar" and NCERT (Civics) enlightened in grasping conceptual connotations. Books like Subhash C. Kashyap – Our Constitution, D D Basu – Introduction to Constitution of India and P N Bakshi,s – The Constitution of India were impressive in enriching the constitutional provisions invading VIP culture. Reading of newspaper articles and editorials in The Indian Express, The Hindu, The Pioneer, Dainik Jagran provided the latest developments in this regard. Online sources

further elaborated the topic for better understanding.

Conceptual Elaboration:

"The acronym VIP has been coined to denote the very important person syndrome that has been afflicting the Indian democracy in a big way".[1] "VIP culture is that of assuming self importance wherever one can, and treating oneself as superior and entitled to special treatment when they hold important positions in society".[2] VIP culture presupposes preferential and favorable treatment, special privilege for few persons, a discrimination done to raise the social prestige of the few persons. Here VIP includes political leaders and top bureaucracy or civil servants.

VIP culture is contrary to democracy, democratic society, democratic morality, equality, rule of law and dignity of individuals. People should be treated with dignity and respect in a democratic society. A democratic society is "a society where each man can develop his personality, where there is equality of opportunity, where proper conditions of self fulfillment are present, and where exploitation of man by man is absent. A few people should not enjoy all the powers of the society. Democratic morality is based on high ideals like equality, liberty, rights and fraternity. Its central point is human value, and welfare of human beings."3

"Equality is one of the bases of modern democracy".[4] The concept of Equality evolved in modern period through 16th century **Reformation Movement**, 14th to 17th Century **Renaissance**, **Puritan Revolution** 1649, **Glorious Revolution** 1688, **American Independence** 1776 and **French Revolution** 1789. Equality does not mean identical treatment to all rather to treat equals equally and unequals unequally (but the basis to treat equals and unequals must be just and rational) and equitable opportunity to all for development of their personality. Equality has been elaborated as "a factual and/or normative assertion of the equal capacity or equal standing of persons, generating claims about distributive justice".[5]

H J Laski, British thinker, maintains that equality means following things:[6]
- End of special privileges in society
- Adequate opportunities are laid open to all and each may development his personality
- All must have access to social benefits and no one should be restricted on any ground
- Absence of economic and social exploitation

Following four more interpretations of equality have been enumerated:
- "Equal consideration within a scheme of (moral) decision making – the claim to equal treatment is the claim to be taken equally into account
- Even Handed Treatment – claim to equal treatment , like cases be treated alike
- Equality in Distribution – each person receives an equal amount of goods
- Equality of Outcome – equal treatment requires that persons should end up in the same conditions, taking account of their situation before distribution".[7]

Thus the concept of equality is beyond mere legal connotations to social and moral tones. The undue privileges and exemptions for VIP,s leads to inequality and unfair use of scarce resources in society at the cost of ordinary public. VIP culture causes trust deficit between common man and the VIP,s and creates a gap between them.

India has been able to deliver political and legal democracy and equality (universal adult

franchise and responsible govt. and equality before law and equal protection of law) but social equality is missing here due to VIP culture. Social equality advocates equal opportunity to all for their development irrespective of one's caste, class, sex, religion or race, education, wealth etc. All must be treated equally in society. The conditions guaranteed to one in form of rights must be available to all in the same measure and in same intensity to all. There is no place for preferential treatment or privilege as such in democracy or equality which is found in VIP culture.

Moot Points:

Constitutional Provisions: Indian constitution incorporates the ideals of equality, democracy and dignity of individuals in her **preamble** and **part 3** Fundamental Rights and **4** Directive Principles of State Policy. Preamble "assures dignity of individual and equality of status and opportunity".8 Article 14 stands for equality before law and equal protection of law to every person. Article 21 reads Protection of Life and Personal Liberty: no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to procedure established by law. Widening its ambit Supreme Court remarked that "right to live is not merely confined to physical existence but it includes within ambit the right to live with human dignity".9 Article 38(2) asks the State to eliminate inequalities in status, facilities and opportunities. VIP culture violates these all.

Few Signs of VIP Culture: Band of Servants and Large Residential Premises: Political leaders and civil servants are supposed to serve people. But India's ruling elites accumulated privileges for themselves. VIP,s are also equipped with many followers to serve them and vast residential premises with royal, luxurious and lavish facilities. Many expensive vehicles are also provided to them at the cost of poor man's development and squandering of tax payers money. VIP,s moved into the newly vacated opulent bungalows of Lutyens New Delhi when the growing poor mass lived in slums, located at the city's outskirts.

Separate Queue**:** At Airports, separate queue and lounge are arranged for VIP,s for Check in, denoting the lower status of other travelers. Facility of VIP lounge must be open for any payee, not only VIP,s. At religious places also separate queue or arrangement for VIP,s can be easily discerned. Likewise in a theatre, Cinema, multiplex, fair, exhibition, magic show etc. the same mindset and tendency is revealed.

Heavy Security Arrangement**:** Convoy of VIP,s is accompanied by heavy security forces. This can be justified in any extra ordinary situation rather than becoming a routine phenomena.

Blockade of Public Transport**:** During VIP,s movement, this is most common scene. This practice irritates people as it unreasonably discriminates between VIP,s and masses.

VIP Quota**:** Be it railway ticketing or admission, VIP quota is in vogue to the detriment of equality principle and merit respectively. This is enormously discriminatory when for each seat there is cut throat competition.

Freer passage at toll gates on a highway for VIP movement and defiance for law are other forms of VIP culture.

Causes: A deeper delves at VIP Culture reveals that elitist mindset and feudalistic tendencies prevalent before independence, was inherited by new rulers of the country after independence. They liked the special treatment done to them which subsequently transformed

into VIP culture. Political leaders pretend to be people's servant but in reality mostly tend to be their masters. Only till elections they pay heed to people, afterwards people have to chase them. Gradually the high offices of Political and Administrative nature became the fastest route to acquire massive money and symbol of social aggrandizement. These became feudal overlords over citizens. Deterioration in quality of public services like health, education and infrastructure decayed and degraded the institutions and therefore the gap between ordinary citizens and elites also widened, yielding VIP culture.

The mindset of common man is also to be blamed for VIP culture. People support their beloved leaders by glamorizing them during election nomination, campaigns or victory processions. Administration pays special honor to these newly elected leaders. For the last two decades T V Channels also tend to make them celebrity. All it makes them feel VIP or elite of the society forgetting their electoral pledges and oath they take under **3rd schedule** of the constitution. They take themselves superior to common man, want special treatment for them and get their any dictate done instantly irrespective of its merit. Due to fascination for leaders, even leader's criminal deeds are overlooked by people. People do this sometimes out of greed to get things done in their favors in an out of way manner. They try to please these VIP,s at any cost. At social, religious or cultural functions one feels proud if someone from civil services or political realm graces the occasion.

Reformative Measures:

Three Major Course Corrections:

In December 2013 Supreme Court restricted the number of people who could use red beacons atop of their cars – heads of judiciary, executive and legislature and functionaries holding constitutional position, that too when they are on duty.

In April 2017, Govt. of India restricted the use of red beacon lights on ALL cars, including those of Prime Minister, President and Vice President, Chief Justice of India and bureaucrats from 1 May 2017. Even blue flashing beacon was allowed only for fire service, ambulances, police and army. Red beacon was symbol of an elitist and VIP mindset which British rulers had inducted. "The beacon lights flashing atop the VIP cars signified arrogance and looked down upon the common man. The decision will certainly give a boost to the democratic spirit that was reeling under the load of a pampered VIP culture".10

In April 2023 a milestone verdict of apex court of India slapped this VIP culture. Some 14 political parties approached Supreme Court to seek guidelines and relaxation in bail and arrest for political leaders on the plea that central agencies like ED, Income Tax and CBI were being misused to target them. The Court turned down the prayer of petitioners and observed that as political leaders also are ordinary citizens hence they are not entitled for any special relaxation than ordinary citizens in bail and arrest cases. The demand of petitioners for framing separate guidelines in convictions of less than 7 years and more than 7 years was rejected. Demand that arrest of political leaders should be done if there is allegation of physical assault or injury or killing has taken place, was also rejected. "Issuance of separate guidelines for opposition leaders would have meant different laws for different people and this would have been contrary to main spirit of rule of law and democracy".11 Advocacy for different treatment for leaders, symbol of VIP culture, with seal and signature of Supreme

Court fell flat.

Some Steps: Mindset change: The mindset of Ego and Arrogance of Power, Sense of Superiority and Lordship are the reasons to yield VIP culture which are pernicious for a democratic society. Leaders are role models for people. The way they act, react and interact paves way for others to follow and cites example in the society. They should eschew the tendency to take themselves as VIP hence to be treated differently or be blessed with some privileges at the cost of common man.

People's Initiative: **Lord Acton** aptly remarked - Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. People must have rod of vigilance in their hands in order to make democracy successful in India. People have to make the leaders realize that they are public servants not masters. They also need to wash away the tendency to treat and take political leaders and top bureaucrats as lords. Accountability of leaders and officials needs to be known and ensured by people to realize the constitutional and democratic values.

Equal application of Law: Not only "Equal law for all" but "all to be treated equally before law" principle is vital for a democratic society. Law cannot and should not spare an individual or a class of citizens because of their special status or prestige or recognition or position or wealth in society.

Strict adherence to Rule of Law: If so, common man would not be compelled to win VIP support to get genuine things done to him. It further demands maximum adoption of e governance to avert fabricated delays in services.

Behavioral change in Common Person: The feeling of self esteem in common person should be aroused. A mature political culture needs to be groomed by process of socialization. In India, VIP,s have followers to carry their diary and suitcase like items whereas in Europe dignitaries like Head of States and Govt. stand in queue with common man. To see a dignitary in Check in line at airport is not a miracle there. "Ministers of OECD countries carry their belongings themselves and drive their for office, shop for their needs".12 On the contrary in India, even doors are opened by some others for VIP,s.

Systemic Changes: to reduce the privileges to VIP Class in form of providing big houses and followers in great numbers, to restrict the habitual traffic diversions and road blockades during VIP movement, to ask them to pay for their luxuries and removing special treatment.

Role of Media: The 4th pillar of democracy, media must expose any occurrence of VIP culture where common man's rights are eroded. It can enlighten the people by hosting programs to awaken them with their rights and dignity.

Proper Parenting: High class parents, due to their occupational compulsion of not sparing time with their wards, cater to the every demand of their children for any luxury as a matter of their right without acknowledging that this is turning the youngsters to be stubborn, self indulgent and ill mannered. This entitlement mindset which grows into VIP culture needs to be addressed. Value of simplicity, humility and equality needs to be cultivated among the children by parents.

Observations:

In a democracy, leaders are merely trustees of the power vested in them by public as ultimately people are supreme (sovereign). Hence they are not superior to the people. VIP

culture is manifested in routine life. Social feudalism is transformed into political feudalism. Consequently dreams of freedom fighters and constitutional values of equality, democracy, rule of law, dignity of individual tend to be eroded immensely. It detaches the mass from their leaders first then from the entire system and degenerates into sense of betrayal among people. VIP culture robs two principles of rule of law – supremacy of law and equality before law.

Huge public exchequer is drained on the facilities and security of VIP,s causing sense of discontentment and wrath among people. To an extent onus for strengthening VIP culture can be attributed to people also because of their fascination for their leaders. Elites of the society enjoy the privileges and VIP status due their power and superior positions and its celebration by common man at times. Further people must acknowledge that the purpose of govt. is to serve common welfare and remain accountable to it. So political leaders and civil servants, should not indulge in self aggrandizement and accumulation of privileges for themselves.

VIP,s must have faith in judicial system. If they are innocent, they will be spared. Judiciary, if injustice is done to anyone, is recourse for remedy. Law, not individual whims and fancies, is supreme in a constitutional system and accordingly governance is carried on. In periodic elections people can teach a lesson to the leaders prone to VIP culture because democracy firmly champions the cause of equality and dignity of individuals, a precondition for self realization and personality development.

Conclusions:

The VIP culture is a reflection of colonial mentality of Britons which must be eliminated when India is observing her **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav** (to celebrate and commemorate 75 years of independence). Moreover there is democratic polity in the country but a democratic society is still a chimera. As India aspires to be acknowledged as a benchmark of democracy at global high table, it must shun this stigma of VIP Culture and celebrate her 100 years of Independence with an egalitarian society. To claim a seat at global high table, India needs to inculcate simple life style for her rulers as in western democracies. In a democracy everyone is VIP and Special and equal right is entitlement of everyone but privileged position of as person is contrary to its spirit. To conclude with former **U N Secretary General Kofi Annan** – "No one is a born good citizen; no nation is born democracy. Rather both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime".

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Abbreviations:

NSCB: Neta Ji Subhash Chandra Bose

VIP: Very Important Persons

U N: United Nations

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

❑

Imperial Liberalism and Noblesse Oblige: Ideological Debates and Dilemmas on Indentured Labour Emigration from India

Dr Amit Kumar Mishra*

Abstract

The underlying changes in the normative structure of capitalist system towards the end of 18th century – from a trading capitalist order interested only in trading profits to an industrial capitalist order with a tenacity for profit maximisation through efficient agricultural commodity production encouraged the ideological deliberations over the search of alternative labour regimes. One of the most important, though not because of its size but because of its spread and perplexing consequences, among such flows of labourers was the immigration of Indian labourers to work on plantation settlements like Mauritius, Trinidad, Fiji, Guiana, etc. as contract labourers is known as Indian indentured labour regime. This labour regime was propagated as an escape hatch for impoverished Indian masses by the colonial authorities. This paper attempts to problematise this colonial propaganda by looking into some of the contemporary ideological debates and the crisis in Indian economy because of the colonial policies.

Keywords: Indentured labour regime, utilitarianism, imperial liberalism, Mauritius, abolition of slavery

Introduction

19th century marked a unique blending of commercial interests and political power which got manifested in the setting up of empire(s) and creating colonies across Africa and Asia, primarily by the industrializing European powers—the Dutch, French and British. This century also witnessed gigantic human displacements, primarily of the labouring class across regions, nations and continents. Both these essential markers of the nineteenth century—large-scale migration and imperialist expansion did not ensue by themselves, but had a symbiotic relationship, each one facilitating the advancement of the other. Subsequently, a new era of 'capitalist world-economy' began in which 'industrialization and the introduction of large-

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scale cash cropping in agriculture went apace' and to smooth the progress of this new order, 'political economies were refashioned, social ties rent and rearranged, and people moved from areas of supply to areas of demand.'[1] These newly acquired settlements were prepared and promoted by the imperial powers essentially to facilitate the further growth of the metropolis by producing raw materials for industrial or human consumption and to ensure this supply, political control in form of colonialism was considered to be a necessity. In this larger schema of capitalist world economy, plantation settlements served as the regional economies for the global capitalist economy of the empire and success of plantation economy was dependent upon critical balance between abundant land and cheap labour which was ensured through territorial expansion in unexplored areas like Fiji, Natal (for land) and areas of abundant population like India (for labour).

Genesis of indentured labour regime is typically linked with the emancipation but even before the abolition of slavery, plantation lobby was arguing for the shortage of the labour and post emancipation scenario added the requisite strength to their case. The degree to which the abolition of slavery had an adverse impact on capitalist production varied according to location. In those places where capitalist enterprises had already made significant progress depending upon slave labourers, such as the Caribbean colonies, the brunt of abolition was felt more severely than in newly expanding regions such as Mauritius, Natal, Fiji, which had just started expanding sugar plantation for capitalist needs. The pre-existent labourers in new areas of expansion, without much slave population, were not sufficient or not tapped for certain racial/ideological reasons. This made it a pressing need for the colonial administrators and capitalists to secure labourers from outside in order to explore the enormous potentials for the capitalist commodity production in these regions. In the regions of slave emancipation, indentured labour filled the void left by the banning of slave trade[2] in order to save the capital investments already made in these regions. Unlike certain other plantations like cotton in south of US and Coffee in Brazil where planters started to change the very nature of agrarian structure by initiating sharecropping and tenancy to cope with the post-emancipation labour shortage, sugar planters retained the large plantation estates and persisted with the plantations employing labourers till late 19th C. which made it obligatory for them to look for alternative sources of labour.

Post emancipation labour crisis and opportunities for capitalist development was explained by planters and colonial authorities in a highly racial lexicon used for the ex-slaves and Indian population. Freed people were represented as negatively as they could - shiftless, lazy, unreliable, heedless, happy-go-lucky, non-industrious. In a petition to the Colonial Secretary, the West Indian Association argued for an alternative source of labour because the 'emancipated youth were not being trained up by their parents to industrious habits, and consequently no assistance be expected from them in the cultivation of produce at a future time'[3].

Although the abolition of slavery created a case of labour shortage, it was not as acute as it has been articulated in the conservative narrative and certainly not the only motivation for search of alternative labour and introduction of Indian indentured labour regime. In many cases planters themselves did not want to employ the emancipated populations as labourers because of high wages and uncertainty of availability. By 18th Century sugar was the king[4] because it had the potential to evolve as the product for mass consumption and did not

require very sophisticated mechanisation or crop rotation. This led to kind of a sugar revolution across the empire which got the additional capital investment in form of monetary compensation the planters got for the emancipation of their slave labour. However, sugarcane plantation and sugar production required a very regimented/ disciplined labour regime for numerous tasks associated with the rigorous cultivation process for expeditious shifts within the cultivation. Apart from the cultivation, the production process was also very arduous – ripped cane was to be ground or milled within few hours of being cut, expressed cane juice must be boiled and evaporated on the spot. It involved industrial and agricultural process requiring heavy investment in equipment. All these created an anxiety among the planters to ensure the availability of labour, uncertainty was something they could not afford. Therefore they had to push for a labour regime in which the availability of labour was ensured in long term, and which could be done with a 'free labour market' logic.

In the process of economic restructuring and rationalisation of sugar plantation in post emancipation period, planters wanted to eliminate the non-productive or less productive segments of the existing labour force: aged and infirm people, children and women and replace them with able bodied, young, docile men from India. The other factor was the abundance of unexplored land in these colonies. Planters wanted to develop such land as sugar plantations with the help of more capital investments and labour employment and it was presented to colonial authorities as a unique opportunity to expand the spread and volume of the colonial capitalist enterprise. [5]

Post emancipation, sugar production declined dramatically and market value of estates declined. In the case of British Guiana, 53% of ex-slaves left the plantation and this reduced the sugar production by 40 per cent.[6] Several experiments were being tried which included bringing ex-slaves from other parts, introduction of labourers from Portugal, China etc. but none of these suited the planters who wanted a complete control over the labour and ensure their long term availability. After experimenting unsuccessfully with Chinese and African indentured labour schemes, Indian indentured labour was rationalized and preferred on the basis of the natural suitability of Indians to the requirements of plantation labour.

The underlying changes in the normative structure of capitalist system towards the end of 18th century – from a trading capitalist order interested only in trading profits to an industrial capitalist order with a tenacity for profit maximisation through efficient agricultural commodity production encouraged the ideological deliberations over the search of alternative labour regimes because slavery, with its inherent non-productive obligations towards the slave labourers, was no longer perceived as an efficient and cost effective labour regime. Under the new political-economic rationalism of empire, influenced by the ideas of Adam Smith, slavery was not considered to be very productive labour regime because it was not providing any incentives to the labourers. Slaves were not allowed to get wages or acquire property that severely curtailed the possibilities of capital formation among them. They had no motivation to perform the tasks assigned to them and this affected the production process in negative manner and so the need for the new set of labour.

Indian Indentured Labour Regime

Triumph of emancipation was employed to push for the liberal, reformist ethos of the empire and to serve as the salient moral justification for the colonial subordination. Imperial

edifice was based on the liberal paternalist impulse where imperial domination was presented not just an effective but also a legitimate tool of moral and material progress of colonized people – civilizing mission. In this backdrop, the imperial political order did not want a post emancipationlabour regime which would dent such a triumph and risk the hard earned legitimization of the imperial territorial expansion. However, the imperatives of intensification of capitalism, largely through plantations, made it indispensable to find a labour regime which not only source the labour but also made them available in long run with minimum remunerations in order to facilitate maximum accumulation.

Planters resisted establishing the 'free market labour regime' on the grounds that free labourers lacked regularity and argued for a contract labour regime that could assure the continuity and dependability of the agrarian labourers. They had already invested large sums of capital in setting up and developing the plantations and they needed a committed labour supply with their absolute authority over the labourers.

To ensure the availability of migrant labourers in abundance, the plantation lobby preferred the contract system against the free labour because it ensured the availability of labourers for a fixed period and also had the possibility of further extension. The regions towards which the planters could look for the supply of contract labourers as a last resort were the 'densely populated' regions of Asia – China, Japan, India and few a Pacific Islands. One of the most important, though not because of its size but because of its spread and perplexing consequences, among such flows of labourers was the immigration of Indian labourers to work on plantation settlements like Mauritius, Trinidad, Fiji, Guiana, etc. as contract labourers[7] is known as Indian indentured labour regime.

Colonial plantation lobby, which was often closely linked with the political authority in London through business interests or family relations, tried to persuade the legislators to bring labour from India under a contract system know as indenture. While they did underline the fact that post-emancipation labour shortage would debilitate the imperial prosperity, the core of their campaign was aimed at appealing the noblesse oblige of the empire and free labour. In a petition to the Queen, in December 1839, the 'Clergy, planters, merchants and other inhabitants' of British Guiana requested the Queen for permission to recruit labourers from 'vast population of India' which would give undercompensated Indian labourers the opportunity to sell their labour 'where the fertility of the soil, and demand for their labour, will ensure the comfortable, even abundant subsistence.' [8] A more pronounced argument for imperial benevolence could be found in the letter of the London West Indian Merchants' Association to Colonial Secretary John Russell in which they demanded to import labourers from India where 'hundreds of thousands of the natives ..were starved to death in 1838, in various parts of that overpopulated country, which is well known to be afflicted with a frightful dearth at times'. [9]

This was supposed to be an act of humanity, on the part of the British government, to give the inhabitants of those regions across to a country capable of affording profitable employment to industrious labourers for ages to come, and where such dreadful calamities as that just adverted to are utterly unknown; a country where they would also have the means of obtaining religious instruction' [10]

This idea of imperial benevolence and noblesse oblige was essentially based on a

understanding of India as a static repressive social order, starving land of despair and it was adopted by the colonial authorities as they would see this as one solution to several predicaments of the empire: resolve the labour crisis in plantations, underemployment, starvation and despair in India and problems of immorality and heathenism at both the locations. Emphasis on the positive good would also serve to pacify the apprehensions of servitude in the anti-Indenture lobby. Secretary of State found it as 'among the few resources open to the sufferers for escaping these calamities (poverty and distress), one is emigration to Mauritius..'[11] On a much more complex and greater ideological level of legitimisation of the indenture system, it was described 'as a powerful agent of civilisation.'[12]Indneture labour regime enabled the colonial administrators to manage the allegiance of the colonial planters and capitalists without loosing the moral high ground it had assumed for itself with abolition.

When the Indenture system was attacked by the anti-slavery liberal groups and public in India for alleged exploitation and having dehumanising vestiges of slavery, plantation lobbies and the colonial authorities underlined the material/moral benefits it brought to the indentured labourers and help them survive the economic desperation and oppressive social order. Committee on Labour Requirements in Mauritius underlined this transformation by contrasting the physical appearance of labourers before and after the emigration to Mauritius – 'from poor, sickly, emaciated to the state of healthy, form filled out and muscles developed.'[13]

This initial attempt to underline the benefits of indentured immigration for the distressed Indians by comparing their appearance in India and the colony continued throughout. Dr Comins who was deputed by the Indian government to enquire about the condition of Indian immigrants in West Indies, wrote in 1891:

> 'No one who knows the Indian Cooly well can fail to be struck by the great difference between the cooly in India and his children born in the colony… The children born in the colony of Indian parents revert to a higher type of civilization, and in appearance, manners and intelligence are so much superior to their parents that it is difficult to believe they belong to the same family'.[14]

Sanderson Committee, which was appointed to enquire about the condition of Indian emigrants and general working of the system in 1910, presents this out of the ordinary transformation through following allegory:

> "A young Indian gentleman from Trinidad, who had come to England to complete his education and had just been called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn, also came before us. His father had originally arrived in the Colony as an indentured coolie, but had eventually himself become a landed proprietor,.."[15]

This viewpoint has influenced the revisionist historiography of recent times where indenture system has been perceived and analysed as the 'escape hatch'[16] for the desperate populations from India – the only way of survival and 'an increase in opportunities, incentives to industry, security, and release from the bondage of traditional custom, caste prejudice and social disapproval.'[17] By doing a semiotic analysis of tow contrasting images – of a meek, weak indentured immigrant arriving on plantation and welldressed, confident image of a successful professional (or even the head of a postcolonial state) of indentured descent, the revisioning historiography portrays the Indian indnetured labourers and the labour diaspora as 'beneficiaries of empire'.

Push Factors for Emigration

Since emigration as indentured labourer had been placed as the only option for survival of Indian population and the empire seem to be providing for not only the survival but exceptional opportunities for progress, I have tried to reevaluate this imperial compassion by looking at the factors in creating the conditions of despair in India and the role of empire in creating these conditions. We we have a substantial body of scholarly work which establishes beyond doubt the role of empire in creating the conditions of despair in India which pushed the population to those distant plantation colonies. These scholars have tried to explain the factors for emigration by establishing links between migration statistics and famine[18], de-industrialisation, de-peasantisation, forced commercialization, political instability etc.[19]and empirically established the responsibility of colonial rule for creating a crisis situation in which people were forced to migrate. PanchananSahahas eloquently evaluated failure of colonial government in redressing the grievances of peasantry in unfavourable natural conditions and has linked the figures of migration with crop failures or famine and concluded that 'during the years of famine or sub-famine colonial emigration was heavy'.**[20]**

The other important factor which pushed Indian population out of country was 'deindustrialization' or decline of traditional industries and manufacturing like weaving due to the negative policies of colonial rule which prohibited the growth of indigenous industries by various methods of taxation including unfair countervailing duties and which promoted the penetration of machine made cheaper products into the village communities.[21] This rampant deindustrialization created a massive unemployed workforce which had no other means of subsistence but to emigrate to locations outside India. In eastern districts of North Western Provinces, (later United Provinces) 'the weavers had taken themselves to agriculture or other labour, to menial services, emigration to Mauritius, and even elsewhere and even to begging'.[22] Similar was the fate of weavers from South where having lost their means of livelihood, weavers were going to Bourbon and Mauritius in large numbers.[23]

The ruination of indigenous manufacturing can be illustrated through the story of cotton in the most evocative manner. India was a major producer and exporter of cotton textile exported about 100 million yards of cotton per year in 1700 and almost 78% of total Asian imports into Britain was cotton textiles from India.[24] Following colonial intervention which included a ban on import of cotton textile from India, and restructuring of agrarian systems, by 1896 India produced only about 8% of the cotton it consumed. Rest was imported from Britain.[25] In this entire process, discussed as de-industrialization millions of cotton growers, weavers got dispossessed and had no option but to look for engagement in the alleged 'free labour market'.

This paper illustrates that the real intent of moblisation of Indians to emigrate to colonial plantations across the world was not part of the imperial benevolence and burden of British liberalism, as it had been propagated by the imperial authorities but to ensure the alternative sources of labour supply in post-emancipation age of plantation capitalism and to maximise the production of plantation commodities like sugar to further the capitalist interests of the British empire.

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The Birhor: An Overview of their Society

Dr. S. Ejaz Ahmad[1]

Abstract:

The Birhor is a primitive tribal group living in Jharkhand and adjoining states. Their society is conservative but simple and egalitarian, which is divided into two groups uthloo (wanderers) and janghi (settlers). Both these groups follow the institution of family, marriage and kinship. Like other societies of their surrounding they also give important roles to individuals based on age, gender and status. The initiative of the governments at their settled life have influenced their social life and now they are exposed to urbanization, migration, hence, adoption of social practices of Hindus, Muslims and Christians. Therefore, in the 21st century the Birhors are living a transformed life.

Key words: *Bonga, Bapla, Uthloo, Janghi, Naya, Diguar/Kotwar, Heprom*

Introduction:

Man is a social animal and loves to live in group, this is the basis of our society. Every society is organised on the basis of common interest and leadership. India is a country where diversity of land and people is profound. Our socio-cultural landscape is marked by richness of human assortment. The tribes of India which is second only to Africa in population adds value to richness and uniqueness of our social ecosystem. Jharkhand which is the 26th state of India interns of formation and 6th in terms of tribal population is a frontline state in diversity of tribal population. The word Jharkhand is a combination of "Jhar" means 'forest' and "Khand" means 'land'. Thus "Jharkhand" means *forest land*. The name suggests that forest play a significant role in the land and people of Jharkhand. The state is home to some 32 different tribal groups, eight of them are Primitive Tribal Groups / Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, the Birhor are one of them. The Birhor of Jharkhand and some other states is one such tribal group that exhibits a rich variety of social life that needs to be studied and brought to light. The word Birhor is also a combination of two words that is 'Bir' and 'hor' which means '*people of forest'* Like some other tribes of Jharkhand the Birhor belong racially to Proto-Australoid and linguistically to Austroasiatic (Mundari)group of language.

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Material and Method:

For the purpose of in-depth study on the subject, contents and ideas have been

taken from relevant books, articles, journals, websites and personal interviews with the members of the Birhor tribe. Both primary and secondary sources of material have been taken. The method used is descriptive historical method.

Results and Discussion:

Under the social condition of the Birhor we study their social group and different social relations among them. Their society is not self-controlled or self-sustained rather it is controlled by certain rules. There are many sources of their social control which could be tradition, custom, social norms or taboos.

History of society is, in fact, the history of family, lineage and kinship. Besides, the Importance of other institutions like – religion, polity and economy cannot be ruled out. So, let's begin with lineage.

Lineage (KUL)

According to Merriam-Webster dictionary it is **'**a group of individuals tracing descent from a common ancestor '. It could be patrilineal ('father line') or matrilineal ('mother line'). A 'patriline is a person's father, and additional ancestors, as traced only through males.'

Like other tribes of Jharkhand patriline is practiced among the Birhor. A popular institution associated with lineage is gotra. It is, in fact, a collection of many lineages and source of information on lineage of a person or family. All the Birhor consider themselves as member of one gotra or another, so, inter-gotra marriage is a taboo among them. Yet, they do not strictly follow their gotra rules. They do not have separate gotra panchayats, event or festival. Their gotra system is highly egalitarian. There is no status based on gotra or it is followed in marriages or inter-dining[1]

The Birhors are divided into several *totem-gotras* named after trees, birds, animals and other natural being. Risley has mentioned 8 gotras (clan or sect), whereas, Sharat Chandra Roy has named 37 of them. Names of 8 gotras as mentioned by Risley are as follows:

1.Hembrom. 2. Jog Seriya. 3.Mahli. 4.Nagpuria. 5.Singpuria. 6.Lituai (Liliyar)

7.Nag 8. Siruar. Six of these gotras except Liluyar and Siruar have also been named by SC Roy[2].

The members of a clan do not wear any badge or distinguishing emblem or peculiar dress, nor make up their hair in any distinctive fashion, nor get representations of their totem tattooed on their body or carved or painted on their houses or on any personal belongings. But, during sacrifices to the spirits known variously as 'Ora-bongas' (Home- gods'), Buru böngäs (Hill-gods) or 'Khunt- bhuts' (Clan spirits) some emblem of the family totem is placed by the side of the sacrificer and this emblem is always carried about with them wherever the family migrate.[3]

Family

A family, according to Collins dictionary ,'*is a group of people who are related to each other, especially parents and their children.*' The largest number of families among the Birhor (75%) prefer nuclear family. Generally, size of a Birhor family consists of 4-5 members. The

family of a Birhor is patriarchal, patrilineal and patrilocal where a male is the head of a family who takes all the decision, a woman is just her companion [4]. Being a patrilineal family, the totem of the father belongs to the son. Mother's gotra has no value because a woman is neither a member of her father's gotra nor her husband's because a woman is neither a member of her father's gotra nor that of her husband.[5]

Marriage:

'*Marriage* is when two people join together through a legal contract, a religious ceremony, or both'. The tradition of marriage is generally found universally in all societies. Its existence is found in different forms in all the tribes of India. On the basis of various popular forms of marriage, sociologists and anthropologists make the following classifications[6].

<div align="center">1. Monogamy.</div>

<div align="center">2. Polygamy</div>

The Birhor generally follow monogamy. The Birhor recognize at least ten diffe- rent forms of union as constituting valid marriage.

1. ***Nam-Napam bapla***—It is a form of love marriage which is more prevalent among uthlus[7].
2. ***Udra-Udri bapla***— It is marriage by elopement.
3. ***Bolo bapla***— It is marriage by intrusion in which a woman intrudes into a man home for the purpose of marriage.
4. ***Sipundur bapla***— It is the converse of the bolo bapla, where a man marries a woman by force.
5 & 6. ***Hirum bapla & Sangha bapla***—Hirum bapla takes place when a man marries a spinster as his second wife. However, when he marries a widow it is Sangha bapla.
7. ***Kiring-Jawai bapla***— In this form of marriage a poor man is bought as son-in-law.
8. ***Golhat (Gua)bapla***—In such marriages a son or nephew is exchanged for daughter or niece by the exchange of betel-nuts.
9. ***Beng-Karhi bapla***— It is practiced by the poor father who cannot afford expenses of marriage. So, the marriage takes place at groom house.
10. ***Sadar bapla***— It is a regular form of marriage which is more popular among the Janghi (settled) Birhor.

Kinship:

'**Kinship** is the relationship between members of the same family'(Collins dictionary com). Kinship ties are connections between individuals, established either through marriage or through the lines of descent that connect blood relatives (mothers, fathers, siblings, offspring, etc.). The kin who are related through "blood" are called consanguineous kin while the kin who are related through marriage are called affine. Among the Birhor kinship relation is the same as it was found by SC Roy in 1925.

At present, there are three main factors of kinship organization or system of Birhor - Totemism, exogamous clan marriage and patriarchy. Marriage is prohibited among the members of the same totem tribe. Succession runs in the male line. The recognition of sapinda kinship with members of other gotras imposes additional restrictions on the simple rule of

marriage and kinship, such as no matrimonial relations between cousins and cousins while siblings are alive[8]. We find a strong bond of kinship among the Birhor where the tradition of relationship of avoidance, joking and teknonymy are still followed.

Social Status and Role among the Birhor:

Status refers to the social position with defined rights and duties assigned to these positions. A role is the dynamic or the behavioural aspect of status. Status is occupied, but roles are played. The status given in Birhor society has been kept in the following four parts.

(a) Gender division (b) Kinship (c) Age division (d) Social factor.

Among the Birhor both social as well as biological factors are responsible for the insubordination of women role in their society. Sociological factor is their being patriarchal society and biological factor is their believe that women are weak, instinctive, soft, and emotional, Whereas, men are considered more hardworking, courageous and logical. As far as, the kinship is concerned, among the Birhor society, the position given and its functions are more important on the basis of kinship relations. It is determined by his social norms which he has to follow by virtue of being a member of that society[9]. The Birhor also respect the age and experience of their elders their opinions and decisions are final in matter of religion, festivals, marriages, panchayats and other serious matters. while youth are assigned work physical labour. Besides, children between 10-12 are also given responsibilities to assist their parents. Social factors also have a definite to play in Birhor society, here, birth of a person as well as his personal achievements award him some special status and role.

Social Stratification:

Social stratification refers to the existence of structured inequalities between groups in society, in terms of access to material or symbolic rewards. Society can be seen as consisting of 'strata' in a hierarchy, with the more favoured at the top and the less privileged near the bottom. Among the Birhor this social stratification can be seen on the basis of occupation, culture, interest and social ordering. The occupation-based stratification is most common among them. In recent years, it has been found that some members are more respected because their interest in lifestyle of caste Hindus have adopted Sanskritization.

Social Leadership:

Social leadership is the need of both modern and traditional society. Among the Birhor it is performed through *Naya* and *Diguar/Kotwar*. Their Naya guides them in matter of religion, economy as well as socio-cultural matters. He is assisted a *Diguar* who assists *Naya* performing rituals, festivals, marriage ceremonies and collecting relevant records.They also conduct meetings of panchayats of their tanda[10].

Conclusion:

To conclude, after the study of their social life we can say that their society can be divided into two groups those of uthloos/bhoolias (wandering)and those of Janghis/thanias (settled). These uthloo Birhor wanders the forest of Jharkhand in search of food throughout the years except the rainy season. Whereas, the Janghis live the life of farmers and pastoral. Among both the Birhor social organization is based both on lineage and residence. The residential unit is called *kumba/tanda* and their unit of lineage is called *khunt/killi/Paris.*

Similarly, their family is not completely a nuclear family. There are instances when within a kumba a joint family is found to be living.

What we come to know from study of their society that their social life is a mixture of tradition and changes. Traditionally, they follow the institution of family, marriage, gotra, lineage and kinship. Whereas, modernity has brought the concept of sanskritization, and social stratification among them. They strongly believe in the custom and tradition of ancestor worship and worship *heprom* as ancestor God. Their marriage customs though deviated from tradition to some extent, yet, they follow traditional marriage forms.

The unit of their society is family, which is mostly nuclear, patriarchal, patrilineal and patrilocal. They follow the traditional system of status and role according to age, sex, and kinship. Besides, with change of time social stratification is also making inroads in their social life. Finally, we can conclude that their social way of life reflects their believe in continuity and change.

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Unveiling the POCSO Act: Expectations and Experiments

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Abstract:

The rising incidence of crimes against children is a matter of grave concern, demanding immediate attention from society, governments, and individuals. Innocent children, who should be protected and nurtured, are increasingly subjected to violence, abuse, and exploitation, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive action. This paper aims to explore India's legislative response to these heinous crimes by analyzing the debates held in parliament and examining the key features of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO Act) enacted in 2012.This paper delves into the legislative intention, outlining the debates held in parliament that led to the enactment of this crucial legislation. Furthermore, the paper explores the key features of the POCSO Act, emphasizing the need for specialized units within law enforcement agencies to handle cases related to child abuse, trafficking, and exploitation. Lastly, the paper addresses significant rulings from various High Courts, shedding light on important issues related to the implementation and interpretation of the POCSO Act. Throughout the analysis, clear and straightforward language is used to ensure easy comprehension of the legislative response to crimes against children.

Keywords: crimes against children, sexual offenses, Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, child abuse, exploitation, trafficking.

Introduction:

The rising incidence of crimes against children is a matter of grave concern that demands immediate attention from society, governments, and individuals alike. It is a distressing reality that innocent children, who should be protected and nurtured, are being subjected to various forms of violence, abuse, and exploitation.[1]This alarming trend necessitates a comprehensive and concerted effort to address and combat these heinous crimes. Efficient law enforcement and a robust legal framework are crucial in combating crimes against children. Sexual offences against children are abhorrent and deeply disturbing crimes that have severe and long-lasting

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consequences for the victims.[2] These offences include child molestation, sexual exploitation, child pornography, and child trafficking, among others. Perpetrators of such heinous acts exploit the vulnerability and innocence of children, causing physical, emotional, and psychological trauma that can impact their entire lives Governments always supposed to enact and enforce stringent laws that ensure the protection of children's rights and deliver swift justice to perpetrators. Specialized units within law enforcement agencies should be established to handle cases related to child abuse, trafficking, and exploitation. Moreover, coordination between different stakeholders, such as law enforcement, social services, and child protection agencies, is essential to streamline efforts and ensure a holistic approach to address these crimes.

India has been a signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Children since 1992. As such, it has a responsibility to take steps to protect children from being compelled or coerced into engaging in any form of illegal sexual activity. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (*hereinafter* Act) is a legislation enacted by the Government of India in 2012 to protect children from sexual abuse, exploitation, and pornography. It aims to provide a comprehensive legal framework for addressing and preventing sexual offences against children, ensuring their welfare and promoting their rights. This paper aims to explore the legislative intention by analysing the debates held in parliament. Additionally, it will examine the legislative response and the requirements outlined in the Act's key features. Lastly, it will address a significant issue by discussing rulings from several High Courts. Throughout this paper, we will use clear and straightforward language to ensure easy comprehension.

Legislative Intention and Expectations:

The Central Government, through Mrs. Krishna Tirath, the Minister of State of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (hereinafter Minister), introduced a The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Bill 2011 (*hereinafter* Bill) in the Rajya Sabha, which was successfully passed on 10th May 2012.[3] Subsequently, the Bill was also passed in the Lok Sabha on 22nd May 2012[4] and received presidential assent on 19th June 2012. Finally, the Act came into force on 14th November 2012. The Minister presented data in the Rajya Sabha regarding a study conducted in thirteen states, involving thirteen thousand participants. The study revealed that 43 percent of children admitted to facing sexual abuse, with the majority of incidents being perpetrated by individuals who were close to them and dear to them.

The Bill, which later became an Act, addresses various offences, including penetrative sexual assault, aggravated penetrative sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated sexual assault, sexual harassment of a child, and the use of a child for pornographic purposes. During the presentation of the Bill, the minister emphasized the existing loopholes in our current laws that have resulted in the acquittal of accused individuals. She stressed the importance of creating legislation that prioritizes the well-being of children and ensures that the accused cannot escape justice under any circumstances.

The Minister emphasized that the Bill included a definition of penetration, which was not previously present in the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The definition had been previously established by the court, which recognized only penile-vaginal penetration. This was

considered a significant accomplishment of the Bill as it expanded the scope of what constitutes penetration.[5] Furthermore, during her speech, the minister highlighted that the Indian Penal Code alone was insufficient to address cases of male child sexual abuse, while the Bill aimed to be gender-neutral. The minister expressed concern about child abuse and stressed the no-need for a similar legal procedure for both adults and children. However, she emphasized that children require a more sensitive approach when dealing with such cases.

The Minister further highlights the significance of the fast track system, particularly in ensuring swift punishment. Additionally, the Minister emphasizes that the Bill includes provisions to prevent children from having to go through repeated appearance during court trials and other formalities. Throughout the entire legal process, there are provisions for the involvement of a child psychologist, an interpreter if necessary, and a language expert in cases where the child is deaf or mute. When explaining the child-friendly procedures outlined in the law, the Minister stated that the police, magistrates, and special courts will handle recording statements with utmost sensitivity, employing a child-friendly approach. Moreover, the medical procedures concerning the child will also prioritize their well-being and adhere to child-friendly protocols. The age of consent in this Bill was 18 years old.

When in Lok Sabha the minister was introducing the Bill asserted the character of the Bill, gender neutral. The Minister in this house asserted again and again that the burden of proof will be on accused only. When the minister once again asserted about friendly for child said that the statement will be recorded wherever the parents or complainant will be prefer and the police will be not in the uniform. There will be provision of video recording. The Minister has emphasis that Integrated Child Protection Scheme for the rehabilitations of victim child.

During the session in the Lok Sabha, the Minister introduced a Bill emphasizing its character as gender neutral. Throughout their speech, the Minister reiterated that the burden of proof would solely rest on the accused. Furthermore, the Minister stressed that when it came to child-friendly proceedings, statements would be recorded based on the preference of the place of parents or complainant, with the police not wearing their uniforms. Additionally, provisions for video recording would be made available. Highlighting the importance of protecting victimized children, the minister placed strong emphasis on the implementation of an Integrated Child Protection Scheme aimed at the rehabilitation of these children.

The Minister reiterated the details regarding the previous age of consent, which stood at 16 years old. For individuals aged 16 to 18, it was suggested that the presence of consent be assessed on a case-by-case basis. However, the Minister expressed concerns about the potential harassment faced by children who may repeatedly be summoned to court to provide evidence of their absence of consent. Such repeated court appearances could lead to stigmatisation of the child. Consequently, based on the Minister's concerns, the Parliamentary Standing Committee has recommended raising the age of consent to 18 years old.

The minister has put forth a logical argument stating that raising the age of consent to 18 would aid in the prevention of human trafficking. In cases where the accused is a minor, the matter will be dealt with according to the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act. Additionally, the minister emphasized the importance of punishing individuals who make false accusations to safeguard against the misuse of existing provisions. For instance, if someone harbors a personal vendetta

against another individual and fabricates allegations, appropriate measures should be in place to penalize such actions. The Minister further emphasized that the Bill includes provisions to safeguard the identity of the child, ensuring that it remains undisclosed unless authorized by the special court, always prioritizing the child's welfare.

During the Session, Shri Maheshwar Hazari from Samastipur, a distinguished Member of Lok Sabha, raised a pertinent concern regarding children under the custody of institutions such as remand homes, protection homes, and observation homes. The honorable Member also highlighted the significance of safeguarding children in fiduciary relationships.[6] He emphasized the necessity to extend child protection measures to encompass these specific areas as well.

Dr. Ratna De from Hooghly said that The Standing Committee's proposal, regarding the Bill under study, suggests that compensation should be granted in every instance, with a portion of the amount to be paid by the offender. However, I find this notion impractical. Additionally, the Committee has put forward the idea of establishing a fund administered by either the State Government or the Court, solely for the purpose of compensating victims. Yet, this approach would likely result in significant delays. The Member further mentioned the Standing Committee's opinion about the establishment of a fund, either under the jurisdiction of the State Government or the Court, to facilitate the payment of compensation. Yet, this approach would likely be time-consuming. Member also said that compensation should include mental and physical trauma. When the member raised the question regarding special court and in the absence of special court session court will trial the cases under this Act mentioned that "[T]his is a gigantic task of designating Sessions Court to be a Special Court as the Sessions Court are already having heavy number of cases pending. It would be an additional burden on the Sessions Court. So, there is a need to establish Special Courts with extra infrastructure."

Legislative Response and Mandate:

This Act aims to safeguard children from sexual assault, sexual harassment, and pornography, while also establishing Special Courts to handle cases related to these offences. The Act addresses various aspects associated with these offences and includes provisions to ensure the protection of children. It also covers matters that are related or incidental to the main objectives of the Act. To ensure the appropriate growth and well-being of a child, it is imperative that their right to privacy and confidentiality is upheld and honoured by all individuals involved in any judicial proceedings concerning the child. Respecting and protecting this right are crucial at every stage of the legal process to safeguard the child's interests and promote their proper development.

The law must function in a manner where the best interest and overall well-being of the child are considered as the utmost priority at every stage. This is crucial to guarantee the child's healthy physical, emotional, intellectual, and social development. By placing the child's best interests at the forefront, the legal system ensures that decisions and actions taken are in line with promoting their overall welfare and enabling them to reach their full potential in all aspects of life.

The preamble also mentioned the obligation under Convention on the Rights of the

Child, the State parties are obligated to take necessary national, bilateral, and multilateral measures. These measures are aimed at ensuring the protection and well-being of children, safeguarding them from any form of sexual exploitation, and upholding their rights as outlined in the Convention. States are expected to actively implement and enforce laws, policies, and collaborative efforts to prevent and combat these harmful practices, both within their own territories and in cooperation with other nations.

Substantial Part:

This Act describe six types of Offences.

Penetrative sexual Assault[7]: -The offence is describing as

> "A person is said to commit "penetrative sexual assault"
> if—

(*a*) he penetrates his penis, to any extent, into the vagina, mouth, urethra or anus of a child or makes the child to do so with him or any other person; or

(*b*) he inserts, to any extent, any object or a part of the body, not being the penis, into the vagina, the urethra or anus of the child or makes the child to do so with him or any other person; or

(*c*) he manipulates any part of the body of the child so as to cause penetration into the vagina, urethra, anus or any part of body of the child or makes the child to do so with him or any other person; or

(*d*) he applies his mouth to the penis, vagina, anus, urethra of the child or makes the child to do so to such person or any other person."

The same definition is also present in the Indian Penal Code (IPC) as the definition of penetration in Section 375, which outlines the offence of rape. The punishment for this offence is a minimum of ten years of imprisonment, which can extend to life imprisonment. In cases involving a child below the age of sixteen, the punishment shall not be less than twenty years, and life imprisonment is also a possible penalty. Additionally, fines are imposed in all cases. When determining the amount of the fine, the court considers factors such as medical expenses and the rehabilitation needs of the victim.[8]

This Act also addresses the issue of Aggravated Penetrative Sexual Assault,[9] a heinous offence. The legislation stipulates that the punishment for such crimes shall not be less than twenty years of imprisonment, with the possibility of a sentence extending to life imprisonment or even the death penalty. Offenders found guilty of this crime are also liable to pay a fine.[10]

The category mentioned as: a police officer, armed forces or security forces, public servant commits, management or on the staff of a jail, remand home, protection home, observation home, or other place of custody or care and protection, management or staff of a hospital, management or staff of an educational institution or religious institution, gang penetrative sexual assault on a child, when someone commits Penetrative Sexual assault using weapon, weapons, fire, heated substance or corrosive substance, sexual assault causing grievous hurt or causing bodily harm, incapacitates the child or causes the child to become mentally ill, makes the child pregnant, inflict the child with life threatening disease etc, death of the child, taking advantage of a child's mental or physical disability to commit the

offence, commit the offence more than once or repeatedly, child below twelve years, being the relative of the child, when child is pregnant, the ownership or management who providing service to the child, being position of the trust and authority, after the offence attempt to murder the child, during communal, sectarian and natural calamity, repeated offender, striping and naked pared.[11]

Another offence is the act of sexual assault,[12] which is legally defined as any intentional act involving physical contact of a sexual nature, without penetration. Examples of such acts include touching a child's vagina, penis, anus, or breast, as well as compelling a child to touch those body parts on themselves or another person. The punishment for this offence is a minimum imprisonment term of three years, which may extend up to five years. Additionally, the perpetrator shall also be liable to pay a fine.[13]

The Next offence is Aggravated Sexual Assault which cover nearly all the category of the penetrative aggravated assault. The punishment for the offence is five years which may extend to the seven year and shall also be liable to pay a fine.[14]

Sexual harassment refers to the act of a person uttering words, making sounds, gestures, or exhibiting objects or parts of their body with the intention that such words or sounds be heard or such gestures, objects, or body parts be seen by a child. Sexual harassment also includes the act of making a child exhibit their body or any part of their body with the intention that it is seen by the person committing the harassment or any other person. Sexual harassment further encompasses the act of showing any object to a child, regardless of the form or media, with the explicit purpose of engaging in or promoting pornography.[15] Sexual harassment also includes the repetitive or constant actions of following, watching, or contacting a child, whether directly or through electronic, digital, or any other means. For the sexual harassment under this Act, imprisonment may extent to the three year and liable for fine also.

Another offence addresses the use of child for the pornographic purposes[16]. It states that anyone who uses a child in any form of media, including television, the internet, printed materials, or any electronic form, for the purpose of sexual gratification may be guilty of the offence of using a child for pornographic purposes.

The statement further specifies that this includes:

(a) "Representation of the sexual organs of a child,

(b) Usage of a child engaged in real or simulated sexual acts, with or without penetration, and

(c) The indecent or obscene representation of a child."

The punishment of this offence is imprisonment not less than five years and in case of repeated offender it may extend to the seven years. [17]

There are provisions related to the possession, distribution and used for the commercial purpose of the pornographic materials.[18] It states that any person who possesses or stores pornographic material in any form that involves a child, but fails to delete or destroy the material or report it to the designated authority, with the intention to share or transmit child pornography, shall be liable to a fine.[19] According to this provision, the fine for this offence should not be less than five thousand rupees. In the case of a second or subsequent offence,

the fine should not be less than ten thousand rupees.[20]

Any individual who possesses or stores pornographic material in any form that involves a child, with the intent to transmit, propagate, display, or distribute it in any way, except for the purpose of reporting or as evidence in court, shall be subject to punishment.[21] The punishment can include imprisonment for up to three years, a fine, or both. Any individual who stores or possesses pornographic material, in any form, that involves a child for commercial purposes shall face punishment. Upon the first conviction, the person shall be sentenced to imprisonment, which will be a minimum of three years but may extend up to five years. Alternatively, they may be fined, or subjected to both imprisonment and a fine. In the case of a second or subsequent conviction, the punishment becomes more severe. The individual shall be imprisoned for a minimum of five years but may be sentenced to a maximum of seven years. The Another category of the offences describes the abetment and attempt. For the abetment the punishment of the same offence will apply and for the attempt of the offence the half of the punishment said offence will apply.[22]

Procedural Part:

In accordance with the provisions outlined in the Code, any individual, including the victim, is permitted to report an offence to the appropriate authority under the Act. The designated authorities under this Act include the Special Juvenile Police Unit as well as the local police.[23] It is mandated by the Act that the language used to record the report, based on the child's account, should be simple and easily comprehensible for the child.[24] Furthermore, the Act includes provisions for a translator or interpreter to be made available to the child if they are unable to understand the contents of the report.[25]

When the Special Juvenile Police Unit or local police determines that a child who has been subjected to an offence requires care and protection, they must take prompt action to provide the necessary care and protection.[26] This can involve admitting the child to a shelter home or the nearest hospital within twenty-four hours of receiving the report. The reasons for their decision must be documented in writing.[27] The specific procedures and guidelines for such arrangements are typically prescribed by relevant authorities. Any individual who provides information in good faith shall not be held liable either civil or criminal.[28] If any individual knowingly makes a false complaint or provides false information against another person regarding offences committed under sections 3, 5, 7, and section 9, with the sole intention of humiliating, extorting, threatening, or defaming them, they shall be subject to punishment, which shall be imprisonment for up to six months, a fine, or both. But there is no punishment in the case of child.[29]

Media Control:

The Act contains provisions regarding the regulation of the media, specifically addressing the need to exercise control.[30] It clearly states that the dissemination of any report or commentary concerning a child, originating from any media source, studio, or photographic facility, is strictly prohibited unless accompanied by accurate and verifiable information. This requirement ensures that any information shared by the media regarding a child is supported by reliable facts and can be verified for its accuracy. Such reports or comments should not be made in a manner that could potentially damage the child's reputation or

violate their right to privacy. Further the Act has given the provision that no media reports should reveal any information that could identify a child, including their name, address, photograph, family details, school, neighborhood, or any other details that could lead to the child's identification. However, there is an exception to this rule. If the Special Court, which has jurisdiction over the case under the relevant Act, deems it necessary and provides written reasons, they may allow disclosure of such information if it is deemed to be in the best interest of the child. Here there will be concept of the vicarious liability.[31]

Recoding the Statement by the Police:

The child's statement should be documented either at their residence, the location where they typically reside, or at a place of their choosing. Whenever possible, it is preferred that a woman police officer of at least the rank of sub-inspector conducts the recording.[32] The police shall not wear the uniform and will not disclose the identity of the child to the media.[33] When the statement of the child will be recorded before the magistrate the lawyer of the accused shall not present there.[34]

Burden of Proof:

In cases where an individual is being prosecuted for committing, abetting, or attempting to commit an offence under sections 3, 5, 7, and section 9 of this Act, the Special Court will assume, unless proven otherwise, that the person in question is indeed responsible for the offence in question.[35] This presumption places the burden of proof on the accused to demonstrate their innocence.

Special Court:

To ensure a speedy trial, the State Government, in collaboration with the Chief Justice of the High Court, has the authority to designate a Special Court for each district through an official notification published in the Official Gazette.[36] This Special Court will be responsible for trying offences under the specified Act. However, there is a provision that if a Court of Session has already been designated as a children's court under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005, or as a Special Court for similar purposes under any other existing law, it will be considered as a Special Court under this particular section. In other words, if a court has already been designated as a specialized court for dealing with cases involving children or other specific purposes, it will also be recognized as a Special Court for the offences under this Act.

During the process of recording the examination-in-chief, cross-examination, or re-examination of a child, either the Special Public Prosecutor or the counsel representing the accused is required to communicate the questions intended for the child to the Special Court. Subsequently, it is the responsibility of the Special Court to pose those questions to the child.[37] The Special Court has the discretion to allow regular breaks for the child during the trial if it deems it necessary. The Special Court shall not permit aggressive questioning or character assassination of the child and ensure that dignity of the child is maintained at all times during the trial.[38] In certain suitable instances, the Special Court has the authority to not only impose a penalty but also order the payment of prescribed compensation to the child for any physical or mental distress experienced, or for the immediate rehabilitation of the child.[39]

The Special Court shall document the testimony of the child within thirty days from the time it acknowledges the offence. In case of any delay, the Special Court shall record the reasons for the delay.[40] The Special Court shall endeavor to conclude the trial within a maximum duration of one year starting from the date of taking cognizance the offence.[41] The Special Court is responsible for safeguarding the child's well-being during the process of recording evidence, ensuring that they are not exposed to the accused. However, it also ensures that the accused has the opportunity to hear the child's statement and communicate with their advocate. To achieve this, the Special Court may use various methods such as video conferencing, single visibility mirrors, curtains, or any other appropriate device to record the child's statement.

The Special Court will conduct trials in a private setting, away from public view, and with the presence of the child's parents or another trusted individual chosen by the child. However, if the Special Court determines that it is necessary for the child to be examined at a location outside the courtroom, it will issue a commission as outlined in Section 284 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 (2 of 1974).

When required, the Court is authorized to engage the services of a translator or interpreter with the necessary qualifications and experience.[42] They will be compensated as per the prescribed fees for the purpose of recording the evidence of a child. In cases where the child has a mental or physical disability, the Special Court has the discretion to seek the assistance of a special educator or an individual who is familiar with the child's mode of communication or an expert in that particular field. Such individuals should possess the appropriate qualifications and experience and will be remunerated as per the prescribed fees for recording the child's evidence.[43]

The Central Government and each State Government are required to take necessary steps to promote widespread awareness of the provisions stated in this Act. This will be achieved through regular intervals of publicity via various media channels, such as television, radio, and print media. The objective is to ensure that the general public, including children, as well as their parents and guardians, are well-informed about the content and implications of this Act. Furthermore, officials from the Central Government, State Governments, and other relevant individuals, including police officers, will receive regular training on the implementation of the Act to enhance their understanding and effectiveness in enforcing its provisions.[44]

Problem Related to Consensual-Sexual Relationship:

In the case of *Independent Thought* v *Union of India,* the Supreme Court of India established a significant principle regarding the relationship between the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) and the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The court ruled that in situations where there is an inconsistency between the two laws, the provisions of POCSO would take precedence over the IPC.

This ruling specifically pertained to the exception for marital intercourse under the IPC, which was deemed inconsistent with the protective measures outlined in POCSO. However, the court's pronouncement carries broader implications, extending the principle to all aspects of POCSO.

Essentially, the judgment emphasizes that when it comes to matters of child sexual abuse (CSA), POCSO's provisions should be given priority over the IPC. This decision highlights the specialized nature of POCSO as legislation specifically designed to address CSA cases and provide enhanced protection to children.

The POCSO Act recognizes that children are unable to provide informed consent due to their age and vulnerability, and it prioritizes their protection and well-being. It is crucial to differentiate between consensual sex among adults and sexual offences against children. While consensual sexual activity between adults is a matter of personal choice and legal rights, any sexual activity involving a child, even if seemingly consensual, is a serious crime under the POCSO Act and is punishable by law. This Consensual sexual activity is major concern of the various courts.

The case of *G Vijayalakshmi* v *State*,[45] decided by the Madras High Court on January 27, 2021. In this case, both the accused and the victim jointly filed a petition to quash the proceedings against the accused under various laws including the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006.

The accusation against the accused was that he had kidnapped the victim and engaged in sexual relations with her, thus committing the alleged offences. However, during the trial, the case began to crumble when the victim and her family turned hostile and stated that the relationship was consensual, and she had willingly eloped with the accused.

During the hearing, Justice N Anand Venkatesh personally spoke to the victim and examined her statement given under oath. He became convinced that her elopement and relationship with the accused were consensual. However, the stringent provisions of POCSO compelled him to disregard this information and allow the trial to proceed. In this judgment, Justice Venkatesh considered medical research on adolescent relationships and said that

> "It is crucial to be aware of the science and psychology of adolescence and young adulthood at this juncture. 'This is because social and biological phenomena are widely recognized as determinants of human development, health, and socio- economic attainments across the life course, but our understanding of the underlying pathways and processes remains limited."

The purpose of POCSO, and the principles established by the Supreme Court regarding quashing First Information Reports (FIRs).[46] Ultimately, Justice Venkatesh decided to quash the case and asserted that It is worth noting that he acknowledged that the criminalization of adolescent relationships under POCSO had already been recognized by the Madras High Court itself in a previous judgment from 2019.

The similar problem arises in case of *Ranjit Rajbanshi* v *the State of West Bengal and Others*.[47] This appeal has been filed against a conviction under Section 376(1) of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 and Section 4 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. The person accused of a crime was 22 years old, and the victim was 16 and a half years old when the First Information Report (FIR) was filed. The victim stated that she had been subjected to a sexual assault, but there were inconsistencies in her testimony. It was clear

from the available information that there was physical closeness between the victim and the accused. However, it is important to note that there was a meeting between the victim's and accused's families, where they discussed the possibility of a marriage between the two, but it did not materialize. Justice Bhattacharya asserted that "the Court cannot be blind to the practical realities of life". [48] He said the POCSO Act was introduced with the right intention of safeguarding innocent children from various crimes. However, if the provisions of the act are interpreted too harshly and without fairness, it can become a tool for misusing the legal system instead of providing protection to vulnerable minors.[49] The court must consider practical realities and interpret a statute in the right context, considering the objectives and reasons behind the Act. The main purpose of the Act is to safeguard children from sexual assault, harassment, and pornography, and to establish Special Courts for the trial of such offences and related matters. Therefore, when determining the meaning of the term "child," it is essential to consider factors such as age, maturity, and other relevant circumstances in order to establish a case of penetrative sexual assault.[50]

Further Justice Bhattacharya mentioned that in considering the case at hand, it is essential to recognize that the accused/appellant cannot be unequivocally deemed guilty of an offence under Section 3 of the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act or Section 376(1) of the IPC (Indian Penal Code), based solely on the literal definition of the term 'child'.[51] Finally the appealed was allowed. (

Similar problem was 'address' by the Allahabad High Court in case of *Atul Mishra* v *State of UP.* Applicant Atul Mishra was charged under sections 363, 366, and 376 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), as well as sections 3 and 4 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act of 2012. Additionally, he is accused under sections 3(2)v and 3(2)va of the Scheduled Caste & Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act of 1989.

After lodging the F.I.R., the police proceeded to visit the informant for a second time to record his statement. He disclosed that he is aware of the whereabouts of the victim but has made the decision not to interfere in her life. Furthermore, he requested the police officials to drop the case altogether. In accordance with his wishes, the police filed a Closure Report before the court. meanwhile police arrested the accused with his baby and disclosed that they were married.

Court after expressing the need and object of the POCSO Act, said

"But this laudable object must have some genuine and inherent exceptions too.
It is imperative for the Court of law to draw thin line that demarcates the nature
of acts that should not be made to fall within the scope of this enactment." [52]

When court was emphasising the societal "reality" said many cases filed under the POCSO Act are related to complaints or FIRs lodged by families of adolescents and teenagers who are in romantic relationships with each other. However, it does not the intention of the Act to cover the cases involving adolescents or teenagers in consensual romantic relationships. The application of bail was allowed.

The Act is a crucial legal framework in India aimed at safeguarding children from sexual abuse and exploitation. A perusal of the various provisions and objectives of the Act, makes it evident that the POCSO Act plays a vital role in addressing and preventing crimes against

children. The most important aspect of the offenses is to address a wide range of crimes that can be committed against children. However, there have been a few court decisions that have undermined the effectiveness of the law, such as the "skin to skin" touch ruling by Justice Pushpa Ganediwala.[53]

The Act places significant emphasis on the protection and support of child victims throughout the legal process. It recognises the vulnerable position of child victims and establishes special courts and procedures to ensure their privacy, dignity, and safety are preserved. It not only defines and classifies different forms of abuse but also focuses on the support, rehabilitation, and protection of child victims. By establishing specialised courts and procedures, the Act ensures that child victims are treated with sensitivity and their rights are upheld.

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7. Section 3 of POCSO Act
8. Section 4 of POCSO Act
9. Section 5 of POCSO Act
10. Section 6 of POCSO Act
11. Section 6 of POCSO Act
12. Section 7 of POCSO Act
13. Section 8 of POCSO Act
14. Section 9 & 10 of POCSO Act
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16. Sec 13 of POCSO Act
17. Section 14 of POCSO Act
18. Sections 13, 14 and 15 of POCSO Act
19. Section 15 of POCSO Act
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid

22. Sections 17 and 18 of POCSO Act.
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25. Section 19 (4) of POCSO Act.
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47. C.R.A. No.458 of 2018 IA No: CRAN 2 of 2020
48. Para 55
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53. *Satish* V *State of Maharashtra* through Police Station Officer, Gittikhadan, 2021 SCC OnLine Bom 72In this case, the accused was alleged to have touched a girl's breast. However, the Judge pointed out that the prosecution did not claim that the accused removed the girl's top and directly pressed her breast (para 29). Therefore, there was no direct physical contact where the skin to skin, with the intent of a sexual act without penetration (para 30). Consequently, this case does not meet the criteria for sexual assault under Section 7 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012. In a case called *Libnus* V *State of Maharashtra*, a judge made a troubling decision. The judge refused to acknowledge an act where a person opened their pants zipper and exposed their private part to a child. The judge's reasoning was that since there was no direct physical contact, it did not qualify as a sexual assault under Section 10 of the POCSO Act.

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Arbitrary Conception of *'Doctrine of Pleasure'* Concept in Gubernatorial Appointment in Feudal and Democratic

Astle[1]
Ankit Kumar[2]

Abstract

The Doctrine of pleasure, as enshrined under the Indian constitution, is nothing but an approach that finds its root in the unfettered feudal system. In a feudal setup, the crown has absolute power; hence no such rule of Law exists. In a democratic setup, there can't be anything unfettered, arbitrary and irrational. The ' pleasure' word and its interpretation are alien to a democratic society. This pleasure bestows power to the holder 'licences to act whimsically'. The paper will address the precarious interpretation of the Doctrine of pleasure in democratic reform and its constitutional boundaries.

The gubernatorial position (as used in old British English for governor) has been a political position for negotiation between political parties. There have had many such incidents in Indian executive reforms, where the conflict between the chief minister of the State and the governor was witnessed. They both hold the position of the statesman, and so to harmoniously construe the dispute is the need for better reforms. The paper will also emphasize the actual political incident of the appointment of Dr Mari chenna Reddy as governor and shutting down the whole Telangana separatist movement. The constitutional framework and arbitrariness in governor appointment shall be discussed in light of the rule of Law in a democratic setup.

Keywords : Gubernatorial, Pleasure, Statesman, arbitrary power, Feudal system.

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Research Gap

The Governor or the gubernatorial (often referred in American context) is constitutionally conferred to be the head of the state or "Dux Civitatis" and remains in the office as long as he enjoys the "pleasure" of the President. Eventually, the focal point of analysis is the metamorphosis of the "doctrine of pleasure" exercised in the appointment of the office of the Governor in respect to the feudal and Democratic set-up. In the Feudal arrangement, the "Doctrine of Pleasure" concerning the appointment of the Governor to the Raj Bhavan was an unfettered power exercised by the Crown whimsically whereas the concept of pleasure in the democratic context regarding the appointment of the Governor under the "Pleasure" of the president has to be reasonable and bona fide.

Introduction- The Gubernatorial position of the Governor in Feudal and Democratic India- A Paradox?

The term "Gubernatorial"[1] connotes basically to the office of the Governor in the state of U.S. However, the etymology dates back to the 18th century, derived from the Latin word called "gubernare"[2] which means 'govern'.

The word referred to the Governor originated in the medieval era and is still prevalent in the contemporary usage. The administration and the governance then were in the intricate form of Feudalism. Feudal system in India flourished during the reign of Mughal rulers, a typically hierarchical concept which consisted of the Monarch filling the top shelf of the pyramid, followed by the nobles or the high Lords/ dignitaries at the court of the ruler. Descending in the hierarchy were the merchants and then were the artisans and the craftsman who constituted of the class of skilled labor. The most oppressed group at the lowest level of the pyramid were the peasants. The King or the Crown was absolutely powerful and often exercised its authority arbitrarily in every sphere, be it appointments of the royal officials. One of such highly esteemed office of the Governor appointed to the Raj Bhavan was on the "pleasure" of the Crown. The 'doctrine of pleasure' regarding the appointments of the Gubernatorial was not an alien concept in this era with absolute power in the hands of a sole authority[3]. This meant that the Governor remained at the office as long as he enjoys the "pleasure" of the Crown and thus the removal of the Governor from his office was served without any notice or bona fide reason. The unruly or mechanical decision by the Crown was an unfettered exercise of his authority. Consequently, Governors were merely puppet in the hands of the rulers.

With the advent of modern era along with paradigmatic shift in the socio-economic setup, new concepts of governance came into play, namely 'Democracy'. The democratic government promised greater accountability with all the people vesting the authority to govern them through elected representatives and this was called as 'popular sovereignty' where the government was subjected to the will of the people. Every statutory or Constitutional posts derives its validity from the Indian Constitution and so does the office of the Governor in the democratic India. The Governor is appointed in every state as the "head of the state" and acts as a bridge between the Centre and the state governments. Although, the Gubernatorial position of the Governor differs from that of the feudal setup, nevertheless are apparently same. The Governor holds his office "during the pleasure" of the President or Durante bene placito[4]. The 'doctrine of pleasure' was exhaustively discussed in the case of UOI v. Tulsiram Patel.

The significant difference in the appointment to the Raj Bhavan in both setups is ok the basis of the exercise of power by the administrators. The President appoints the Governor on the advice of the Council of Ministers which can be effectively said to be 'on the advice of the PM'. However, the appointment or removal of the head of the state cannot be exercised whimsically or capriciously by the President. The appointment or removal of the Governor from his/her office has to be bona fide following the principle of equity, just and good conscience as it can be thoroughly checked by legislative enactments and judicial reviews. Nonetheless, the appointment to the Gubernatorial position by the President in the democratic India can be arbitrary and mechanical but with checks and balances by the Council of Ministers. Thus, 'doctrine of pleasure' has underwent changes to adapt to the changing socio-economic environment.

The doctrine of pleasure and its Constitutional relevance as enshrined in the Indian Constitution

The doctrine of pleasure has birthed out of the Common Law system which owes its origin to England. The concept plainly elucidates that the office of any government servant or officials would be pivoted on the pleasure of the "political superior" who runs the government or the 'sovereign'. Classically, this authority in the hands of the Crown during the medieval era was an undisputed power and the Crown exploited the power capriciously. The power to appoint whosoever deemed fit and remove anyone, depending on their whims and fancies was a casual arbitrary practice. These officials had no fixed tenure and their survival depended on the absolute discretion of the Crown which was unquestionable. The absence of checks and balance laid no restrictions on the arbitrariness and thus the Crown needn't give any bona fide reason or notice to remove or dismiss any official from his office. Such rule was thoroughly practiced in the United Kingdom which was derived from the Latin phrase "Durante bene placito Regis"[5] which means "during the pleasure of the King".

India, being a Common Law country and a member of the British Commonwealth embraced the same rule in its Constitution or the Law of land. But the inherent question that lies here is that- is the 'doctrine of pleasure' applied in the Indian Constitution literally a carbon copy of the what was practiced in the UK? Let us analyse the basic tenets or provisions of the Indian Constitution that highlights this doctrine. The classic example of how the doctrine of pleasure has been incorporated in the Indian Constitution is evident in the appointment of the Governor of each state in India. According to Article 155 and 156 of the Constitution[6], the Governor, being the appointee of the President, stays in the office as long as he enjoys the pleasure of the President. However, the 'pleasure of the President is the will of the Council of Ministers, on whose advices the President is mandated to act upon as provided in Article 74[7]. Thus, the president or we can merely put that the Central Government has the power to remove the Governor from the Raj Bhavan. The various appointments on different posts of the Centre or the Union illustrated under article 310, for example; the defence or the Civil servants are all appointed for the tenure as long as they enjoy the 'pleasure' of the President which again incorporates this doctrine.

The rule to remain in the office during the pleasure of the political superior or the head of the state, nonetheless, is not present in the absolute or unfettered form. The democratic setup itself disallows the exercise of this doctrine in a capricious, irrational or unreasonable

manner. The President, in his capacity can remove the Governor from the office provided that the President has compelling reasons and rare circumstance to act upon the decision. The Central Government cannot place any person as a puppet in their hands to appease them and misuse the powers given in Article 356. The removal of the Governor cannot be mechanical which means that the Governor should be removed only in the circumstances when he loses confidence of the President and the Central Government. The decision should be supported with a bona fide reason and materials to allude that the Governor acted against the confidence of the Centre or acted in bad faith. Other provisions mentioned in the Constitution which bars the usage of 'doctrine of pleasure' are enshrined in Article 309 and 311 which is also a proviso to Article 310 which incorporates the said rule. Thus, even though, this doctrine is presented and enumerated in the Indian Constitution, classically in the appointment of the Governor, it is still curtailed to a justified extent[8]. The exercise of pleasure can also be restricted by statutory enactments by the Parliament as ultimately the Central Government acts through the President. The decision to remove the Governor from the office shall always be intra vires and shall not violate the Constitutional spirit and the law of land.

'Doctrine of pleasure' in the UK and Australia: An analysis.

Traditionally, every office of a civil servant in the UK was held during the pleasure of the Crown as in most cases, the Crown was the appointing authority. All the civil official held their office during the 'pleasure' of the Crown which meant that their office can be terminated anytime if it deemed fit to the Crown. Thus, the Civil official were nothing more than a mute toy in the hands of the Crown. The Crown was not obliged to assign any reason or justification to dismiss any official, even in the situations where the Crown might have breached the contract of employment where the Crown was still not bound with it. This plainly means that the Crown was levied with no liability even in cases of breach of contract and the arrears or damages arising out of such breach cannot be claimed in any court of law in England. However, this gradually changed with the change in the society and laws and later in 2000, Bill introduced in the House of Lords ensured that the appointments to the office of Civil officials will be free from any kind of political prejudice and would comply with the norms laid down in the Code of Civil Service Commission (House of Lords, 2004)[9].

Similarly, the principle of 'Doctrine of pleasure' was adopted during the colonial rule in the Australia as the part of Common Law system which originated from the UK. But with pace of development in ideas and expressions, several amendments were made to rectify and narrow down the usage of the 'Doctrine of Pleasure and now the appointments to the public offices are not influenced by the political biases but are fixed provided that the officials don't act unlawfully or unconstitutionally.

So thus far we see how in most democracies and Common Law nations the concept to the 'doctrine of pleasure' restricted and narrowed down and in no manner, it is used absolutely or arbitrarily. The vivid difference in the usage of the doctrine is evident from the different provisions present in the Constitution which entails that all the authority and exercising of power shall not be 'ultra vires' or unconstitutional.

Examining the status of the Governor in both Feudal and Democratic set-up.

As far as the understanding goes about both Feudalism and Democracy, we see the vast difference of power and authority as where in Feudal setup the Monarch or the King/Queen

are the sole rulers whereas Democracy is the rule by the representatives elected by the People. The Feudal setup was a hierarchical order in the society where the Crown or the Monarch is the despot and had extreme or absolute powers. The most esteemed royal office was that of the Governors who were appointed to the Raj Bhavans who would facilitate political negotiations. All such officials of the Crown remained in the office on the mercy or whims of the Crown. This power was absolutist in nature and cannot be rebutted by anyone or any authority and its decisions were never backed by justifications. The Crown owed no obligations to provide reasons in case of removal of the Governors.

On the contrary, as enshrined in the Preamble, India is a "Democratic Republic"[10], which means the head of the state is the 'President' or the "titular head" who acts on the advice of the Council of Ministers or the ruling party. India also being a federation of states, the Union Government through the President appoints a 'Governor' as the head of each state. Eventually, the Governor shall stay in the office as long as he enjoys the pleasure of the President or ultimately during the pleasure of the Union Government. However, this power to act on the 'pleasure is fettered [11]by different Constitutional provisions in compliance with the spirit of a Democratic setup. The President has to assign a bona fide reason in case of dismissal of the Governor and through various judicial precedents it has been reiterated that only in rare circumstances of loss of confidence, the Governor can be dismissed. Even though, the doctrine of pleasure has been widely incorporated from the United Kingdom but it can never be arbitrary or mechanical. So thus far, we comprehensively understand the major differences between the two setups in regard to the Gubernatorial position of the Governor and how the 'Doctrine of pleasure' is differently incorporated.

Conclusion:
A way forward to reconcile the conundrum of Governor appointment and political negotiation.

Unlike the president, the governor's appointment does not come with accountability to the public. The conundrum and the rising feud in many a state is nothing but an outcome of a 'lack of proper channelized provisions for appointment and removal of the governor' in our constitution. The way forward to address the significant grey areas of the governor's position is to amend and ensure accountability and freedom for the office of the governor. However, it is, in any case, impossible to even think about the ruling party making proper laws and amending existing articles for the 'free and fair appointment of the governor'. Since for any political party, it's a matter of political negotiations to attempt to exhibit its power in different states and union territories. Majorly by the governor, the ruling party in most of the union territory and schedule -5 (Indian constitution) states indirectly determines the policy and governance matter. One real-time example was the incident of the appointment of Mari chenna Reddy as governor to cease the aspect of Andhra Telangana separation. The political person turning to a statesman through Governor appointment is a major issue revolving around the disparity of the chief minister and Governor in a state. This allows political negotiation. One example is when Mr Ramakrishna Rao from Andhra was appointed Governor to negate the separate state demand for Telangana. In 1970, this was repeated, and Dr Mari chenna Reddy was appointed as Governor of Uttar Pradesh to refute the ongoing separate state agitation. He merged his political party with Congress, and later, he also became

the Chief minister of Andhra Pradesh (that time combined). After the election, he vacated the cm office and was appointed governor of Tamil Nadu. Here, the gubernatorial post was one such that was a tool for political negotiation benefiting these leaders to get the status of a statesman. That's why at that time, it was called as Use, abuse and misuse of the power conferred. Thou, in the case of Rameshwar Prasad v. Union of India, 2006, justice Pasayat said it would be indeed chimerical to expect the political party in Delhi to even attempt or think of making an amendment to the constitution and give up their powerful chair of the governor (in his dissenting opinion).

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The Love and Fear of Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract:

Artificial intelligence is the ability of machines and software to perform functions commonly performed by intelligent beings. These functions include learning, reasoning, problem solving, perception, and understanding languages. Intelligence comprises of the ability to perceive the real world, to constantly learn, synthesize, interpret, infer meaning and react accordingly. The relationship between human intelligence and artificial intelligence (AI) is complex and multifaceted, characterized by a mix of fascination, collaboration, and some concerns. Human intelligence and AI have the potential for a mutually beneficial relationship. AI algorithms can assist in data analysis, pattern recognition, and automating routine tasks, freeing up humans to focus on more creative and strategic endeavors. While AI technology is rapidly being adopted across various industries benefitting human kind. There are some concerns that arise with the advancement in AI technologies. Perhaps one of the biggest fear humans holds is the intelligence of AI systems outgrowing human intelligence. The possibility that these autodidactic machines in the future achieve complete autonomy, develop their own identity, and self-instructing themselves is scary. Imagining a future in which these highly intelligent systems turn into enemies of mankind and declare war against their own creator sends chills down one's spine.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, intelligence, learning, human, algorithms.

Introduction:

Artificial intelligence (AI) is a combination of computer programs and algorithms that have been designed to mimic human intelligence in terms of thinking and acting like humans. Before we try to understand AI, it is important to understand intelligence. Intelligence is composed of reasoning, acquiring knowledge through experience, learning through exposure to real life problems and the ability to solve problems. Intelligence also comprises of the

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ability to perceive the real world, interpret intelligently and react accordingly. Engineers, scientists and researchers have achieved significant advancement in increasing the processing and computational speed of computers. The focus has now shifted to make computers smarter and highly intelligent. The race to build more and more intelligent machines has begun. "Intelligence" is the ability to constantly learn, to synthesize and to infer meaning.

The progress and development of artificial intelligence draws upon the knowledge from various fields. Knowledge representation and reasoning, machine learning, natural language processing, automated planning and scheduling, computer vision, robotics, and many other fields contribute to the development of artificial intelligence. Artificially intelligent systems are built for a variety of tasks, including speech recognition, learning, planning, and problem solving. Deep learning is another exciting branch of AI. A subfield of Machine Learning, Deep Learning involves using neural networks to model and solve complex issues.

Artificial Intelligence can broadly be categorized into four types based on its functionality:

1. Reactive Artificial Intelligence:

Algorithms are used by reactive AI to optimise outputs in response to a collection of inputs. AI that plays chess, for instance, are reactive systems that optimise winning strategies. Reactive AI tends to stay somewhat static. They are unable to evolve or adapt to new circumstances. As a result, given the same inputs, it will create the same output.

2. Limited memory Artificial Intelligence:

AI with limited memory can adapt to past experiences or update itself based on new observations or data. The quantity of updates is usually minimal, and the memory is typically not very long. Autonomous vehicles, for instance, have the ability to "read the road" and adjust to unusual circumstances, even "learning" from prior mistakes.

3. Theory of Mind Artificial Intelligence:

This type of AI is fully adaptive and capable of learning from and retaining previous experiences. These types of AI are capable of passing the Turing Test and can deceive a person into thinking it was a real person. These AI uses multiple layers of neural networks that attempts to impersonate the functioning of human brain but they are not self-aware.

4. Self-aware Artificial Intelligence:

This is the most advanced level of AI technology where the AI system is aware of its own existence and have mindfulness of their own identity. These types of AI develop alertness, apprehension, feelings, emotions, consciousness and are sentient of their own existence.

The love and appeal of artificial intelligence.

The relationship between human intelligence and artificial intelligence (AI) is complex and multifaceted, characterized by a mix of fascination, collaboration, and some concerns. Artificial intelligence has been depicted in a variety of ways in movies. For example, a very popular hollywood movie the matrix depicts a quintessential dystopia where mankind's fear of super intelligent AI becomes a reality. Another popular movie named the terminator portrays a world where AI machines would have attained the self-awareness stage and become extremely intelligent. In such a world where AI would be existing as an independent species, the fight between artificial intelligence and humans would get real. In such a scenario humans

would be fighting for their survival against a more intelligent and advanced species.

Human intelligence and AI have the potential for a mutually beneficial relationship. AI technologies can augment human capabilities, helping us solve complex problems, make better decisions, and enhance our productivity. For example, AI algorithms can assist in data analysis, pattern recognition, and automating routine tasks, freeing up humans to focus on more creative and strategic endeavors. The development of AI has been greatly influenced by human intelligence. When creating AI algorithms and models, researchers take inspiration from human cognition and intelligence. Neural networks, machine learning and deep learning aim to imitate how people process information and learn from data. The foundation for AI development was laid by human intelligence, and this influence is still present today.

We have always wanted to impart human-like qualities, attributes and emotions to AI systems, leading to an emotional connection between humans and AI. This can be observed in the popularity of virtual assistants like Siri or Alexa, where users may develop a sense of familiarity or even affection towards these AI-powered entities. However, it is important to remember that AI lacks true consciousness or emotions and is ultimately a product of human engineering.

While AI has made significant progress in specific domains, human intelligence possesses unique qualities that AI struggles to replicate. Human creativity, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and the ability to understand context and nuance are areas where AI still falls short. These aspects highlight the importance of human intelligence alongside AI, as they contribute to innovation, empathy, and social interactions. The combined potential of human and artificial intelligence can bring about transformative changes across various fields, but it also requires careful navigation to address societal concerns and ensure a human-centric approach to AI development and deployment.

The human fear of intelligent machines.

Homosapiens aka humans stand tall today as the most dominant and intelligent species on planet earth because the ancestors of the homosapiens like homo neanderthalensis and other species of the hominid family could eventually evolve into the most intelligent species on the planet. Humans today control over most of the resources available on this planet for themselves. We have taken over large part of the forests around the world and converted it into cities, town and villages for ourselves limiting the other animal species to live within more and more limited, smaller and confined regions. We enjoy all these previlages due to the human intelligence and the ever-increasing knowledge of humankind. With the advancement in science and technology we have now reached a stage where we can create intelligent machines that mimics some of the human intelligence characteristics. All of this is fascinating and fine upto the point as long as we have control over the intelligent machines we have created. However, the threat gets real only when the artificial intelligence outpaces human intelligence. There is a possibility that these autodidactic machines in the future could not only self-learn but also gain complete autonomy and self-instruct.

Artificial Intelligence is like your best friend in many ways who is stronger, smarter and more intelligent than you. You could always count on this friend. This friend would be there for you whenever you need him. But, what if this best friend of yours who knows all your little secrets, all your weakness turns into your biggest enemy. AI is somewhat like that. Its

great until it is on your side. But it is dangerous if this highly intelligent artificial species stands against you. It could wipe you and your entire species out from the face of this planet.

Mankind has always been fascinated by intelligent life in outer space. We have been curious and searching for them since a long time. With the progress of science and technology the search has only intensified further. Even though we humans do not know for sure if there are aliens somewhere out there or not. The question that follows immediately after this is that, if there are aliens out there. Are they more intelligent, smart and advanced than us? Should we carry on our efforts to contact them or is it wiser to remain isolated. Somewhat similar is the case when it comes to artificial intelligence. We are curious to learn more about it, we want to improve the AI technology so that it can make life easier for us but we also fear that what if its self-learning abilities makes it even smarter than us. What if humans lose control over the smart self – learning intelligent machines they have created. They could become a threat to our very existence. As we the homosapiens would no more be the smartest and most intelligent species on planet earth. The other fear we face today is the fear of AI taking over our jobs. In present times where computers are present across all industries the penetration of AI systems is unchallenging. With uncertainty looming over and media adding more fuel to the hype millions of employee's fear losing their jobs.

A new problem that has risen with the progression of artificial intelligence is deep fake. Deep learning algorithms are used in deepfake AI to swap faces in videos, images, and other digital content in order to make the fake seem authentic. Deep fakes are frequently used to spread false information on purpose, or they may be used with malicious intent. They may be made with the intention of intimidating, humiliating, and undermining people. Through the use of convincingly faked videos and images, they can also be used to spread false information.

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Prophetic Leadership in Academic Institutions: A Catalyst for Positive Transformation and Ethical Excellence

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Abstract:

The research focuses on the idea of prophetic leadership in academic institutions. Prophetic leadership shows an unrelenting dedication to promoting a culture of learning, motivating positive change, and upholding social responsibility. Prophetic leadership is typified by transformative leadership practices that encourage good change and a culture of learning and growth. These practices are visionary, moral, and transformative. Due to the fast-shifting global environment, academic institutions have recently faced several challenges. In the face of these challenges, prophetic leadership has emerged as a compelling leadership paradigm that goes beyond conventional approaches. Academic prophets are characterised by their morality, enlightened perspective, and unwavering commitment to fostering positive change both inside and outside of the institution. In this theoretical study, the key characteristics of prophetic leadership are investigated together with the impact on academic institutions, implications on educational outcomes, and social involvement. This paper aims to shed light on the function of prophetic leadership in shaping the future of higher education through a critical analysis of pertinent literature and theoretical analysis.

Introduction:

The position of a leader is frequently used to determine the success or failure of leadership processes in a family, group, organisation, institution, and the scope of a larger community, such as a nation. (Sonmez Cakir & Adiguzel, 2020) The leadership model is much more diversified. Many leaders have developed their leadership styles as a result of the problems that they have faced.(Maqbool et al., 2023; Sfantou et al., 2017) Each leader has unique obstacles, even though there are some similarities in some common ones. The prophetic leadership concept is an intriguing leadership style. (Whitfield & Davidson, 2016) Based on history, the Prophet used it throughout his time, demonstrating that this leadership paradigm is excellent for use in daily life. Leaders are expected to maintain these characteristics to be effective role models in all parts of life, both prophetically and personally. (Leadership,

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2024; Sultan & Jaradi, 2022)

In academic institutions, prophetic leadership refers to a visionary and revolutionary leadership style that goes beyond traditional administrative positions.(Karwan et al., 2021) It entails leaders who have a thorough awareness of the institution's mission and position in society, as well as those who inspire and guide their communities towards good change, growth, and social impact. Prophetic leaders in academia frequently challenge the established quo, advocate for novel ways, and work for educational equity and justice. (Braam et al., 2020)

These leaders are motivated by a strong moral compass, a desire to learn, and a desire to serve the greater good.(Steinmann et al., 2018) They serve as change agents, influencing the academic landscape and cultivating an environment that encourages excellence, innovation, and critical thinking.(Abbas & Asghar, 2010; Innovation, 2016) Prophetic leadership in academic institutions recognises the interdependence of education, society, and the future. It emphasises the necessity of solving contemporary concerns, embracing diversity, and providing students with the skills and information required in a fast-changing world.(Hernes & Zadra, 2003; Kuh et al., 2006; Patel & Goyena, 2019) Prophetic leaders inspire and mobilise people to imagine and achieve a shared mission through their visionary perspective.(Liu et al., 2022) They engage in strategic planning, create cooperation, and enable faculty, staff, and students to become active participants in creating the institution's direction and effect. (Hénard & Roseveare, 2012) Furthermore, prophetic leadership extends beyond the institution's walls, reaching out to the larger community and building relationships that improve social involvement and address societal problems. (Whitfield & Davidson, 2016) These leaders are aware of the social, economic, and cultural settings in which their institutions operate, and they use this knowledge to their advantage.

Fundamentally, prophetic leadership in academic institutions involves the desire to establish learning environments that are not just academically good but also transforming and socially responsible. It lays the groundwork for people's holistic development and the formation of a generation of leaders capable of addressing future challenges and opportunities.

Objectives:

To evaluate the relevance of prophetic leadership in the academic institutions

To analyse the cultivation culture of learning and innovation

Methodology:

Research Approach: For this theoretical study, a literature survey and conceptual analysis will be used as the research approach. Regarding prophetic leadership and its application in the setting of academic institutions, the emphasis will be on critically analysing the current literature, scholarly articles, books, and pertinent theoretical frameworks.

Literature Search: Academic databases including PubMed, Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Scopus will be used to conduct a thorough literature search. To find pertinent sources, we'll utilise keywords like prophetic leadership, academic institutions, visionary leadership, ethical leadership, transformational leadership, and social responsibility.

The paper is mainly conceptual and descriptive and it is based on the extant different research papers, journals, and articles related to leadership, ethics, and academic institutional

leadership, available over internet-based sources. Various other related books and journals which were available in physical form were also accessed to develop the foundation of the paper.

Theoretical Framework:

To stimulate progress, achieve excellence, and foster holistic development, prophetic leadership, which is characterised by visionary guidance and a strong moral compass, is extremely relevant in academic institutions.(Chukwuma Mgboji, 2018; Hénard & Roseveare, 2012) The prophets' excellent leadership, which was characterised by persistent dedication, sage judgement, and a revolutionary vision, served as a model for this leadership approach.(Hill et al., 2005; Mirzal & Ninglasari, 2021) The administration, instructors, pupils, and other authorities in educational institutions can gain a lot from the use of prophetic leadership principles.

1. Visionary Guidance

Prophetic leadership in academic institutions requires a compelling vision for the future of the institution. By outlining a clear mission and objectives, a visionary leader motivates stakeholders. By directing efforts towards a common goal and fostering a feeling of purpose and direction, this shared vision increases motivation and commitment.(Amercian Planning Assoication, 2015)

2. Ethical Foundation

Moral ideals and ethical behaviour are emphasised by prophetic leadership. This relates to promoting an atmosphere of integrity, honesty, and accountability in a learning environment. The administration fosters a climate of trust and respect among the staff, faculty, and students by encouraging ethical behaviour. (Luciano, 1998)

3. Empowering Teachers and Staff

A prophetic leader gives teachers and employees the tools they need to succeed in their positions. Prophetic leadership improves education by facilitating opportunities for professional growth, praising accomplishments, and supporting creative teaching methods.(Berry et al., 2010; Hardiyanto, 2020)

4. Student development holistically:

The academic, moral, emotional, and social development of students is given top priority by prophetic leadership. Beyond passing standardised tests, the emphasis is on developing students' critical thinking, creativity, empathy, and character. Students are motivated to develop into well-rounded persons who are more equipped to handle the challenges of life.(Berry et al., 2010; Hardiyanto, 2020)

5. Fostering Inclusivity:

In academic institutions, prophetic leadership is fundamentally based on inclusive education. Prophetic leaders make sure that every student enjoys an egalitarian and supportive learning environment, regardless of their background or talents. Practises that are inclusive help people feel like they belong and lower obstacles to education.(Pedaste et al., 2021)

6. Continuous Improvement

The culture of continual improvement is fostered by prophetic leadership. Academic institutions can change to meet changing educational demands by promoting reflective practice and welcoming criticism. Better academic results and improved institutional performance result from a focus on growth and improvement.(Lasrado & Zakaria, 2019; Mullins, 2011)

7. Community Engagement

Prophetic leadership places a strong emphasis on community participation. To build a supportive learning ecosystem, academic institutions work in conjunction with parents, community members, and other stakeholders. Participation in the community improves the resources offered to students and fosters a sense of shared accountability for their education. (Russell, 2009)

8. Impact on Society

Prophetic leadership inspires academic institutions to make beneficial contributions to society. Educational institutions with prophetic leadership promote in students a feeling of social responsibility and empathy for others through community service programmes, social projects, and campaigning.

The Climate of Innovation and Constant Learning

Organisations and institutions must adapt to ongoing changes and disruptions in the knowledge-based economy of today. For an organisation to remain competitive and relevant, it is essential to foster a culture of learning and innovation. Such a culture not only stimulates the investigation of fresh concepts and innovative solutions but also empowers staff members and stakeholders to embrace constant learning.

- Leadership Commitment: The dedication of senior leadership is the foundation of any learning and innovative culture. Leaders must set the tone by actively supporting learning initiatives, taking part in them, and boosting risk-taking. (Lisa Dreier et al., 2019)
- Continual learning initiatives: Giving staff members access to learning opportunities including workshops, training sessions, and mentorship initiatives promotes professional progress and builds a growth mentality.
- Knowledge Sharing: Fostering creativity and cooperation inside an organisation requires the development of platforms and systems that enable the exchange of knowledge and ideas.
- Reward and Recognition: By praising and rewarding people and groups for their creative work, organisations can better understand the value of learning and innovation.(Yaqub & Al-Sabban, 2023)

Findings:

The results of this study confirm that prophetic leadership acts as a catalyst for good change and moral excellence in educational institutions. Prophetic leaders establish a culture of excellence, inspire a sense of purpose, and encourage moral decision-making. Their forward-thinking strategy fosters innovation, improves the calibre of the research, and strengthens community involvement. Academic institutions should make leadership development investments and build supportive environments for visionary and moral leaders

to fully realise the promise of prophetic leadership. Higher education institutions can better position themselves to have a beneficial impact on society and build a better future for everyone by cultivating prophetic leadership.

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Innovating Through Adversity: India's Digital Initiatives During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract:

The COVID-19 outbreak urged the educational institutions to adopt alternative methods of teaching and learning for the continuity and maintenance of quality education. In India, the pandemic had a major impact on higher education (HE) and it convinced educational institutions to adopt E-learning who earlier were not willing to adopt it. It made the system realize and accept new methods and approaches of teaching-learning like flipped classroom, blended approach of learning etc. The current study provides an overview of the role of E-learning by highlighting the various digital initiatives taken by Government of India especially during and after the pandemic.

Keywords: Digital initiatives, E-learning, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, COVID-19, Higher Education (HE), India

Introduction:

The National Education Policy (NEP-2020) highlights the importance of the Digital India Campaign for transforming India into a digitally empowered society. The policy claims that education will play a critical role in this transformation and calls the relationship between education and technology bi-directional [1]. Education plays an important role in human development and the higher education is a central venue for the construction and development of new knowledge and the digital technologies act as essential means for achieving this potential. The digitalization in higher education empowers the higher education institutions (HEIs) in attracting more and more students, making the teaching-learning effective and

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improve the overall process of teaching and learning. With the growth of technology, the digital resources in India have become increasingly available to students, providing students with new opportunities to access higher education. In the year 2020, after the outbreak of COVID-19 in the world, the Government of India (GoI) had to close all the educational institutions and to sustain higher education, it encouraged the HEI's to adopt alternative methods of teaching learning using E-learning practices. The pandemic convinced educational institutions to adopt E-learning who earlier were not willing to adopt it. E-learning approach is adopted by HEIs in traditional or face-to-face mode to facilitate teaching and learning through internet or intranet technologies. Anytime, Anywhere and Anyplace are the three essential characteristics of this approach. It promotes independent and active learning and enables use of efficient means of delivering course material to students. Students can interact with their peers around the world because it makes education open and accessible to a wide audience. E-learning can adjust to the needs of everyone and offers cost-effective education and flexibility in terms of time, place and pace. The HEIs are using E-learning to be in line with the future 21st-century technologies. Research claims that learning that takes place through E-learning platforms increases the retention of information among students [2]. It makes learners self-directed where they can learn synchronously or asynchronously at any time [3]. E-learning makes the learning experience more engaging and memorable by making it possible to include a range of multimedia resources such as interactive quizzes, podcasts, videos etc. In a survey by "Wiley's annual Voice of the Online Learner", it was revealed that around 94% of students have a very positive view of online learning, and 83% of students showed their interest to learn again through online mode [4].

E-Learning During Covid-19 Pandemic in India

Just like in any other part of the world, the Indian HE experienced both challenges and opportunities due to COVID-19 pandemic. With the shift to E-learning from the traditional mode of education, the usage of technology increased HEIs invested and encouraged use of new technologies to support remote learning. During the pandemic, the HEIs conducted virtual classes by using various platforms like Google Meet, Zoom, MS Teams etc. The faculties of HEIs recorded lectures and posted them online for students and thus enabling students to study and learn at their own pace. This flexibility and convenience for students proved helpful to not only to show learners but also to those students who faced internet issues. The faculties also made the best use of the digital initiatives implemented by GoI especially in the field of higher education. They encouraged students for submitting assignments electronically and adopted online assessment methods to assess the learning progress of students. E-content plays an important role in E-learning. Realizing this, with the advent of the pandemic, the University Grants Commission (UGC) made exemplary efforts to spread awareness about various digital initiatives of GoI and to increase their usage among students and teachers. Among these initiatives, providing access to "Study Webs of Active Learning for Young Aspiring Minds (SWAYAM)" online courses "(http://storage.googleapis.com/uniquecourses/online.html)" without registration was a very need based and praiseworthy decision. The website was made available to students free of cost. Due to this step, there was a massive rise in enrolment of students in SWAYAM and it reached 1.1 crore between the time period of July 2019- January 2021. Around 24110 e-

content modules related to 87 undergraduate courses were made available online to students on the website of Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC) "(http://cec.nic.in/)". Another useful digital initiative which helped both teachers and students of HEIs during Pandemic was e-PG Pathshaala "(https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/)" . It hosted interactive and high-quality e-content. Around 23,000 modules containing e-texts and videos in 70 PG disciplines were hosted on this website. In May 2020, the "Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)" now "Ministry of Education (MoE)" through the National Digital Library of India (NDLI) created a special collection namely "Corona Outbreak: Study from Home". The collection aimed at enabling the teachers and students to have access to the educational literature during the pandemic. In addition to this, the MoE & IIT Kharagpur released "Consolidated Covid-19 Research Resource Repository. The access to the repository was enabled through NDLI. The repository contained collection of academic and research content for teachers and students which consisted of latest scholarly publications, documents, videos, journals, conferences etc. As an immediate response to the pandemic, the Central Institute of Educational Technology (CIET) has initiated a series of webinars for the professional development of teacher and students from April 2020. Till date, it has conducted 800 webinars on various aspects of integrating technology in teaching learning. In order to benefit the teacher and students, the CIET has maintained the video links and presentation of all the conducted Programme on its website (https://ciet.nic.in/pages.php?id=webinar&ln=en). Another praiseworthy initiative of GoI in the year 2020 was the launch of a national program "VidyaDaan 2.0" which aimed at developing and contributing E-learning content and getting a chance to be recognized nationally. The program brought together organizations and academicians to develop and contribute enriched curriculum-aligned E-learning content. The contributors can contribute E-learning content in a variety of forms like e-texts, videos, animations etc. Due to the growth of online learning during the pandemic, various national and foreign investors realized the capability of the EdTech market and invested in India-based E-learning and EdTech startups. Due to this, around 9000 startups emerged in India for delivering learning solutions to students, teachers and educational institutions [5].

E-Learning after Covid-19 Pandemic in India

The COVID-19 pandemic which started in the year 2020 has put over 1.2 billion children out of their school. As a result of the pandemic, the education system has changed dramatically where E-learning platforms have seen a distinctive rise. The pandemic accelerated the adoption & implementation of E-learning around the world. It also paved the way for colleges and universities to move their traditional classroom-based teaching learning to online platforms. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 also emphasizes on establishing a hybrid education system in India which will empower the education system with interactive and innovative technologies [6]. In February 2023, the SWAYAM topped among E-learning platforms by 2.4 crore enrolment and 26 lacks completing the courses. The ratio between males and female enrolment was 40:60 [7]. In 2021, UGC notified that the HEIs are allowed to teach up to 40% of syllabus of each course through online mode and rest 60% can be taught in offline mode (other than SWAYAM course). The UGC in September 2022 notified that the degree obtained through online and distance mode will be treated as equivalent to those degrees acquired through the conventional mode of learning. This step will help many students who

wanted to enroll for various courses but could not do because of residing in isolated or far interior places. Such a need based decision will empower them to pursue the course of their interest by saving their valuable time and reducing their travel expenses. Further, in the year 2022, the UGC amended the guidelines for Open and Distance Learning Programmes and Online Programme aiming at making online learning easier for international students and encouraging them to enroll in Indian Universities [8]. The students who enroll for various programmes through various E-learning platforms and complete the programmes are being issued credits for the course. These credits are stored in "Academic Bank of Credits (ABC)" which is a student-centric facility to be implemented at the University level across India. The initiative aimed at enabling student mobility across HEIs and allowing the student to move across various streams and HEIs. The ABC will act like a bank for students where the students can pursue online degree from various Universities in India and earn credits which will be stored in the bank [9]. The CIET also started to conduct various workshops, webinars and training programmes from March 2021 on the website (https://ciet.nic.in/workshop-training.php). Till today, CIET has conducted 42 workshops and training programmes on topics such as ICT integration in teaching and learning, e-content development, use of educational software and tools, digital storytelling, and online assessment, among others. The CIET is continuously carrying out training programmes. The Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs, GoI, in the Union Budget 2022-23 while presenting the Union Budget 2022-23" announced that a digital university "DESH-Stack eportal" will be setup in India for online learning providing world-class quality universal education. The university will provide a personalized learning experience to students. High quality e-content will be developed in all spoken languages and delivery of it will be made possible through digital teachers [10]. The ministry also announced that all states will be urged for setting up physical libraries at the panchayat levels so that the access to the resources of national digital library is ensured. By 2026, it is being project that India will face a scarcity of 14-19 tech professionals. The scarcity of tech professionals can be efficiently bridged by offering blended learning as it is cost-effective and a better method to produce skilled manpower [11]. In a related study, it was found that around 66% of learners were satisfied with online learning and around 76.47% of participants responded that the blended mode will be the future of learning. As high 88.92% of participants suggested that government should provide high-quality video conferencing facilities to students for free [12]. In a similar study conducted by Manjareeka et al., (2022), around 72.3% of teachers believed that videos or animation can raise the attention among students. However, 86% of teachers felt face-to-face learning is better than online mode of learning and also believed that the online mode of learning cannot be a substitute to face to face learning [13].

Conclusion:

COVID-19 pandemic has made us realize that a holistic approach to education is needed because it considers the student's academic, social, and psychological well-being. By prioritizing a holistic approach, educators can better support students through the challenges like that of the recent pandemic and prepare them for success in their future lives. The COVID-19 pandemic has actually tested the resilience of HEIs in executing E-learning. The convenience, flexibility, and cost-effectiveness make E-learning an attractive option for both

students and teachers. Thus, the E-learning platforms will continue to find its audience ensuring flexibility and providing new learning possibilities to students. In future, it is expected that E-learning will become even more prevalent and impactful in education. The E-learning platforms are strong enablers for learning but it would not reduce the importance of a teacher in the teaching-learning process and rather it would re-shape the role of teacher in higher education. Thus, the digital initiatives taken up by GoI during and after pandemic stood as a strong backbone support to both teachers and students of HEI's.

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सत्राची फाउंडेशन, पटना

शोध, शिक्षा एवं प्रकाशन की समाजसेवी संस्था

यह संस्था –

– साहित्यिक सम्मान देती है।

– शोध पत्रिकाएँ प्रकाशित करती है।

– पुस्तकें प्रकाशित करती है।

– सेमिनार आयोजित करती है।

– राजभाषा/राष्ट्रभाषा सेवियों को प्रोत्साहित करती है।

– शोधकर्ताओं को स्तरीय शोध के लिए प्रोत्साहित करती है।

– नेट/जे.आर.एफ. के अभ्यर्थियों को निःशुल्क मार्गदर्शन देती है।

– हिन्दी साहित्य के शिक्षार्थियों को प्रतियोगी परीक्षाओं के लिए तैयार करती है।