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Journal of Liberal Arts and Sciences

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Journal of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Is Nayib Bukele a Wannabe Dictator?

Aayush Maniktalia[1*]

Abstract

The paper explores the political dynamics in El Salvador and aims to analyse their implications in El Salvador's democracy.

Key Words: authoritarian, Bitcoin, El Salvador, Nayib Bukele, organised crime, populism

1. Introduction

"If any country can be said to have suffered enough, it would surely be El Salvador, the tiny nation of 6.4 million people on the Pacific coast of Central America" said a Washington Post Opinion piece was written in 2019 which celebrated the landslide victory of ex-San Salvador mayor Nayib Bukele as the dawn of a new era in El Salvador's troubled history. The article was't wrong about El Salvador's suffering. The nation has a long history of inequality and violence, the ugliest chapter of which occurred during the 1980s when a civil war between a U.S.-backed government army and Cuban-supported guerrillas claimed tens of thousands of lives. The war ended with the Chapultepec Peace Accords in 1992, post which the country remained a political duopoly with the politics dominated by the two largest political parties, the conservative right-wing Nationalist Republican Alliance, or ARENA, and the left-wing Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). The governments of both these parties have struggled with two problems that have been seemingly endemic to Latin America, corruption and Violence. El Salvador is one of the deadliest countries in the world and had a ridiculously high homicide rate of 100 persons per 100,000 people in 2015. This can be attributed to the prevalence and strength of organized criminal gangs in the country, including the infamous MS 13. In 2003, President Francisco Flores of ARENA attempted to confront the gangs up-front by implementing "*mano dura* "or iron-fisted policies. This, however, led to extrajudicial killings and human rights abuses on the part of the law enforcement agencies which further intensified the violence. The FMLN government tried a different approach to security by promising to handle the root causes of violence. As a part of the same, a truce was reached between the gangs and the government wherein the gang leaders promised to reduce violence in exchange for better prison conditions. Murder rates fell for a while but then skyrocketed when the truce fell apart in 2014. Post-2014, the FMLN increasingly came to embrace the "*Mano dura* "policies it had criticized earlier. In the end, however, none of the policies seemed to work and El Salvador remained one of the most murderous countries in the world. Be that as it may, recent events have shown that The Washington Post piece's optimism regarding the election of Nayib Bukele as President was miscalculated.

2. Who is Nayib Bukele?

Nayib Bukele is a 40 year old business man born in San Salvador. A dropout from Law School, Nayib spent much of his 20's managing nightclubs. In 2012, he won political office as the mayor of Nuevo Cusdcatlán. In 2015, he was elected as the Mayor of the capital, San Salvador. As mayor, he rebuilt the city's central square. This, he argued, wrestled control of the area from gangs. He was earlier a member of the FMLN from which he was sacked for now towing the party line, he claims. Running as an independent candidate in 2019, he won the presidency by a landslide victory on a vague, populist, and anti-corruption platform. This made sense as all of the last three president elects were facing charges of corruption, with one in prison and one in exile in Nicaragua. He has acclaimed his popularity among the masses using the means of social media and has a massive following on Instagram, Twitter, and interestingly, Tik Tok. The population was deeply disillusioned by the current political parties and vested their trust in a charismatic

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political outsider who vowed to *"clean things up ."* The President-elect has consistently enjoyed approval ratings of around 90%, by far the highest in Latin America and possibly the world.

3. What is happening in El-Savador?

Post-Bukele's election in 2019, he became the President. But since he had run as an independent candidate, he did not have a majority in the legislature. In February 2020, the President showed his opponents and the world that he would not let a mere legislative body stop him from getting his way when he ordered soldiers armed with M-16's to occupy the country's legislative assembly. He threatened the lawmakers that if they did not approve his 109 million US dollar loan for better police equipment to support his anti-crime initiative, he would not mind "pressing the button", i.e. dissolving the legislature.

As the coronavirus pandemic to the world by surprise in 2020, President Bukele introduced the most draconian lockdown in the region, which critics have claimed aimed more at consolidating his power than at preventing the spread of the virus. As a part of the Covid 19 prevention measures, any persons found outside their houses by law enforcement without a legitimate reason were put in arbitrary detention in overcrowded quarantine centers. The measures were, in fact, so extreme that the supreme court called them unconstitutional. Mr. Bukele defiantly tweeted that he wouldn't respect the decision.

The homicide rate, ever politicized in El Salvador, dropped significantly under Bukele's reign as President until April 2020. The President in his campaign argued against the infamous *"Mano Dura "* policies and several security analysts have pointed out that the reason for the fall in homicide rate has been a truce between the gangs and the President. The President has denied these allegations.

In April last year, 77 murders took place over a single weekend. Later that month, the government released pictures of semi-naked imprisoned Gang members crammed head to head while their cells were searched. The photos made headlines all over the world for the blatant disregard for Covid Protocols at a time when the world was being ravaged by the coronavirus and the government was called out by various human rights groups. The search operation was a part of the government's response to the killings, which officials argued were ordered by imprisoned gang leaders. When legislators met to override his veto of a bill that would repatriate citizens stuck abroad the President tweeted that his epidemiological team had detected significant suspicion of Covid-19 in the chamber and that it should be shut down.

All of this happened against the backdrop of the Trump administration's unwavering support for the Bukele government. For the United States, the single most important issue concerning El Salvador had been the status of the hoards of people who had left El Salvador owing to the violence in the four decades in search of greener pastures, many of whom arrived in the United States as refugees. Donald Trump, not exactly an ardent believer in democratic values was more than willing to accommodate Bukele's seemingly authoritarian behavior in exchange for the fall in the number of El Salvadorians escaping to the United States. This fall has been attributed to the popularity of Bukele and the populace's trust in him. This changed with the election of President Joe Biden and the US government has on several occasions condemned the behavior of Bukele.

In February 2021, the president's new party, New Ideas won a supermajority in the legislative elections. The party won 56 out of the assembly's 84 seats, completely obliterating the competition. The new legislators voted to remove all five judges of the constitutional chamber of the Supreme Court as well as the attorney general, who had also opposed excesses. Judges loyal to Bukele were placed in the constitutional chamber. Finally, Bukele could exercise unrestrained control over all the three organs of the government, i.e. the executive, legislature, and judiciary. Human Rights Watch's director of the Americas said of the government, *"There is not a democratic institution, there are no real checks and balances on the exercise of the power of Bukele."*

In September, El Salvador adopted bitcoin as the legal tender. The President has claimed that the move will bring more financial liberty to the people. However, many financial analysts have criticized the move considering the volatile nature of the cryptocurrency. The move has also been cited as an attempt by Bukele to distance the country from the US dollar and reduce the US's mammoth influence as he falls out of favor of Washington.

4. Is Nayib Bukele on the path to become a Dictator?

It is not an easy task in the field of political science to predict whether a leader has the potential and desire to become an autocrat. Daniel Ziblatt and Steven Levitsky in their seminal book, How Democracies die? What history reveals about our future have tried to do exactly that. They have come up with a framework to establish the likelihood of a leader becoming autocratic depending on the rhetoric, ideologies, and policies adopted by them. The model is based on a nuanced historical analysis of the breakdown of democracy in various regions of the world at different times.

1	Rejection of (or weak commitment to) democratic rules of the game	Do they reject the Constitution or express a willingness to violate it? Do they suggest a need for antidemocratic measures?
2	Denial of the legitimacy of political opponents	Do they describe their rivals as subversive, or opposed to the existing constitutional order? Do they claim that their rivals constitute an existential threat, either to national security or to the prevailing way of life?
3	Toleration or encouragement of violence	Do they have any ties to armed gangs, paramilitary forces, militias, guerrillas, or other organizations that engage in illicit violence?
4	Readiness to curtail civil liberties of opponents, including media	Have they supported laws or policies that restrict civil liberties?

Nayib Bukele does show a *weak commitment to democratic rules of the game*. His attack on the legislature's consequent disregard and legally unsound dismissal of the judiciary are testaments to this. He has also used extra-constitutional means to grab power.

Nayib Bukele however, does not exactly qualify for the criteria of *denying the legitimacy of political opponents*. He has often targeted the political and economic elite on the grounds of corruption but has certainly not questioned their legitimacy as political opponents. The idea that political opponents are agents of foreign powers is unheard of. Similarly, Bukele has not encouraged mass violence (at least on the part of the public), which is evident from his speeches and interactions. As for the fourth point, Bukele has certainly enacted laws that restrict civil liberties. The media has also been attacked, as evident in the recent law taxing 40 percent of the Foreign Funds of Media houses and civil society organizations.

5. Conclusion

Consequently, in accordance with the qualitative analysis above it would be fair to say that Nayib shows a strong inclination to be an autocrat. The events of the next couple of months would undeniably provide us with more clarity on the matter. If seen from a Neo-liberal standpoint, the way ahead is clear. The democracies of the West should use their leverage to persuade the President to backtrack and restore democracy to its full capacity. This can be done by incontestably condemning the events that have taken place since recently. The events currently unfolding are also a test of President Biden's hardline pro-democracy stance on which he campaigned.

Governments in the previous three decades have failed to stem corruption or tackle organized crime effectively. In such a scenario, it would be unfair to hold *democracy* as the epitome of a nation’s progress and consequently its loss as the greatest calamity, which the West often does. This is not to say that autocratic rule is the answer to El Salvador’s woes. Autocratic rule is never the answer and more often than not leaves a country worse off than it started. The argument, however, is that for a country that is already on the brink, it would be extremely naive and shortsighted to corner it further in the name of democracy, considering it has a leader whose actions are by and large supported by the population.
Declaring the regime a pariah puts the world at risk of antagonizing the Salvadorian people and promoting further anti-democracy sentiment in the country.

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Social Determinants of Health and the Disproportional Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on The African American Community

Rashi Randev[2]

Abstract

In the United States, the history of discrimination based on race and socio-economic status has contributed towards the growth of factors that have resulted in health disparities, lack of access and utilization of adequate health care. These existent health disparities in the United States reflects on the persistent gaps and inequalities in the quality of health and healthcare and are directly correlated to social and economic disadvantages, therefore negatively impacting the African Americans who have consistently experienced discrimination and have faced social and economic impediments for access to quality health care. Despite an increase in the developing interest of understanding the link between the social determinants of health and health outcomes, many academic scholars, researchers, policymakers, and others have only focused on interpersonal racial and ethnic discrimination and have given less emphasis on studying and identifying the health outcomes of structural racism; one of the root causes of racial health inequities. This research paper attempts to analyse how the COVID-19 pandemic has brought out the existing patterns of discrimination and systemic racism present in American society.

Key Words: *Racism, Discrimination, COVID-19, Health Disparities, Structural Inequality, Black Lives Matter*

1. Introduction

In the United States the history of slavery, enactment of Jim Crows[3], and the long struggle for civil rights represents the traditional domination of one race over the other and this dominance is still present in forms of racial discriminations and inequalities in American society and continues to be a significant challenge for the individuals of the African American community.

Historically in the United States, opportunity and prosperity have largely been reserved and associated with the white population through the means of intentional exclusion and prejudice towards the African American community. The deep-rooted racial and ethnic discriminations prevalent today are a direct repercussion of structural racism and systemic inequality. It continues to disproportionately affect the African American community by limiting their access to opportunity and upward mobility thereby creating disparities and gaps in quality education, employment, housing, health outcomes, and equal treatment in the criminal justice system.

The existence of disruptive social and economic conditions such as housing segregation, disparities in health ailments, poverty, and unemployment has led to social limitation of prospects for employment, further pushing the members of the African American community towards crime and violence. The objective of this research paper is to make an attempt to understand the socio-economic inequalities and disparities in the American society that pre-existed the COVID-19 period, and this pandemic has brought these disparities and inequalities into focus, which has impacted the African American community disproportionately.

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[3] Jim Crow laws were state and local laws that enforced racial segregation in the Southern United States. These were practices and laws that served to separate black people from white people. The most common types of Jim Crow laws forbid intermarriage and separated black and white citizens in public places, especially in restaurants and theatres and states and cities were allowed to punish people who broke these laws.

2. Racism and Discrimination in the United States of America

It was believed that with the implementation of the Civil Rights Act, the racial biases and social inequalities faced by the African American community would be eliminated but today even after decades of the enactment of the civil rights bill into law, the problems of unemployment, residential segregation and disproportionate numbers of African-Americans incarcerated in U.S. prisons continue to widen the existing racial gaps and inequalities for the African American community (Mitchell, 2004). The United States of America has been the biggest supporter of democracy and individual rights but the persistent circumstances and experiences of such social, economic, and racial inequalities faced by the African American community in a democratic America show how racism and discrimination are deeply embedded in the American culture and society

While there have been substantial laws and legislations which have brought about changes and have paved the way for the African American community in different areas such as, education, policymaking, law, trade and commerce, and various other fields. Yet, discrimination based on race remains one of the most intricate problems in the United States, as problems of racial stereotyping and personal bias cannot be altered by policy legislation. These persistent biases stimulate interracial tensions and other social and economic problems that are often ignored by the larger part of the American society unless there is a public outcry (Curtiss, 2011)

Incidents of police violence and use of force against the African American community is nothing new but as we have progressed with time, social media has become a powerful tool to express and stand against discrimination, racial biases and instances of violence by law enforcement agencies in the times of global civil society's usage of social media, have driven the issues of Black lives into the international spotlight like never before. This has led to the emergence of Black Lives Matter, a hashtag cum mass movement that has broadened the conversation around state violence by including all about how African Americans are intentionally left powerless at the hands of the state. The power of social media networks, with a rapid exchange of images, videos, and text narratives of violent encounters between police and unarmed African American people have brought unequal race relations to the forefront (Baker, 2001).

The Contemporary police brutality and innocent killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor have led to another civil rights crisis and have forced people to come out and protest amidst a pandemic. Racial biases and disparities in the criminal justice system, mass incarceration, use of brutal force on crime policies for petty crimes and minor drug offenses have inexplicably impacted African Americans, also persistent racial gaps in life expectancy, level of education, wealth, and income among the African American population, depicts the structural discrimination creating constraints on their human rights (NAACP, 2017).

3. Social Determinants of Health in the African American Community

It is believed that race-based discrimination has created social and economic obstacles which have hindered the progress of the African American community. There have been various affirmative policies, actions and legislations embarked by the American government to address the issues of racial inequality but the presence of social disparities in terms of housing, health and employment rates is a reminder that policies and legislations have not reliably reduced racial inequality. This section of the paper discusses the social determinants of health and the three persistent social and economic inequalities that are responsible for disproportionately affecting the African American community amidst the Covid-19 pandemic.

4. Residential Segregation

In the United States of America, the practice of residential segregation is the most formidable arrangement of segregation and apart from African Americans, there has been no other community of the American society that has ever experienced such a convoluted level of residential segregation (Barnes, 2004). Since the passage of the Civil Rights Act, the African American community has made significant economic and political advances but they still face substantial disparities in terms of access to residential ownership, employment, quality of education, among other disparities. These gaps can be seen in the form of continuing residential segregation because of the existence of racially segregated housing markets, impacting the economic mobility of African Americans.

In the year 1917, the metropolitan resident segregation regulations were stated unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in the case of Buchanan V. Warley and as a response, a restrictive covenant was formed where the white owners were not supposed to sell their property to African Americans and the white owners who infringed this covenant could be sued by their neighbours (Gilbert, 1963). It was only in 1948, after years of struggle and arduous efforts that the Supreme Court in the case of Shelley V. Kraemer stated that such covenants were unenforceable in any court of law. But by the time this judgment came, the residential segregation norms had already been established in almost all American cities and continues to persist till date in the form of isolated ghettos which perpetuate violence, offer low wage jobs and have limited avenues for the African American community to escape their social and economic circumstances (Barnes, 2004).

The arrangements and patterns of housing segregation seen today have not developed by chance. As Richard Rothstein points out in his book, The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America, “the public policies of yesterday still shape the racial landscape of today” (Artega et al.2020). In the 20th century, the state-approved forms of discrimination and the federal government policies which were profoundly racially prejudiced, have played a precarious role in establishing and enduring segregated African American neighbourhoods (Sohn, 2017).

To counter the effects of the Great Depression, a two-fold approach to housing policies was adopted by the federal government and worked largely in favor of white middle-class families, while have intentionally harmed the African American community. On the one hand, the federal government pursued to stabilize monetary conditions for homeownership by establishing the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC), the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the secondary mortgage market. The introduction of openly backed, low-slung down payment, fully remunerating, long-term, fixed-rate home mortgage loans promoted the demand for housing and advanced the construction and loan and mortgage commerce. On the other hand, the founding of the Public Works Administration (PWA) Housing Division programs supported and funded public housing structures and slum clearance to better the housing situations and conditions of low-income families and improve employment in the construction trades. However, this two-fold approach to housing policy encouraged residential segregation in significant ways. The federal government’s support for homeownership was explicitly directed at white borrowers and excluded African Americans. The Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC), specifically, embedded redlining as a way to assess the quality of neighbourhoods based on their racial and ethnic composition. Residential zones with a large population of African Americans usually received the lowest ratings and were considered unsafe to secure government-assisted mortgages (Centre for American Progress, 2020). The central cities with a maximum concentration of African Americans were consistently repudiated from receiving funding (World Health Organization, 2002).

Simultaneously, slum-clearance plans moved the minority African American residents and pushed them closer to the slums, since most of the government-sponsored accommodations were beyond their purchasing capability as they belonged to the low-income families, and constraining covenants restricted them from moving to racially integrated neighbourhoods (Morris et al. 1999).

Although as compared to the 1960s and 1970s, a consistent decline can be noted in residential segregation patterns it continues to persist in the metropolitan areas of the U.S.A and as a community, African Americans remain to experience the highest segregation levels among all other existent racial and ethnic groups. Looking at the empirical evidence and research, a typical African American lives in an area that is only identified as a 35 percent white neighbourhood, but it has not improved much since 1940, an average African American resident lived in a neighbourhood where the white residents comprised of 40 percent of the total population (Logan and Schuetz, 2017). Therefore, the African American homeowners continue to be concentrated in Black neighbourhoods even when they are financially sound and have the monetary ability to afford properties in any neighbourhood of their choice, whereas the prospects for equity building are similar to those of white homeowners of similar socio-economic status. These racially segregated patterns in residential neighbourhoods are distressing because they reflect and contribute towards persisting racism and discrimination in the residential landscape of America (Barnes, 2004).

The Fair Housing Act was brought to eliminate the explicit discrimination and disparities in the housing industry and eventually putting an end to residential segregation. Even though the Fair Housing Act has succeeded in eliminating the aggressive racial discrimination that existed more than 60 years ago but the American housing industry is still highly divided along racial lines. The benefaction and practice of federal redlining and racially biased housing policies and practices persist even today, as housing discrimination is still experienced and manifested in various other ways and African American neighbourhoods continue to be socially judged and financially devalued as compared to the white neighbourhoods (Gilbert, 1963).

A series of reports by the Department of Housing and Urban Development not only brings out the severe levels of concentration of families of African Americans in low-income neighbourhoods but also shows an interconnection between racial segregation and inequalities in access to food, health, and education (OHCHR, 2016). Individuals residing in the lower-income African American neighbourhoods have fewer employment opportunities, few educational achievements, lower life expectancy, greater levels of exposure to violence and police brutality.

Residential segregation hampers people’s access to green spaces and leads to excess exposure to pollution, infections, and environmental hazards, which upturns the risk for diabetes and heart and kidney diseases (Pirtle and Whitney, 2020). These low-income segregated neighbourhoods have limited access to safe abortion practices, medical facilities and health clinics (Sampson, 2003).

These social and economic inequalities manifesting through residential segregation, are responsible for the results of higher rates of African Americans contracting the coronavirus. Also, sociologist Robert Sampson points that the Covid-19 virus has uncovered class and race-based discriminations and vulnerabilities, according to him also brought the concept of “toxic inequality,” into the light, especially because of the clustering of COVID-19 cases in the African American community and pointing that even if they are at the same level of income or poverty as the white American population, they are probable to live in poor neighbourhoods, have polluted environments, lead exposure, higher rates of incarceration, and higher rates of violence (Walsh, 2020).

These problems of the Black neighbourhoods results in long-term health consequences, most of the cases are concentrated in urban areas with high population density, which mostly comprises Black neighbourhoods and during the time of a pandemic, these places witness a higher impact on the residents as norms of social distancing and frequent washing of hands cannot be carried out effectively in dense communities with prior health risks, improper housing, poor sanitation, and limited access to clean water.

5. Poverty and Unemployment

The social and economic aspects of both unemployment and poverty have inexplicably affected the African American community. There is undeniably a correlation between the two but the problems of poverty and unemployment do not impact everyone equally, but in America, the African American community suffers excessively from both unemployment and poverty and are more likely to be out of employment and more likely to be in conditions of poverty as compared to the White population.

The factors contributing for a larger chunk of the population of the African American community belonging to a greater percentage that are under poverty and unemployed are not singular in nature but social and political influences have underwritten this contradiction of social inequality. Traditionally, the racial discrimination against the African American community in the American society has significantly led to lack of quality education and access to homeownership (PEW Research Center, 2015).

A population survey held in 2018 to evaluate the characteristics of lower-income families by the measure of race and ethnicity demonstrated that in America out of the 7.5 million low-income generating families consisting of children, 20.8 percent were African American (U.S. Census Data, 2019). Also, mostly the lower-income racial and ethnic minorities are likely to reside in heavily populated neighbourhoods and houses that are held by generations, and their monetary conditions followed with an unhealthy lifestyle practices, making it a challenge for low-income families to take essential and compulsory precautions for their safety amid a pandemic (Henderson et al, 2009).

According to the Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, the African American community, even though accounting for 13 percent of the American population, makes up close to 40 percent of the American homeless population (Allen, 2020). Also, individuals who are homeless do not have the option to stay at home and isolate themselves, homeless individuals and families often live in close quarters, most of them in their advanced years, having compromised immune systems and are extremely vulnerable with higher possibilities of exposure to the COVID-19 virus.

There are low-income generating occupations where individuals from the African American community are disproportionately predominant and they are at a higher risk of contracting the Covid-19 virus. Close to 40 percent of the African American workforce, that is more than seven million, have been identified as low-wage workers and have occupations where there are no options of paid sick leave and therefore they are more likely to continue working even when they are infected and this can increase the risk of exposure to other workers (Allen, 2020).

A study carried out by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has pointed that many individuals from the African American community who can be identified as frontline workers and are responsible for delivering essential services for public transit, health care, and food services have an obligation to interact with the general public, even with a high number of outbreaks in their communities, which exposes them to higher risks of contracting the COVID-19 virus. The study also stated that nearly “a quarter of employed Hispanic and African American workers are employed in service industry jobs, compared to 16 percent of non-Hispanic whites. African Americans make up 12 percent of all employed workers but account for 30 percent of licensed practical and licensed vocational nurses, who face significant exposure to the coronavirus” (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).

In the year 2018, 45 percent of workers occupying low-income jobs were dependent on an employer for health insurance. Only when a worker is tested positive for Covid-19, the employers let their workers take leave of absence, therefore the pandemic has forced low-wage workers to continue to go to work even when they feel unwell and the virus being highly contagious and rapidly spreading. The target time period in which an individual gets to know they are infected and they could have self-isolated, they have undoubtedly infected many others who came in close contact with them both at home and workplace (Artega et al. 2020).

6. Health and Insurance Coverage

Health is often associated with the economic standing of a human being. Individuals who belong to the higher income groups are likely to have better access to healthcare services as well as lifestyles that enable them to make healthier choices, on the other hand, the individuals with lower incomes every so often finds it hard to have access to healthcare services and their lifestyles which are limited by their monetary conditions tend to have disadvantageous effects on their health as compared to people with higher incomes.

The African American community has a history of discrimination in the United States which has led to some inadequate aspects that have steered significant health disparities in the African American community. The meaning of health disparities states the variances in disease risk, incidence, morbidity, prevalence, and mortality as well as other hostile circumstances, such as unequal access to quality health care which is a reality among various racial and ethnic groups in the United States. Moreover, these health inequalities across the United States are gaps in the quality of healthcare and are associated with social and economic handicaps, they have a negative effect on individuals from the African American community who have systematically faced greater social and economic impediments to health care. These impediments arise from reasons traditionally linked to discrimination or exclusion based upon race or ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, or sexual orientation (NAACP, 2017).

Historically, the African American community has been disproportionately diagnosed with prolonged comorbidities such as asthma, hypertension, and diabetes, which are underlying health conditions that may make the COVID-19 virus more fatal. According to Dr. Anthony Fauci, an immunologist who has been associated and has also been the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases since 1984, has stated that “it is not that [African Americans] are getting infected more often. It’s that when they do get infected, their underlying medical conditions wind them up in the ICU and ultimately give them a higher death rate.” (CNBC, 2020).

Problems of hypertension have been one of the major health complications and an underlying cause for COVID-19-related deaths among African Americans. A recent study conducted by Khansa Ahmad, E.W Chen, and U. Nazir, studied the connection between poverty and heart diseases, trying to understand why many African American's lives were lost in the pandemic. In the study, the author points that the American healthcare system has failed to address the higher possibilities of socially and economically disadvantageous communities suffering from heart disease (Ahmad et al. 2019). Also having a higher incidence of chronic health conditions as compared to the white population, African Americans experience higher death rates.

Another significant concern is the lack of health insurance coverage, the Affordable Care Act which was brought by the Obama administration led to the health insurance coverage of 17.6 million but the American states which had extensive health disparities precluded the Medicaid; expansion. According to the National healthcare quality and disparities report (2015), the enactment of the Affordable Care Act did aid to close the gap in the number of uninsured individuals, and comparison to the white population, 15.9 percent of African American population was uninsured in the year 2014 (PEW Research Center, 2015). These health disparities and tendencies were already present before COVID-19, but this pandemic has brought these disparities and inequalities into focus.

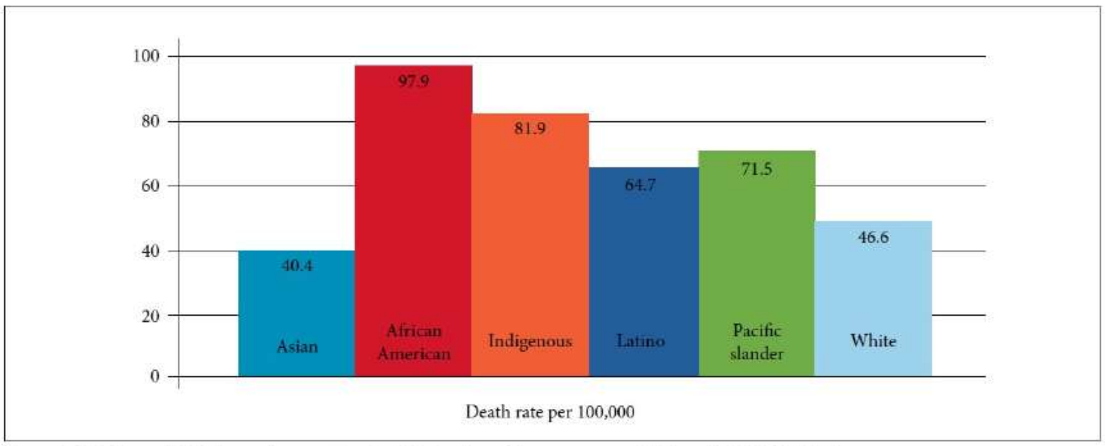
7. American Governments’ Response towards COVID-19 and the Impact on the African American Community

According to a report by Reuters, individuals belonging to the African American community are more likely to get infected and lose their lives to COVID-19 as compared to any other racial community in the

United States (Wolfe, 2020). The demographic data present is inadequate and with the second wave of COVID-19 hitting the United States the African American community is still at significant risk.

The data by the American Public Media (2020) on the COVID-19 mortality rate by the measure of race/ethnicity as of July 21, 2020, including Washington, DC, and 45 states (as mentioned below in figure 1) represent an alarming death rate across all races, explains how racial minorities have been impacted because of the health crisis and how the African American community have faced the brunt amidst the pandemic.

FIGURE 1. COVID-19 deaths per 100,000 people by race/ethnicity, through September 10, 2020



Source: APM Research Lab. September 10, 2020. Available at https://www.apmresearchlab.org/COVID/deaths-by-race.

The above figure 1 displays that 97.9 out of every 100,000 individuals from the African American community have died from the COVID-19 virus, the estimates of Latinos were 64.7 per 100,000, the white population at 46.6 per 100,000, and Asians with 40.4 per 100,000. The data shows the disproportionate loss of African American lives, the rapidly increasing COVID-19 cases and the number of deaths in the African American community underlines the reality that the pandemic has worsened the existing social inequalities tied to race, class, and access to the health care system.

The predominance of the social, economic, and health conditions among African-Americans are considered to be the most substantial explanations for their rising death rates but it is also essential to acknowledge that the risk the African American community is at, was intensified by the continued ineffectual federal government response towards COVID-19 (Taylor,2020). The escalation of racial unrest during the Trump presidency, followed by the inconsistencies with testing and the constant denials from the White House regarding the threat and the reverberating effects of the virus and lack of preparedness are also equally responsible for the African American death toll. Prompt and timely response from the Trump administration could have averted the conditions and consequences of a major health crisis the general American population has ever witnessed while disproportionately affecting the African American community (The New Yorker, 16th April, 2020). In comparison to the Trump administration, there was a stark difference in the approach of handling the coronavirus pandemic by the Biden administration, particularly in terms of transparency and boosting the vaccine supply.

It is believed that the onset of the COVID-19 contagion wave resulting in disproportionate African American deaths accelerated because of the Trump presidency's ignorance and malfeasance. But after a year amidst the pandemic and change in the leadership, the reverberating waves of the virus are still resulting in the disproportionate deaths of African Americans and it can be ascertained that it is not because of the lack of promptness and preparedness but an outcome of decades of structural racial discrimination and systemic inequality faced by the Black communities in America.

8. Conclusion

In the United States, a significant percentage of the White American population have also lost their lives to the COVID-19 virus but the rate by which African Americans are getting infected and dying has reshaped the debate of public health crisis into a reflective lesson in racial, social, and class inequality. In the last year, with a raging pandemic claiming more lives than the Spanish flu and disproportionality affecting the African American community with threats of starvation, evictions, unemployment, innocent killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and riots on Capitol Hill, demonstrates the prevalence and existing patterns of racial biases and structural racism in the nation which is the biggest champion of democracy. A profound understanding of the social and economic determinants of health in the light of the existing health crisis and the disproportional impact of the pandemic on African American community's health outcomes makes the question of the right to health a political imperative. To bridge the racial gap and socio-economic disparities, there is a need for a multispectral approach through the lens of human rights as the COVID-19 pandemic is more than just a health crisis and to close the gap of health inequality and improve health equity, there needs to be a comprehensive understanding of the aspects which lead to health disparities and factors which can contribute to an effective multifaceted response. As United States adjusts to the new normal, it is imperative that the social, economic and health gaps in the lives of marginalised and vulnerable racial communities, particularly the African American community, also conforms to the new normal which should be driven by enhanced and improved legislative policy changes, considerable research and evaluation, along with relevant community engagement strategies which can together directly affect and alter the social determinants of health.

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Girl Education and its Management in Rural India: A Critical Assessment

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Abstract

Girls in rural India are frequently denied educational opportunities. It is unfortunate that certain societies still discourage female education. Girls' empowerment, prosperity, progress, and well-being are dependent on education and education management. Perception about Girl-hatred from birth to grave is seen in different places in the society. Girls continue to face economic, educational, social, political, health, nutrition, rights, and legal inequalities. Girls persecuted in all fields need to be empowered. This strength comes from the process of empowerment and education. Girls' education will enable rural transformation. The present research paper will enlighten the needs of girls from rural areas to encounter the difficulties and to fight their conventional roles in society. There is a strong need to adapt to the modern methods and approaches of the society in terms of female education. This will in turn boost national development by raising national income which in return uplift the women and set a tone in the realm of empowerment. Thus, gender inequality will be minimized.

Keywords: Girls' education, Gender inequality, education management, rural transformation

1. Introduction

Girls and women in third-world countries lack a considerable amount of access to educational opportunities. Educational backwardness slows down growth and affects family income, reduces health, and puts girls and women at a greater risk of exploitation and trafficking. This leads to the stifling of economic growth in the entire world. Educational access for girls and women is crucial and an effectual mechanism is essential for the betterment of the lives of individual families in order to bring economic prosperity to impoverished areas around the world. Education has a prolonged history of effectively collaborating with local partners to create, run and assess community-based programs for developing the lives of women and girls. Global educational programs not only help girls in enrolling and helping them to continue but also assist women to have access to educational, economical, and social resources in their communities. These opportunities not only help them in bettering their own lives but also their families as a whole. For parents, especially mothers, this involves fostering settings in which the daughters of the family have equal access to the basics of education, can make informed choices about their futures, and can further safeguard themselves from trafficking and sexual exploitation. Education helps women to nurture skills that further guide them to make decisions and impact the community by bringing change for good. Consequently, educational programs worldwide have an affirmative impact when it comes to dealing with menaces like population explosion, medical issues, and income inequalities.

Managing female education in rural India is an arduous task because it undergoes multiple layers of structural oppression, right from delivering a girl child to sending her to school for the first time. Ultimately, when she passes with flying colours and opts for higher education, going beyond the set boundaries of both her geographical and gender-assigned barriers, the lady usually faces a two pronged challenge, firstly, from her immediate community members and secondly, from her family members, who are apprehensive about her security status once she has to move beyond her familiar territories. So we see

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here that familiarity breeds a sense of over- protectiveness, which does not apply to her male counterparts usually.

To substantiate more on this scenario, we can cite the personal experience of one of the authors; Fahmida Bora (31), who is from Samaguri village in Sivasagar district, Assam has a similar abovementioned experience. A year ago, when she was working as Assistant Professor in a University and pursuing her PhD, received a marriage proposal. On returning home, she enquired whether the groom side was aware about her professional commitment and to which her family members informed her that the groom side was not informed about her job role, otherwise there were possibilities that the marriage proposal could be called off. She ultimately decided to not go ahead with the marriage proposal because that was a direct violation of her own autonomy. This small instance shows how women, especially with roots from rural areas, have to go through multiple layers of challenges to cement their own identity.

Swami (1990), made a critical study of women education in nine districts of the Vidarbh as region for the period 1947-87 and pointed out substantial progress at the primary level, but higher wastage and stagnation amongst girls, the primary reason cited for lacking separate schools and women teachers. In higher education, girls were found largely in general education, with only a few going in for technical and vocational education.[4]

Ali (2011), made a study on "Challenges facing women employees in career development: A focus on Kapsabet Municipally, Kenya". The objectives of the study, upon which this paper is based, were to asses women's career development practice; find out if gender balance was given a chance; examine the challenges facing women in career development and establish the best practices on gender equality. The study found that promotion among women was low and training for women employees was minimal. Most women employees were dissatisfied with career development programmes and women were discriminated against in career development opportunities.[5]

Subha and Reddy (2001), in their work on "Education for quality and empowerment of women." investigated that education is an effective means to achieve social and economic development.[6] Similarly, Das, Jonali (2011) study on "Women empowerment and tribal community", emphasizes on achieving the aim of universal primary education as early as possible. In tribal areas girls schools and girls colleges should be promoted. And in every schools and colleges especially which are in rural areas, toilet with proper facilities for ladies should be provided.[7]

Mridula (2005), analyzed in her article "Access of women to Higher Education", that there is a need of rethinking about the higher education of women. The present rate of women access to higher education is 38.84% which does not ensure the quality of higher education. Access of women to technical discipline viz. engineering, medicine, veterinary science and law should be increased through these subjects in the colleges of smaller cities and towns without comprising with quality. Initiative should be taken for increasing access of women to large unorganized as well as organized sector. It should be made mandatory for the universities and colleges to have girl's hostel. Distance higher education mode should be encouraged by opening more centers and courses in the women colleges. Besides the above steps social

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awareness, social environment and social security in favour of women are the basic points where attention should be paid.[8]

Begum (2006), worked on "Women Entrepreneurship in India: challenges and strategies." From her research work she found that with changing times and change in cultural norms, increase literacy, industrialization, social and occupational mobility influenced the women to enter into the field of entrepreneurship. There is no denying the fact that women have made considerable progress in the last fifty years but yet they have to struggle against many handicaps and social evils in the male dominated society.[9]

Janaki (2006), in his study "Empowerment of women through education:150 years of University Education in India found that Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. The concept of equality, opportunity and education touches every aspect of women's lives social, political and economic.[10]

Neelam (2006), work on "Women Empowerment through Education: Role of Universities", reveales that educating women benefits the whole society and on the basis of this education they enjoy better status in the society. It has a more significant impact on poverty and development than men's education. It is also one of the most influential factors in improving child health and reducing infant mortality.[11]

2. Reasons for Under-education of Girls in Rural India

Men and women perceive the economic benefits of education and the costs associated with pursuing such education differently. Parents who pay for the education in private institution think of investment in women's and girls' education as unprofitable. This is partially true since much of the benefits from educating women are social rather than financial. The opinion of parents about the current cost of schooling and the future advantages affects their decision about whether their girl child should continue her education or not. Even distance to schools in rural areas are sometimes deciding factors behind educating the girl child. Sons are sometimes favored not only in educational aspects, but also in the distribution of food at mealtime and property inheritance. Leaving aside economic costs and rewards, there are also psychological costs to consider. The threat of discriminatory access based on psychological impressions is more concrete and real. The considerations discussed here include any and all motivations that cause a parent to be hesitant to send their girls to school. One of the most obvious factors is fear for a girl child's physical and moral safety, which causes parents to not allow them to go long distances for attending classes. Parents opt for schools that only admit girls and employs lady teaches and this is because of religion and socio-cultural issues. When girls attain puberty then education may be perceived as a threat to the prospects of marriage. Consequentially, girls who are more involved in the household chores than their brothers are less likely to attend school. In these terms, the prospect of increasing opportunity costs in a combined family is greater. Does this imply that when the opportunity costs of teaching girls and boys are the same, both the girl and boy child will have similar opportunities of attending school? Sadly, the answer is no. Parents continue to keep their daughters at home for the household chores to work and the sons are sent to school.

3. Gender Gap and Educational Accessibility in Rural India

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Education acts as the deciding element, as it is the only component that can start a chain reaction of benefits for women. However, difference in literacy, enrollment, and years spent in school between men and women are key indicators which reveal the poor level of female education in India. The poor women literacy rate reveals underinvestment in women's education but it is not just low enrollments, the attendance of those enrolled students are also low. Rural girls are members of disadvantaged groups, such as SC’s and ST’s are the worst case situation. Further, the ratio of female dropouts has inclined to rise as education levels have raised especially in rural areas.

4. Challenges and Issues in Female Education in Rural India

Despite various instances of women achieving remarkable feats in all walks of life over the years, they continue to fall under a disadvantaged bracket of economic and socio-political positioning. Women cannot be categorized into a homogenous entity in terms of class or caste. Nevertheless, they face unique challenges that demand specific attention. In 1953, Indian women were identified as a backward group in the society. The Ministry of Education considers girls, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes as the three most disadvantaged groups in education sector. Women's educational, economic, political, and social backwardness makes them the most considerable hindrance to societal transformation**.** It is unavoidable that when this 'backward' group bears the primary burden for raising future generations, societal improvement cannot be swift or meaningful.
A developing economy cannot proceed if education stays in the hands of conservationist policy makers, who have a narrow outlook of society; as long there exists discrepancy in men's and women's educational degrees, the disparities in men's and women's position in society will not diminish, let alone disappear. The most essential element contributing to the backwardness of our masses, particularly women, is inadequate or lack of education.

Table 1: India’s National Literacy rate

Category	**Literate Population 2011**	**Literacy Rate 2011**	**Literacy Rate 2021**
Persons	763,498,517	72.99%	77.70%
Males	434,683,779	80.89%	84.70%
Females	328,814,738	64.64%	70.30%

Source: Census 2011, National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5) & National Statistical Office (NSO) data.

According to National Statistical Office (NSO) data India’s average literacy rate is 77.70% & male literacy at the India level in 2021 stands at 84.70% & female literacy stands at 70.30%. Women's literacy is lower than men's literacy, which lowers national literacy. This disparity in literacy rates between the sexes also appears in the enrollment ratio. As mentioned in the current statement of elementary education among the communities which seems to be dubious that 100% of girls’ enrolment will be attained. However, in our society children are assigned to schools based on their gender rather than their ability or aptitude. Girls are not sent to schools as they are expected to help with home chores in rural communities. The rural poor's resources are so less that they have nothing left over for their children's education. If there are enough resources, they prefer sending boys over girls to the school. Parents do not recognize the importance of education, particularly for a girl who will marry and stay as a housewife. They have little motivation to send their children to school because they cannot identify a direct link between education and economic advancement. It is still not widely recognized that there is a clear link between education, excellent motherhood, and effective housekeeping. Illiterate women are consequently in charge of managing millions of households and raising millions of children. Change is critical in this aspect and without any form of transformation, our democratic institutions upholding access to education would be a sham.

Women’s position in the educational sector is disoriented by unwelcoming demeanor of guardians. As sometimes the parents are very hesitant enough to send their daughters for formal schooling as compared to the male counterparts particularly at higher levels. Another issue that is directly related to this is the girls' reluctance to obtain western education and their own misunderstanding of the values of formal education. Equity in education means that personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or family background, are not obstacles to achieving educational potential (definition of fairness) and that all individuals reach at least a basic minimum level of skills (definition of inclusion). Women's limited accessibility to formal education in this country is also stringently founded in religion, history, culture, political institutions, legislation, and social attitudes, which restrict access of women to formal education in several spheres, as compared to their male counterparts. Due to a late start in education, Indian women have fallen behind their counterparts in industrialized and some emerging countries. This is due to our perceptions and attitude that make the women suffer from early education. This lowers them to mere kitchen managers and baby bears only. As a result, their education is expected to end in the kitchen, a situation that many parents despise, discouraging their investment in girl-child education. Other obstacles to women's education which includes the familiar issues like inadequate fund, poor facilities, lacking manpower towards education sectors, sexual harassment, contradicting societal role expectations, government policies, and a lack of political will to achieve the intact educational program. Another significant issue is the inferiority complex observed in Indian women that can be linked to environmental manipulation; because women seems to accept negative self-fulfilling insights, stereotyping, and stigmatization that they are members of weaker sex through the traditional socialization process of the typical society. At the moment, the forces that combine to prevent women education and development in India which could be largely defined as the denial of access to education as early marriage, detention to solitary living, and subjugation by culture that is to accept the given choices forced on them.

5. Importance of Girls' Education

The empowerment of women could be properly perceived if enough and practical education is provided to them. This is critical because, no matter how affluent a country is but it will always resist standing on its own without a valuable, well-organized, adequate, and useful education for all of its citizens’ education that is significant to its current necessities, aims, and ambitions. The sort of education being promoted is one in which the spirit of self-realization is incorporated, as well as all that is required for the country's general growth, such as mass literacy, economic empowerment, and so on. Counselling also acts as a positive factor in this venture as alongside education, mental health of the student plays a crucial role. The empowerment proposed comprises a process of questioning power relations and obtaining greater control over the source of power. However, this cannot be achieved unless women have sufficient access to practical and formal education. This anticipating statement assumes that education has been firmed to be a viable mechanism of transformation. Women's education, both formal and in utilitarian approach is necessitated because of the following:

- **Educating future generations:** It is stated that if a boy is taught then only a person is educated, but if a girl is taught then the whole nation is educated. The enrollment of a girl in school is likely to educate the entire future generation. Thus, it can be presumed that imparting a girl’s education is to infuse the nation’s progress.
- **Reduce infant mortality:** Children born to educated mothers are likely to survive a healthy and better life. The female generation should attain education so that they are less likely to be infected with HIV/AIDS and, as a result, less likely to pass it on to their next generation. Primary and secondary education alone helps greatly reduce infant mortality.
- **Lower maternal mortality:** Educated women who have a better understanding of maintaining the health issues of maternal challenges. So, to raise the girls’ level of education there is necessity of female health care workers to promote maternity care, such as prenatal medical concern, delivery problems and other emergencies.

- **Abolition of child marriage:** Child marriage nearly often ends a girl's education and as a result, illiterate or barely literate young mothers are left with insufficient resources to raise healthy and educated families. After fifth grade every year a girl continues in school which delays her marriage by a year. So, educated girls usually marry later in life, when they are more capable of bearing her responsibilities and caring for their children.
- **Reduction of population explosion:** Educated women have fewer and healthier children. In 2000, a research survey was conducted in Brazil by UNESCO which reveal that the educated women had a norm of 2.5 children in compare to uneducated women had a norm of six children.

- **Growing political involvement:** Educated women are likely to involve in public platforms as in meetings, political conversations, etc., and are also involved in the process of decision-making, resulting in a more representative and effective government.
- **Reducing domestic and sexual violence:** Educated girls and women are not as much of likely to be sufferers of or tolerate domestic and sexual abuse in their households.
- **Increasing socioeconomic growth:** In order to pursue an enhanced life for the better chance of evasion poverty, living in good health and an improving standard of life for their children, families, and communities; then the women have to be educated enough. As a result they can be highly socio-economically developed.

6. Education Management and Female Education in Rural India

Since Independence, the policy frameworks and prospects of educational facilities for women have been a remarkable step for the nation's education era. In spite of the efforts and noteworthy benefits, gender inequalities still continue especially among the disadvantaged groups and in remote areas too. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986), as revised in 1992, was a turning point in the domain of women's education policy as it recognized the requirement for addressing the conventional gender differences in educational access and achievement. The NPE also accredited that the betterment of infrastructural facilities wouldn't be the problem solving matter alone. Further it states that women's involvement in the educational development is very significant for the empowerment of women. According to the POA (Programme of Action), education can be an effective mechanism for women's empowerment and ensuring equal contribution in progressive developments. Further, the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan emphasizes on improving the secondary schooling to all children as well as the organized and safe communication arrangements or residential facilities should provide that depends on local circumstances.

7. Educational Provisions of Centrally Sponsored Schemes in School Education (CSS):

Some of the important Schemes for Elementary Education include:

1. Operation Blackboard
2. Education Guarantee Scheme & Alternative and Innovative Education (EGS &AIE)
3. Teacher Education
4. Mid-day Meal Scheme
5. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan(SSA)
6. Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya(KGBV)
7. Shiksha Karmi
8. Mahila Samakhya
9. District Primary Education Programme (DPEP)
10. National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level(NPEGEL)
11. Lok Jumbish
12. Janshala Programme
13. Padhe Bitiya Badhe Bitiya

14. Ladali Scheme[12]

Some of the important Schemes for Secondary Education include:

1. Access and Equity
2. Quality Improvement in Schools(QIS)
3. ICT in Schools
4. Integrated Education for Disabled Children(IEDC)
5. Vocationalisation of Education

These programs include a monthly allowance of a set amount. Apart from these, there are awarded scholarships for finishing specific educational programs. This not only helps to reduce female foeticide but also makes parents realize that daughters are not a burden. Parents are also motivated to educate them because they do not have to worry about financial costs.

There are several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that are also working to improve girls' education in rural areas. Many of these organizations build up camps and provide financial assistance in addition to advising people on the need for it. However, this is insufficient. As a culture, we must recognize and change our fundamental beliefs about women and girls. Today, there are so many women and girls in every area who are making the country proud all over the world. We only need to give them a wing and they will be able to fly as high as the sky. Stereotypes and discrimination must be eradicated. The gender gap must be closed even further.

However, we are pleased that things are changing for the better. As more children emerge with flying wings, these examples provide other girls an opportunity to follow in their footsteps. The situation in rural areas is steadily improving as well. With all of the schemes and donations, things that were once impossible to accomplish are now possible. The greater the gender equality, the more we will regard ourselves as affluent nations.

8. Conclusion

Education is a powerful element that has the potential to turn many odds in favour of females, particularly in rural India. As a result, a sole focus on females' education is required. Education for teenage girls is hampered by a variety of problems, the most significant of which is a lack of infrastructure and schools. Second, the amount of time it takes to get to school, as well as the threat of crime and other unforeseeable events, would increase, necessitating the provision of public transportation specifically for girls. A legal provision would aid in the rescue of girls who are married off at a young age, which ultimately will provide a prospect for them**.** A general consciousness drive is required to uplift their mental and physical growth. In nutshell, it should be noted that girls should be treated with affection which would ensure that the role of women in the society would be undeniably important. Any society which cannot treat its women with dignity and respect is destined to collapse.

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Crisis Management for Public Officials

*Ashima Singh**

Abstract

This research paper aims to understand crisis management and includes the various types of crises. It explores the various aspects of leadership, which are helpful during times of crisis because only a motivating leader can envision and come up with practical policy solutions in the face of adversity or crises. Thus, understanding the examples and research methodology used by policymakers makes it easy to deal with a crisis and tackle the impediments as we would find out in the case of the San José rescue mission. Crisis management refers to a group of activities that must be carried out to evaluate a potential crisis. It is necessary to make sound decisions during a crisis and learn from crisis experience to build strength and competence. Crisis management can be seen as a management model developed for effectively handling an unusual situation that emerges suddenly. This disrupts routine functioning and makes decisions more challenging, increasing risk, stress, and conflict. To implement an effective crisis management strategy, public administrators must be knowledgeable and skilled in crisis management and be committed to allocating resources for crisis preparedness and management.

Keywords: Crisis management, Public Administrators, Public Sector, Private Sector, Social Construct, World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO), Population and Pandemic Preparedness.

Introduction

If an organization does not invest in emergency preparedness then it becomes a high-risk gamble that endangers human lives, incurs economic and response costs. [5]World Bank and World Health Organization (WHO) investigations indicate that most countries would need to spend an average of between $1 and $2 per person per year to reach an acceptable level of pandemic preparedness. [4]WHO has made it mandatory for health system institutions to have an efficient crisis management system. It has been mentioned in the report that 1.5 billion people including children and women have been affected by health-related crises. [2]In the case of risk assessment, it is observed that it precedes the emergency. This is different from a needs assessment that arrives after the impact of a crisis or hazard.

Public administrators must ensure that the most effective methodology to deal with crisis management is to be knowledgeable and skilled in crisis management. They must also be committed to allocating resources during crisis preparedness and management. Risk is different from hazard because risk can be understood as a probability and can be calculated. A hazard is a potential that can be assessed but not calculated. Thus, the two notions are different. For instance, if a city is established on the line of two tectonic plates, the hazard of an earthquake is present, but the risk or the likelihood of an earthquake taking place cannot be estimated as there is no account of past events.

Identification of a crisis means that the features that constitute a crisis are diverse and these features sometimes overlap. There are four general ways a crisis can be recognized, which are discussed below: Crisis as self-evident means when a crisis takes place, its description of scholarly work and media coverage is clear. The description of the event and the way it is put across speaks for itself. One does not have to go through a dictionary or guidebook to confirm if it is a crisis. The headline instantly prompts the reader that there is a crisis or situation close by. During an outbreak, the type of information disseminated on social media by government officials must provide a reassuring tone to the general public. [7]It has been observed that public officials' responses and news media responses counter each other during the onset of an outbreak. It is essential to understand the role of public administrators during a crisis and issue a

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comforting statement. During a pandemic, public officials have to understand and engage the citizens in positive thinking and decision-making abilities by sharing only pertinent information on their social media handles. Crisis as an objective refers to a crisis that can be evident through a produced checklist of criteria. There is a substantial agreement that an event must meet the conditions before it can be called a crisis. Then it could be called a severe threat or an urgent need for action.

Crisis as perception can be understood in a way that a crisis may have an element of individual human perception. The way one perceives a crisis does not necessarily apply to the other person. The perspective of a crisis may therefore depend on an individual's perception, the degree to which they are affected by the event, and so on. The process of giving meaning to receive stimuli is referred to as perception. It is also the result of "awareness of objects, relationships, and events through the senses." The perception of a crisis can be subjective. [3]For example, if we set a particular goal, then there are chances that, due to some unavoidable circumstances there would be a possibility that the specific goal would not be attained which can be called the subjective as well as the objective difficulty that is experienced during the setting of a goal but not being able to attain it can lead to anxiety.

Crisis as a social construct includes crises that can be seen by some as an idea that has been accepted and created by the social class. This is because individuals, institutions, and society always encounter experiences that are beyond the normal or their routine ways of operating. Those who have been affected will face extraordinary and legitimate threats as well as possibly lacking the information and time for decision-making.

Crisis as terminology is attributed to a particular set of unavoidable social circumstances. A social construct is something that exists not in objective reality but as a result of human interaction. It exists because humans agree that it is real. Crisis can be divided into the following four types which are: Crisis at the institutional level which means the public versus private sector. It also refers to both the public and private institutions that can be affected by a crisis. Some situations can lead to a crisis of law that could significantly affect an institution's trustworthiness and status.

The private sector includes a corporate crisis which can be seen as an event or situation that threatens the company's ability to effectively operate. This crisis can escalate into a long-term impediment to business growth. Therefore, they have a sense of responsibility to their stakeholders to respond effectively to the crisis and also promptly to avoid embarrassment, especially in front of the general public. It is essential on the part of leaders to take quick steps in the face of a crisis.

A public sector crisis occurs when its institutional status, basic structures, principles, and values are threatened. For public administrators, the crisis may concern the whole or a large part of the citizens. Given the social contract between a government and its citizens, the public sector should take ownership of managing the crisis to protect its population and infrastructure as well as restore public order in society. The unrevealed objective of crisis management in the public sector is the welfare and the elevation of people residing in society.

Societies and communities are also part of the diverse nature of a crisis at the societal level. Over the past few years, we have faced various crises like climate change, racial crisis, diseases, pandemics, natural disasters, terrorist attacks, financial crises, etc. The list is exhaustive and these types of crises present challenges to societies in various forms.

Crisis based on timescales includes the following types of crisis which are as follows: Crises that suddenly begin and abruptly end refer to bomb explosions, hijackings, locust invasions, etc. Crises may start and end within hours, days, weeks or they may last longer. Crises build up slowly until they reach a decisive point and then they fairly and swiftly conclude. For example, the lack of maintenance on a nuclear reactor can cause a lot of destruction to the environment as well as humankind.

Crises that are a long-term threat refer to crises that develop slowly and a resolution is rarely reached. In other words, the crisis typically remains unresolved. For instance, global warming, deforestation, etc.

Crises with lingering impacts refer to crises that occur quickly and often reach a short-term solution. In any case, it has wider consequences or may even lead to a period of crisis for individuals, institutions, and societies. For instance, oil spills, financial crises, etc.

A traditional or recurring crisis is known to occur in a particular region. A crisis has either occurred in that region before or the region is known to be vulnerable to the specific crisis. This could be hurricanes, earthquakes, bushfires, etc. A novel or new crisis means it is unprecedented. It comes under the category of a crisis that is new to a geographical location or with no previous event that can be used as a comparison. For example, COVID–19 is a classic case of a novel crisis. Its consequences and impacts are unprecedented. There are different stages of a crisis. The crisis management procedure is designed to address challenges faced in the following phases of a crisis. The pre-crisis stage is the initial stage of a crisis wherein the early threats have been noticed but the threats have not developed into a crisis. Effective crisis preparedness and early warning systems are required to reduce the potential impact. An acute crisis occurs when the critical situation was not contained during the pre-crisis stage and it became a crisis as a result. This stage is when the crisis is being managed through a crisis response and stabilization system. Crisis management tries to assess crisis interventions at the post-crisis stage. The crisis management cycle is a useful way of understanding the demand of crisis managers to think of crisis management in terms of different phases of a cycle. The phases are as follows:

Preparedness Phase 1

When it comes to crisis management, preparedness refers to the idea of taking actions in advance to minimize potential negative impacts. In terms of preparedness, the following features should be considered: Emergency Planning aims to make sure that the various organizations involved in emergency response possess sufficient capacities (for instance, emergency centers, human resources, equipment, and supplies) throughout the country to respond to emergencies. Since the emergency response capacities have been developed, operational plans should be established and these plans should contain standard operating procedures that should be supported by national directives. Thus, emergency plans can take many different forms which are not limited to plans for a crisis management team, business continuity plans, or crisis communications protocols.

In developing an emergency response for a novel crisis, the emphasis must be on the development of the crisis manager's capability to be able to improvise and innovate during a crisis. Integrated response networks should also be implemented. Training and exercises in the preparedness phase include training response units and testing equipment. Developing the ability of staff to use it and testing the various emergency plans as well as the staff's knowledge of the detailed protocols and procedures.

Response Phase 2

Once a crisis has not been ruled out and upon notification that an emergency is occurring then the crisis management team led by the staff should take charge of the situation. This enables the team to be proactive in managing the crisis. While the crisis management team makes decisions, takes action and then the public official that heads a government institution must continue to manage the administrative affairs of the institution.

Stabilization Phase 3

This stage could go on for several weeks or even months, depending on the type of crisis. Crisis managers must ensure the re-establishment of critical service and even in the absence of a complete functioning infrastructure. This can be attained with the help of a contingency response plan and effective planning. For example, emergency services and a responsible team must take charge of effective planning.

The stabilization phase must not be seen as an end in itself but as a means to an end. For example, in the situation of an emergency that displaces a large population the stabilization of the crisis would occur when sufficient sheltering capacity is sustained to meet the immediate needs of the displaced population by the aid organizations. This makeshift arrangement should continue until the affected population moves into long-term housing solutions. Therefore, crisis managers must ensure all temporary shelters are closed.

Recovery is the fourth phase

During the recovery phase, attention is paid to ensuring a long-term, sustainable recovery involving intense coordination, integration efforts, and community involvement. Leading the recovery phase involves coordinating with various kinds of stakeholders from diverse backgrounds and it requires a highly professional crisis manager with sufficient leadership skills, authority, and coordination skills. Crisis recovery must aim to restore both the personal lives of individuals and the employment of the community. Depending on the crisis and how it has affected communities, long-term recovery may take several months or years. The recovery phase must be managed by the government and if required, may include events such as the reconstruction of infrastructure. For example, public roads, hospitals, police stations, etc. Social protection grants may be provided for the welfare of individuals, families, businesses, etc.

Evaluation of Phase 5

In the evaluation phase when the crisis is receding, government officials must indicate closure to the public through a formal and well-communicated process to help alleviate anxiety and encourage the return to a state of normality. Public administrators should make sure that crisis management is the preparation for and carrying out of all emergency functions pertinent to mitigating, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from emergencies and disasters caused by all hazards (whether natural, technological, or man-made). Public officials have the main responsibility to prevent and reduce the impact of a crisis. This includes international, regional, sub-regional, transboundary, and bilateral cooperation. Measures should include predicting future crises and implementing preventive and preparatory measures to build catastrophe-resistant and disaster-resilient communities. Research and data from natural as well as social scientists have shown that crises are becoming more frequent, intense, and complex.

People-centered management involves public officials making sure that managing the risk of crises and disasters must aim at protecting people, livelihoods, and productive assets. It should include cultural and environmental benefits while protecting all human rights which include the right to voice and development. To manage risk effectively, the public official must aim to be accountable for using available resources sustainably and efficiently. This means that policy should be framed in such a way that its main priority must be to save lives and protect the environment. Unity of efforts and command includes public administrators who must ensure unity of efforts among all levels of government and communities engaged in crisis management. Plans at all levels of local government must support the community’s vision and mission and be consistent with its values.

To resolve a crisis, there should be unity of command and assumed instructions from government leaders. It is noteworthy that unity of command removes any kind of confusion, duplication of efforts, or argument among response teams. Public administrators should know that crisis management needs all-of-society engagement and partnership. There shouldn't be any discrimination and special attention should be given to the public which has been disproportionately affected by the crisis (especially the underprivileged people). Gender, age, disability, and cultural perspectives should be included in all policies and practices. Professionalism regarding the principles of crisis management concerns not only the personal attributes of the crisis manager but also the commitment to crisis management as a profession.

Public officials must accept that addressing underlying disaster risk factors through disaster risk-informed public and private investments are more cost-effective than primary reliance on post-disaster response and recovery. The need for a global partnership is essential in crisis management. Public administrators need to comprehend that developing countries (particularly least developed countries, small island developing states as well as other countries facing specific disaster risk challenges) need sufficient, sustainable, and timely provision of support. This may involve technology transfer, finance, and capacity building from developed countries and organizations tailored to the needs and priorities of vulnerable countries as recognized by the countries themselves.

The approval of "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" constitutes the amalgamation of efforts to implement a substitute to the Millennium Development Goals. It is a life-changing plan of action for all nations and all stakeholders to execute. It has a primary goal for the abolition of poverty and its central mandate is the integration of the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The document also ensures that there is universal collaboration and citizen welfare so that no one is left behind.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been seen as a positive and aspirational milestone for all the stakeholders. The Secretary-General describes the outcome as a "universal, transformative and integrated development agenda." The 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 global targets are for regions to pursue sustainable development as well as for communities to uplift themselves. Disaster risk reduction cuts across many aspects and sectors of development. One can find 25 targets related to disaster risk reduction in 10 of the 17 SDGs strongly establishing the role of disaster risk reduction as a core development strategy. Some of the SDGs which directly link to the research work have been discussed below:

Goal 1: To eradicate poverty in all of its forms, which means throughout the world

To eradicate extreme poverty, it is essential to build disaster resilience and preparedness measures. As one of the most important drivers of disaster risk, given how it creates and enhances social and economic vulnerability, poverty has notably contributed to the growth in risk conditions which further reduces the progress of sustainable development. There is evidence to suggest that the impacts of disasters undermine hard-earned development gains in both developing and developed countries potentially forcing the most vulnerable into extreme poverty. By 2030, there is an estimate that 325 million people will be trapped in poverty and susceptible to the extremes of climate change especially in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Thus, it is pertinent to build and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities to prevent future disaster events from pulling more people into impoverishment. In addition, it is pertinent to protect their livelihoods and assets to help them come out of the crisis.

Goal 2: Improving nutrition, ending hunger, and achieving food security is crucial

Natural disasters contribute to global food insecurity and hunger particularly when they exacerbate existing economic vulnerability. Large shocks and extensive risk are among the factors that destroy agricultural assets causing significant damage to the livelihoods and food security of millions of farmers. Agricultural practices must be redesigned to account for projected changes in the climate and increased disaster risk.

Goal 3: For all age groups we must ensure a healthy lifestyle and encourage well-being

A disaster has an impact on people's health and well-being in the event of an emergency. Diseases, injuries, psychosocial consequences, and impairments associated with extreme weather and climate-related hazardous occurrences pose the greatest threat to public health.
To carry out this goal, one needs to measure according to the Sendai Framework which recommends promoting disaster risk understanding at all levels including educational institutions and companies.

Goal 4: We must ensure that everyone has access to a high-quality education that is inclusive and non-discriminatory

Education is critical to reducing vulnerability and increasing community resilience to disaster risk. As a result of a disaster, students and teachers lose their lives but valuable public investments in social goals, infrastructure, and education are also jeopardized along with long-term consequences. Schools must incorporate disaster-resistant structures and adapt to local risks if we are to move forward with this goal. In the event of a disaster, emergency shelters are extremely beneficial, and building resilient infrastructure aids in coordinated response and recovery efforts.

Goal 5: Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls must be achieved

Although no action target emphasizes the role of women and girls in disaster risk reduction it is critical in achieving the goal of gender egalitarianism and empowerment to build disaster resilience in communities. According to the framework mentioned by Sendai, women's participation is imperative for effectively managing disaster risk as well as designing, funding, and implementing gender-sensitive policies, plans, and initiatives.

Goal 6: We need to ensure the management of water and sanitation for everyone

Sustainable water management is essential for addressing disaster vulnerability and implementing the resilience of communities to water-related hazards. [8]Due to the growing population in India, it is critical to understand the distribution of water at the local level and find out a solution for the water crisis and implementation of proper hygiene standards across all states.

Goal 7: We must ensure access to affordable and modern energy for everyone

To build resilient infrastructure, it is essential to achieve the energy goal. This requires strengthening and promoting the durability of upcoming and existing critical infrastructure to make sure that they remain operational during and after a catastrophe.

Goal 8: To make sure there is equal opportunity for everyone and sustainable economic growth.

Investing in disaster risk reduction and resilience is essential to secure economic growth and advancement in society. To achieve this goal, as outlined in the Sendai framework we must promote ways for disaster risk indemnification.

Goal 9: We must improve our structure, promote inclusivity and non-stop industrialization and encourage invention

In terms of the public position, it's critical to develop updated structural norms and recuperation and reconstruction practices. It's also necessary to introduce and cultivate a culture of conservation that includes the development of a brand-new structure.

Goal 10: We need countries to cooperate and bring down inequality in society

A disaster can show the divide between men and women. For instance, after Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005, women's average income increased by 3.7 percent from 2005 to 2007, and men's income increased by 19 percent. The impoverished population is almost always the most affected by a disaster. For households and communities to be resilient to disasters, it is essential to promote and create social safety nets that are linked to livelihood enhancement programs. [1]The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) examines the relationship between disaster risk reduction and evolution within the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030). Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development identified and declared the critical need to reduce disaster risk. Despite the link between disasters and development, disaster risk and resilience received insufficient attention in the original Millennium Development Goal agenda.

While it is universally acknowledged that disasters can erode and destroy development gains there is scant recognition of the role that different development approaches play in creating or increasing vulnerability. There are many ways that disaster risk reduction is identified and advanced in the document including the direct references to the outcomes of the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sendai Framework as well as the specific opportunities to attain the SDGs through bringing down disaster risk. As we can state an example, reducing the vulnerability of the poor to disasters and building resilient infrastructure can help the underprivileged.

These targets are about promoting education for sustainable development and upgrading educational opportunities and ensuring healthy lives. It is important to ensure that high-level policymakers are trained to deal with a crisis. They must grasp the regularities of crisis management by following the guidelines which include the political and institutional issues that will emerge during a crisis or complex dilemmas. The use of a clear and concise checklist will improve crisis performance and the ability to be open to contrasting views as well as coordinate with various stakeholders is essential.

Once a crisis has taken place there is usually no time to look for the right people and interconnect with them based on trust. Thus, effective crisis response relies on pre-existing cooperative networks built and maintained during the preceding period of the crisis. Strategic crisis managers must do everything to escalate the growth of such networks and they should not endure the persistence of non-contact and silo mentalities. Silo mentalities generally damage corporate culture because of the lack of information shared in the organization.

The need of the hour is that independent experts must carry out an audit during the crisis which would help in crisis management. A critical examination by an external auditor is an essential quality assurance system. It introduces accountability to a normally obscure area that comes under examination after a crisis has occurred. It is also observed that system-wide crisis preparedness would not happen without the continuous involvement and visible commitment of political-administrative leaders.

The vocabulary and deeds of political officials must indicate that crisis management is essential as well as a crucial activity that must be valued at all times. There must be proactive two-way communication with relevant policymakers, academicians, and community advisers. Frequent and rigorous crisis management exercises and seminars must be conducted to increase future crisis performance and not pursuing or implementing this is the main cause of crisis response failure. [6]In today's fast-paced environment, it is important for teams to perform and acquire knowledge at the same time. During the Chilean Mine Rescue on August 5, 2010, there were more than 700,000 metric tonnes of rock suddenly seeping in that blocked the central passage to the tunnels in the San José copper and goldmine in Chile's Atacama Desert. The rescue team leadership of San José is quite similar to the challenges and situations that today's businesses and organizations are facing. If businesses want to achieve growth and development then they need to face the risks and challenges as well.

A summary of the San José rescue team teaches us that during any situation or crisis one can only use the best available tools and develop an efficient strategy. The disaster unfolded in two steps which was a 17-day search operation to find and contact the miners and a 52-day rescue during which they were supported and then pulled up safely and securely. During a time of crisis, it is the responsibility of the leader to motivate the team and make them work hard even if the result is unknown. In this situation, Sougarret managed to keep up the spirit of the team and he made sure that they failed fast and learned fast because failure was inevitable in this situation.

The brave executives and administrators who lead change in the world envision three key tasks which are logical progression, visualizing the future, volunteering as a change agent, and finally supporting the process of change. A choice to do something that has a higher goal. A higher goal here means something that is attainable by one person who believes in the idea of leadership and wants to make a difference in the world. Even if in the beginning it wasn't clear to that person what the actual goal was, one can still create a difference at the social, economic, and environmental levels. [7]The true meaning of leadership involves a choice and not a position. In the making of this choice, one can take effective decisions for society's welfare.

In such environments, failure is proof that a mission needs to be mastered. However, recurrent failure coupled with excessive stress is hard to confront. As quickly as leaders begin ignoring information that doesn't support their assumptions the technique of creating modifications gets interrupted. Leaders need to build tolerance for failure and ambiguity to appl y the twin technique effectively. Therefore, a crisis response needs to be continuously monitored, updated, and adjusted in the light of experience gained from travel and educational webinars as well as experience gained from other legal systems at the national and international level. Learning from foreign experiences is critical in jurisdictions with little or no recent crisis and emergency experience.

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Integration between Spot and Future Returns of Gold and Cardamom: In Indian Commodity Market

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Abstract

Non-arbitrage and asset pricing theories have paved way in ascertaining the price discovery role of futures market by excavating the important price links of the market which are mainly devoted to two price concepts: spot and future prices. This paper intends to investigate the explicit relationship between spot and future prices of selected commodities actively traded by value as well as by volume in the commodity market. The positive correlation between the variables and the existence and non-existence of a long run and short run relationship in cases of returns, is revealed by co-integration test and Error Correction model (for the price data collected from MCX India ltd).The Co-integration test divulges a long run relation among the variables. The ECM reveals that, the short-run changes in future price have a positive impact on short-run changes in spot price. The existence of a relationship between variables does not prove causality hence Granger Causality test is used to check the causal links for both the commodities (Gold, Cardamom). For the data of the given time-horizon, Granger Causality undoubtedly analyzed the Causal links between the Spot and Futures in terms of their returns. The direction is from Futures to Spot in case of Agro-commodity (Cardamom) and Bullion commodity (Gold). Thus the study establishes important price links in the commodity market. The scope of this study can be extended to the non-linear models, using GARCH which are under consideration for our further research.

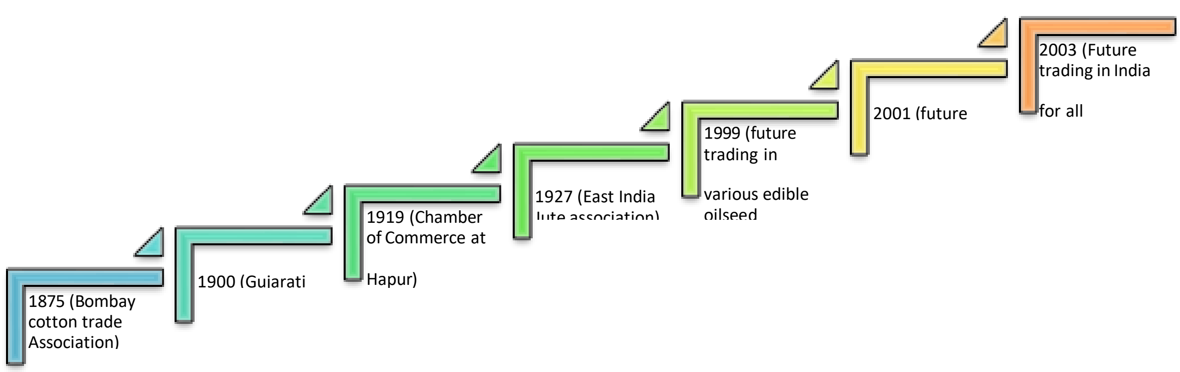
Key words: Co-integration, commodity market, future price, spot price, granger causality.

JEL Code: C22, C52, C58, C87, E44, Q02

1. Introduction

A commodity driven economy like India, has a long trading history traced back to the 19th Century with the establishment of Bombay Cotton Trade Association Ltd. in 1875 the first organized commodity future market of its kind. The evolution of the commodity trading in India is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The evolution of the commodity trading in India



Source: computed from https://www.samco.in/

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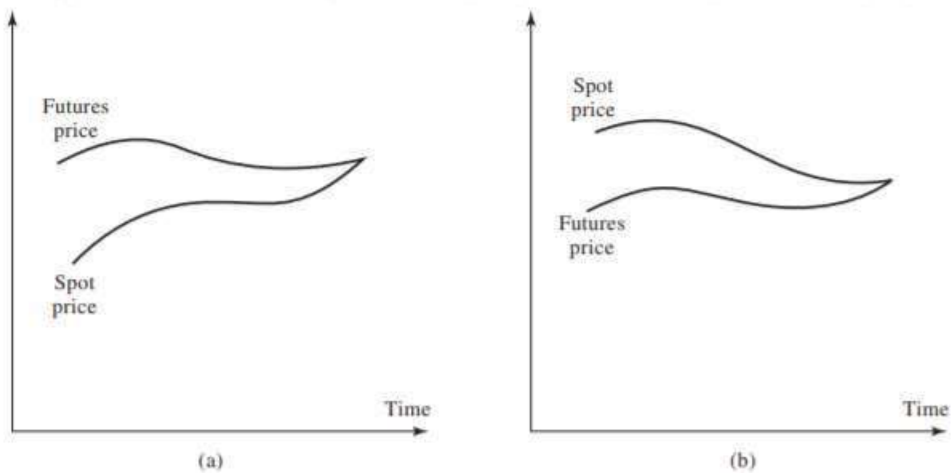
Commodity market instruments have progressed significantly since 2002. Over the years, with the increasing volatility of the markets, commodities have become a forthcoming asset group for investors as well as an efficient choice of portfolio diversification. Impeccably, many literatures and theories (non-arbitrage and asset pricing theories) have mentioned the role of futures market in the price discovery by clearly noting on the relation of spot (price at which an underlying asset can be bought or sold for immediate delivery) and future prices (Price at which an underlying asset can be bought or sold for future delivery). Economic theory often propose that certain variables are expected to have a long-run equilibrium relationship, even if the variables may drift away from equilibrium for some time, economic forces or market movement may be expected to restore equilibrium. "Convergence happens because the market will not allow the same commodity to trade at two different prices at the same place at the same time. As the delivery period for a futures contract is approached, the futures price converges to the spot price of the underlying asset. As traders exploit this arbitrage opportunity, the futures price will fall. Suppose next that the futures price is below the spot price during the delivery period. Companies interested in acquiring the asset will find it attractive to enter into a long futures contract and then wait for delivery to be made. As they do so, the futures price will tend to rise. The result is that the futures price is very close to the spot price during the delivery period." (Hull, Pg. 28). Figure 2(a) illustrates the convergence of the futures price to the spot price and Figure 2(b) the futures price is above the spot price prior to the delivery period.

Figure 2 (a) Futures price above spot price; (b) futures price below spot price



The base defines whether the commodity market is in a backwardation situation, including the shortage or surplus of the physical commodity in the market. As the market approaches maturity, the basis reduces until it equals zero and spot and futures prices converge. (Kaldor, 1983). Hence, the spot–futures association is quiet an interesting issue, particularly for commodity markets. **Past studies** regarding this and on the Indian Commodity market are available at national and International levels. The paper by Fama & French, 1987 examines two models of commodity future prices. The theory of storage explains the difference between contemporaneous futures and spot prices in terms of interest changes, warehousing costs and convenience yields. Financial instruments have positive effect on price discovery and the efficiency of resource allocation (Chan 1992; Schwarz et al. 1994). Kavussanos and Nomikos, 2003 in their paper investigated the causal relationship between futures and spot prices in the freight futures market. Causality tests, generalized impulse response analysis and forecasting performance evaluation indicate that future prices tend to discover new information more rapidly than spot prices. This paper by Batchelor et.al, 2007 reveals a co-integration relation between spot and future rates by adopting various univariate and bivariate linear time series models. According to the study by Kabra, 2007, the turnover of the commodity futures market has grown exponentially in a short span of time, the futures market as an effective instrument of risk management and price discovery. This benefits growers, traders, processors, and other stakeholders in the physical trade. Investment has grown significantly high because recently the institution as well as the investors are interested in the commodity markets (Domanski et al. 2007). By using the non-arbitrage and asset pricing theory, the study by Hernandez & Torero, 2010 initially examines the dynamic relationship between spot and future prices. Then it performs linear & non-linear causality tests to uncover the direction of information flows between spot and future prices. And the results indicates that spot prices are generally discovered in future markets.Jabir Ali and Gupta 2011, analyzed the efficiency of agricultural commodity for major agricultural commodities in India by using Johansen's co-integration and Granger causality tests. The result reveals that there is a long-term relationship between futures and spot prices for most agricultural commodities. Singh & Singh, 2014 in their paper reviewed the available literature on commodity future market efficiency and related issues such as volatility spill over of spot and future prices. Sharma 2015, in his paper uses, Johansen"s Co-integration techniques as well as Error Correction Model to examine the lead-lag relationship as well as the long –run relationship between spot and futures market for selected Agricultural commodities. Alfredo and David, 2021 in their paper detects, analyzes and measures price convergence in time series by demonstrating the convergence processes in Germany, France and Italy after the introduction of the common currency and also the 19th Century wheat prices.

India is predominantly an agrarian economy, ranking second in farm production in the world. It provided employment to about 52 per cent of the workforce. The contribution of agriculture and allied activities to the nation"s GDP (Gross Domestic Product[13]) was 51.81 percent in 1950- 51, which declined to 15 per cent in 2012-13 which further declined to 7.68 percent in 2016-17 (MOSPI, 2017) and a negative growth is currently found due to the pandemic situation. "India exported $39 billion worth of agricultural products in 2013, making it the seventh largest agricultural exporter worldwide, and the sixth largest net exporter" (USDA)[14]. Agriculture accounts for about 14.7 per cent of the total export earnings. Besides, goods made with the agricultural raw material also contribute about 20 per cent in Indian exports. In other words, agriculture and its related goods contribute about 38 per cent in total exports of the country. Keeping these in mind, the government introduced a number of reforms. In all this, the strengthening of existing institutions in spot and derivative trade has become crucial as commodity markets do influence the lives of millions of stakeholders in the country's diverse and large commodity ecosystem (MCX, 2017).

Long-term relationship between futures and spot itself means co-integration relation. Hence, an attempt has been made in the current paper to check the (price convergence) long run and short run relation between spot and future prices along with the direction of causation of two commodities like Gold and cardamom. For which secondary monthly data for the spot and futures price is used to analysis the daily prices obtained from Muti-Commodity Exchange (MCX) of India ltd (https://www.mcxindia.com/). The specific commodities considered are Cardamom (Agro commodity-per Kgs) and Gold (bullion commodity – per 10 grams) as these are the two actively traded commodities in terms of value as well as volume in Indian Commodity market. Most of the studies have employed co-integration, ARDL and granger causality to capture the Convergence effect. Hence monthly data from June 2015 to December 2019 is used to verify the Spot and future relation. Simple ratio, data visualization technique, **stationarity test, co-integration**[15] test, and **Granger causality** is performed to test the above objective. Based on the above objective and methodology the paper is divided into following sections. Section 2 briefly reveals the history of the sample commodities, section 3 clearly presents the methodology, the result and discussion are provided section 4 and finally the concluding remarks, policy suggestion and scope of future research is presented in section 5.

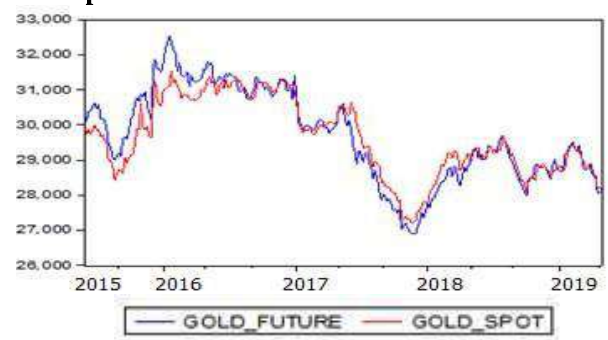
[13] GDP is a monetary measure of the market value of all final goods and services produced in a period in an Economy

[14] A department of the United States government that manages various programs related to food, agriculture, natural resources, rural development and nutrition

[15] Co-integration of two (or more) time series suggests that there is a long-run, or equilibrium, relationship between them

"India, is a major producer and consumer of cardamom, holding the second spot in world production. Cardamom is widely used as spice, well-known for its freshness, flavour and aroma, domestic consumption is influenced during festivals. Gold is the oldest precious metal known to man and for thousands of years it has been valued as a global currency, a commodity, an investment and simply an object of beauty" (https://www.mcxindia.com/products/bullion/gold). Apart from the common man, central banks also have been holding gold reserves as a store of value right from the days of Gold Standard and Bretton Woods Standard. In 2009, Government of India purchased 200 tonnes of gold from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at $6.7 billion. This purchase propelled India to the tenth position among top gold reserves holding nations. According to estimates, the gold acquired over the years in India is around 20,000 tonnes, the largest holdings by any country. Owing to limited bullion supplies, the demand has been largely met through imports. Demand of gold is influenced by seasonality.

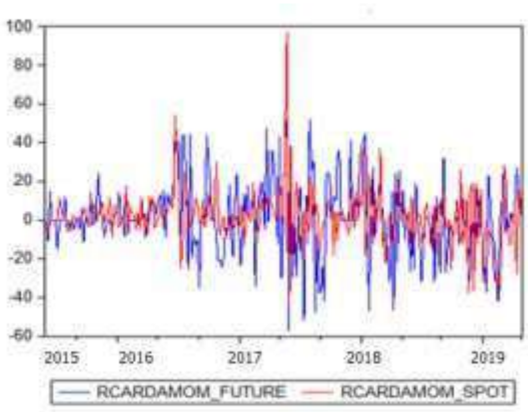
Figure 3 and 4. Original Spot and Future prices of Cardamom and Gold

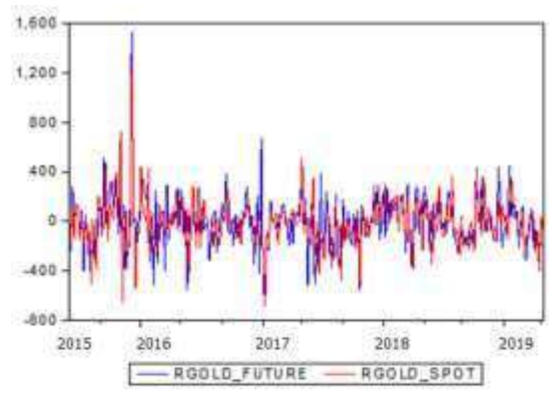


Source: Computed from MCX

Figures 3 and 4 illustrates the original spot and futures prices and Figures 5 and 6 indicates the returns[4] for the two commodities during the entire sample period and Figures 7 to 10 exemplifies the volatilities[5] of spot and future prices.

Figure 5 and 6. Spot and Future Returns of Cardamom and Gold

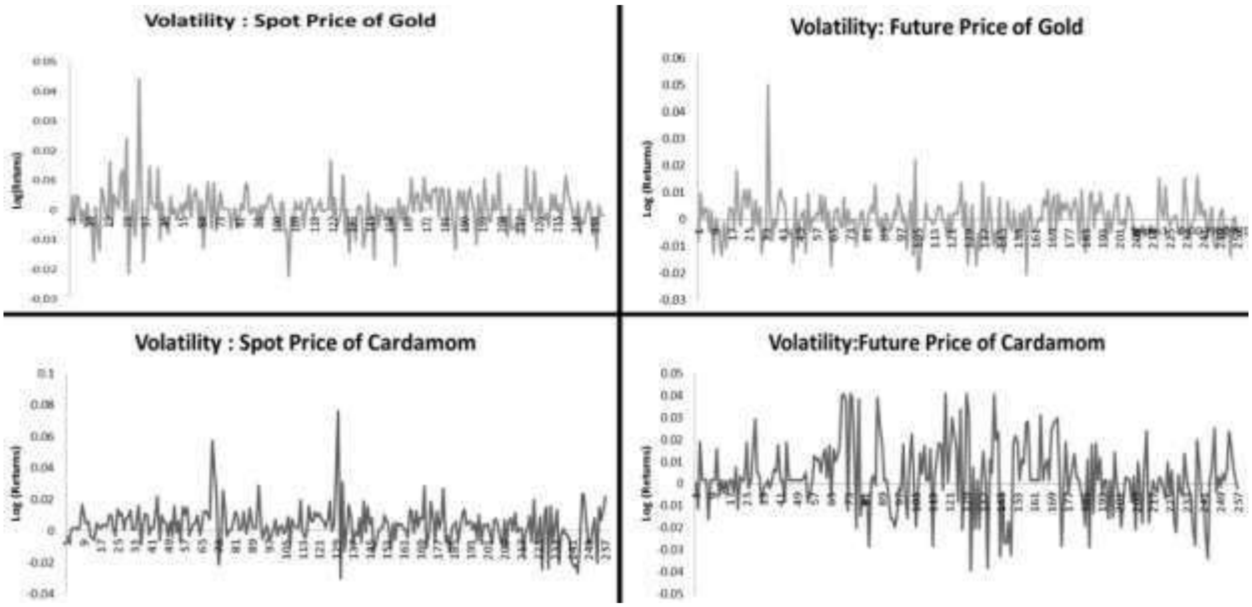




Source: computed from MCX

The emerged patterns show that, futures markets exhibit strong forwardation- i.e, the future price is on average higher than the spot price of the nearby futures contract (the average difference of the prices is around (INR) 560 for Cardamom and (INR) 45 for Gold).Volatility measure is the absolute deviation returns from the sample average as quoted in Crain and Lee (1996),from the figure it can be analyzed and observed that, spot and futures are highly correlated as they rise and fall in a similar manner, with peaks during the price spikes (about 97 percent of correlation exists between the variables).

Figure 7 and 8: Volatilities of Spot price and Future price of Gold, and figure 9 and 10 Spot and Future volatilities of Cardamom.



Source: Estimations based on data of MCX India ltd.

2. Methodology

Co-integration, Error Correction Mechanism (ECM) and Granger causality tests are employed to formally investigate the dynamic relationship and the causation between spot and futures prices. These tests assume that data series are stationary, and the stationarity[6]properties between the variables are verified by Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test. Further, the long run relation between the variable are checked using co integration and in the short run there may or may not be disequilibrium, this can be checked using (ECM)[7]. The existence of a relationship between variables does not prove causality (Gujarati: pg. 696) hence, granger causality is performed. The analysis was carried out with the aid of EVIEWS 7.

2.1. Stationarity

The Dickey-Fuller test (1979, 1981) is employed to examining the stationarity of the series, which requires the estimation of the following equation, in a simple (Autoregressive) AR(1) process

$Y_t = \alpha + \theta Y_{t-1} + e_t$ (i)

"Where θ = 1 corresponds to a unit root. As the constant in a stationary AR(1) model satisfies δ = (1 − θ) μ, where μ is the mean of the series, the null hypothesis of a unit root also implies that the intercept term should be zero. Although it is possible to jointly test the two restrictions δ = 0 and θ = 1, it is easier (and more common) to test only that θ = 1" (Verbeek, p. 269). "For testing purpose, t - statistics is taken as test „statistic‟ though it does not follow the t – distribution (critical value are provided by Dickey and Fuller (1979, 1981)). Sometimes DF test does not reject the null hypothesis, thus it is advisable to perform a range of Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) test as :

$$\Delta Y_t = \beta_1 + \beta_2 t + \delta Y_{t-1} + \sum_{i=1}^{m} \alpha \, \Delta y_{t-1} + s_t$$

The number of lagged difference terms to include is often determined empirically, the idea being to include enough terms so that the error term in the ADF equations serially uncorrelated. Here also it is tested whether $\delta = 0$ and the ADF test follows the same asymptotic distribution as the DF statistic, so the same critical values can be used" (Gujarati, pg. 817)

2.2. Co-integration and Error Correction Mechanism (ECM)

Many economic or financial time series appear to be I(1): I(1) variables tend to diverge as $T \rightarrow \infty$, because their unconditional variances are proportional to T. Thus, it may seem that I(1) variables could never be expected to obey any sort of long-run equilibrium relationship. It is possible for two (or more) variables to be I(1), and yet a certain linear combination of those variables to be I(0). If that is the case, the I(1) variables are said to be cointegrated:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta X_i + e_t \qquad \text{(ii)}$$

Rejection of the Null implies the residual is stationary. If the residual series is stationary then Y_t and X_t must be co-integrated. " If two or more I(1) variables are co-integrated, they must obey an equilibrium relationship in the long-run, although they may diverge substantially from that equilibrium in the short run.(Chris Brooks, 2008). If Y and X prices are co-integrated; that is, there is a long term, or equilibrium, relationship between the two. Of course, in the short run there may or may not be disequilibrium, this can be checked using ECM (Gujarati, p822). The error term in (ii), can be treated as the "equilibrium error." And this error term is used to bind the short-run behavior of Y to its long-run value. If two variables Y and X are co-integrated, then the relationship between the two can be expressed as Error-Correction Model (ECM)" (Engle & Granger (1987)). Consider the following model:

$$\Delta y_t = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \Delta X_t + \alpha_2 u_{t-1} + \varepsilon_t \qquad \text{(iii)}$$

where Δ denotes the first difference operator(Returns in this case), εt is a random error term, and $u_{t-1} = (Y_{t-1} - \beta_1 - \beta_2 X_{t-1})$, that is, the one-period lagged value of the error from the co-integrating regression (ii). ECM equation (iii) states that ΔY_t depends on ΔX_t and also on the equilibrium error term. If the latter is nonzero, then the model is out of equilibrium. Thus, the absolute value of α_2 decides how quickly the equilibrium is restored.(Gujarti,p.822)

2.3. Granger Causality

The Granger (1969) test for causality between two variables is employed for this study. The test indicates that, for two time-series variables X_t, and Y_t, if X improves the prediction of Y, then X (Granger) causes Y. The estimating equations can be written simply as follows.

$$Spot_t = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \alpha_i Spot_{t-i} + \sum_{p=1}^{n} \beta_i Future_{t-i} + \mu_t$$

$$\text{-------------------------------------(iv)}$$

$$Future_t = \sum_{i=1}^{n} \lambda_i Spot_{t-i} + \sum_{p=1}^{n} \delta_i Future_{t-i} + \eta_t$$

"Granger Causality test states that Y is not only influenced by lagged value of Y but also lagged values of X, then X causes Y. On the other hand if X is influenced by lagged values of Y in addition to lagged values of X then Y causes X. If X causes Y and Y also causes X then it is known as bi-directional relationship between X and Y. Further, if X doesn't cause Y and Y doesn't cause X then it is known as an independent relation between X and Y. A simple F-test can convey whether the lagged values of X contribute significantly to the explanatory power of Y equation.

AIC/SIC: The Akaike information criterion (AIC)/ Schwarz Information Criterion (SIC) is a measure of the relative quality of a statistical model, for a given set of data, providing a means for model selection.

3. Empirical Results and Discussion

3.1. Unit Root Test

Table 3.1: Unit Root Test Statistics:
ADF Test Results for Spot and Future prices, (t- values) at Levels (L) and Return (R_t)

	With Constant and	Cardamom		Gold	
		Spot	Future	Spot	Future
L	No Trend	2.50	1.245	-0.54	-0.64
	Trend	0.705	-0.62	-1.92	-1.97
R_t	No Trend	-14.46*	-13.10*	-16.03*	-15.79*
	Trend	-15.17*	-13.29*	-16.01*	-15.77*

* significant at 1% levels[8]. [Note: The optimum lag length (2) is identified using Schwarz information (SIC) criterion.

ADF test used to check the stationarity and the table 3.1 reveals that the data is stationary at first difference for both the commodities (revealed by p-value) both with and without intercept and trend.

3.2. Co-integration Test

After the stationarity test, co-integration[9]is performed to determine the existence of long run relation between the variables. Automatic selection of lags based on SIC, Newey-West bandwidth selection using Bartlett kernel,(the Unit root null hypothesis assumes individual unit root process).

Table 3.2: Unrestricted Co-integration Rank Test
(Trace and Max-Eigen Statistic for Spot and Future Prices)

		Cardamom		Gold	
	Hypothesized No. of CE(s)	Trace Statistic	Max-Eigen Statistic	Trace Statistic	Max-Eigen Statistic
	None	81.93* (0.00)	43.53* (0.00)	127.94* (0.00)	88.52* (0.00)
R_t	At most 1	38.41* (0.00)	38.41* (0.00)	39.41* (0.00)	39.41* (0.00)

Trace test indicates and Max-Eigen Statistics test indicates co-integration at 0.05 level MacKinnon-Haug-Michelis (1999).

**significant at 1% level*

Trace statistics and Maximum Eigen values of Table 3.2 reveals that the variables are cointegrated in case of the Returns of the commodities i.e., a long run relation between Spot and Future prices in case of the both the commodities, cardamom and gold. Since the two variables are cointegrated, the relationship between the two can be expressed as ECM to check for short run equilibrium which is given as

$\Delta Car_{SP} = 0.001 + 0.286\ \Delta Car_{FP} – 0.016\ \hat{U}_{t-1}$ (v)

p-value (0.33)* (0.00)* (0.227)

$\Delta Gold_{SP} = -6.61E\text{-}005 + 0.570 \Delta Gold_{FP} + 0.110 \hat{U}_{t-1}$ (vi)

p-value (0.852) (0.00)* (0.001)*

Statistically, the equilibrium error term is zero (for both the commodities), suggesting that spot price adjusts to changes in future in the same time period. As (v) shows, short-run changes in future price have a positive impact on short-run changes in spot price of cardamom.

In (vi) future price of gold is zero and u_{t-1} is positive, which means that is spot is too high to be in equilibrium, that is, spot $price_{t-1}$ is above its equilibrium value. The possible reason could be , "Gold is favorite of all precious metals throughout the world for its magnificence, liquidity, investment qualities, and industrial properties gold is typically viewed as a financial asset that maintains its value and purchasing power during inflationary periods ", which can be the reason for short run disequilibrium of this metal.

3.3. Granger Causality Test

Table 3.3 depicts the F-value of the variables, which clearly states the existence of relation (F-value) between variables in case of Spot and Future returns of both Cardamom and Gold. i.e the anticipation of future price causes the spot price. But it should be added that the direction of causality may depend critically on the number of lagged terms included (Gujarati, Pg.698). The result clearly indicates the price convergence theory.

Table: 3.3.Granger-Causality test Results between Spot and Future prices (F- value)

Cardamom					Gold				
	Lag Length	Spot does not Granger Cause Future	Future does not Granger Cause spot	Inference		Lag Length	Spot does not Granger Cause Future	Future does not Granger Cause spot	Inference
R_t	2	0.417	5.18*	$\overrightarrow{F\ \ S}$	R_t	2	0.76	21.40*	$\overrightarrow{F\ \ S}$
	5	0.412	3.259*	$\overrightarrow{F\ \ S}$		5	0.72	12.15*	$\overrightarrow{F\ \ S}$
	9	0.953	2.560*	$\overrightarrow{F\ \ S}$		9	1.80	7.73*	$\overrightarrow{F\ \ S}$

*significant at 1% level

4. Conclusion

"At the expiration date, a futures contract that calls for immediate settlement, should have a futures price equal to the spot price. Before settlement, futures and spot prices need not be the same. The difference between the prices is called the basis of the futures contract. It converges to zero as the contract approaches maturity" (Peter Ritchken, 1999, Ch.2). Thus this paper attempts to establish the important links of between Spot and Future prices in the Commodity Market among two actively traded commodities (Cardamom and Gold). The result clearly indicates the price convergence theory. The Co-integration test establishes a long run relation among the variables. The ECM reveals that, the short-run changes in future price have a positive impact on short-run changes in spot price. Also the Granger Causality undoubtedly analyzed the Causal links between the Spot and Futures in terms of their returns and the result reveals that the anticipation of future price causes the spot price for both the commodity, thus proving the price. The direction is from Futures to Spot in case of Agro-commodity (Cardamom) and Bullion commodity (Gold).

The study establishes important price links in the commodity market. The results of this study will have more impact to the hedgers who take appropriate positions in the market as well as to the policymakers and regulators. The finding stipulates that the futures markets are able to meet their objectives of price discovery and also help in "price risk hedging".

When interest rates are uncertain, the payoffs from forward contracts cannot be generated by an active trading strategy. When markets are imperfect (as in reality), the pricing relationships are affected. The volatility of prices may not always lead to price convergence. Finally, a contract must be chosen in such a way that choosing a contract that it fits their income tax needs so that the loss can be curtailed.

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A Values-Based Integral System of Education and its Merits in Transforming Today's Society – A Case Study of Toogoolawa School

Dona L Goodman

1. Introduction

As our planet has taken charge of a floundering humankind by way of the global coronavirus-19 pandemic, those who envision a sustainable future for all are truly blessed with the opportunity of a century…or several centuries… to turn back the tides of unsustainable over-consumption, inequity and divisive rhetoric… and to re-imagine a world of peace and prosperity through a global system of engaging a heart-centered, values based, inter-dependent, empowerment of all the children in this world.

This time of reflection and awakening, where almost all children, in every country are out of school, all who are called to education…to empowerment…to self-actualization towards a universal harmony, are today challenged and compelled to say goodbye to rote learning and wholesale cruelty, inspired by a culture of competition and scarcity, and to scour the globe for existing best practices, to re-think and meet an unparalleled opportunity to support our young people to become more creative, courageous and compassionate than the generations that made this day possible.

"The saddest aspect of life right now is that science gathers knowledge faster than society gathers wisdom," said the famous American Writer, Isaac Asimov. What the world needs today is neither a new order, a new society nor a new education. Change lies in each individual mind and heart filled with goodness. Educare is an important part of the solution. 'Educare' in latin means to draw out the values which are inherent in every child to make them whole. The culmination of the best educational process happens when it leads to the realisation of one's full potential and the ability to use those skills for the greater good.

This paper highlights about the philosophy of education which is deeply embedded in human values and which shapes the character and personality of students during their formative years. This approach empowers children to think (head), take action (hands) and most importantly, follow the heart—HEART, in the English language is comprised of the same letters as EARTH, thereby, aligning each of us with every other form of life on Earth.

SECTION I: A New World with Old Wisdom

A strong nation is built by strong individuals, and weak individuals make up a weak nation. The moral fabric of a nation cannot be sustained by force; it can be built up only from source – the source of the spring of human values that is innate in every human. Victor Hugo, the French Poet and Novelist said, "He who opens a school door, closes a prison." This indeed is a statement that transfuses the current of vigor, vitality, purity and power to the institution of education that helps society, for its upkeep of morals and justice. However, in the current scheme of things, this statement is disproved by repeated abnormalities in the moral gene of young students. So, all one gets to see is a big white elephant in the room painted with sordid pictures of juvenile crime like drug abuse, theft, terrorism, homicides… etc. The United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, has estimated that more than 1 million children are behind the bars around the world. Worldwide some 200,000 homicides occur among youth 10 to 29 years of age each year, which is 43% of the total number of homicides globally each year [WHO, Fact Sheet: Youth Violence, 2015, http://goo.gl/Fgxt7s].

Approximately 430 young people aged 10 to 24 die every day through interpersonal violence. [WHO, Fact Sheet on Adolescent health, 2015, http://goo. gl/kjKbBT].

Technology has made great strides in modern times, and revolutionary advances in various fields are of the blue-chip quality. But unfortunately, materialism has spread like wildfire and people are competing in a mad rat race for satiating their material needs and wants. No harm in that, as long as it does not lead to decay in moral standards. Sadly, this is the most frightening change the world has seen. Globalization has imposed and established rules, which only benefit a few. Spiritual and ethical values have been undermined.

Excessive competition, parental expectations, commercialization of education, negative impact of media, misuse of information technology, globalization, consumerism etc… have put immense pressure on children, families and schools; leading to a distortion of basic human values, an attitude of seeking instant gratification, shortcuts; leading to insecurities and fear-based survival. The cynical teachings of modern education have become so ego-oriented, money and job-oriented that, when children grow up cynical and angry at the Universe, and at each other...it's hardly something to be surprised at.

Former Minister of Education in Bhutan, His Excellency Mr Lyonpo Thakur S Powdyel says, "I might be the last man standing who still holds firmly on to the belief that of all the sectors of public service, education has the distinct privilege of being called the Noble Sector. And, for a good reason! Education is uniquely situated to serve as a virtuous instrument to enable our children and youth to cultivate the nobility of their mind, the nobility of their heart, thereby leading them to practise nobility in action.

Somewhere along the way though, the rains started beating us. Today, there is a lot going on around the world in the name of education but much of it has very little to do with education or genuine learning. This fall from grace that purposeful learning has suffered over the years and become a largely diploma-hunting or career-carving enterprise explains the state of our world and the lot of the human race.

But education is built on the principle of hope and of possibility. Life may not be perfect and the world leaves much to be desired, but with effort, we can make the world better and life more beautiful. Otherwise, there is no incentive to build seats of learning and engage the most precious segment of the society – children and youth - and keep them in our schools, colleges and universities for extended periods of time.

We have to rehabilitate education to the honored seat of the Noble Sector that it was once placed and make it an instrument of humanization. The stakes couldn't be higher. Education is an act of faith."

Dr Gururaj Karajagi, Founder and Chairman of the Academy for Creative Teaching at Bengaluru says, "Surely, the decline in values result in weakening of the social fabric and several aberrations surface. It seems to be the cyclic nature of the universe. These challenges of facing violence and greed have been there in the first century and even before that. In the ancient India epic Mahabharata, which is supposed to have happened in the third century B.C., the great sage Vedavyasa declares, 'I shout with raised arms, please follow the path of Dharma but nobody listens to me.' Can you feel the frustrations of this wise man? Does that era not symbolise the ugliest face of violence, greed and jealousy? What happened in the first century is no different, and the same negative values are seen today as well. Since, we live at this time and we are facing it day after day, the effect seems greater. So, it is not the question of era but of basic human nature.

Most of us in today's world feel that the society is becoming more materialistic, and values are being pushed into the background. It looks as though the economic man is calling the shots. There is nothing unusual about it. Each era of human existence throws up a role model and the whole society tries to emulate this model during that time. To make the idea clearer, let us consider the vedic times. Who was the role model for the society? It was a wise man or a Rishi. He was an icon. Even the kings and the princes came down to his hermitage, sat at his feet to get knowledge. He was held in highest esteem. Even a mighty king like Dasharatha could not decline the request made by the sage Vishwamitra, who asked the king to send his dearest sons to the forest with him. The icon of a rishi was so strong that a warrior like Kaushika did severe penance and became Sage Vishwamitra. It was the time when wisdom and knowledge were respected. Let us come down history and take a look into the period of Mahabharata. By then the role models had changed. Who were the heroes of Mahabharata? The heroes of this era are undoubtedly the mighty warriors such as Bhishma, Drona, Karna, Arjuna etc. The Brahmin Dronacharya was teaching the princes warfare instead of philosophy and scriptures. Even the God incarnate, Parashurama was running a specialised institution of warfare. It was the time when everyone wanted to be a great warrior. That is why a tribal boy like Ekalavya wanted to be like Arjuna and not Vedavyasa. The icon had shifted from 'wisdom' to 'bravery'.

Let us consider the pre-independence period. Before the independence of India, our role models were Gandhi, Patel, Nehru, Azad, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and other freedom fighters. It was the dream of every youngster to be a freedom fighter and every school in the country was a training ground for freedom fighting. All school campuses reverberated with the sounds of vande mataram. The icon was 'patriotism'. After independence, unfortunately, the icon of the society has been a rich man or 'money'.

Everyone in the society is aspiring to become rich. They want to be as much rich as possible and as quickly as possible and at any cost. Getting rich at any cost has been the motto. Invariably this process of getting rich instantly is at the cost of values."
At the cost of values in education! Did we perhaps forget about the spiritual nature of all, especially children? Or are we no longer acknowledging it, as their inner lives and feelings are lesser respected or prioritised?

Prof. Ron Toomey, Emeritus Professor, Victoria University, Australia says, "As I see it, in today's world there is so much violence, greed, contempt for environmental issues, human rights abuse, massive social and cultural disharmony, because as a species we have lost the plot. We have thrown the baby out with the bathwater. In earlier times, as a species we recognized the importance of educating the whole person so he/she would be a rounded, democratic contributor to worldly affairs. Today, education is viewed as a technical, instrumental act. Teaching itself is circumscribed by 'teacher competencies' designed to serve prescriptive outcomes-based curricula which in turn are subjected to scrutiny by standardized high stakes testing regimes. Such tests add little to teachers' understanding of students' real abilities, interests and dispositions. Typically, they are a poor measure of student achievement and have little relation to students' lives, or to their future job prospects. Students stress around the inflated importance of tests and this significantly impacts many students' well-being. Education has become fixated upon employability. So, this isn't an issue about a decline in values but rather one of encouraging the wrong things to be valued. At a time when the world is at a very real, do or die crossroads, we should be placing greater emphasis and value on sustainability, conflict resolution, social and cultural harmony and above all co-operation not competition."

This is the time to raise a vociferous call for the emergence of a 'New World'. The 'New World' is not a world without challenges, but it is a world in which man will emerge victorious in every struggle through his probity. It is not a world without darkness, but it is a world in which man believes that he can conquer darkness through his inner illumination. It is not a world without death, but it is a world where man knows that there is life beyond death through the experience of the eternal ancient truth. The 'New World' is not a world that looks up to God in heaven for its redemption, but it is a world where man realizes his immense spiritual potential to bring down the peace of heaven onto the earth. In this heaven on earth, no one will be allowed to starve or go without raiment and shelter; none will suffer without medicines and care when needed. None of the children born into this 'New World' is denied opportunity for right education. This is the vision of a Golden Age, envisioned by all benevolent thinkers and leaders down the ages around the globe.

Sri Madhusudan Sai says it beautifully, "Giving wrong education is more damaging than not giving education. All the social problems that we witness around us - the crisis, the terrorism, etc - have participation from the youth, teenagers and children because there is lack of the correct idealism. Teach them wrong things they will pick up the wrong things, teach them right things they will pick up the right things. Thus, much lies on our shoulders. There cannot be a happy country in an unhappy world. We cannot ignore what's happening in another part of the world and say it's not my problem. That's not the right way. We are one. We are all connected. Let's say we are all in the same boat. Just because the hole is at the other end of the boat we cannot sit in peace and say 'that is not at my end.' Let's all sink. That's not the correct idea."

Sri Sathya Sai Loka Seva Gurukulam Group of Institutions invigorated and enlivened by Baba's spirit of bestowing the highest education to every little source of life that enters its portals, has embarked determinedly, on the unveiling of the greatest glory of life – the divine self that is within each and every person. How is this done at these Institutions? Transmuting humanity from dehumanization to humanization through values-based education is the first step and it doesn't just stop there…bestowing the wisdom of the fundamental unchanging truth about life which solves many a quest, completes an incompleteness, hand holds every student back to their peaceful inner nests, is their end – the leap from humanization to divinization. Thus, spiritual wisdom is both the means and the end of their educational journey.

While knowledge and intelligence are often equated with complexity, wisdom often emerges as elegantly simple. This is not a simplicity born of ignorance but a simplicity that is akin to one's existential reality; it cuts to the chase; it sees through the cloud of complexity. Wisdom does not simply serve individual growth but growth in general. Wisdom is distinguished from bare intellect especially by its integration with the heart, to know oneself authentically and spontaneously.

Over the centuries, the meaning of spirituality has completely been misunderstood; most people think that spirituality is another name for religion. This isn't true. Spirituality is the most natural thing that there is; with or without adhering to one's religious norms; believing or disbelieving in the existence of God; irrespective of one's economic status, intellectual capabilities, race and creed. It is simply our own conscious self, recognizing which we know that we are more than just a body, that we are a soul with inherent noble values. As the 13th century Persian poet, Maulana Jalaluddin Rumi puts it, "The very center of your heart is where life begins – the most beautiful place on earth." Spirituality reminds us that there is only love, without borders, races, ethnicities or cultural divides, and the basis of everything is a higher conscious energy, which permeates the entire creation. Einstein called it 'Supreme Intelligence.'

In his book, 'Education and the Soul', Professor John Miller of the University of Toronto, Canada, writes, "The time has come for soulful learning. We have had enough of machine-like approaches to education which deaden the human spirit. The present trends in outcomes-based education and accountability drain the vitality from our classrooms. The pressure for quantifying all learning without concern for quality represses the student's soul. Instead, we can learn to bring onto the Earth an education of deep joy where the soul once again learns to sing. It is time to restore education to what it rightfully is - education of the soul. And, it is not a new vision. It is a vision that was articulated by the Greeks and various indigenous people centuries ago. It is found in Taoism and in the teachings of Christ and the Buddha. Different eras have witnessed the advent of many prophets and saints. They were beacons of light and taught that spirituality is the undercurrent in all the religions. But we have failed to recognize this repeatedly."

The above is the answer to all those who may ask, "Why is it important to gain this spiritual wisdom?" Knowledge of the supreme helps us break through our limited existence; it brings a sense of unity, self-discipline and self-sacrifice; it is the bedrock of all the noble human values; it is the substratum on which our innate goodness and inner beauty thrives; it is that, knowing which we know everything else.

SECTION II: A Simple Solution to a Complex Problem

Darkness can be ended only with the help of light. We cannot overwhelm darkness by attacking it with more darkness. All the efforts of today's global governance are exactly doing the latter. The money economy has put a price tag on every commodity of use; right from water, food, shelter; up till knowledge, creativity and relationships. Privatization has transferred the ownership of public sector from the government to the private sector, to tussle the managerial inefficiency of the public sector. Globalization that is believed to have integrated world economies and increased interdependence between countries, leading to improvement in global economy and people's lives, is in fact a travesty of truth.

The World Bank has estimated that 40 million to 60 million people will fall into extreme poverty (under $1.90 a day) in 2020, compared to 2019, as a result of COVID-19, depending on the assumptions of the magnitude of the economic shock. The global extreme poverty rate could rise by 0.3 to 0.7 percentage points, to around 9 percent in 2020. Additionally, the percentage of people living on less than $3.20 a day could rise by 0.3 to 1.7 percentage points, to 23 percent or higher, an increase of some 40 million to 150 million people. Finally, the percentage of people living on less than $5.50 a day could rise by 0.4 to 1.9 percentage points, to 42 percent or higher, an increase of around 70 million to 180 million people.

Due to global shocks such as COVID-19 and because it is becoming increasingly difficult to reach those remaining in extreme poverty, who often live in fragile countries and remote areas, poverty reduction may not be fast enough to reach the goal of ending extreme poverty by 2030. New research estimates that, by 2030 up to two-thirds of the global extreme poor may be living in fragile and conflict-affected economies, making it evident that without intensified action, the global poverty goals will not be met.

The majority of global poor lives in rural areas and is poorly educated, employed in the agricultural sector, and under 18 years of age. The work to end extreme poverty is far from over, and many challenges remain. In most parts of the world, growth rates are too slow, and investment is too subdued to increase median incomes. For many nations, poverty reduction has slowed or even reversed.

The 43 countries in the world with the highest poverty rates are fragile or in conflict-affected situations (FCS). Economies facing chronic fragility and conflict have had poverty rates stuck at over 40 percent in the past decade, while countries that have escaped FCS have cut their poverty rates by more than half.

Access to good schools, health care, electricity, safe water, and other critical services remains elusive for many people, often determined by socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity, and geography. The multidimensional view – wherein other aspects such as education, access to basic utilities, healthcare, and security are included – reveals a world in which poverty is a much broader, more entrenched problem. The share of poor according to a multidimensional definition that includes consumption, education, and access to basic utilities is approximately 50 percent higher than when relying solely on monetary poverty.

Dr Neil Hawkes, Founder, Values-based Education (VbE) International, United Kingdom says, “Statistically less people are currently being killed globally by war and violence than ever before, so at an international level there is actually more peace being maintained. We are also not seeing the same level (although it still exists) of destructiveness of people being ‘kept in their place’ through racism, slavery, colonialism, class, caste etc. However at a community and family level, there have been profound recent changes, which have created a growing low level of mental health e.g…the breakdown of families and extended families, movement of people away from their family homes and communities, isolation and loneliness, media that projects a materialistic road to happiness, political systems that lack integrity etc. All this has led to an existential vacuum with people feeling that they have no meaning or purpose. We need to live as cosmic-centric beings rather than ethno-centric (group) or ego-centric (personal) individuals - both of which lead to violence and greed!”

Mark McCaffrey, Co-Founder of Climate Education, Communication and Outreach Stakeholder Group and Founder of CLEAN - Climate Literacy and Energy Awareness Network says, “As Paulo Freire pointed out half a century ago, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, education then (as now) is based on the Banking Model whereby students receive, file, and store their deposits information, which they can ‘cash in’ when they join the workforce and become ‘productive’ members of society. Aimed at maintaining the status quo- whatever that is in a particular part of the world- the values instilled in such an education system ultimately oppress the people in the system and the environment that is also regarded as a resource to be exploited for profit and control. This is particularly true in education relating to climate, environment and sustainable practices, which, especially if they encourage participation in developing adequate responses to climate change and environmental folly, are considered disruptive of the status quo. A fully transformative education-a pedagogy of the oppressed and for the oppressed is imperative in order to transform society, and this requires learning and participation far beyond formal education (though it can be sparked there) and into every aspect of society and life.”

After decades of implementation of global policies for development in the sectors of economy, education, health, food security, environment, defense and trade; the world has only seen intensification of competition, high degree of imitation, price and profit swings, and business and product destruction. The gap between what is and what ought to be – the Is-Ought Problem, is widening in spite of the prowess of all the intellectual acuity put together by the polymaths. Is there a solution, a quick fix for this?

Yes, there is and the solution is to draw out the simplicity from all the seeming complexity. This requires a sharp intellect arising out of a kind heart, to distill the clear sound out of all the cacophony, only to bring a revolution in the way we think. Rabindranath Tagore, the great Indian thinker said, “Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high, where knowledge is free, where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls, where words come out from the depth of truth, where tireless striving stretches its arms toward perfection, where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and action into that heaven of freedom, my father, let my country awake!”

So, the simplicity of the complex problem lies in understanding that the most valuable and most beautiful, such as ‘Knowledge’ itself ought to be given free of cost. A price tag devalues it and a ‘NO’ price tag doubles its value. A world that strives for ‘Freedom’ in every aspect of social life, does not believe in ‘Free’ transaction of products of basic social relevance, such as Education, Health and Nutrition. This is the irony! A child, who had to buy his education, later grows up to naturally sell his skills. In this pursuit, every child who grows up to be an adult, is busy playing catch-up and breeds a lot of stress. The children who are not able to afford money to join this race are left behind in the society. How are we to balance this lop-sidedness?

Education is bequeathed as a gift and as a matter of right to every child, COMPLETELY FREE OF COST. Nature, nutrition, spirituality, academics, sports, arts, culture is administered in the right proportion to nurture integrated personalities. The human values of Truth, Righteousness, Peace, Love, and Non-violence are the linchpins which act as the driving force.

Thus in a value centric education a student is shaped into a perfect instrument for service to society, which will be his/her path to self-fulfillment. Christina Kwauk, Brookings Institution says, “I like to think of education as an “I, We, It” framework, where development of the heart/one’s pathway (self-awareness) is the starting point to understanding the “we” of society (social awareness; e.g. how we are interconnected as human society), which is then the launch point for developing ecological awareness (e.g. how our human systems are interconnected with the more than human systems around us). This entails both a subject-based knowledge (e.g., knowledge of ocean systems, knowledge of basic mathematical principles, literacy, etc.).

Spiritual Heart Adoration

This 3H model of Head, Heart and Hands can be viewed metaphorically from the perspective of a tree - where the trunk rises from the roots, the branches spread out the leaves, flowers blossom and fruits are borne. A fully blossomed child develops into an integrated personality, in whom the head, heart and hands work in harmony. Such a personality will have a brilliant head, a loving and compassionate heart and competent hands.

This model proposes a balanced combination of academic programs, physical education, spiritual, cultural, service and other extra-curricular activities so that ample opportunities are provided for all aspects of the student’s personality to blossom fully. Of course, a dedicated team of noble and competent teachers is crucial for the success of this model. Residential education is highly conducive for effective implementation of this model. The three planks of this educational model is explained below - Heart (Spiritual/Adoration) – Roots of the tree.

Inculcation of spiritual insight alone can provide the foundation for a noble, able and stable character. The surest sign of spiritual insight is the blossoming of Selfless Love in the heart. Such Love springs out of recognition of the ‘Unity’ of all life. Experience of this Unity or Oneness is the highest spiritual wisdom. This Love expresses itself in myriad forms – as adoration or devotion towards God, as reverence towards parents, teachers and elders, as friendliness towards equals, as compassion and sympathy for the suffering, and in general as reverence for all life!

Head (Intellectual/Illumination) – Trunk of the tree

Academic programs in pursuit of Truth of the universe and its basis provide illumination to the head/ brain. The left part of the brain fosters the logical and rational aspect of the personality and the right part stimulates the emotional or the intuitive aspect. This model proposes to cultivate rational brilliance and emotional balance in equal measure through relevant activities.

Hands (Physical/Service) – Branches of the tree

Physical education is an important part of this model. Physical strength and stamina, healthy habits, discipline, team-spirit and sportsmanship are developed through a curriculum of physical exercises, Yoga and sports activities. Continuous adherence to a disciplined life of right activities in the daily routine will cultivate will power in the student to do the right thing always under all situations. This will bestow upon him/her the strength of character to lead a life of Right Conduct.
Periodical self-reliance activities on the campus and social service activities in the surrounding communities inculcate dignity of labor, selflessness and social responsibility.

Heart – Root of the Tree
Love in the heart expresses itself as selfless service to others. Illumination of the head helps in achieving competence in service. The range of skills, knowledge, attitudes and understanding that needs to be developed from the above segments of value based education (VbE) is identified. Of crucial importance is to ensure that the process of developing VbE is well planned (constructing an action plan/road map) and that there is continuity and progression in the student's school experience, which is monitored, evaluated and celebrated in order to keep the process alive and constantly under review. Ensuring that VbE is visible in all subjects and aspects of the curriculum, the school values leader or a group of staff, which may include representatives of the student body and community, may lead this process.

VbE has seven core components:
1) Authentic modeling by adults of positive values.
2) Inner curriculum - Creating awareness of thoughts, feelings and emotions.
3) Reflective practices which link to the science of interpersonal neurobiology.
4) Creation of a calm, purposeful and happy VbE atmosphere, both physical and emotional.
5) Development of an explicit VbE curriculum and its links to the wider curriculum.
6) Development of quality values-led leadership.
7) Comprehensive development of an ethical vocabulary which nurtures ethical intelligence.

Values Education is any activity, which promotes the understanding and enactment of positive values, which develop the skills and positive character traits of adults and students, so they can live the values as active members of the community. It is considered as a very successful form of character education.

SECTION III: The Joy of Learning about Life

The secret of life in every being is but a mystery which when discovered opens the infinity to us. It is the most intelligent puzzle fabricated by the Supreme Intelligence, by keeping the answers right within us, and yet creating the delusion of the possibility for an answer without us. The answers to all the problems of without lies within. The cracking of this puzzle is the interesting game of life. Once hit upon, life is an absolute breeze.

If education is to offer taste for the tinsel of the world, to produce money-making machines without a heart, then we are surely only refuting our own existence. But if education offers taste for the truth of life, to produce peace-making humans with a heart, then we are surely giving much more to this planet than taking from it.

For the child to have a well-rounded personality and be able to live its complete potential; there needs to be equal emphasis on Physical, Intellectual, Emotional and Spiritual aspects.
Oscar Wilde, the famous Irish poet and playwright said, "The best way to make children good is to make them happy." Every child is a germination of spontaneous joy – a joy that

has no reason or season. An education system only needs to take care not to extinguish this joy of life that sprouts from within their hearts, but rather nurture and protect it.

One of the important changes that the human society has seen in the past 50 years has been the way we access and process information. While on one side, the need to learn, upgrade and expand the curriculum continuously to match the changing global scenarios, has brought newer technologies and opened up new fields of knowledge; on the other hand the obsoleteness of some of the well- known ways of learning and teaching; which cause undue pressure on the children of writing too many exams, long cumbersome lesson plans, and strain due to severe competition; has only created more dissatisfaction among young children. This has led to very little scope for the development of other aspects of their personality including, pursuing their passions, choosing subjects of their liking, and taking alternate professions than to simply follow the herd. The emotional, mental and spiritual aspects of the child's personality have been compromised in the name of intellectual brilliance. This has led to a lopsided approach to education and has proven disastrous for the happiness of the child. An unhappy child bears the pain of injustice which it doesn't deserve and a happy child bears the ecstasy of existence which is its birth right. The spirit of the child is throttled under the opacity of economic status, marks, capacity for rote learning, and competition. This horse race is running ruthlessly towards its own self-destruction.

Rabindranath Tagore in his talks about Civilization and Progress said thus: "When I was a child I had the freedom to make my own toys out of trifles and create my own games from imagination. In my happiness my playmates had their full share; in fact the complete enjoyment of my games depended upon their taking part in them. One day, in this paradise of our childhood, entered a temptation from the market world of the adult. A toy bought from a foreign shop was given to one of our companions; it was perfect, big and wonderfully life-like. He became proud of the toy and less mindful of the game; he kept that expensive thing carefully away from us, glorying in his exclusive possession of it, feeling himself superior to his playmates whose toys were cheap. I am sure if he could have used the modern language of history he would have said that he was more civilized than ourselves to the extent of his owning that ridiculously perfect toy. One thing he failed to realize in his excitement – a fact which at the moment seemed to him insignificant – that this temptation obscured something a great deal more perfect than his toy, the revelation of the perfect child. The toy merely expressed his wealth, but not the child's creative spirit, not the child's generous joy in his play, his open invitation to all who were his compeers to his play-world". Hence, all the efforts of the several educational institutions across the world today, who have realized the importance of a child-centric education system, gives its all to preserve this beautiful art of a child that comes to life through its pure spirit.

Michelangelo said, "I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free." Value based education is based on 4 C's – critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity. Another C called character gets added in 5C. Simply put, Character is the ability to do the right thing always. Understandably, all of this requires considerable time and focussed effort. Therefore, reducing the unwanted academic burden by enabling the child to choose the right subjects, based on the child's aptitude and interest; and allowing enough time to learn other important skills, for not just surviving, but thriving in the twenty first century, are the goals of value based education.

The Core Principles are therefore as follows:

1. Knowledge on all the matters of the world - a complete personality.
    - Academic excellence pertaining to subject knowledge
    - Life skills like communication technology, inter-personal relations, cooking, maintenance, driving etc.
2. Repositories of all the good qualities that emanate spontaneously.

- Love, kindness, compassion, dutifulness, discipline, patriotism, service-mindedness etc.

3. Knowledgeable about ancient Indian wisdom - the culture of the land
    - Study of spiritual texts and philosophies
    - Discrimination between right and wrong
4. Ever engaged in the welfare of the world
    - Dedicated to society at large
    - Using one's professional skills and knowledge

An inspiring example to augment the joy of learning is seen in Asia's Happiest Country and the Second Fastest Growing GDP in the world, Bhutan. The Former Minister of Education in Bhutan, His Excellency Mr Lyonpo Thakur S Powdyel founded and supported the concept of Green Schools in Bhutan. He wrote a book called 'My Green School' and he calls it a meditation on the core function of education. Mr Lyonpo Thakur Powdyel says, "We believe that every nation must have its own North Star, in much the same way that every man, woman and child ought to have their own dream, to guide them towards their destination, just as the ancient mariners, lost on the wide open seas, looked at the North Star to find the safety of the port. For Bhutan, the North Star was identified and articulated by His Majesty the Fourth King Jigme Singye Wangchuck when he proclaimed that Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross Domestic Product.

If a nation has a big dream or an all-embracing vision, it is important for the sub-systems of the nation to do their part to acknowledge and advance that vision. Education being the most critical and strategic sub-system that is charged with the task of preparing the future citizens and leaders of the country, Bhutan's Ministry of Education launched a nationwide educational reform initiative called 'Educating for Gross National Happiness' to be implemented through the medium of Green Schools.

In our scheme of things, green is a colour but more importantly, green is a metaphor. Green stands for anything and everything that supports and sustains life in all its infinite variety. So, we can have a green school, a green home, a green society, green economy, green laws, green parliament, green politics, etc.

A Green School acknowledges the multiple claims of life and planet Earth on the process of teaching and learning as represented in the Sheirg Mandala. A Green School honours the claim of Mother Nature, society, culture, ideas, academics, aesthetics, spirituality, and ethics or morality. Young men and women who go through a Green School learning experience are supposed to release these normative values when they graduate and join the larger society. They are expected to help in the making of a more harmonious, just and happy society.
We have made some encouraging progress and seen positive results since we initiated the programme in 2009 but it is a long way…"

To be born a 'human being' is a biological process but 'being human' is much more than that. Human life is the epitome of all creation and deserves to be lived better than being spent in mere outer material pursuits. An education structure with the following elements - Mindful Teaching (For Teachers), Dynamic Parenting (For Parents), Indian Culture and Spirituality, Compassionate Healthcare (For Medical Professionals), Dharmic Management (For Management Professionals and Management Students), A Scoop of Self-Help (For Teenagers), and Love Without Duty (For Social Workers and Aspiring Social Workers) can help in attaining such a joy and happiness based education.

SECTION IV: Gender Equity - Girls Education
The power of the 'she' is a fact that has lived through several centuries in spite of the several attempts to push it to the knees, by various societal stages of progression and regression.

Femininity was considered a weaker sex and the global society at large gave an insouciant shrug at her inherent potential, until several studies of demography, economics and social welfare, laid bare the facts that were so long turned a blind eye to.
A July 2018 study which was part of a series of notes at the World Bank (World Bank. 2018, The Cost of Not Educating Girls, page 3) revealed that the potential impact of not educating girls involved a huge monetary cost which runs in the tens of trillions of dollars. The potential cost of not educating girls is very high for the girls and societies overall. Some of the grave effects of not educating girls includes the following: Less earnings and low standards of living, Child marriage and early childbearing, Fertility and population growth, ill-health and malnourishment, low agency and decision-making, low social capital and institutions, and negligible altruistic behaviour. Globally the loss in human capital wealth was from US$15 trillion to US$30 trillion.

Globally, nine in ten girls complete their primary education, but only three in four complete their lower secondary education. In low income countries, despite progress over the last two decades, less than two thirds of girls complete their primary education today, and only one in three completes lower secondary school. Low educational attainment for girls has potential negative impacts on a wide range of other development outcomes not only for the girls themselves, but also for their children, families, communities, and societies. It affects girls' life trajectories in many ways. Girls dropping out of school early are more likely to marry or have children early, before they may be physically and emotionally ready to become wives and mothers. This may affect their own health. It may also affect that of their children. For example, children of mothers younger than 18 face higher risks of dying by age five and being malnourished. They may also do poorly in school. Other risks for girls and women associated with a lack of education include intimate partner violence and a lack of decision-making ability in the household.

The Former Director General of UNESCO said, "We will never achieve any of the Sustainable Development Goals without overcoming the discrimination and poverty that stunt the lives of girls and women from one generation to the next. We must work at all levels, from grassroots to global leaders, to put equity and inclusion at the heart of every policy so that all girls, whatever their circumstances, go to school, stay in school and become empowered citizens."

The United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) is an initiative launched by the United Nations in 2000 at the World Education Forum in Dakar. It aims to reduce the gender gap in schooling for girls and to give girls equal access to all levels of education. (www.ungei.org)

Healthy environments and prosperous economic potential are interdependent and inextricably linked to the social structures that provide for the health, education, and development of the 2.2 billion people under the age of 18 on Earth today. In the least developed countries, children comprise nearly half the overall world population and nearly a quarter (500,000) of these youngsters are adolescent girls between the ages of 10 and 19. Intergovernmental commitments to the well-being of children are firmly established in both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

An increasing body of evidence indicates that if the mother of today's newborn child is educated, the chances for her daughter or son to be healthy and attend school are more likely. This is of essential value to the goals and objectives of the Rio+20 agenda. Further, studies have found that economic returns to primary education of girls, boosts her eventual wages between 10 and 20 percent.

Overall, the message is clear: educating girls is not only the right thing to do for the girls, but it also makes economic and strategic sense for countries to fulfil their development potential.

SECTION V: The Power of Oneness - Intergenerational, Non-denominational and Multi-cultural

Now a days 'Oneness' is a popular word in the worldwide. We often say that 'We' are connected, not separated from others. Yet we draw our own invisible, impenetrable, mental boundaries from individuals, regions, languages, castes, races, communities and countries. Probably we need to demystify the concept of 'Oneness' to really get there.

The awareness of Oneness is the awareness of one's inherent divinity, which is the same in everyone and everything. The feeling of oneness is the basis of love. We cannot love others, if we think they are different from us. Consciousness is the basis of all that is; just as gold is the basis of all gold jewellery. This is the ultimate truth that is taught to the students and staff of these Institutions - the truth about themselves. Once this truth is realised, the students will cultivate and practise values very spontaneously. This is TRUE POWER – The Power of Oneness.

Love is the hallmark of everyone's inherent divinity. It is the basis of all human values. Different religions of the world talk about 'Oneness'. Masters like D T Suzuki (Japanese Zen Scholar and Practitioner), Lao Tzu (Chinese Philosopher), Saint Patrick from Ireland, Saint David of Wales, Saint George of England, Saint Andrew of Scotland, Morihei Ueshiba O-Sensei (the Founder of Japanese Martial Art), Jalaluddin Rumi (the Sufi Philosopher), Ibn al-'Arabi (Muslim mystic, philosopher, poet and writer) and many others established their experience of 'Oneness' to the world and taught it to others for the redemption of their existence. The true confluence between the East and West, where they saw eye to eye, was brought about by these spiritual masters.

Generally, many of us only look at the surface of a religion, and hence we fail to understand any religion in depth. The misconception of people can only be removed if the children are taught about the unifying nature of religions from a very early age. They will then know that all religions ultimately have the same teachings - that of being a better person, to be of service to humanity, respecting all men, recognising the same energy that resides within all of us and hence to understand that no one is separate from us. It is only then, that peace can prevail.

Professor Samuel K Samuel, Vice President of All India Association for Christian Higher Education, Principal of Crossland College at Brahmavar, Karnataka, and President of Federation of Mangalore University Private College Principals' Association says, "We have learnt to tolerate other religions but not to respect. Hence a values-based system of education that teaches looking beyond religious differences is important. Decline in our value system can be attributed to the unhappy happenings around. We seldom remember that to be born a human being is a rare event in itself and its wise to use this opportunity as effectively and skillfully as possible, rather than waste it over proving superiority, feeding our greed and fuelling our ego. What we need in this world is peace and peaceful co-existence."

Religion in education all too often gets a bad press. Critics argue that it has no place in schools, which should be 'neutral' – free from the intolerance, extremism and illiberalism which they say religion engenders. Faith is irrelevant for everyday life, they claim. In a pluralist and diverse society, religion offers only segregation and ignorance, they declare. It is assumed that religious education is nothing but a sinister means of indoctrination; of imposing a set of beliefs upon children.

'Spirituality in Education based on Harmony of Religions.'

We all know that education is about intellectual enlightenment, concerned with opening minds, not closing them. Even in faith schools around the world, which promote the tenets and values of a particular religion, pupils are encouraged to question rather than to accept passively any given creed. The majorities of faith schools do not teach from the perspective of one single faith, but incorporates an element of comparison between religions. Far from being self-regarding and unlike segregated institutions that deepen division, faith schools encourage openness to others, emphasizing that the thing we all have in common is our humanity, which is of infinite value.

Children also need the opportunity to discuss challenging questions about the ultimate meaning and purpose of life, and what it is to be human, about death, about why people believe in religion, and the difference between right and wrong. Religious education is perhaps one curricular subject which asks more questions than it answers. It is only when young people have grappled with these enormous questions that they can begin to make sense of what they believe and think. As education becomes increasingly utilitarian, viewed often as a means merely of contributing to a skills-based economy, religious education can encourage pupils to think, and to develop their own sense of identity. And if young people are encouraged to recognize their own uniqueness and value, they will flourish both as individuals and as citizens in a pluralistic society and global community.

Also, the belief that religion is unscientific has to be recanted. Einstein said, "Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind." There has been much research recently on brain and neuroplasticity, however, Karl Pribram, an Emeritus Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at Stanford University iterates that everything that they had thought about how the brain works has turned out to be wrong and goes back to say that the new understanding of how the brain works had been described in the distant past by the people of ancient India (Knight, 2015). Karl Pribram successfully demonstrated that the memory of the human being is not contained only in the brain but is distributed throughout the surrounding space in a similar way to a hologram. This was not accepted by many and some academics tried to disprove Pribram by removing chunks of brain of laboratory rats who had been trained on mazes. All the attempts to disprove Pribram's hypothesis failed (Knight, 2015).

At first Pribram thought the holographic model of the brain was an analogy but he came to realise later that this is a true hologramic function (Knight, 2015). This concept of the hologramic brain has been well-known by ancient seers who connect to the mysteries of the whole universe and reveal knowledge yet to be discovered. Primitive societies had this knowledge, such as Aboriginal Australians who are connected to the essence of the planet, or the ancient Mayans, or the Yogic seers who could see the mysteries of the universe and the connection to the whole. Erwin Schrödinger, the Austrian Irish Physicist said, "Quantum Physics reveals a basic oneness of the universe."

SECTION VI - A Case Study - Toogoolawa School

Toogoolawa School is an inter-denominational, values-based and spiritually inclined school situated in the continent of Australia. It not only seeks to provide a basic education to students, but also gives students a strong and practical philosophy for living, by emphasizing on the five universal Human Values of Love, Truth, Peace, Right Conduct and Non-violence to lead a happy and fulfilled life. Sometime in 1987, a 25 year-old Gold Coast property developer named John Fitzgerald took the first steps towards realizing his vision of assisting youth-at-risk, by introducing himself to clinical psychologists, Dr Ron and Suwanti Farmer. The Farmers had been conducting weekly, after-school Education in Human Values (EHV) classes in Sydney for children whose parents gave high priority to the development of good character.

The three of them founded Toogoolawa Children's Home – Toogoolawa is an Aboriginal word meaning, 'A Place in the Heart' – a small facility providing full-time residential care to children rejected by a series of foster homes. Gradually, a formal schooling system started which grew in strength from 12 students to 107 students today.

The present Toogoolawa School is for boys only, aged 9-15 years, all of whom have emotional or behavioral issues which make them unwelcome in, or unable to attend, mainstream public and private schools. Having a boys-only school allows the teaching staff to focus on creating and understanding a male culture that endeavors to live according to the five Human Values.

Most of the boys are several years behind their peers in literacy and mathematics, sometimes because of intellectual limitations, but often because their emotional/behavioral issues have resulted in them either being excluded from class or being unable to concentrate, understand and remember critical information.

The school building comprises of five classrooms, a manual arts room, home economics section, a Queenslander building for medical and allied health consultations, and administration offices. The school is surrounded on three sides by grassy fields, one of which has a running creek to explore, and their logo, imprinted on the uniform shirts and decorating a small altar in each classroom, depicts the essence of the Human Values Education approach. Encircled by the five values, it has a central figure where a teacher kneels in front of a student, both of them resting on the hand of the Universe, which itself is a microcosm of an all-engulfing 'Love' that sustains the entire creation. The message is that of unconditional Love which permeates all policies and teaching activities in the School.

Each one of the five Human Values is emblazoned in large letters across the length of the main building, visible to all passing traffic. Every room is enriched with posters of wise sayings and colorful illustrations of the Values, each playing its silent, valuable, guiding role. Attendance is free, apart from a small levy to provide a preservative-free lunch to all and cost-free uniforms to the more destitute families. Weekly hampers of wholesome food are delivered to the homes of such students.

During the weekly storytelling session for the whole school assembly on Monday mornings, the story often makes reference to the teaching and major figures from different faiths. Further, one of the main teaching strategies is termed 'Unity of Faiths', whereby the teaching staff are encouraged to convey the message, or even better, to draw out from the students, that the five Human Values are fundamental principles in all of the major faiths, and also in humanism and in many people's forms of spirituality. One of the recommended activities is for classes to visit different places of worship – churches, mosques, synagogues, Buddhist and Hindu temples and shrines; thus, inviting comments, discussions, creating understanding, and a feeling of connectedness. Since Toogoolawa School began operating in 1998, over 1580 boys have benefited from the education programme; of these, about one third have integrated back into mainstream schooling; others have entered traineeships or TAFE courses. Around 85 % of the students leave Toogoolawa and take on some form of work or study.

Conclusion:

Hence a value based education can only be successful when the following is attained –

T - Transformation – Making every effort to establish human values as the foundation of education

E - Example to Everyone – Practice speaks louder than Precept and this is laid down as the primary code of conduct for every teacher

A - Awareness of Oneness – An unbiased approach gained from the knowledge of the immanent unity in all

C - Culture of Countries – Consciously bestowing cultural values to help students lead a righteous life

H - Head, Heart and Hands – Synchronised methodology to create brilliant heads, compassionate hearts and competent hands

E - Environment – Naturalistic surroundings to stimulate originality and lead one back to one's natural spiritual self

R - Role of Religion – Imparting the knowledge about the basic teachings of world religions to inspire harmony, broad-mindedness and religious tolerance

Having set the definition of 'TEACHER' right, how does it get practically implemented on a constant basis could still remain a question. Steadfast guidance from the leadership, policies in keeping the efforts continual on the alignment of every individual's vision, purpose and goals; with the magnanimously mightier goals of the Institution, leading to the betterment of a vaster humanity, keeps things sane and salubrious. We can choose to either view it as a herculean task or take it as easy as a pie. It's like this – When we peel an orange, we remove the bitter rind before we could partake the juicy pulp. Likewise, we must peel away the outer layers of fear, criticism, hatred, narrow thinking, and negative attitude; in order to truly transform, and uncover who we truly are.

Quoting again, His Excellency Mr Lyonpo Thakur S Powdyel: "Teachers are indeed the most critical factor in a vital service such as education. They teach not only what they know, they teach who they are. Teachers not only deliver the curriculum, but they are THE curriculum. Material resources are necessary, but the human-teacher is critical

Making of Political Identities: Practices of Marginalization and Assertion.

B. Neelanjana Banyopadhyay[*]

Abstract

Etymologically, the term '*marginalization*' delineates the idea of insignificance and dismissal of someone or something. In human society, marginalizing a particular entity is a practice done to assert the predominance and importance of the elite and privileged population over the ones who are demarcated to be inferior and peripheral. The process of marginalization has been existing within the society due to the presence of hierarchy; especially vertical hierarchy. Marginalization has quintessentially become a tool to propagate the firm cultural, political, social and economic superiority of certain groups or communities over the rest. This automatically gives way to the question of who are the ones marginalized. How can one differentiate between the privileged and the deprived? A *marginalized* can be defined as one who is economically, politically, culturally and at times legally, neglected and left impoverished; thereby becoming vulnerable to exclusion in the society. However, marginalization occurs at all levels; thereby not restricting it to just the economic or cultural domain. Something as abstract as an idea may also tend to get marginalized, due to its lack of practice and acknowledgement. Anything that stands in contrast to the paramount position within a society or group, is rendered the identity of 'marginal'. Marginalization can either be social or spatial, in reference to cultural, religious, ethnic inequalities and geographical peripheralization, respectively. This paper shall deal with both the forms of marginalization. Social marginalization deals with oppression and ignorance on the basis of caste, class, culture, gender etc. Such an inequality, disrupts the development of either an individual or a group as a whole who is in a disadvantageous position. The constant subjugation and discrimination of the ones marginalized, limit their chances of opportunities and survival. The domination has largely been one sided and has historical evidence to prove its persistence as well. Despite all odds, certain unorganized, local confrontations and oppositions had always come up as a means to assert their steady resistance against the inhuman oppression. Our concern is the ways in which these uprisings took place and how successful they could be. It is necessary to remember that the very ascribed and demeaning identity that the marginalized were imposed with, became their symbol of uniqueness in the long run. However, this depicts the underlying idea about the subaltern who lacks a particular identity, and uses the absence of identity as grounds for its rebellion.

Key words: *marginalization, identity, assertion.*

1. Introduction

Despite the pluralist cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity in India, the nation tries to assert its homogeneity by living up to the ideals of 'unity in diversity'. However, under this garb of unity, lies the malevolent history of cultural, racial discrimination. It is only in the post-colonial period that any legal steps had been taken to promote the welfare and development of the unprivileged under the acts of Constitution, rendering a political identity to the ones who were initially deprived of it. However, indigenous attempts had been undertaken long before the legal statements, which tried to build up a local identity. The attempts of the powerless to reorganize themselves and rebuke against the powerful, gives them a political dimension. Marginalization has been portrayed, both in terms of means as well as people. In the former sense, a particular method has been marginalized not because of its inadequateness, but due to its lack of predominance compared to the others, in

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a distinct field of concern. The given idea can be elucidated with reference to marginalization of music in India. Time and again, the idea of nationalism has been directly or indirectly, upheld by the domain of politics. As the popular notion goes, nation or nationalism can be thoroughly asserted through political means. The social and cultural domain largely remains less or absolutely unidentified in showcasing nationalist sentiments or actions per se. Music, a distinct cultural aspect, can seldom be thought of as a popular means of nationalist assertion. It is thus seen as a marginalized aspect within the broader canvas of nationalism. However, this idea has been rightly negated in the works of Janaki Bakhle and Sumangalam Damodaran. They have rightly pointed out the use of music and dance to uphold national sentiments against colonial rule. It is with the help of such cultural elements that an aesthetic idea of nationalism is brought forward. The mentioned fields of music, dance and drama have been used as a tool to depict the regional traditions while also promoting progressive ideas like nationalist freedom and struggle against colonial rule. The idea of freedom and assertion is not simply against colonial oppression, it can also be used in depiction of the act of 'breaking out' from the stereotypical assertion of freedom through solely political practices. The idea behind this is how the marginalized have tried to leave behind their restricted arena of influence and come out to propound itself as a potential element of mass mobilization. Music and theatre in Sumangalam Damodaran's '*The Radical Impulse: Music in the Tradition of the Indian People's Theatre*', have been used as popular platforms to infuse the radical ideas of nationalism, spirit of freedom and resentment against the colonial exploitation on the people or the Indian society itself, which practices a hierarchy based exploitation through caste and linguistic differences[16].

It was the larger Indian population, standing against the colonizers and the Indian elites who were represented through the means of art and culture and it was essentially their plight of misery that was the crux of the representation. The popular political ideas of freedom struggle could not always reach the interior rural domains which were predominantly inhabited by a vulnerable population who had no far reaching links to any radical modernized idea. The cultural performances were used to depict the deplorable plight of rural and oppressed India before the privileged lot of people who had the luxury to watch theatre plays. It was through these methods that an underlying sense of unity and connection was created across class, religious or geographical boundaries. Mobilization of the working class people along with the other local rural population, created a sense of empowerment among them who formed the larger chunk of the majoritarian Indian population. Despite adequate western influences, the aspect of indigeneity was to be kept intact. Revivalism of the native traditions meant promotion of a feeling of linguistic harmony by breaking the use of chauvinistic western music and taste that had well penetrated among the elite sections of the Indian society. A grounded national identity was being created by transcending the realm of depiction of people's plight to performances which were essentially meant for the promotion of the nationalist ideas as an extensive political message. However, the greater idea of nationalism was not restricted to particular regions and began to address the whole nation for a unified identity. The initial musical and theatrical rigidities were reduced to cater to the larger populace. It was used to educate and ignite strong messages against the existing laws. The traditional music consisted of harvest songs, festival songs and resistance songs, portraying the lives and every-day struggles of local peasants.

The need to highlight upon the issue of marginal assertion in India is due to the predominant Indian elitist idea that tries to make Indian tradition and culture synonymous to Vedas; which is essentially an elite Brahmanical text that nullifies the presence of anything that isn't rooted in Hinduism, rather Brahmin Hinduism. Hinduism's eulogy as pointed out by Gail Omvedt in her piece, '*Dalit Visions; the anti-caste movement and the construction of an Indian identity*'; becomes the tool of oppression against the deprived non Brahmans,

[16] Damodaran, S. (2017). *The Radical Impulse: Music in the Tradition of the Indian People's Theatre Association*. Tulika Books.

especially the marginal classes[17]. The predominant Hindu culture is said to have its roots in the Aryan lineage which essentially becomes the epitome of pure and high birth. The failure of Secularist or Reformist ideas to separate the ascribed notion of India being recognized by the predominant 'Hinduism', making the nation a home to Hindus, essentially. Such an idea is strictly negated by the Dalit thinkers who term Hinduism as the very source of oppression and prejudices. This could be possible due to empowerment of the marginalized Dalits who went on to create their own separate political identity and assert their distinct thoughts. The protest against the hegemony of existing Hindu culture is the essence of Dalit assertion of identities. The political identity got strengthened in the post-independence era with the creation of their own political party, the Dalit Panthers. Oppression has not only been on caste and class basis but also along gender lines. The double oppression of a woman who is a dalit in a patriarchal, Hindu predominant space becomes the reason for bringing up gender issues into the limelight. As mentioned earlier, any movement, essentially requires consciousness within and for themselves in order to collectively arrange their demands and resist the counterpart to gain political identity and empowerment. A marked political tactic is the formation of political iconography which could be attained by Ambedkar in popular political domains. This reflects the steady growth of identity of an untouchable, and a shift from being the marginalized to gaining an influential and respectable image not just before the Dalits, but the whole nation. Negation and deconstruction of the established Hindu ideals is the outcome of the empowerment of the marginalized. Reconstructing a new image of courage and praise by demolishing the glorified image of Hindutwa is carried out by the Dalit marginal group. A larger contribution to it is made by the use of literature to assert their importance, bring out their deprived status and fight for their human-like conditions for survival.

The credit behind such an empowerment may or may-not be given to the influence of western radical ideas which helped them realize the universality of their plight as prejudices against the weak isn't something exclusive to India. The measure of infusion of western system of music in the scope of Indian Classical Music has been shown in Janaki Bhakle's work, '*Two Men and Music: Nationalism in the Making of an Indian Classical Tradition*'. The two men, Bhatkhande and Paluskar, proponents of Indian Classical music showed the epistemological transformation of music which was due to the advent of Colonialism[18]. The predominant Hindu music was more of a theorization that could seldom be put to practice by all. Keeping aside the idea of a nation which was nevertheless a western creation, Indian music needed a new system of notation as the modern Indian secular music was intolerant towards the religious character of Indian culture. Even the differences between the two proponents were on the basis of parity between the two forms of music. Use of western notational system as the standard notation for India was refuted by Paluskar who believed in the originality of Indian Bhakti cult of music, whose preservation was paramount. One can notice the conflict between the acceptance and rejection of western musical culture within the premises of Indian classical music. On the other hand, Eleanor Zelliot's work on dalit literature, gives a new definition to the marginalized group of Dalits who believe in humanism and brings about changes in the society by creating a unique identity of its own and appropriating a part within the predominant prejudiced culture[19]. Poets like Namdeo Dhasal, Annabhau Sathe etc, have not really been influenced by the use of western literature as much as they have flourished in their native language of literature. The reason behind a native uprising through literature is due to the incapacity of the rural untouchables to have an access or knowledge of the sophisticated secular ideas of the west. In the mentioned context, poems are used as a tool to bring into limelight, certain aspects like; the plight of the people, the denunciation and criticism of the predominant Brahmanical laws and customs

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[17] Omvedt, G. (2006). *Dalit visions: The anti-caste movement and the construction of an Indian identity*. Orient Blackswan.

[18] Bakhle, J. (2006). *Two men and music*. Orient Blackswan.

[19] Zelliot, E. (2008). 23 Dalit literature, language, and identity. *Language in South Asia*, 450.

which oppresses the idea of humanity, the image of local deities against the exalting image of Hindu Gods as a method of creation of a separate identity. The narrative of the poems use irony and satire to dampen the glorious Hindu traditions.

The association of social peripheralization[20] to that of spatial assertion, has been depicted in Teresa Calderia's '*City of Walls Crime, Segregation and Citizenship in Sao Paulo*'. It is through this book that the author tries to highlight upon a specific transformation that takes place on class lines, while eventually resulting in a geographical or spatial arrangement based on the former. What began as a closed circuit of housing, having people of all classes living in close proximity to each other, transforms into a distinct center-periphery demarcation, where the rich and affluent, manage to live in the center while the marginalized, obviously gets shifted to the peripheral fringes for residence. This further creates a complicated space of living by erecting closed, protected condominiums for the elite which is a stark symbol of sophistication and privatization; while what lies beyond the protected walls are marginal and unworthy of socialization. The very image of 'corticos'[21] depict how lowly human lives have come to terms. Lack of living spaces, tend to make people of all class identities, form a concentrated living while projecting a steady hierarchy through the areas occupied. The author mentions the importance of residence as it was a necessary element of the working class movement. A shift from rented housings to auto-constructed homes is the reason behind the migration of the marginal sections towards the peripheries which assured cheap lands. Legality was reserved exclusively for the rich by providing them with municipal construction regulations while the chaotic process of urban development lingered in the peripheries[22]. Poverty depicted lack of freedom which was associated with the corticos, however, moving to closed enclaves for protection of the privileged did not really guarantee true freedom. Apartments were now shifted to cheaper peripheral spaces for the middle class, for they had to maintain their class identities. The spatial distance of living, reflected the class composition alike. However, the marginalized working classes, used the medium of social movements to uphold the ideas of equality and freedom for the unprivileged and inclusion of the marginalized into the realm of social acceptance. However, homogenization of spaces of closed enclaves, creates explicit unsociability and disparity even among the likes. Despite the persistent encroachment of human standards of living, the poor and neglected population amidst the existing legal prejudices, tend to use the modern idea of democracy to assert their social importance and recognition, not as the lumpen, but citizens of the state. Democratization also helps the unprivileged to appropriate political spaces of identity which were initially reserved for the elite and affluent sections only.

A similar form of spatial marginalization has been portrayed in Anusua Chatterjee's work on Muslim Ghettos[23]. The religious identity marks the marginalization which is doubled with class differences. Muslim minorities in India tend to live in ghettoized spaces which do not include the majoritarian middle class Hindu population. Muslims are made synonymous to aggression and hostility which creates an imaginary demarcation resisting the socialization

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[20] Peripheralization: socio-spatial inequalities leading to the European usage of the term 'peripheralization' and 'marginalization' that indicates a disparity between the centralization and peripheralization processes in terms of social, economic, spatial and political polarization of productions, social relations.

[21] Corticos or Gueto: an area of concentrated old housing system with unhygienic and poorly sanitized rented out shared rooms, located in Brazil and Portugal. It originated in Sao Paulo in the 1700s.

[22] Caldeira, T. P. D. R. (1992). *City of walls: crime, segregation, and citizenship in São Paulo* (Doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley).

[23] Chatterjee, A., & Jodhka, S. S. (2017). *Margins of citizenship: Muslim experiences in urban India*. Routledge India.

of the Hindus with that of the Muslims. The class based marginalization exists along with cultural marginalization. Despite hailing from the middle class, certain Muslims choose to stay within the ghettoized zone, which already provides a home (slums) to the lower class Muslims. In spite of internal class differences, cultural familiarity within the ghetto infuses a sense of entitlement to one's own against the discriminative majoritarian population.

Laurent Gayer's book, '*Karachi; Ordered Disorder and the Struggle for the City*' shows creation of political identities by ethnic groups of Karachi (the war zone of Pakistan) in order to get protection and security against the existing ethnic, political and criminal violence. Unlike the previously mentioned articles that dealt with creation of political identities as a platform to assert their representation and communitarian identities, the political representation in Karachi is largely a survival strategy for all in a disorderly space which is predominated by mob violence. Of course, political linkage creates a form of distinct identity which is necessary in order to survive. Targeted ethnic and political violence which was initially based on linguistic or political prejudices respectively, has taken the shape of widespread criminal violence[24]. Even the interpretation of urban space does not really help to sense the approaching danger anymore. Constant repetition of violence which initially used to be something unusual has created an unnatural normalization of fear within the public spaces. The increased sect wise religiosity has reduced the utility of pluralist public spaces. However, the creation of marginal and localized 'mohallas' ensures assimilation of people belonging to similar ethnicity as a sign of safety. Local homogeneity leads to ethnic separatism which is further accelerated by territorial acquisition. The same book also introduces the use of Urdu ghazals and poems, a symbol of its cultural heritage as a mouthpiece for people across class and religious identities to communicate among themselves. The rhetorical language of the poems in Urdu, act as strong narrative, depicting the fear and grievances of people and how petty riots have taken up the form of severe violence. It is the innate feeling of separatism and difference among people that has aggravated the communal disharmony and hatred towards one another. Extensive political association has increased tension among people of different allegiances and what began with an intention of self-survival, could not be attained without violence.

The themes of marginalization, self-assertion and creation of political identities and postulation the importance of individuals or a community as a whole has been the crux of the discussion where marginalization acts as both boon and bane for assimilating the deprived people to resist oppression, due to the existing prejudices meted out towards them. Creation of political identities remain intact as true consciousness and assertion of importance in a discriminative society can only work in the presence of power which is guaranteed by practicing politics.

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Vagaries of Migrant Labour – Case Based Study By Standard Group, Ahmadabad

Ranjana Dureja[*] and Harleen Mahajan[**]

Abstract

The research has been conducted on “Standard Group” a fast -growing company manufacturing PVC hoses for different applications. The company has two manufacturing units Standard Flex Pvt. Ltd and Standard Poly - Hose Manufacturing Company. The Standard group emphasize on technological advancement, product and service quality as a key for organization progression. The organization has large number of migrant workers who have the latitude of working seasonally. However, these migrant workers mainly belong to the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and other parts of Gujarat. The research emphasizes exploring the various reasons for which migrant labourers stay absent from their workplace i.e at Standard Group. Research further highlights challenges faced by the company due to hiring migrant workforce and elaborated reasons of their migration. For greater understanding of problem, In-depth semi structured telephonic interviews were conducted with 75 internal migrant workers along with organization head and supervisors. Findings of research indicate the factors which facilities or debilitates hiring process at Standard group. Further research recommended strategies for organization to manage and retain migrant workers. Furthermore strategies recommended in this study will help Standard group to cope with production loss and improve organization operations.

Keywords: Recruitment, Selection, Referral, Migrants, Absenteeism.
JEL code: M12, M10, M54

1. Introduction about the company: Standard Group

Standard Group was established in the year 1970 with a vision to manufacture and supply PVC Hose[25] pipe. Mr. Vishnu Bhai Patel, the promoter of the company with considerable amount of experience and expertise, had clear vision in this field. For four decades, Standard group had developed an enduring foundation for the business. With their modern production & assured quality, they achieved leadership in cost, quality and delivery of products and services. The main aim of the organization was to attain international standards along with the philosophy of expansion through fairness in the profession. SPL provided cost effective, reliable and superior qualitative products which offer contentment to their customers.

The standard group is an emergent company with two firms-Standard Flexes Pvt. Ltd and Standard Poly - Hose Manufacturing Company under it, manufacturing PVC hoses for different applications. The owner of the organization strongly believes in the informal hiring of employees through employees referrals. The organization has a large number of workers

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[25] PVC Hose: PVC hose is tubing made from PVC material. ... Hydraulic PVC hose can be found in machine shops and manufacturing plants. For high pressure applications, PVC hose may be reinforced with wire.

who have the latitude of working seasonally. However, due to seasonal migrant workers[26], the organization suffered the problem of absenteeism, who frequently migrate to their villages during crop harvesting. These migrant workers mainly belonged to the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and other parts of Gujarat[27]. This case highlights crucial aspects of the demographic, economic and internal dynamics of migration with relevance on the absenteeism trend. The case discusses the challenges faced by the company due to the demographics of the workforce.

Mr. Mihir Patel, one of the young owners of Standard Group endeavor authentic, ethical and technical excellence in his profession and believes in accomplishing their task by supplying the highest quality service by promoting excellence through operations. Commenting on his business philosophy Mr. Mihir argued, “Goals must be achieved through intensive focus on quality products, excellence in customer service and manufacturing efficiency. Organization is striving for excellence through Quality, Product Innovation and Technology Up-gradation”.

Since the inception, Standard Fine Flex Pvt. Ltd was a recognized leader in the PVC hoses located in industrial town of India, Ahmedabad with two subsidiary companies. It was a fast-growing industrial group in PVC hose.

The company had two manufacturing unit (locations) which are as follows:

1. Standard flex Pvt. Ltd	**2. Standard Poly - Hose Manufacturing Company**
PVC medium duty hose	Nylon Braided PVC Hose
PVC heavy-duty hose	
PVC boil hose	
PVC non-toxic hose	

Source: Standard Group India

Organizational Practices

Due to the informal employer-employee relationship in the manufacturing department, the organization has adopted a conventional style for managing human resources mainly for recruitment and selection procedures. The employment relations were determined by an interaction between employer, workers, and they were collectively concerned. But in recent years a new form of oppositions aided by rapid technological[28] innovations and adaptations have significantly altered the way of workers and their response to change at the workplace. So, the organization concentrated more on traditional tasks for coordinating industrial actions. The organization’s human resource management was closely integrated with manufacturing rather than strategies.

Recruitment through employee Referral

The Employee Referral[29] program at Standard Group provided opportunities to their employees and their families to provide assistance in a variety of operations. The objective

26 Migrant workers: A migrant worker is a person who migrates within a home country or outside it to pursue work. Migrant workers usually do not have the intention to stay permanently in the country or region in which they work.

27 Major states of India mentioned as a source of migrant labours-https://censusindia.gov.in/Data_Products/Data_Highlights

28 technological innovations: A technological innovation is a new or improved product or process whose technological characteristics are significantly different from before.

29 Referral: the act of directing or sending somebody/something to another place or person for professional help or information.

of the policy was to motivate employees to refer their friends or persons known to them for employment in various openings. The procedure of employee referral policy was as follows- employees used to refer a friend or professional acquaintance whose credentials must match with the minimum requirements for a given position within the organization. Organization heads or owners in conjunction with the supervisor would verify all details received by referrer and thus used to formulate the final judgment on referral eligibility.

Supply of labour

Recruitment and selection of workers took place at entry-level, merely posts were filled by internal sources generally through employee referrals or personal contacts. These casual labour sources generated information through factory gates or through employment offices which were considered as a crucial source for providing jobs to employees in need. Internal source of recruitment was cost-effective but it depended upon an employee who used to refer their friends or persons known to them and this process was recognized as "Referrer" by the organization. Occasionally, jobs were filled through external sources as well, in case of insufficient internal sources offered by the referrers in the organization. The owner argued, "Most of the workers join initially, possess lack of experience in this segment and approach here with an entire deferent skills but gradually able to complement with what we are expecting them to do."

Training and Guidance

An organization with a total staff of 75 workers in the manufacturing unit and almost 50% of the staff migrant workers, provided relevant training and guidance to each and every employee on safety and health aspects. So that individuals working in an organization must be equipped with adequate technical knowledge regarding the process, hazards involved, safety measures required, etc. The objective of the training was to identify the productive machine safety, lighting, control of hazards at work premises. Organizations arranged such training so as to improve the productivity of the enterprises as well as to make the working conditions better by implementing these training solutions.

There was a suitable working condition as far as sanitation, ventilation, lighting facilities were concerned but workers faced temperature variation during summer and which may vary from 2 to 4 degree. The owner said "when the individual is working in a production department , training structure is developed and all our staff must go through, such trainings which involve dealing with machinery, potential health and safety risks involves in handling machines, basic food hygiene, food safety, personal hygiene and safety ".

2. Review of Literature

The review of literature has been collected both on the basis of reasons of absenteeism of the migrant laborers and on the other hand, measures taken by the companies where they work.

Reasons of Absenteeism of the Migrant Laborers

(TOI 2019) Latest census data disclosed the statistics on migrants and identified that near to half population of Gujarat constitutes of Migrants. Research suggests that reason of migration is to earn and save money. In Most of the cases workers send money to respective family as remittance[30]. Families utilizes remittance for acquiring assets, utilizing money on education, healthcare and other household maintenance such as purchasing and repairing

30A remittance is a payment of money that is transferred to another party. However, the term is most often used nowadays to describe a sum of money sent by someone working outside/ abroad to his or her family back home.

their pukka houses[31]. Mostly workers utilizes their money to repay back debts, marriages and other marital arrangements. Hirway & Sharma, (2014) identified the influence of land ownership in worker's migration. Workers who have land holdings are less likely to migrate, yet in some cases workers having land possession prefer to move to urban area to generate supplementary income. Research identified temporary migration is more common in case of workers possessing lands and more likely to visit their villages due to farming and agricultural work. Study shows the perception of migrants towards staying in city and highlights, workers are interested to stay back till they obtain opportunities and earn enough for satisfying basic and living needs. Further research suggests that incessant availability work, job security, salary, accommodation and other basic facilities are prerequisites for settling in the cities where they are working as migrants. Moreover research indicated that migrants are fascinated with settling in urban areas due to high wages and better earning opportunities.

(Prashant Kumar Siddhey, 2013) Migrant workforce in India is one of the significant foundations for loss of creation and income to the companies. Every one of the workers should know about their pretended in the association. There nonappearance is one of the significant issues for diminishing usefulness. The administration plays a critical part to play to take endeavors towards diminishing truancy in the association. Impetuses and extra financial advantages, better relations of the representatives with the administration and better working circumstances can go about as central point towards decreasing truancy. Truancy is a widespread issue and each association ought to endeavor to handle this issue in the most ideal manner. (Forte, 2012) supervisors could recognize procedures to decrease representative truancy and foster noteworthy answers for lessen non-attendance levels and increment efficiency and benefit. Second, business administrators could utilize the aftereffects of this study to distinguish what procedures could uphold work manageability and occupation fulfillment among its laborers, which associates to individual and firm execution.

3. Research Objectives

The current research focuses on the problem faced by the Standard Group with respect to skill shortage for which it recruited migrants, as it was easier for migrants to contribute to the effective operations, however through such mobilization organization faced the immense problem of absenteeism in consequence of seasonal migrant workers, and the organization did not have any provision of keeping spare employees during employee on leave. So the problem in hand is to find the ways to reduce the intermittent absenteeism. The main scarcity of labour occurred in the routine manufacturing process as in the industry's production carried out on a continuous basis but few machines remained unused due to the shortage of labour and thus the organization was facing production losses as well. During harvesting seasons rate of absenteeism may raise to the extent of 30%, which leads to heavy loss in production as per the attendance records.

4. Research Methodology

The purpose of the study was to explore the factors causing high absenteeism among migrant workers. The survey conducted from the perspectives of organization heads to investigate the challenges faced by migrant workers and construct suggestive approaches for dealing with similar issues. Field survey method was adopted for collecting information by observing and interviewing people associated with the study. The researchers visited the company to collect the data which was divided into three parts. First part includes collection of general information regarding tasks and duties along with general practices followed by organization. Second part; include collection of information related to single migration, reasons and problems associated with migration from other parts of states. Third part

31Pucca housing (or pukka or pacca) refers to dwellings that are designed to be solid and permanent.

included suggestive measures which organizations may follow to avoid absenteeism and turnover among migrant labours.

Data collection: Since random sampling was used within all the levels of the management structure, half of the population was covered. A total of 2 managers along with 5 supervisors and 3 organization heads were interviewed along with 60 workers including migrant and non-migrant workers, contractual workers and other helping staff. The demographics showed that 70 percent of workers belonged to 15-24 age groups whereas the majority of supervisors and machine operators were experienced and belonged to 25-34 age groups.

Designation	**No of sample**	**Percentage of total population being covered**
Managers	2	50
Supervisors	2	50
Organization heads	3	100
Workers	60	50

Source: Author

5. Analysis from the Qualitative interviews:

The extensive qualitative interview of the 75 migrant laborers revealed the following factors of their being absent intermittently:

Workers [32]Demographics: The majority of workers in the organization followed patterns of internal migration from rural to urban especially migrants from the agricultural sector and were generally small and marginal farmers (agricultural labourers), landless agricultural labourers, sharecroppers, and few are engaged in animal husbandry also.

Table I: Classification of migrant labourers (Author)

Type of migrants	**Percentage**
Agricultural labourers	25
Landless agricultural labourers	20
[33]Sharecroppers	30
Labourers engaged in animal husbandry	25

As they belonged to the low status of agricultural workers in the rural hierarchy and faced tremendous economic problems due to lack of employment opportunities, poor security of occupancy, low income, and insufficient diverge of economic activity in rural areas. In agriculture virtually they faced bad climate with a lack of rainfall. Poverty was the crucial factor causing labourers to leave the village as they have insufficient income, a lack of respectable employment opportunities within the village as well as low salaries. Better employment opportunities and higher wages in economically but once they are employed in urban areas they needed to go back at the time of harvesting as indicated in the table majority of them were agricultural and share croppers so they needed to take care of their farm lands. They remained absent from their duties during crop harvesting seasons, and due to this, production gets reduced to a considerable amount.

Housing deficiency: Due to housing problems in an urban area, these workers recruited from the rural areas and regulated in such a manner that woman and children remained in the

[32]Demographics: A demographic refers to distinct characteristics of a population. ... Some examples of demographics are age, sex, education, nationality, ethnicity, or religion, to name a few.
[33]Sharecroppers: a tenant farmer who gives a part of each crop as rent.

villages while males migrated to the modern sector, so they frequently visit their villages to meet their family which causes[34]absenteeism. Thus organizations provided housing facilities to their workers with required amenities, but it was not sufficient enough to bring the whole family to the urban areas. One of the workers in the company discussed, "Happy to have domiciled with required facilities, thankful for employers, new employment conditions that seems very hospitable and thus manage to bring here my family members also. But as my wife and children are there back in Rajasthan I needed to visit them often in case of family urgency or some occasion".

Social and religious ceremonies: Workers frequently used to visit their villages for certain social and religious ceremonies which were too many in India, along with that it was being observed as absenteeism rate was high in general but it might be at peak during marriage season which was a matter of concern for the organization. As the migrants got socially detached from the people of their original area, thus organization cultivated relationship-friendly work environment by placing employees of the same culture in one place so that workers would feel satisfied and socially connected with each other, For that organization celebrates majority of festivals collectively, such as Holi and Diwali festivals - apart from bonus, organization supply crackers also at the time of Diwali. The worker testified, "I am very happy here. I feel like home and employees are like a member of the family enjoying the work and feeling like a part of a big family and is both highly motivated and satisfied", but I need to celebrate festivities with my near and dear ones."

Cost of living: A significant portion of the expenditure was remarked for daily expenses or basic subsistence needs such as food, clothing, and health care as well as for the payment of debts, particularly those used as expenses for migration. They also spent on education, home construction or renovation, and the purchase of real estate and appliances. Only a small percentage was saved or set aside for what may be considered "productive investment" such as income or employment generating activities, or the purchase of farmland or tools to start a business and other endeavors with multiplier effects (Meyers, 1998; Nayyar; 1998). This was the major factor that they were reluctant to shift their complete families to Ahmedabad.

6. Findings and Conclusion

The major findings of the study are that for the migrant workforce of the standard Group, significant portion of the expenditure was for the daily expenses or basic subsistence needs such as food, clothing, and health care as well as for the payment of debts. This was the major factor they don't prefer to bring their families here along with in Ahmedabad. Also the accommodation which was provided by the company was not sufficient enough for the whole family. So in case of festivals and other occasions the migrant workforce preferred to go back their native villages. The suggestions for the company officials were that apart from the accommodation which was provided to the migrant labourers they must focus on motivating them to bring the whole family with them so that they could celebrate the festivals in Ahmedabad only. Also if the company could support the education of their children they would be highly willing to settle here as their expenses would not go up. As far as harvesting of crop is concerned in their native place they could get it done by others as it didn't cost much to them. If these suggestions would be by the company, surely the problem of absenteeism would go down.

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4. data_highStandard Group India
5. lights_nw_nw_nw.doc (censusindia.gov.in)

Book Review

Pathania J. Gaurav, 'University as a Site of Resistance: Identity and Student Politics' (2018), India, Oxford University Press, 236 Pages. ISBN No: 9780199488414

***Prantik Basak*[35]**

The book investigates how marginalized communities in Indian higher education redefine the politics of space by constructing various strategies to deconstruct the fixated notions of identity, cultural politics, and caste. We see a rising debate amongst intellectuals about university autonomy, academic freedom, and freedom of expression. Pathania references the suicide of Rohith Vemula on 17th January 2016, which led to massive student agitations all over India. Rohith's suicide note was an attack on caste and hierarchy in society, where he termed his birth as a 'fatal accident' (p.1) as his value as a man was reduced to his immediate identity. On 9th February, 2016, with the arrest of JNUSU President Kanhaiya Kumar, the media started the debate of nationalist vs anti-nationalist, and very soon every public action was interpreted in these inverse categories. Fighting against the narratives of 'anti-national', 'den of drugs', and 'terrorism' (p.2), the JNU community engaged the civil society to educate the nation about nationalism, which they believe was misinterpreted.

Pathania highlights the rise of illiberal liberalism in India. Being gay, feminist, and secular are considered anti-national. Such nationalism promotes 'intolerance and arrogant patriotism' (p.3), and is 'poisonous for intellectualism' (p.3). The book highlights the concerns of activists over the government's silencing of opposition at universities. Bans on anti-government articles became widespread. It was alarming to see the negative reactions of the government and the masses towards student protests. With the implementation of the compulsory attendance system at the university level, Pathania describes it by referring to Foucault's concept of 'disciplining the bodies' (p.4). The book explains how the administration started focusing on controlling how the university behaves and not what it produces. It ultimately came down to being a clash between the liberal campus culture of JNU and the conservative culture of mainstream society.

Questions were thrown at the right-wing asking if their idea of nationalism includes Dalits or Muslim women; or the mothers who work tirelessly to feed their families. Pathania reflects how public university education was not just about career development but also about social justice and creating an intellectually vibrant space. A space for ideological activism thrives in the university which the students use to enlarge their space for freedom and autonomy leading to critical thinking, and activism. However, post-independence, it was alleged that some universities had become 'nurseries for breeding mafia-politicians' (p.9) and that 'lumpen behavior is sanctioned by senior party leaders' (p.9). Pathania also points out the massive impact of globalization on higher education. Education moved out of the hands of educationists and into those of politicians and bureaucrats with a political agenda. The book points out that the present challenge facing institutes of higher education is to balance state control and a market-driven economy.

Pathania states that universities are the 'litmus of crisis and democracy' (p. 11), as no democracy can survive without the roots of ethical and philosophical imagination. Referring to Bombongan, Pathania states that the 'university is the womb' (p. 13) where 'human beings are well nourished' (p. 13). A new kind of student activism is on the rise in Indian universities, where students are using their identity and caste as a medium of assertion. Dalit students of the University of Hyderabad organized protests stating how consuming chicken was 'secular' while the consumption of beef became an issue of religion. For Dalit students,

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the aim was to make the university campus more inclusive, wherein everyone's cultural preferences are accepted and respected. Pathania argues that this new form of student activism challenged the existing cultural hegemony in society.

An interesting trend in student activism has been the creation and celebration of counter-narratives by the Dalit community. A new narrative of 'Moolnivasi' (p. 16) dominates the Dalit-Bahujan discourse, which argues that Dalits were the original inhabitants of India. Rather than celebrating Gandhi, marginalized students hailed Jyotiba Phule as the 'Father of the Nation'. These examples make the readers understand how students are challenging the norms and paving the way for inclusion and freedom of expression. University campuses have become the breeding ground of ideologies; it is thus the responsibility of the university to provide the students with new 'epistemic tools' (p. 17) to debate old narratives and imagine new ones. The residential university in particular is a site of transformative encounters, with different forms of living, food cultures, and religious practices.

The second chapter of the book explicitly deals with the Telangana movement. The book tries to understand the Telangana movement from the lens of a new social movement. NSMs rise from within the sphere of cultural production and the lifeworld, and from the need to create 'cultural alternatives in everyday life that seek to escape from the state' (p. 36). Pathania explains three themes that helps us understand the movement for a separate Telangana state. One theme is identity; the second theme is culture and the third is the decentralized nature of the movement. The main reason behind the Telangana agitations was the social and economic backwardness of the region. The book highlights how different phases of the movement were essentially a struggle between two cultural identities and divides the movement into three phases. The first phase (1953-72) was about the cultural deprivation of Telangana people after the merger with Andhra; the second phase (1973-2000) was marked by intense cultural mobilization while the final phase (2001-2014) was one of cultural and political assertion.

Telangana's Telegu maintained an Urdu base whereas Andhra Telegu had a Sanskrit base. The Telangana accent was considered inferior in the eyes of the growing Andhra population. The book highlights the claim of Telangana activists how the need for English-speaking employees was filled up by Andhras. Pathania states the core requirement for a government job in the city: one had to prove their 'mulki status' (p. 42). There were rampant cases of filing fake mulki certificates as the administration was dominated by Andhras. Telangana locals failed to secure government jobs, and the ones who did had to face ridicule due to their culture and 'inferior' accent. Despite the State Reorganization Commission's fear that 'Telangana itself may be converted into a colony by the enterprising coastal Andhras' (p. 44), Andhra Pradesh was formed in 1956 by merging eleven districts of Andhra and nine Telegu speaking Telangana districts of the former princely state of Hyderabad. The book mentions that this merger was backed up by a Gentleman's Agreement, which promised to make equal development and socio-political representation between Telangana and Coastal Andhra. This was, however, ignored.

The Gentleman's Agreement was a 'rhetoric flourish' (p. 46), which left Telangana economically backward. Different pay scales for Andhra and Telangana employees set by the Pay Commission under the leadership of K. Brahmananda Reddy created permanent grievances. Referring to the work of Syed Hussain Alatas, Pathania explains how colonial subjects developed 'a sense of inferiority and dependency' (p. 47). This ultimately led to the emergence of the native vs. settler issue, which also called for the realization of the special identity of the Telangana people. In the case of the Telangana movement, language was both a binding and a separating factor. Andhra's dialect, culture, and festivals have dominated mainstream media and become a part of popular culture. Thus, the Telangana-Andhra association represents a hierarchy and exploitation in the name of a language, manifesting itself politically.

The book elaborates on how group of intellectuals behind the Telangana movement has been trying to rewrite the history of Telangana to emphasize its culture in contrast to that of Andhra. For decades, this movement has been associated with the students and teachers of Osmania University in Hyderabad. In chapter two of the book, Pathania explains how due to the movement for separate Telangana, intellectuals established organic linkages with the poor working classes through their art, music, writings, and speeches. Student activism has always been a key part of the Telangana movement since 1957 as it is the students who were the most affected by discrimination. Osmania has always been a ‘hotbed’ (p. 76) for any kind of activism, but what is interesting for the readers to learn is that classroom teaching had no contributions to it. It was primarily the non-academic environment that contributed to a campus culture of activism for a separate Telangana. The role of teachers can be seen in supporting the students and advising them. While students were the forerunners, professors and alumni served as the movement’s guiding force.

In chapter three, Pathania explains the readers the various networks student activists form. The book tries to find out the role of the students in changing the tide and making the movement for Telangana a mass movement. We get to know how marriage functions on the campus acted as platforms where student leaders connect with party leaders. The university, therefore, acts as a surrogate family. The role of networking played an unparalleled role in the Telangana movement. Students were mobilized on their cultural identity of belonging to Telangana as well as their caste background since the vast majority of students at OU belong to OBCs. Pathania elucidates social networks as important channels for the recruitment of new students. ‘Dhabas’ were the ‘strategy forums’ of the movement. University dhabas became the place of debate and political strategy. Students congregate in the evening at dhabas over tea and cigarettes, which is conducive to extended discussions. ‘Chai, cigarette, and chatting are what makes an activist’ (p. 137).

Chapter four describes how student movements became generational; how the protestors of 1969 influenced the modern generation of student activists. This chapter aims to understand how generations of Osmania alumni still visit the campus to meet the new generation. There are three types of activists coming from Osmania: students, teachers, and alumni. Alumni includes the agitators from 1969. The book tries to find the difference between the agitations of 1969 and 2009, stating that 1969 agitations were very erratic in nature as compared to the 2009 agitations, which were more organized. The role of media, mainly social media, was unparalleled during the 2009 agitations. The live telecast of the student’s immolation strengthened public support for a separate Telangana. The use of cultural symbols like dappu (a traditional medium of communicating news in villages), which highlights the ‘life-world’ (p. 163) of lower castes, helped reach a wider mass. Similarly, activists worship Telangana Talli (mother goddess) to oppose Telegu Talli which is a cultural symbol worshipped by Andhra Telegus. Such symbols find a new meaning when it is linked to a movement.

Campus activism does not represent any particular ideology; it is a combination of the student activist’s regional identity, political aspirations, and the vision of the movement. Most student activists were first-generation learners; they ventured into the city life for education and jobs, which they later found to be non-existent. This strengthened their desire to become a part of the movement. University provided them with the understanding of the problems and offered a solution. The main theme which we can derive from the Telangana movement is that of the lived experiences of the activists and their relationship with the movement. It has produced several student intellectuals who later emerged as ‘organic intellectuals’ (p. 182). Chapter five of the book discusses the significance of suicide notes as they represented a counter-narrative to the state’s ‘promised’ narrative of ‘inclusive development and growth’ (p. 188). The readers also understand how ethnically based nationalism arises out of a sense of alienation, and on the other hand, from resentment against unfair exclusion, whether political, social, or economic.

This book adequately describes the nature of student politics in contemporary India and is a fulfilling read for scholars who look forward to understanding the nature of student activism and its connection with mainstream politics. This book empowers marginalized people as it upholds the strength of the marginalized students and their role in leading the movement for a separate Telangana. The book also achieves the task of highlighting the significance of resistance and revolution in a democracy, and how education can lead to the realization of starting and sustaining resistance. Pathania's work is of value to all young students as they are the future of India; this book would help students realize the importance of dissenting voices in university spaces and the power of activism. Coming to methodology, Pathania has followed an ethnographic research method to present a major part of his research, which is evident from his one-on-one interactions with several student leaders, both from the old and new generations involved with the Telangana movement. The message that Pathania puts forward through his book is clear: the role of universities in creating a space for intellectual activism and resistance. Adequate pieces of evidence have been provided by the author to support his arguments.

Furthermore, inadequate attention has been paid to understand pan-Indian student politics. The book also doesn't discuss women's participation in the Telangana movement. The influence of the global student movement on the Telangana movement was also missing. Nevertheless, the author has made a substantial contribution to the research literature available on student politics and resistance in India. The book has provided recent examples as well as past incidents, which helped provide a better understanding. It is a relevant work in the field of sociology and political science which would be helpful to any student studying resistance politics and movement scholars focusing on India. The book majorly contributes to the growing body of social movement literature by establishing the Telangana movement as cultural resistance. The author has provided a meticulous framework for new social movements. The records of voices from student leaders and in-depth interviews with Osmania alumni provide the general audience with an understanding of student activism. This robust volume will benefit scholars, students and ethnographers alike.

About the Journal

Introduction: Journal of Liberal Arts and Sciences is a collection of work and a platform for exemplifying excellent creative writing skills and communication, showcasing strongest analytical, objective, empirical, scientific and critical thinking and pieces of creative original research in the realm of liberal arts, science and sustainability interfaces. It aims to demonstrate intellectual diversity and to encourage best research and liberal arts, science and sustainability practices.

Objectives, Vision and Mission: Journal of Liberal Arts and Sciences aims to raise various issues, challenges of rising importance nationally and globally. The journal aims to meet the UN SDGs and will be in line with international standards. The journal fulfills the quest for assimilation and dissemination of knowledge in varied forms. It will specifically promote free writing style, out of the box forms of communication so as not to bind individuals in their thought process and in forms of communication. Out of the box submissions will be highly encouraged. The journal will facilitate to meet the vision of Manav Rachna in addressing the UN SDGs and a wide variety of sustainability goals through research, intellectual, creative, scientific thinking and practice by having on its advisory board renowned academicians, artists and sustainability practitioners, art and culture related institutions from around the world. The journal also has well profound editors and reviewers on the board.

Thematic Areas: The journal will focus on the various domains of liberal arts encompassing various disciplines such as psychology, economics, political science, public administration, fine arts, music, social work, sociology, cross-cultural studies, gender studies and rights, history, philosophy, women rights, geography, anthropology, education, legal studies, development studies and practice, international relations and ethics. Contributions from these areas will be sought and encouraged to give trans-disciplinary exposure to the readers. It will create a set of readers, thinkers, decision and policy makers who will create their own values. It will enable a future policy direction for attaining sustainability goals by bridging liberal arts and sustainability science.

Outcome: The contributions will be encouraged to push frontiers of past, existing and new research and meet current and future global challenges with innovative solutions and creative decision making

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Timeline: The annual issues are scheduled for November each year. Submissions will be screened through a double-blind peer review. The review will be transparent and the reviewers will give genuine review which may help the contributors. The target audience will include academicians and practitioners from around the world.

Instructions to Authors

Journal of Liberal Arts and Sciences invites high quality research papers, case studies, literature review based papers and book reviews, commentaries, photo articles, photo monographs, opinion piece, visual narratives, vlogs, short blogs and précis writing for **Vol. 1, No. 2** which is scheduled to be published by **May 2022** and the submission deadline is **21st November 2021**. Submissions for publication in the Journal of Liberal Arts and Sciences must comply with the format described in the publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th Edition). The following needs to be assured:

1. Manuscript should be original and should be accompanied with an undertaking (attached) that the same has not been published elsewhere, and will not be sent for publication anywhere till it is under review with JLAS.
2. Manuscript should include a separate title page with the name of the author(s) and affiliations.
3. Author identification notes should be typed only on the title page.
4. Email address of the corresponding author may please be provided.
5. Each submission should include an abstract of approximately 200 words. Abstracts may include graphics and visuals or flow charts too. It should be typed in 1.5 line spacing, Times New Roman with font size 12.
6. The language of the manuscript must be in English and English translations of vernacular work will also be encouraged in the journal.
7. The language of the text should be bias free, objective and culturally sensitive.
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The articles should broadly contain: Title, Abstract, Keywords (maximum of 8 keywords), Introduction, Objectives/ Hypothesis, Method (This should cover techniques, Sample, Tools/ Measures, Procedures, etc.) Results, Discussions, Conclusion and References (in APA format, 7th edition arranged in alphabetical order). Tables and graphs should be on a separate page at the end of the submission having their intended position clearly indicated in the text. All submissions should maintain ethical standards.

All data, views, opinions, and statements expressed in the journal are the views of the authors. Neither the publisher nor the Editors are in anyway responsible for them. The editor reserves the right to edit or modify the articles for which no communication shall be done with the authors.

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Reference Examples: For referencing, APA, 7th Edition should be followed: the following are some reference examples:

1. **Journal Article**
    1.1. Grady, J. S., Her, M., Moreno, G., Perez, C., & Yelinek, J. (2019). Emotions in storybooks: A comparison of storybooks that represent ethnic and racial groups in the United States. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, *8*(3), 207–217. https://doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000185
    1.2. Jerrentrup, A., Mueller, T., Glowalla, U., Herder, M., Henrichs, N., Neubauer, A., & Schaefer, J. R. (2018). Teaching medicine with the help of "Dr. House". *PLoS ONE*, *13*(3), Article e0193972. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0193972

Parenthetical citations: (Grady et al., 2019; Jerrentrup et al., 2018)
Narrative citations: Grady et al. (2019) and Jerrentrup et al. (2018)
Note: *If the journal article does not have a DOI but does have a URL, include the URL of the article at the end of the reference.*

2. **Magazine Article**
    2.1. Schaefer, N. K., & Shapiro, B. (2019, September 6). New middle chapter in the story of human evolution. *Science*, *365*(6457), 981–982. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aay3550
    2.2. Schulman, M. (2019, September 9). Superfans: A love story. *The New Yorker*. https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2019/09/16/superfans-a-love-story
3. **Newspaper Article**
    3.1. Carey, B. (2019, March 22). Can we get better at forgetting? *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/22/health/memory-forgetting-psychology.html
4. **Whole Book**
    1.1. Rabinowitz, F. E. (2019). *Deepening group psychotherapy with men: Stories and insights for the journey*. American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000132-000
    1.2. Sapolsky, R. M. (2017). *Behave: The biology of humans at our best and worst*. Penguin Books.

Note: *Do not include the publisher location.*

5. **Edited Book Chapter**

5.1 Aron, L., Botella, M., & Lubart, T. (2019). Culinary arts: Talent and their development. In R. F. Subotnik, P. Olszewski-Kubilius, & F. C. Worrell (Eds.), *The psychology of high performance: Developing human potential into domain-specific talent* (pp. 345–359). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000120-016

Note: *Do not include the publisher location.*

6. **Dictionary Entry**
    6.1. Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Culture. In *Merriam-Webster.com dictionary*. Retrieved September 9, 2019, from https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/culture

Note: *Merriam-Webster is both the author and the publisher, so the name appears in the author element only to avoid repetition.*

7. Government **Report**
    7.1. National Cancer Institute. (2019). *Taking time: Support for people with cancer* (NIH Publication No. 18-2059). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National

Institutes of Health. https://www.cancer.gov/publications/patient-education/takingtime.pd

8. YouTube Video

8.1 Harvard University. (2019, August 28). *Soft robotic gripper for jellyfish* [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=guRoWTYfxMs

9. Tweet

9.1 APA Databases [@APA_Databases]. (2019, September 5). *Help students avoid plagiarism and researchers navigate the publication process. More details available in the 7th edition @ APA_Style table* [Tweet]. Twitter. https://twitter.com/APA_Databases/status/1169644365452578823

Note: *The same format used for Twitter is also used for Instagram*.

10. Facebook Post

10.1 News From Science. (2019, June 21). *Are you a fan of astronomy? Enjoy reading about what scientists have discovered in our solar system—and beyond? This* [Image attached] [Status update]. Facebook. https://www.facebook.com/ScienceNOW/photos/a.117532185107/10156268057260108/?type=3&theater

11. Webpage on a Website

11.1 Fagan, J. (2019, March 25). *Nursing clinical brain*. OER Commons. Retrieved September 17, 2019, from https://www.oercommons.org/authoring/53029-nursing-clinical-brain/view

11.2 World Health Organization. (2018, May 24). *The top 10 causes of death*. https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/the-top-10-causes-of-death

Note: *Provide as specific a date as is available on the webpage. This might be a year only; a year and month; or a year, month, and day.*

12. Blogs

12.1 Freakonomics. (2010, October 29). E-ZPass is a life-saver (literally) [Blog post]. Retrieved from http://freakonomics.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/10/29/e-zpass-is-a-life-saver-literally/

Note: *The name of the blog itself is not part of the reference, although it's often evident from the URL*.

For more details you may refer to *https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples#supplemental*

All submissions need to be e-mailed to the editor at ***anandajit.fbss@mriu.edu.in*** or submitted online at ***http://publications.mriirs.edu.in/index.php/jlas***

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