



RESEARCHER

A Multidisciplinary Journal

Vol. XVII, No. 1, 2021
ISSN 2278-9022

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Sonika Khajuria*

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EDITORIAL

Dear Readers

Over a period of time keeping in view the scholars' need for publication, making their research known in the public knowledge domain, as per the guidelines of UGC-CARE List, the Advisory Board and the Editorial Board of the University of Jammu Journal *Researcher* stands revised under the patronage of Prof. Manoj Kumar Dhar, Vice-Chancellor, University of Jammu.

This Journal was started in the early seventies as Journal of Social Sciences, and keeping pace with the increasing research demands changed into *Literati* and finally *namkaran* (christened) *Researcher: A Multidisciplinary Journal* with ISSN 2278-9022. The four sections of the Journal: Science and Technology interface with Social Sciences, Business Studies and Arts and Humanities-encourage researchers to send their discipline-specific, interdisciplinary papers that might not fit well in a traditional, discipline-specific journal, and also give an opportunity to researchers to transcend discipline boundaries to get acquainted with research in other disciplines for information and enrichment.

As editor of *Researcher*, I am honoured to have actively involved, motivated, and determined editorial team. Besides, our Advisory Board includes eminent faculty from across the world. Their inputs have not only helped us in instilling new editorial policies but also facilitated to ensure a high quality blind review process. Special thanks to our reviewers from across India, who despite their busy academic schedule gave detailed value-based review reports to chisel the quality of the papers for publication, so that the readers find them more useful, easier to read and more robust.

In this issue, Science and Technology section focuses on the present technology intruding into the lives of youth along with highlighting the nuances of material science. Social Sciences section covers a broad spectrum of minorities, politics, transition, disaster, and decentralization of power. Business Studies section gives us insight into the capital structure on profitability of Sri Lankan consumer services companies to emphasis that these results/studies are supportive for companies to operate in a competitive environment. And the last section on Arts and Humanities underscores the relevance of learning English Language through local literary texts as learners easily identify the context and are able to relate and communicate.

Our mandate is to make *Researcher* a top multidisciplinary national journal with a reputation for publishing quality, reproducible research following a rigorous blind peer review process.

Your comments and suggestions are most welcome at publication.ju@gmail.com.



Prof Anupama Vohra
Editor

RESEARCHER

A Multidisciplinary Journal

Vol. XVII No. 1, 2021
ISSN 2278-9022

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SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Usage, attitude, and addiction: Internet in the lives of rural adolescent girls of Jammu

Neeru Sharma*, Sunali Sharma** & Sonika Khajuria***

ABSTRACT

The present research was conducted (a) To study the : (i) Internet Attitude (ii) Internet Addiction (iii) Internet Usage among rural adolescent girls of Jammu. (b) To assess the relationship between Internet Attitude and Internet Addiction. A sample of 60 adolescent girls, aged 12-18 years, studying in the 9th and 10th standards, were selected from high schools located in the Bajalta village of Jammu. The tools used for the study were the self-devised Internet Usage Questionnaire, Young's Internet Addiction Test, and Internet Attitude Scale by Zhang. The results of the study show that the majority of the respondents were 15 years of age, using the Internet on their mobile phones, at their homes, through Wi-Fi connections, mostly for less than one hour per week and having 30 friends on SNS. They have been using the Internet for the last one year, preferably during the night, and mostly for downloading and educational purposes. Majority of the respondents had a high attitude towards the Internet and had complete control over their Internet usage. A non-significant correlation was found between the Internet Attitude and Internet Addiction.

Key Words: Internet Usage, Internet Addiction, Internet Attitude, Rural Adolescent Girls

Introduction

The development of the self is an important aspect of adolescent's developmental milestones. Identity development also occurs within the large societal context, where cultural identity, sexual identity, and the impact of gender roles are central to the adolescent's self-definition and self-evaluation. It is a crucial time for young people to develop their capacity for empathy, abstract thinking, and future time perspective, a time when the close and dependent relationship with parents is to give way to more intense relationships with peers and other adults (Erikson, 1968). In this exploration of identity, the Internet has come to play an important role, as it has connected adolescents, especially girls, to a wider world, which they are otherwise not allowed to explore due to security concerns of parents in rural areas. The Internet has taken them to a virtual friendship world where they are networked to people spread around the world.

Adolescents like spending time on social networking sites like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Google, Skype, etc. 'Social networks' are formed through a collection of individuals linked together by a set of relations through online social networking sites, which 'virtually' link individuals, who may or may not 'know' each other. In the social context, social networking sites enable multiple communication functions, such as e-mail, instant messaging, chats, blogs, downloading, picture sharing, and many other functions that allow adolescents to participate and co-construct their own environments. Peer

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relations and friendships have attained a new dimension with the coming of the Internet and Social Networking Sites (SNS). It is theorized that being part of a social network may also be beneficial for adolescents by encouraging the development of identity. The usage of SNS has been so widespread that it has caught the attention of academics worldwide. The use of SNS among the people of India is evidently increasing, particularly among Indian adolescents. Being in a social network may provide adolescents with a sense of group support and belongingness as well as opportunities to negotiate conflicts and take the perspective of other group members (Rubin et al., 2006). The number of adolescents independently using the Internet for self-directed activities is continually increasing, and it is becoming evident that through the adolescent's engagement with the Internet, they have developed an in-depth understanding of the different uses of the tool for different purposes (Salman, 2010).

According to Meeker's (2019) Internet Trends Report, out of 3.8 billion Internet users, 12% are in India (<https://inc42.com/buzz/jammu-and-kashmir-goes-offline-india-leads-the-world-in-Internet-shutdowns/>). According to the IAMAI (Internet and Mobile Association of India): Rural India, with an estimated population of 918 million as per the 2011 Census, has only 186 million Internet users leaving out potential 732 million users in rural India. Rural Internet penetration has grown from 18% in December 2016 to 20.26% in December 2017. The number of Internet users in India is expected to reach 500 million by June 2018, said a report by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) and Kantar IMRB. The UT of Jammu and Kashmir has been experiencing a steady increase in the number of Internet users. Of the total Internet subscribers in the state, 23.7 lakh have been using a narrow band, whereas 11.5 lakh are broadband users. The report also reveals that the Internet penetration in Jammu and Kashmir is higher than the Indian averages. In rural areas, the figure of 20.32 subscribers per 100 is even better than the corresponding all-India figure of 13.17.

The term 'Internet Addiction' was proposed by Dr. Ivan Goldberg in 1995 for pathological compulsive Internet use (Weinstein and Lejoyeux, 2010). Griffith considers it as a subset of behavior addiction any and behavior that meets the 6 components of addiction i.e., salience, mood modification, tolerance, withdrawal, conflict, and relapse (Goldberg 1996). While Davis avoided the term Internet addiction, referring it as a dependency on psychoactive substances, he instead preferred the term "Pathological Internet Use" (PIU). Internet addiction is a new disorder first described by Kimberly Young in 1996 and has sparked controversial debate among both clinicians and academics. Since then there have been many studies examining the multiple facets of this disorder and have concluded that the proper detection and diagnosis of Internet addiction is difficult and often complicated by the fact there is no standard definition of Internet addiction.

Young linked excessive Internet use most closely to pathological gambling, a disorder of impulse control in DSM4, and adapted the DSM4 criteria to relate to Internet use in the Internet addiction test developed by her. According to her, various types of Internet addiction are cyber-sexual addiction, cyber-relationship addiction, net compulsions, information overload, net compulsion, information overload, and computer addiction. Jerald Block in an editorial in the American Journal of Psychiatry recommends the inclusion of IAD in DSM4. He opines that conceptually, the diagnosis is a compulsive impulsive spectrum disorder that involves online and/or offline computer usage and consists of at least three subtypes: excessive gaming, sexual preoccupations, and e-mail / text messaging (Young, 1996).

JUSTIFICATION:

The Internet is seen as the most dynamic mass media in the present century. Its interactive nature has attracted adolescents from all walks of life. The number of adolescents independently

using the Internet for self-directed activities is continually increasing. It became evident that through adolescent's engagement with the Internet they have developed an in-depth understanding of the different uses of the tool for different purposes (Salman, 2010). In India use of Internet is enormous especially among adolescents. A study conducted by Sharma et al. (2013) revealed that computer experiences mainly affected how the Internet is used in the learning process.

Various research studies have shown that the adolescent's interactions with new technologies are often influenced by current trends. Among them communication is the most important use of the Internet, and popular communication applications include E-mail, instant messaging, Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, and Hike etc. Adolescents spend a considerable amount of their time on these application's. As per the article, Internet users in India are expected to reach 500 million by June (IAMI Agarwal, 2018). Rural India, with an estimated population of 918 million as per the 2011 Census, has only 186 million Internet users, leaving out potential 732 million users in rural India.

Mahmud (2016) revealed that the students exhibited positive attitude towards the Internet irrespective of gender, again in contradiction to most other findings. Otaibi (2012) revealed that the use of the Internet involves educational, cultural purposes, leisure, entertainment, and purchasing purposes. Besides, there is the existence of significant differences at the level (0.01) between high and low Internet users in the general attitude towards the Internet, in favor of the high users of the Internet. Subbiah et al.'s (2017) study revealed that the majority of students faced problems due to occasional usage. Whereas 1.33% of students faced no problems with Internet addiction. Azher's (2018) study revealed that the prevalence of Internet Addiction was higher among male students than among female students. Regression analysis showed a positive and significant relationship between Internet addiction and anxiety levels among university students.

It is true that the Internet has emerged as an effective and convenient mechanism to fulfill the needs of information, education, and entertainment, but it is to be noted that spending time on the Internet instead of with people can have a decisive impact on different human and social skills. Educationists, Sociologists, and Home Scientists have argued that human and social skills are being adversely affected because of excessive dependence on Internet Usage. Therefore, there is a great need to access Internet Usage, Internet Addiction, and Internet Attitude among adolescent girls.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To study among female students of high schools in Bajalta village of Jammu and Kashmir:
 - a. Internet Attitude
 - b. Internet Addiction
2. To assess the relationship between Internet Attitude and Internet Addiction

METHODS:

The present study was conducted to understand the Internet attitude of rural adolescent girls in the context of Internet Addiction.

I. SAMPLE

- a. **Size:** The sample for the study comprised of 60 rural adolescent girls, studying in classes 9th and 10th, in High Schools of Bajalta Village, of Jammu Division of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir.

- a) **Criteria for sample selection**
 - ▶ **Education:** Only adolescents who were studying in classes 9th and 10th in high schools were selected.
 - ▶ **School:** Only adolescents studying in both private and government schools from the rural area of Bajalta Village were selected.
 - ▶ **Residence:** Only adolescents residing in the rural area of Bajalta were selected.
- b) **Sampling Technique:** Multistage sampling technique was used to identify the sample. Bajalta Village was purposively chosen from Jammu District to match the sample. A comprehensive list of both private and government schools in Bajalta Village was obtained from the Office of the Directorate of School Education, Jammu. From this list, two schools were selected randomly. These were the Diamond Public School and the Government High School, Chaklargaan. Among these schools Screening Tool was distributed among classes 9th and 10th. It was used to identify Internet users, and a list of Internet users was thus prepared. From this list 60 adolescent girls were selected randomly for the final data collection.
- c) **Locale:** Bain Bajalta/ Majalta/ Majial is a village in the Dansal Block in Jammu District of the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, India. It is located 15km towards north from the District headquarters Jammu. The total geographical area of the village is 681.1 hectares. Bain Majialta has a total population of 1,636 people, 462 of whom are workers (223 among them being cultivators and 5 Agricultural Laborers). There are about 278 households, as per the Census Report of 2011, in Bain Majalta village. The village was initially known as Bajalta but when the Dogra rulers came they made 101 (stepwells) in the village which is commonly known as 'Bain' in Dogri that's how the village got its name "Bain Bajalta" (Rural Tourism in Jammu, 23.09.2018). 'Dogri' is the main language spoken in this area.

I. TOOLS USED:

The following tools were used for data collection:

- a) **Screening Device:** A self-devised questionnaire was used to collect information regarding background variables and preferences regarding Internet usage, the time spent on Internet, and devices used by adolescent girls for Internet access. This too helped in identifying the Internet users.
- b) **Internet Usage Questionnaire:** A self-devised questionnaire was used to collect information regarding Internet Usage among the respondents like background variables, preferences regarding the websites, time spent on these sites, number of friends, type of Internet connection, etc.
- d) **Young's Internet Addiction Test by Dr Kimberly Young (1998)** is a five-point Likert scale with 20 items. The instrument encompasses the extent to which Internet use affects subjects' thoughts, feelings, behavior, sleep patterns, functioning, and its validity has been established. The instrument shows very good internal consistency (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.903$). Each item is rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 to 5. The maximum score was 100 points. Score varies from (20 to 100) with 20-49 depicting an average online user who has complete control over his/her usage, 50-79 connoting a

user having frequent problems due to Internet usage and 80-100 signifying a user having a serious impact of the Internet on their lives.

- e) **The Internet Attitude Scale (IAS) was developed by Dr. Yixin Zhang** in the year 2012. It is a 40-items Likert-type one-dimensional inventory for measuring attitudes toward the Internet. Furthermore, this inventory was created to measure Internet users preferred and perceived specific Internet attributes. It is a 4-point Likert Scale (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree). The reliability of the scale, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, is 0.81, and the Inter correlation - subscale correlated significantly with each other, suggesting convergent validity of each subscale. The maximum score is 160 and the minimum is 40.

III. DATA COLLECTION: Data were collected in three phases:

- a) Phase 1: Screening, for sample identification
 - b) Phase 2: Pretesting
 - c) Phase 3: Final data collection
- i) Phase 1: Screening, for sample identification: Initially, screening was done to identify the sample. For this purpose, the screening tool was used among all the students who were 12-16 years, in the selected schools of Bajalta. Using this procedure, the Internet users were identified for final sample selection.
 - ii) Phase 2: In this phase Internet Usage Questionnaire, Internet Attitude Scale, and Young's Internet Addiction Test were pretested on a small sample, to ensure the validity of the scales. These data were not used in the final analysis.
 - iii) Phase 3: Final data collection: After the selection of the sample and finalization of the tools, data were collected by visiting the selected schools in rural areas of Jammu.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS:

The data obtained by the use of various tools were subjected to both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Data analysis was initiated by making a code book, coding the gathered information, and then transferring it to SPSS (20th Version).

Qualitative analysis: After coding the Internet Usage Questionnaire, descriptive coding categories were devised to organize the data. These categories were formulated to highlight the major responses and to derive conclusions based on these.

Quantitative analysis: For quantitative analysis the data were tabulated and frequency and percentages were calculated. Statistical analysis was done by using SPSS software (20th version), and the mean, standard deviation, and correlation were calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Age of the respondents

Age (in Years)	Girls (n=60)
13	1 (1.6)
14	9 (15)
15	25 (41.6)
16	16 (26.6)
17	6 (10)
18	3 (5)
Mean ± S.D	15.43 ± 1.07

Data given in Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents (41.6%) were 15 years of age, 26.6% were 16 years of age, and 15% were 14 years of age. Their mean age was 15.43±1.07.

2. INTERNET USAGE AMONG RESPONDENTS

Table 2 (a) Devices for Internet Usage

Responses	Girls (n=60)
Mobile	55 (91.6)
Tablet	2 (3.33)
Laptop\Desktop	3 (5)

Analysis of Table2 (a) reveals that 91.6% of respondents used the Internet on their mobile phones, whereas 5% of respondents used the Internet on their laptops/desktops.

Table 2 (b) Place of using the Internet

Responses	Girls (n=60)
Home	56 (93.33)
School	3 (5)
Cyber Cafe	1 (1.66)

Table 2(b) shows that the majority (93.33%) of the respondents used the Internet at their homes, 5% used it in their schools, and 1.66% of respondents used it at Cyber Cafés.

Table2(c) Types of Internet connections used

Responses	Girls (n=60)
Prepaid	8 (13.33)
Postpaid	11 (18.33)
Wi-Fi	41 (68.33)

Table2(c) reveals that the majority (68.33%) of the respondents used Wi-Fi connection for Internet access, 18.33% respondents used the Internet on postpaid connections, and 13.33% used prepaid connections for Internet access.

Table No2 (d) Hours spent per week using the Internet

Hours Spent on Girls(n=60) Internet/week	
Less than 1.	47 (78.33)
2-4	11 (18.33)
5-6	1 (1.66)
Over6	1 (1.66)

Table 2(d) shows that the majority (78.33%) of respondents used the Internet for less than 1 hour per week, whereas 18.33% of the respondents used the Internet for 2-4 hours per week.

Table 2(e) Years since using the Internet

Responses	Girls(n=60)
Less than 1 year	18 (30)
1 year	24 (40)
2 years	18 (30)

Table 2(e) shows that the majority (40%) of respondents had been using the Internet for less than 1 year, whereas 30% of the respondents had been using the Internet for the last 2 years.

Table 2(f) Time of day preferred for Internet Usage

Responses	Girls(n=60)
Morning	2 (3.33)
Afternoon	1 (1.66)
Evening	27 (45)
Night	30 (50)

Table 2(f) shows that the majority of respondents (50%) preferred using the Internet at night, 45% of the respondents had been using it during the evening, whereas 3.33% respondents used the Internet in the morning.

Table 2(g) Purpose of accessing the Internet

Purpose of Internet Usage	Girls(n=60)
Accessing Social networking sites	2 (3.33)
Educational purpose	18 (30)
Downloading	19 (31.66)
Viewing online videos	4 (6.66)
Shopping	2 (3.33)
Playing Games	15 (25)

Table 2(g) shows that the majority of respondents (31.66%) used the Internet for downloading purposes, 18% respondents used it for educational purposes, 25% respondents used it for playing games, 6.66% respondents accessed the Internet for viewing online videos, whereas 3.33% respondents used it for shopping, and accessing social networking sites (SNS).

Table 2(h) Friends on SNS

No. of friends on SNS	Girls(n=60)
30	52 (41.66)
60	4 (6.66)
More than 60	4 (6.66)

Table 2(h) shows that the majority of adolescents (41.66%) had 30 friends on Social Networking Sites (SNS), 6.66% respondents had more than 60 friends on SNS, and 6.66% respondents had only 60 friends on SNS.

3. ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE INTERNET

Table 3 (a) Distribution of sample on Attitude towards the Internet

Levels	Girls (n=60)
Low (40)	0 (0)
Moderate (41-101)	20 (33.33)
High (102-162)	40 (66.66)

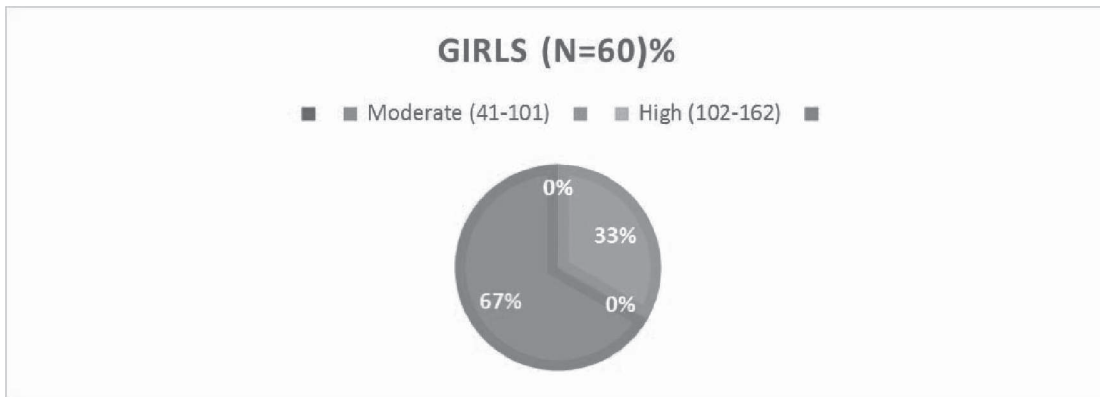


Fig 1 Attitude towards the Internet

Table 3(a) and Fig 1 reveal that 66.66% of the respondents had a high attitude towards the Internet, whereas 33.33% of respondents had moderate attitude toward it, though none had a low attitude towards it.

4. INTERNET ADDICTION AMONG ADOLESCENTS

Table 4. Distribution of sample on Level of Internet Addiction

Levels	Girls (N=60)
Complete Control (20-49)	43 (71.66)
Frequent problem due to usage (50-79)	17 (28.33)
Serious impact of Internet on life (80-100)	0 (0)

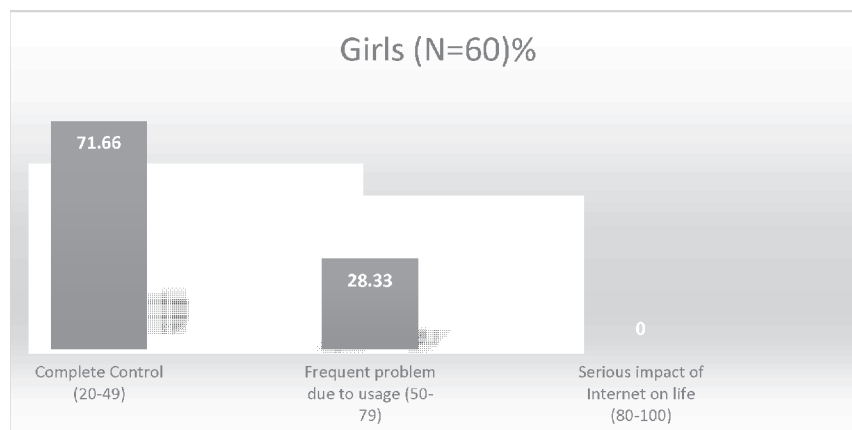


Fig 2. Internet Addiction among respondents

Table 4 and Fig 2 show that 71.66% of respondents had complete control over their Internet Usage, whereas 28.33% had frequent problems due to it, though none fell in the range of serious impact.

5. INTERNET ATTITUDE AND INTERNET ADDICTION

Table 5. Relationship between Internet Attitude and Internet Addiction

Variables	Internet Addiction
Internet Attitude	.142

Table 5 shows that Internet Attitude was not significantly correlated with Internet Addiction, though the relationship was positive.

DISCUSSION

The Internet has reached out to almost every nook and corner of the world and is being used by almost everyone. Adolescents have been the most influenced ones and have been benefitted by usage of the Internet, but simultaneously the review from all over the world presents a worrisome picture. Internet addiction is increasing day by day. The Internet as a global village has become an important entertainment source for adolescents (Chou and Peng, 2007), serving a substantial role in changing the social lives of people (Ross et al., 2009), but along with all the benefits, the problem of excessive use is also becoming apparent (Nalwa, 2003).

The present research was conducted to study the usage, attitude, and addiction of Internet in the lives of rural adolescent girls of Jammu. The results of the study showed that the majority of the respondents were 15 years of age, and most of them were studying in the 9th class, in rural High Schools of Bain Bajalta Village, of Jammu. The rural adolescent girls used Wi-Fi connections for Internet access, at their homes, and mostly on their mobile phones. The results of a previous study conducted in Jammu, by Katoch (2014), support the finding of this study, that most of the adolescents used Internet on their mobile phones, and at their home. Adolescent girls had been using the Internet for less than one hour per week, and very few of them used the Internet for over 6 hours per week. This may be because rural girls, besides their academics, have to attend to the household chores, and may not be able to spare much time for the Internet, besides the economic reasons. The results of Manjunatha's (2013) study reveal that majority of adolescents spent 5-6 hours per week on using the SNS. The adolescent girls have been using the Internet since the last one year. Similar results were found in Sawhney's (2011) and Katoch's (2014) studies. They mostly preferred night time for Internet access, perhaps because they were free from their household or educational chores at that time only. Sharma's (2011) and Sharma's (2015) studies, conducted in Jammu, revealed that most of the adolescents use the Internet at night. The rural respondents had 30 friends on the SNS, whereas in a previous study on urban adolescents of Jammu, Sawhney (2011) found that 43% of adolescents had more than 90 friends on the SNS and 36% girls had 30-50 friends on it. Sharma and Sharma (2018) found that the urban adolescents of Jammu used the Internet for 4-5 hours daily and had been using it since the last 4-5 years, which is much higher than the usage of their rural counterparts.

These adolescent girls used the Internet mostly for downloading and educational purposes, although Devi and Singh's (2009) study showed that the majority of adolescents accessed the Internet

for educational purposes. Sharma (2015) revealed that most of the adolescents used the Internet for accessing SNS, whereas in the present study, only 3.33% of adolescents used the Internet for this purpose. The rural respondents had mostly 30 friends on SNS sites. In the study conducted by Sharma (2015), most of the adolescents had more than 30 friends on SNS. More the number of friends on SNS more the time spent on Internet Usage.

Internet Addiction is increasing with the advancement in technology, and with the launching of ever new smartphones and newer applications, although in the present COVID crisis it has been the most useful source of information on health and education. In the present study majority of the respondents had 'Complete Control' over their Internet Usage, although few of them had 'Frequent problems due to usage'. Analyzing their usage pattern, it was obvious that their usage was low as they had very few friends on SNS, and had been using the Internet since the last one year only, and that too mostly for downloading and educational purposes. Bajalta, though connected by railway and road transport, is still a very small village with very few households. Mostly agriculturists reside there.

Studies from all over India and the world reveal the amount of Internet Addiction being faced by youth. Sharma and Sharma (2017) found that 60.83% of respondents had an average level of Internet addiction, and among these there were 56.67% boys and 65% girls, whereas 35.83% of respondents had mild Internet Addiction, and among these there were 43.33% boys and 28.33% girls, whereas 3.33% of respondents, only girls, had severe Internet Addiction (Sharma and Sharma, 2017). Goel's (2013) study revealed that adolescents had Moderate control over their Internet usage. Cao and Su (2009) found that among their sample of 2620 high school students from China, only 2.4% showed Internet Addiction, whereas, another study Sharma (2015) found that adolescents had Complete Control over their Internet Addiction, and very few of them had Frequent problems due to usage. Prevalence of Internet addiction was found to be 35.6% among Internet users (Arthanari et al., 2017).

Many studies from India have found varied amounts of Internet Addiction (IA) among youth, using mostly the Young's Internet Addiction Test for assessment. Some researchers have also found its relation to gender, mental health, and excessive usage, and have suggested measures to improve the mental health of youth in this scenario of excessive or Problematic Internet Usage. In a study on internet usage among college goers in India, Goel et al. (2019) found that 74.5% were moderate users, 24.8% were possible addicts, and 0.7% were addicted. They further found that those towards the addicted part of the spectrum reported had high anxiety, depression, and anxiety depression scores. In another study on urban adolescents of Assam, 65.4% of the respondents had mild, 13.46% had moderate, and 1.9% had severe addiction; and female adolescents had higher levels of Internet addiction (84%) as compared to their male counterparts (71.4%) (Saikia et al., 2019), as found in this study too. Sixty-five (11.8%) students had IA, and it was predicted by time spent online, usage of SNS and chat rooms, and also by the presence of anxiety and stress (Yadav et al., 2013). Out of 300 students, 24% were in the score range of 50-79 i.e. moderate addiction, and 6.33% were in the score range of 80-100 i.e. severe addiction (Bhatia et al., 2016). The Internet Addiction Test scores revealed 57.3% adolescents as normal users, 35.0% as case of mild, 7.4% as moderate and 0.3% as severely addicted to the Internet (Sharma et al., 2014). In a study conducted in Vadodara, Jhala and Sharma (2016) found that 24.2% of the total sample was classified as potential high users of the Internet. Their results also indicated differences in the Internet usage patterns of adolescents in the following dimensions: gender, in urban and rural areas of Vadodara, English and Gujarati medium schools, and among different grades (Jhala and Sharma, 2016). Balhara et al. (2018) reported that the prevalence of severe PIU/Internet addiction ranged from 0 to 47.4%, whereas the prevalence of Internet overuse/possible Internet addiction ranged from 7.4% to 46.4% among students from Southeast Asia.

Physical impairments in the form of insomnia (26.8%), daytime sleepiness (20%), and eye strain (19%) were also reported among problem users (Balhara et al., 2018). The majority (70.5%) of adolescents were normal users, 23% had a mild addiction, 6% had a moderate addiction, and 0.5% had a severe addiction (Kayastha et al., 2018). In a recent study on university students by Jain et al. (2020), 15.51% of the subjects were found to be Internet Addicts and 49.19% were over users. Depression and insomnia were more common in Internet Addicts and over users. Out of 502 higher secondary students, from Rewa, Madhya Pradesh, 32.9% of students had mild Internet Addiction, 16.3% moderate and 0.4% severe Internet Addiction (Goswami et al., 2018). The prevalence of Internet Addiction among urban school students was found to be 83.3%, while it was 78% in rural school students (Sowndarya and Patter, 2018). Studies from other countries too have found the prevalence of Internet Addiction. Kwok-Kei et al. (2014), in a study of Asian countries, found that Internet addiction is highest in the Philippines, according to both the IAT (5%) and the CIAS-R (21%). Internet addictive behavior is common among adolescents in Asian countries. Problematic Internet Use is prevalent and characterized by risky cyber behaviors (Kwok-Kei et al., 2014). The level of Internet Addiction was the highest among the 15-16-year-old age subgroup and was lowest in the 11-12-year-old age subgroup in a study conducted in Croatia, Finland, and Poland. There was a statistically significant interaction between the purpose of Internet use and age with regard to the level of Internet addiction (Karacic and Oreskovic, 2017). Mild to moderate Internet Addiction is prevalent among youth in India and elsewhere.

In the present study, the relationship between attitude towards the Internet was found to be positive among rural adolescents. In the present COVID crisis, the Internet has found a central place as a tool of education, health, connectedness, and entertainment among the youth. The Government of India has launched many applications and Internet-based programs for them. The awareness level of the population regarding COVID is being generated through use of the Internet. The Arogya Setu App has become an essential download to estimate one's safety from the disease. Students living in far off places are connected to their institutions and counselors. Even internships and trainings are happening on the virtual mode, as is the syllabi completion and examinations. The positivity of the Internet has proved very beneficial in this time of lockdown.

Rural adolescent girls have a high of attitude toward the Internet. The rural areas, which otherwise remained dependent on television or radio for news and views, are now connected to instant receiving of information. Smartphones have now become necessity rather than luxury. Not much review is available on attitudes towards the Internet, although most of the studies have found the prevalence of a positive attitude among youth. Results from a study in Malaysia indicated that students had positive attitudes toward using the Internet as a learning tool, adequate basic knowledge of the Internet, and viewed the learning environment as supportive of using the Internet for learning (Hong et al., 2003). Otaibi (2012) found that a large number of the subjects of the study samples (85.6%) agreed that the Internet is a rapid means of getting information, a good source of information (68.1%), and a good means of continuous self-learning (69.4%). Mahmud (2016) found a positive attitude towards the Internet among students. High school students' overall attitude towards the Internet was high; they felt that the effect of the Internet on their health was also high. It was concluded that students who were addicted to the Internet harmed their health (Alduaij and Al-Amari, 2016). Female students have been found to have more positive attitudes toward Internet usage (Kaya et al., 2016). In the present study too, the females had a positive attitude toward the Internet, possibly because females, especially in rural areas, are not permitted to move outside the house for entertainment and enjoyment, whereas males can do so. The restrictive movements in real world are

compensated by the movement in the virtual world, which are not generally monitored by the elders, who are usually not adept to these technologies. Findings of the study by Alzahrani and O'Toole (2017) showed that students had positive attitudes toward using the Internet in general. Their study indicated that students who have home Internet access or greater prior experience with it had significantly more positive attitudes towards using it, which may explain the positive attitudes that emerged (Alzahrani and O'Toole, 2017). Multiple regression revealed that students' enjoyment, feelings toward Internet usefulness, and self-efficacy significantly contributed to their anxiety level toward utilizing the Internet (Zhang, 2003).

Conclusion:

The Internet is here to stay and its uses are innumerable and beneficial, especially for youth today. The Indian Government has laid a lot of stress on the Digital Skills in all its policies and programs, but caution has to be maintained as this should not lead to excessive usage. Internet addiction among youth has been found to be mild to moderate in most of the studies. The positive attitude of adolescents towards the Internet has to be used effectively and the benefits have to reach out to all through proper awareness and skill upgradation. Hence, the question is not whether or not to use it, but how to use it effectively for personal and national growth and development. Massive Online Open Courses, available in India through the SWAYAM platform, have provided opportunities to all to study from the top-notch faculty in premiere institutions of India like IITs, IIMs, ISCERs, and many others, which would not have been possible otherwise. Females who face restrictive movements beyond their homes or schools can be benefitted a lot through the Internet Usage, especially those from the rural areas of India, and can reap the benefits of usage by upgrading their knowledge and skills.

SUGGESTIONS

For Adolescents girls:

1. Use the safety features of the websites.
2. Do not be friend unknown people on SNS.
3. Be a part of the familial and social activities, leaving the phone aside.
4. Indulge in physical exercise, direct communication, and peer interactions.
5. Be ready for the life of responsibilities and work, other than the household work.
6. Do not talk about sex with strangers.
7. Think before you post anything on SNS.
8. Be smart while using a smart phone.
9. Do not share your password, even with close friends.
10. Be nice online or at least treat people the way you'd want to be treated. People who are unpleasant and aggressive online are at a greater risk of being bullied or harassed themselves. If some one is unkind to you, try not to react, definitely do not retaliate, and talk about it to a trusted adult or a friend who can help.
11. Make your parents aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the Internet so that they do not fall into the traps of cyber criminals.
12. Use privacy tools to block negative people
13. Use the Internet to upgrade your skills and knowledge.

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Investigating the effects of multi-pass on graphite added friction stir welded joints of armor grade aluminium AA7039 alloy

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Surender Phogat****, Sonu Bhushan***** & Gyander Ghantas*****

ABSTRACT

Friction stir welding has to develop as an effective welding and microstructural modifications technique due to its applications in various multidisciplinary fields. In this study, commercial aluminium plates of AA7039 friction stir welds were reinforced with graphite. The number of passes were varied for the experimentation while all other process parameters kept constant. The rotating, transverse speed and tilt angle were used at 1000rpm, 31.5mm/min and 20 respectively. In the case of passes, three levels i.e., single-pass, double pass & triple-pass were used for variation. Macrostructure and mechanical properties were examined to investigate the effects of passes. The results of the study revealed that the grain in the nugget zone become finer in double pass than single-pass welds. But in triple-pass welds, the grains found again coarser than double pass. The mixing of the graphite within aluminium is found smoother with increasing range of the passes. Mechanical properties of fabricated welds were also found significantly affected by the variation of the number of passes.

Key Words: Multi-pass, Stir, Welding, Macrostructure and mechanical properties

Introduction

The demand for designing novel lightweight as well as highly strengthened alloy welds has been increased in various fields like aeronautics, naval and automobiles. Newly developed joining techniques plays an important part in the manufacturing processes for the development of strengthened and lightweight structures. Friction stir welding (FSW) a solid-state welding process was developed by W.M. Thomas et.al. in 1991 [1] which provides great effectiveness in developing the appropriate and required welds efficiency even in non-weldable aluminium alloys such as 6XXX – 7XXX series [2-5]. In this technique, a rotating tool of non-consumable type is dropped in adjoin of the piece of work and a transverse motion of the same tool caused the mixing of soft material to produce weld joint [6]. The movement between work piece and tool shoulder results in contact friction which correspondingly generates heat and material plastic deformation in the stir zone. The transverse movement of the tool has been fixed along the line of the weld. These increased heat energies and strains in the stir zone of the base metal experience dynamic recrystallization of the material i.e., generation of new grains in the welding zone.

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Although, the parameters in FSW plays a major role in qualitative and effective FSW welds such that a number of researchers consequently perform the various numerical and experimental study on FSW technique. R.S. Mishra et.al. reviewed both friction stir processing (FSP) and FSW in their study [7]. R. Nandan et.al. presented a neat and précised literature on the properties, process and structure of FSW [8]. P.L. Threadgill et.al. gave a comprehensive overview on the FSW based aluminium alloys [9]. However apart from the experimental review, numerical reviews are another aspect. So, X. He et.al. 2014 provides discussed various studies on numerical analysis of FSW technique [10]. These researches main focused on reviewing the research on the single pass criteria only. Although, various researchers utilized multi-pass in FSW as the grain refinement strategy. Also, C. Leitao et.al. 2016 considered multi-pass strategy for improving bonding in respected areas of dissimilar FSW lap joints [11]. Wherever, multi-pass strategy presented in advantages in the cladding of dissimilar metals as well such that researchers like N. Osman et.al. 2019 fabricated a AA6061 and C2801P copper alloy. As result, some optimized process parameters were obtained with peel and shear strength of the alloy as 750kpa and 5850kpa [12]. Recently, a review on multi-pass FSP technique for aluminium surface composites had been conducted by V. Msomi et.al. 2021 [13].

However, it is evident from the studies that improvements in the FSW welds can be done by rearrange the process parameters. So, in this study the focus is to check the mechanical performance of the aluminium FSW weld with a graphite reinforcement that is considered under a multiple-pass parameter. The macroscopic structure and the tensile testing have been conducted using optical microscopy and universal tensile machine (UTM) respectively on the fabricated aluminium-graphite alloy.

Multi-pass FSW process

Multi-pass is used to enhance the microstructure of the metal matrix composites (MMC). Mostly, multi-pass criteria have been utilized in FSP for creation of surface composites as well as aluminium based MMC. Multi-pass FSW is a new technique that utilizes the concept of multi-pass FSP for generation of reinforced weld presented in Figure 1 that is considered as the process steps for this study.

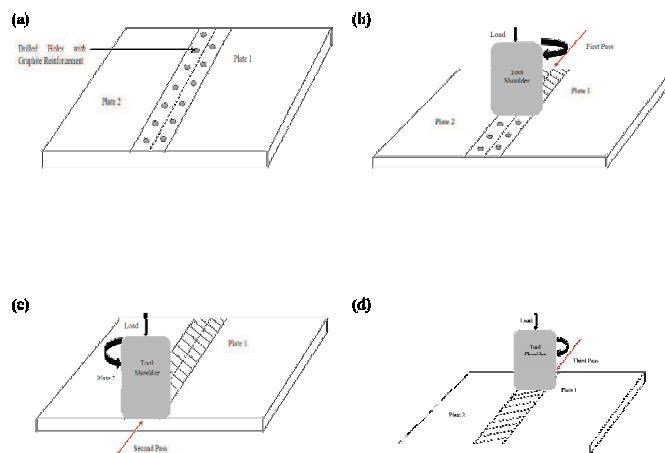


Figure 1 Schematic representation of the multi-pass FSW (a) Plates with drilled holes with reinforced graphite, (b) First pass, (c) Second pass and (c) Third pass

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So, in this study reinforced weld has been fabricated using a multi-pass FSW. An aluminium plate with graphite as a reinforcing particle is utilized for experimentation. Also, Figure 2 presents the competencies that play part while fabrication of the multi-pass FSW composite weld.

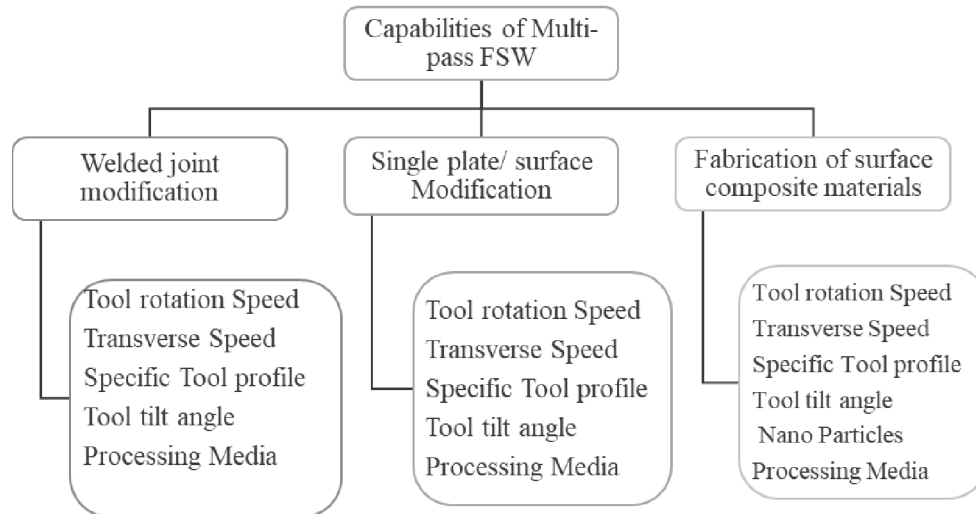


Figure 2 Parameters of Multi-pass technique [13]

Experimental setup:

In this research, an AA-7039 aluminium alloy that has been used in various applications like development of armor suite, aircraft industries and hydraulic equipment's such that the plate of this alloy having 5 mm thickness with dimensions 75 mm x 75 mm and graphite as reinforcing medium are selected for FSW experiment. Additionally, the synthesized aluminium plate composition is presented in Table 1 which are determined in Narang-Scientific Laboratory, New Delhi by using spectroscopic analysis. Graphite powder of 1 micron is introduced in the pass of the weld by drilling small holes of size 1.2 mm which is presented by Figure 3(a) and 3(b) respectively.

Tab.1 Material composition of AA-7039

Component	Cu	Si	Fe	Mn	Mg	Zn	Al
Percentage (%)	0.05	0.31	0.69	0.68	2.370	4.69	Bal.

A semi-automatic vertical milling machine (VMM) was utilized for welding that is available in the National Institute of Technology Kurukshetra, India. A specially designed fixture was utilized to hold work-piece and kept it unmovable during the welding. However, due to the drilled holes the extra loading on the tool for penetrating has been reduced. The drilled holes are considered to be in a zig-zag position in plates such that equal mixing of the graphite particle is considered while generation of new grains of the alloy. This can also be revealed from Figure 3(b). Then the tool pin is allowed to apply force into the work-piece with a constant rotational speed until workpiece surface get in touch with the shoulder of tool pin which is shown by Figure 4. Then, the transverse feed is then provided to the FSW tool in a desired direction having a constant rotational speed. The operating parameters are also present in Table 2.

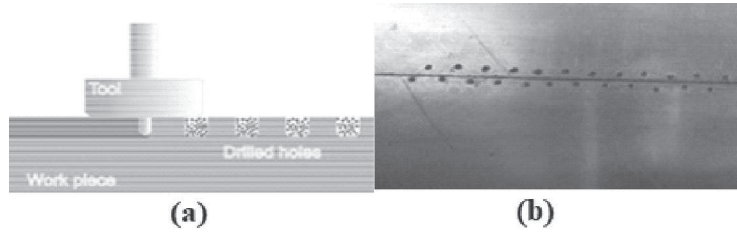


Figure3 (a) Holes drilled and (b) Holes in the plates

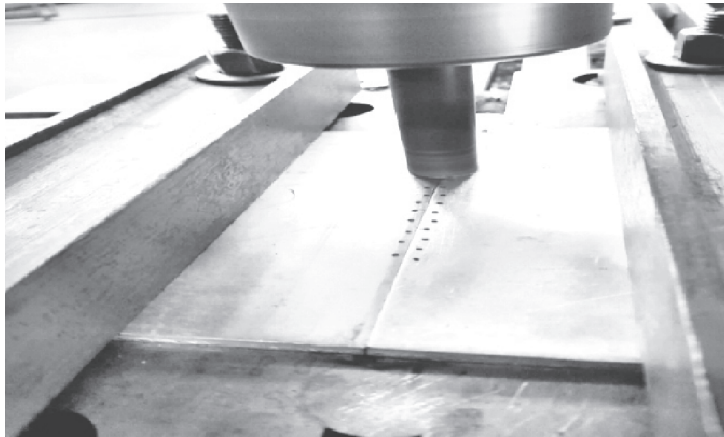


Figure 4 Welding of plates

Table 2 : Operating parameters

S. No.	Parameters	Values
1	Rotating speed	1000rpm
2	Traverse feed rate	31.5mm/min
3	Drilled hole size	Diameter: - 0.0012m Height: - 0.003m
4	Passes	1-3

A square pin profile tool of 6mm and 18mm dynamic and shoulder diameter respectively was used to fabricate the joints presented in Figure 4.

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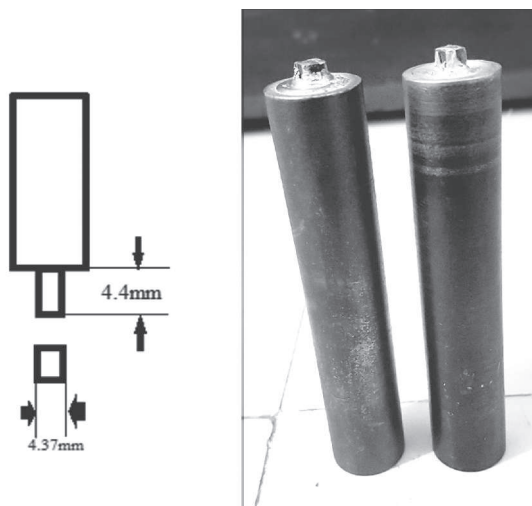


Figure 5 H13 Square profile steel FSW tool

The tilt angle, tool transverse and rotating speed are the process parameters that are kept constant at 20, 31.5 mm/min and 1000rpm respectively for analyzing the effect of number of weld passes. All fabricated welds are tested in two directions i.e., transverse and longitudinal. Thus, variety of the samples are prepared according to the specification of ASTM 08 M for both testing. The prepared specimens are present in Figure 6 following with dimensions. The first three i.e.,

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| a) Length of specimen | 60 mm |
| b) Gauge Length | 20 mm |
| c) Gauge width | 6 mm |
| d) Gauge thickness | 6 mm |

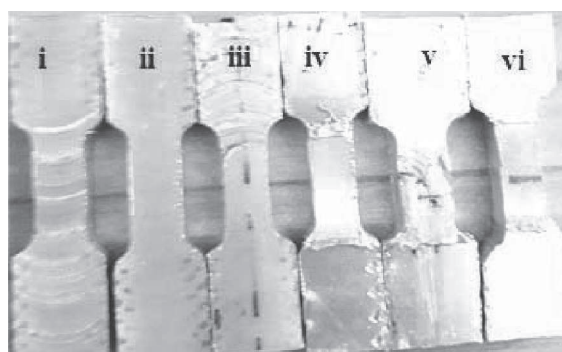


Figure 6 Prepared Specimens for Longitudinal and Transverse Test

Results and Discussion

This study is an attempt to analyze the effect of multipass on the graphite reinforced FSW welded joints of AA7039. Firstly, a macrostructure of the fabricated joints has been developed using the optical microscopy technique which is presented in Figure 7(a), 7(b) and 7(c) for single (SP), double (DP) and triple (TP) pass respectively. From the results of the multipasses and the figures it is evident that the grain refinement takes place with the increase in the number of passes. Also, there is an

increase in the mixing of the grains of the base material with the particles of the reinforced material i.e graphite in aluminium with the increase in the number of pass . Figure 7 and Figure 8 presents the different cross sectional and macrostructural view for the weld joints under SP, DP and TP

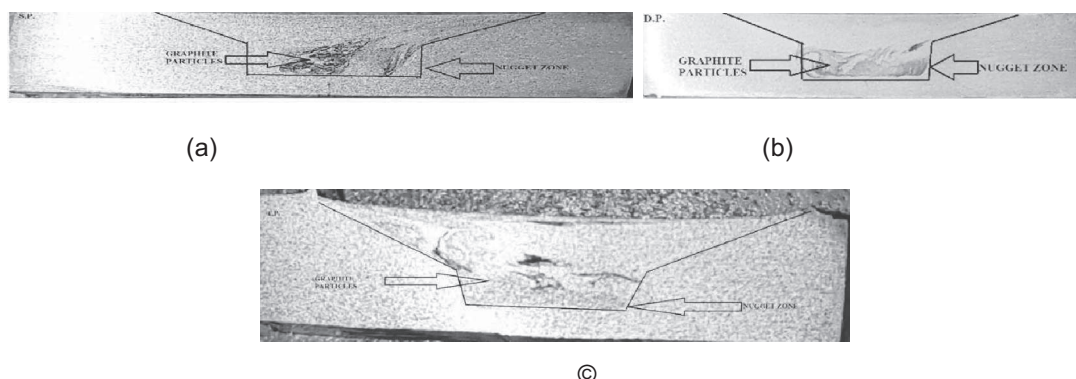


Figure 7 Cross section view of (a) Single, (b) Double and (c) Triple Pass

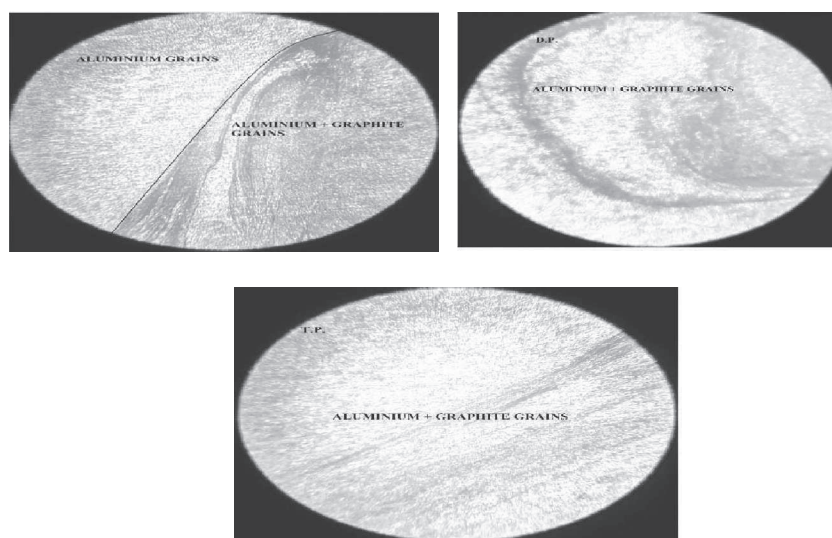


Figure 8 Macrostructural view of (a) Single, (b) Double and (c) Triple Pass

Secondly, the specimen is considered under tensile testing in two directions i.e., LT and TT direction. It is depicted from the Figure 9 that in longitudinal direction the tensile strength of the composite weld is increasing with the increase in the number of passes and failing of all the sample is occur at the time of formation of the necking from heat affected zone of the weld. In longitudinal, direction due to the consideration of Nugget zone under testing the stress of the weld fabricated is lower than the base material for all three passes samples. In transverse direction, the tensile strength of the sample fabricated is increasing with the increase in the number of passes. Also, it is evident from the macrostructures and the tensile testing reports that the mixing of the graphite particles in aluminium base weld can be done more effectively with the increase in number of passes with the increased rates of tensile strengths. This means the fabricated weld might be used in creating frames

Investigating the effects of multi-pass on graphite added friction stir welded joints of armor grade aluminium AA7039 alloy

and curved body parts of various automobiles, airplanes and ships where the graphite is responsible for providing high strength and aluminum provides a low weight property to the materials.

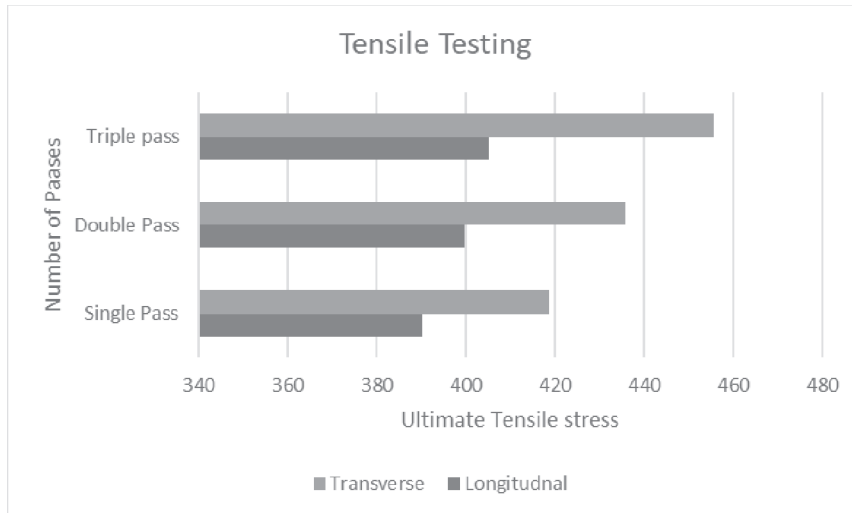


Figure 9 Tensile Testing for different passes

Conclusion

The conclusions drawn from the current research are:

- ▶ With the set of appropriate parameters properties of the Nugget zone can be enhanced with the repairing of the defected welded zones.
- ▶ The mixing of the graphite particles with the aluminum alloy results in the increased tensile properties of weld.
- ▶ The increase in number of the pass results in grain growth and improved distribution of the graphite particles.

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SOCIAL SCIENCES

Issues of Religious Minorities in Contemporary India : Causes and Way Forward

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ABSTRACT

The Rights of Religious minorities have gained greater visibility and relevance all over the world. India is no exception to it, as it is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-linguistic, and multi-cultural society. However, the concept of a religious minority has been comparatively a new one. It was developed with the passing of various legislative measures regarding religious minorities during the colonial era. After attaining independence on the lines of religion line, it was expected that the issues of religious minorities might be solved but the contrast picture of religious minorities has appeared in India. The Indian constitution had incorporated various provisions such as Articles 14, 15, 16, 21, 25, 28, 29, and 30. Besides this, the Indian government has appointed commissions like the National Commission for Minority, the Ministry of Minority Affairs, the National Commission for Minorities Educational Institution in order to better safeguard the rights of the Minorities. Despite the presence of such articles in the Indian constitution, the latest reports of Committees and Commission like the Gopal Singh Committee (1983), the Sachar Committee (2007), and the Ranganath Mishra Commission (2007) have revealed the poor picture of the educational, social and economic position of religious minorities in the contemporary scenario. Besides these safeguards, the religious minorities are still facing many problems like the crisis of identity, underrepresentation, insecurity of their lives and property, etc. in contemporary India. To find out the reasons in the constitutional safeguards for their problems, this paper presents the contextual analysis of what kind of constitutional safeguards related to religious minorities are included in the Indian constitution. Further, this paper enlightens the loopholes within the constitution which become reasons for their problems despite the presence of such safeguards. Thereafter, an attempt is made to present some way forward to solve their dilemma that they are facing in the contemporary period.

Key Words: Religious Minorities, Constitutional Safeguards, Loopholes, Way Forwards

Introduction

India has been proclaimed as a "Sovereign Socialist, Secular, Democratic and Republic" and endeavors to accommodate different minority groups that inhabit the country. The Indian constitution is committed to the equality of all citizens and is also bound to preserve, protect, and assures the rights of minorities in matters of language, religion, and cultures which forms an important segment of Indian society. The constitution of India uses the word minority in some Articles-20 to 30 and 350 A and 350 B but, does not define the word 'minority' in the Constitution or any other enactment. As per clause (c) of section 2 of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992, five communities vide Ministry of Welfare notification dated 23rd October 1993 are declared as minority communities viz Muslims,

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Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Zoroastrians (Parsis)". Subsequently, Jain was also included in this list in 2004. (Manisha Sethi, 2016: 56) However, the Human Rights Commission of the United Nations Organization in 1950 has defined minority as "only those non-dominant groups in a population which possess and wish to preserve suitable ethnic, religious and linguistic traditions or characteristics markedly different from the rest of the population". (Naseem & Naseem, 2016: 84) In a broader sense, an ethnic, religious, or linguistic minority is a group numerically smaller than the rest of the population of the State to which it belongs and possessing cultural, physical, and historical characteristics, religion or a language different from those of the rest of the population of the states. Since the framers of the Indian Constitution firmly believed in the principle of Pluralism and fully accepted the presence of different religious groups, the rights of the minorities have been given a special place in the constitution. The Indian Constitution is not only devoted to the idea of equality among its citizens as it prohibits discrimination on the ground of religion. It is likewise committed to safeguard the interests of religious minorities as it has acknowledged the presence of religious minorities and given them official status. That is why it has offered them special safeguards in the constitution. There are general rights incorporated in the Indian constitution such as 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 35, 26, 27, and 28 that apply to all citizens including the religious minorities, and protect their general interests. Other than general rights, the Indian constitution has also incorporated special rights for the religious minorities under Articles 29 and 30. (Massey, 2003:24) These are intended exclusively for minorities and have been designed to protect their identity, culture, language, and education. These rights were incorporated into the Indian constitution because the constitution maker realized that it would be difficult for them to retain and conserve their distinct culture in the absence of any constitutional safeguards regarding the culture of religious minorities and that they could face the challenge of assimilation with the majoritarian culture. Since the partition was founded on religion, an unfriendly atmosphere has been existed in India, making it more difficult for them to survive and protect their interests in all spheres of existence, whether political, social, and economic.

Even after the partition of India, minority issues were not solved completely, so it was essential to incorporate special safeguards for religious minorities. Before independence, while framing the constitution of India, initially, the first draft of the constitution included the safeguards which protect their political, economic, cultural, religious interests. They had been provided with various safeguards, the most important were firstly a separate electorate with representation for communities in proportion to their population for ten years. Secondly, in all Indian and provincial services, the viewpoints of all the minorities shall be taken into account when making appointments for these services along with the consideration of the efficiency of administration. Third, for a temporary period, the continuation of special provisions for Anglo Indians in Railways, Custom and posts and Telegraphs services and educational institutions. The report on minorities on 27 August 1947 is regarded as the most well-known for the different safeguards it contains for the religious minorities. However, all these safeguards were removed coming to the final draft of the Indian constitution except educational and cultural rights that have been left. (Shiv Rao, 1967: 764). In the absence of such rights in the constitution, otherwise, distinct cultural or linguistic, or religious identities of minorities would be melted over the period of time into one identity i.e. identity of a majoritarian community. It is generally believed that Article 29 and Article 30 are dealing with the religious minority community only. However, Article 29 is more generally worded and the protection of this Article is given to all citizens of India as it is not limited to the numerically smaller religious minority. But it can apply to any segment of the citizen, who may have a distinct script, language, and culture, although they may belong to the majority community.

Nevertheless, the benefit of Article 30, is extended only to religious and linguistic minorities and not to any other section of the Indian citizens. However, even this right is not absolute in the sense as its regular interpretation has been given by the judges of the Supreme Court and High Court in various cases such as *St. Stephen's College vs the University of Delhi*, *Azeez Basha vs Union of India*, *Yoginder Nath Singh vs state of Uttar Pradesh*, *SK. Md. Rafique vs Managing committee*, turning its shape from minority rights to general rights. When this right was inserted into the constitution, it gives more power to the religious minorities regarding minority educational institution, but its vagueness does allow the Supreme Court to play the role of regular interpretation of this minority right which mostly eroded the purpose with which this right was inserted. The conjunctive approach used by the judiciary to give the meaning of minority rights granted under Article 30 by linking Article 29 (2) and Article 30 (1) which had the effect of too much restricting the rights which the constitution had guaranteed unconditionally. Such an issue appears clearly in the case of the institution of religious minorities such as the *Jamia Millia Islamia University*, *Aligarh Muslims University*, etc. (Jain, 2005: 2434) However, the Indian constitution as a whole has provided a broad range of protections in the form of Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State Policy which take care their general and special interests of every citizen of India including religious minorities which are as follows.

- ▶ Article 14: Equality before Law
- ▶ Article 15: Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth
- ▶ Article 16: Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment
- ▶ Article 25: Freedom of conscience and free profession practice and propagation of religion
- ▶ Article 26: Freedom to manage religious affairs: Subject to public order, morality, and health, every religious denomination or any section.
- ▶ Article 27: Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion: No person shall be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination.
- ▶ Article 29: Protection of interests of minorities
 1. Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script, or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.
 2. No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language, or any of them.
- ▶ Article 30: Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions

Further, such special safeguards were guaranteed to the minorities to inculcate a sense of confidence and security in them. After analyzing the constitution of India, it is found that there are no provisions related exclusively to the religious minorities only except Article 30. By clubbing them with the other citizens, their particular demands remain unfulfilled. (Baj Pai, 2011). Nevertheless, with the passage of time, the Indian government has recognized that the constitutional provisions for minorities are not adequate to protect the interests of religious minorities and ensure their well-being. On 12 January 1978, the Union Home Ministry stated that despite the safeguards provided in the

Constitution and the laws in force, there survives among the minorities a feeling of inequality and discrimination. So, the Government of India attaches the utmost importance to the enforcement of safeguards provided for the minorities and is firm of the view that effective institutional arrangements are urgently needed for the implementation and enforcement of all the safeguards provided for the minorities in the Constitution in the Central and State laws and in Government policies and administrative schemes enunciated from time to time. The Government of India has, therefore, resolved to set up various National Commissions for Minorities such as the National Commission for Minorities, the National Commission for Minorities Educational Institutions, the Ministry of Minority Affairs in order to safeguard the interests of the minorities whether based on religion or language. These commissions and the Ministry of Minority Affairs were assigned with the job of examining the causes of backwardness of the religious minorities and suggesting measures for the upliftment of the religious minorities. (Mahmood, 2016: p33) When these institutions were formed, it was expected that these institutions would become the backbone and act as a savior of their right and freedom. (Manchand, 2009: 92) What is shocking that despite the existence of the constitutional provisions and National Commissions appointed for Minorities, religious minorities are not able to exercise their right. Justice Rajinder Sachar headed the Prime Minister's High-Level Committee, which presented its report in November 2006, reveals that the educational, social, and educational growth of Muslims has fallen far behind that of other groups in our society and the Muslim community can hardly be differentiated from the SCs on most indices of social, educational and economic deprivation. (Hasan, 2009: 48) It is because the responsibility of implementation of these constitutional provisions lies on the shoulder of the political parties who formed the government. Neither the NDA government nor UPA Government did nothing to help religious minorities. Once their purpose is fulfilled, they left religious minorities as they were in their previous position. Apart from this, the discrepancies within the constitution such as undefined word of minority, secularism, and not clearly defined minority rights provide unlimited space to the judiciary and legislature to give them their proper interpretation which sometimes runs counter to the interests of religious minorities. Following are the causes of their problem in the contemporary period. Some problems affect all while some are faced by some particular religious minorities.

Identity Crisis and Indic-Origin Religious Minorities

Albeit the Indian constitution from Article 25-28 provides religious freedom to all religious communities, but it denies the separate identity to Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains by including them under the ambit of the word Hindu. The incorporation of the words Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhist in the word Hindu gives an impression that these religions are not independent and are merely offshoots of Hinduism. Further, the constitution maker has adopted the assimilative approach towards these religious minorities, which directly threatens the identities of these religious minorities and compels them to hold their religious affairs according to the Hindu Code Bill. It was felt by Indic origin religious minorities that the hidden intend was to include them among the Hindu communities. Anwar Alam also acknowledged that such a problem was faced by these religious minorities because not only at the Indian constitutional level, but the definition of Hindu in the context of the Hindu Code Act of 1955 is also used in the same way. (Brass & A Vanaik, 2002: 95) This demon's attempt at the legal level of Hindu homogenization and assimilation is particularly striking because it took place during the Nehru era, the era most often described as the golden period of secular Indian nationalism. The principle of homogenization and assimilation of reformed Hindu law in the constitutional and legal levels was imposed on them and the subsequent identity crisis overrides them. The constitution recognizes Hindus, Muslims, and Christians as distinct communities, each with its own separate culture, religious

practices, and personal laws. Initially, when drafting the Constitution, Sikhs, Parsis Buddhists were regarded as minorities. In the final draft of the constitution, however, they were clubbed with the Hindus. All these religious minorities have been frequently appealed to the Indian government to recognize their religious identities and treated them as distinct religious groups, yet these requests have not acceded. (Bose & Jalal, 1998: 123) They urged the Indian government that although under the National Commission for Minorities Act of 1992, Muslims, Sikhs, and Buddhists were recognized as the minorities at the national level, and subsequently, Jain was also included in it in 2014. Then why the religious minorities are still considered at the constitutional level as Hindus. Even, the United State Commission on International Religious Freedom in its annual report of 2019 suggested that India should change the explanation II of Article 25 of its Constitution and should recognize Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism as distinct religions with their own separate religious identities, yet the Indian government has not taken any steps in this direction. Moreover, the National Commission to review the working of the Constitution (NCRWC) also known as Justice Manepalli Narayana Rao Venkatachaliah Commission also stated that the Indian Constitution has grouped Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jains, with Hinduism, and as a result, they are not legally recognized as separate religions. It also recommended that explanation II of Article 25 should be reworded as follows—(b) providing for social welfare and reform or the throwing open of Hindu, Sikh, Jain, or Buddhist religious institutions of a public character to all classes and sections of these religions. Even after 74 years of independence, the denial of such rights to religious minorities has resulted in identity crises, which are particularly acute in the case of the Sikhs and Jains community.

Implementation of Uniform Civil Code

The secular constitution of India guarantees religious freedom to all communities, including religious minorities, which includes the right to manage their religious affairs and their family matters. But under Article 44 in the Directive Principle of State Policy that makes all citizens subject to a Uniform Civil Code throughout the country. In other words, the constitution in Article 44, urges the state to work towards establishing a uniform Civil Code. The designation of this Article as a Directive Principle was driven by the Assembly's desire to achieve national unity—and not gender equality—by reassuring religious minorities that their personal laws would not be upset. After the implementation of the constitution, the Indian government made various attempts to implement the Uniform Civil Code with the purpose to bring changes in all the previously recognized personal laws of religious minorities which create fear among them. (Jaffret, 2010:17) It goes against 25 which protects the religious freedom and cultural rights of all citizens, including religious minorities to maintain their religious beliefs which having no similarity among them. (Bhargava, 2010) On the one hand, the Indian constitution recognized the importance of personal laws for religious minorities such as Muslims, Christians and on the other hand the presence of a uniform civil code as a directive principle seen by them as a threat to their respective personal laws. The first initiative for the implementation of UCC was made in Shah Bano Case. Initially, its verdict favoured the Muslim women, but later it reverses back to the previous position on the issue of maintenance of divorced women. As the result, the regressive Muslim women's rights Act passed in 1986 was passed by the Rajiv Gandhi government to nullify the decision in the Shah Bano case (Hasasn, 2014). Consequently, various attempts have been made in another area of personal laws such as to make Triple Talaq a criminal offense. The Supreme Court ruled the practice unconstitutional in 2017 in the Shayara Bano case (2017) and ordered the government to enact a law in this regard. The bill was first introduced in 2017, but it was stalled in the upper house of parliament, where some MPs called it unfair. Ultimately the Parliament has passed the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2019, thereby criminalizing the practice of

instant Triple Talaq. Triple Talaq is now a cognizable and non-bailable offense under this new law. The minority communities viewed it as an interference in their Personal laws which was not appreciated. These judgments are based on the perception that the personal laws have been particularly oppressive to vulnerable groups. Nevertheless, these judgments are not wrong, but they must be come out of the efforts of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board and after taking the consent of the religious minority community. Even the Law Commission of India was given the task of examining in June 2016, whether it is possible to introduce a uniform civil code in India. The chairman of this commission, Justice Balbir Singh Chauhan had recommended that the personal laws would be reformed by the community themselves. Since the Constitution guarantees religious freedom, it is impossible to repeal all laws and replace them with a common civil code. This again brought up the debates on the implementation of uniform civil code vs personal laws throughout India. Every religious minority is very sensitive towards their personal laws which conserve their separate identities and which distinguished one community from another community in various matters. Such initiative develops fear among the religious minorities that if it is implemented, it will bring changes in all the matters relating to marriage, divorce, succession, guardianship of personal laws as per the Uniform Civil Code. (Chibber, 2008: 701). This causes the religious minorities to raise voices against it as it is going to threaten the diversity that is existed in the culture, religion of religious minorities and threatened the concept of multiculturalism and legal pluralism.

Discrimination in Affirmative Policy

The Indian government's reservation policy has benefited only a small number of Dalits in the country. Reservations are a quota-based mechanism that classifies individuals and groups as "Scheduled Castes." Caste discrimination continues, and caste categories are legally recognized, in order to enact a form of affirmative action known as "reservations." The Presidential Order of 1950 provides the basis for this discrimination, stating in clause 3 that "notwithstanding anything found in paragraph 2, no person who professes a religion other than the Hindu (Sikh, or Buddhist) religion shall be deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste." Fifteen percent of seats in all educational institutions, as well as in the government jobs, are reserved for the Scheduled Castes. The Presidential Order of 1950, by describing Scheduled Castes as only belonging to the Hindu faith, also denies reservation benefits to any Scheduled Caste persons who convert to Islam or Christianity. Before independence, the British had granted communal reservation, but after independence, the deprived strata among minority communities were denied these benefits due to their religion. (Economic and Political Weekly, 2018:5) However, Dalit Christians and Dalit Muslims have considered it as an important step towards social equality. Moreover, conferring the SC status to Dalits Christians and Dalits Muslims would increase their representation of religious minorities in the Indian Police Service, Indian Civil Service, Indian parliament, and educational institutions.

In fact, their presence in these areas has never been large in the absence of affirmative action. It is known that there are no constitutional safeguards on service matters for minorities. They argued that in the way that the SCs and STs of religious minorities of Indic-origin have a reservation, the same affirmative approach would be provided to non-Indic-origin religious minorities. Initially, the caste-based approach to reservation only covered SCs and STs of Hindu only as the aim of reservation was to raise the standard of scheduled caste people belonging to the Hindu religion only who were discriminated against due to the caste system. It was on that basis, such benefit was denied to SCs and STs Classes belongs to Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, and Buddhism because they all believed in the principle of equality and not on the caste system. However, the third paragraph of the presidential order of 1950 was amended twice by the parliament to extend constitutional safeguards to Dalit Sikhs

such as Mazhabis, Ramdasias, Kabirpanthis, Baurias, Sareras, and Sikligars, as well as Buddhist Dalits, although these religions also do not believe on the caste system (Sikand, 2004:113). The purpose of reservation is to bring the ostracized sections into the political and social mainstream, however, the Muslims Dalits and Christian Dalits are still being discriminated against based on their religion. These groups argued that it violates Article 15 of the Constitution, which states that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on religious grounds. Likewise, the report of the Sachar Committee also recommended that Muslim Dalits and Christian Dalits such as their Buddhist and Sikh counterparts must be given affirmative benefits through the reservation. In January 2020, the Supreme Court of India had decided to consider a petition by the National Council of Dalit Christians, a private organization, to make reservations, "religion-neutral" so that Dalit Muslims and Christians alike too can get a benefit. The plea is still pending in court.

No Constitutional Status to Minorities Commissions

Another one that played a significant role like other loopholes for the insecurity and violation of rights of religious minorities was that no constitutional status has been given to all minority institutions. Initially, after the independence, the Indian government did not think about the necessity of the existence of such institutions for them. Due to vote bank politics, the Indian government had constituted Minorities Commission to counter the forces of majoritarianism. Such institutions such as the National Commission for Minorities (1997) and the National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions (2004) were formed with a purpose to evaluate progress and development of minorities, monitoring the working of safeguards provided to them under the constitution and laws, but they failed in their purpose. Initially, the Minorities Commission was formed on 22 February 1978 with no powers. For religious minorities, it's just a namesake institution. After fourteen years of operation of this institution, parliament enacted the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992 which gave it statutory status instead of constitutional status. In the same vein, at the state levels also, several states such as Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu have constituted the same institutions for religious minorities as well. Despite the existence of these institutions, they have proven to be a failure to prevent the violation of rights of religious minorities and to eradicate the injustice they have faced in their lives.

The answer to these questions is that NCM does not have a constitutional status that would grant its autonomy and the required power to carry out its functions effectively. Other bodies, such as the NCSC/NCST, which were created after the NCM, have been granted a constitutional status. Why does the Indian government not use the same policy for religious minority institutions as it does for other institutions is a major question mark? This could be because any attempt to protect minority rights or strengthen minorities is perceived as a challenge to national unity in due course of time. Such psyche continues to prevail among Indian politicians and any rights which strengthened religious minorities will ultimately lead to the partition of India. As a result of this mindset, the Indian government has always been hesitant to take the requisite steps to make these institutions constitutional bodies. However, since its birth, the NCM has been demanding from the government to grant it a constitutional status in order to better protect the rights of minority communities. In response, the government had made various proposals to make it a constitutional body from time to time. The last move for giving a constitutional status was made in 2004 but no further progress was made in this regard. The Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment (2017-18), in its 53 report recommended that the NCM is almost ineffective in its current state to deal with the cases of atrocities against minorities. It recommended that constitutional status should be given to the "body without any delay". (Naseem &

Naseem, 2016: 89) The committee also stated that a bill related to a constitutional status to the NCM has been prepared way back in 1978 but was still pending before the government. The NCM has also requested to grant it a constitutional status so that it can carry out its responsibilities more responsibly and effectively. Till now, this bill has not seen any further path. The seriousness of the government towards religious minorities is more reflected, although, the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) is mandated to have seven members is reduced to merely one member alone. Currently, only one member Atif Rashid is in the Commission. While all others six posts are lying vacant since May. This is not the first time that the vacancies have not been filled in the NCM. Even in 2017, all posts remained vacant for two months. There is always a complaint that most of the time, seats are vacant. With this one person in NCM, it claimed that most of the problem of religious minorities' received had met in the period from 2019 to 2020.

Since its creation, it has received a large number of complaints relating to discrimination against minorities in different parts of the country. It is seen that the function of the National Commission for Minorities is remained to be the storehouse of grievances of the minorities only as it does not have vast powers including powers of a civil court; the power of investigation into all matters related to the safeguards provided for the Minorities under the constitution or any other law or any order of the Government. (Najiullah, 2011: 69) It does not have the power to investigate specific complaints about the denial of rights and measures to protect religious minorities. Nevertheless, the NCM has wanted the Centre's support to set up a specialized investigation cell similar to the one that exists at the National Commission for Scheduled Castes. The NCM's demand of its constitutional status is a part of its annual report for 2016-2017. Presently it can only send reports on the status of religious minorities, which include in its recommendation to guide the central and the state government regarding what kind of measures should be taken for the welfare of religious minorities. At most of the time, its recommendations are generally ignored or simply discarded. Its entire functioning is contingent upon the goodwill of state governments. For minorities' Commissions to perform their duties effectively, constitutional status is necessarily required.

Under-Representation of Religious Minorities in Policy-Making Bodies

The representation of minorities in the parliament has always remained less than 20% as minorities constitute approximately 20% of the total population of the country. In the absence of their proper representation in the parliament, they remain unable to protect their interests as the issues related to minorities are decided by the members of the majoritarian community. During the passage of the bills relating to the issues of the minorities, the ruling parties do not consider the opinion and suggestions of the representatives of the religious minorities that ultimately affect the interests of religious minorities. Since the first Lok Sabha, from 1952 to 1996, their representation has been around 10 %, except for the seventh Lok Sabha, when their representation in the Lok Sabha had reached up to 14%, the highest compared to the earlier. Recently, however, in the 16 and 17 Lok Sabha elections, their representation has been reduced to 8 %. In other words, their political representation has shown a constituent downward trend, on which the whole remains low, except for the 1980 election. It means that they have a muted presence in the public sphere and their representation in legislatures is nowhere close to what political justice dictates. (Bhargava, 2007) They have been excluded from the public domain as a result of treating the religious minorities equally in the public domain. Consequently, they begin to have the lingering feeling that they are not been heard adequately, that their views are not being properly taken into consideration, they have no real say in matters of public concern including those which are of vital concern to them. The absence of the same political rights which has been enjoyed by other minorities such as SC and ST of representation

in the legislature on the basis of reservation of seats etc., in the constitution for the religious minorities has contributed to their further marginalization and exclusion in policy-making bodies. Such a problem was also highlighted both by the Gopal Singh Panel Report (1983) and the Sachar Committee Report (2006). (Manchanda, 2010: 53) The necessity and importance of constitutional provisions concerning political representation can be seen in the light of its positive impact on the Dalits in India. The lack of this right under the constitution deprives religious minorities of their political voice. This makes them helpless in the recently passed laws in the parliament relating to the minority groups such as Criminalization of Triple Talaq, Abolition of reservation in Parliament for Anglo Indian community, CAA Act, etc. Due to their less number in the parliament, their voice was not considered. Religious minorities as a political minority have no sway over the passing of the CAA bill, which ultimately threatens the existence of the minority community. Since the independence, their number is reducing day by day in parliament, which is now about 4 percent. In all these cases, the absence of a sufficient number of minority communities in the parliament failed to safeguard their rights and eventually threatened their interests. For this purpose, political representation is not only necessary to protect their political interest, but it also helps to create a congenial environment for the other rights to be enjoyed. That's why the religious minorities have urged the Indian government to extend the policy of reservation of seats in the Lok Sabha Assemblies and the State Legislative Assemblies for them on the basis of the politically marginalized minority which is currently limited to the SCs and STs. Either replace non-inclusive electoral system such as the first past the post system with the proportional representation which will significantly increase their political representation.

Absence of Riots Preventing Laws

Since independence, religious minorities have faced violence in different parts of the country. Such episodes increased in frequency and intensity in the 1980s and 1990s and have culminated more recently in several major incidents such as anti-Sikhs riots of 1984, Bombay riots of 1992-93, riots after the demolition of Babri Masjid, Gujarat riots of 2002, attack on Christian in 2008 in Orissa, Muzaffarnagar riots of 2013 and most recently Delhi riots against Muslims in 2020 have created a sense of insecurity among the religious minorities. (Singh, 2003) These riots were criticized all over the world for the brutally killing of religious minorities. Alongside these and other large-scale attacks, since the dominance of NDA at the National level, lower intensity of violence organized hailing from the majority community against the religious minorities become a continual phenomenon in certain areas across the country such as lynching, although many go unreported by either authorities or the media. To control the menace of communal violence against the religious minorities, the Indian government since 2005 has been introducing the Communal Violence (Prevention, Control, and Rehabilitation of Victims) Bill with modification till 2014 with the purpose to provide security for them yet it has not been passed in the parliament. (Desai, 2011) Despite the necessity of such a law for controlling the riots held against the religious minorities, this bill has not been given the required attention of the Indian government. In recent days, similar to it, during the last five years, more than 60 persons have been lynched by the majority community on the pretext of cow slaughter and beef export, etc. Although some states such as Manipur, Rajasthan, and West Bengal have enacted anti-lynching laws. Even the Supreme Court of India ordered the union government to enact a law to address the menace of the mob-lynching crisis. A Supreme Court bench, headed by the former Chief Justice Dipak Misra termed the mob lynching "horrendous acts of mobocracy" and directed the Indian Parliament to bring a stern law to stop the crimes. But till today parliament of India has not enacted any law against mob lynching and for preventing communal riots. As the result, religious minorities have been the victims of communal riots.

Working of Anti-Conversion laws

The Indian constitution granted the freedom of religion which includes not only freedom limited to the religion in which a person is born, but also include the freedom of conscience, which allows every citizen of India to have any religion or change their religion according to their free will. This was the purpose of the drafter of the Indian constitution when it was inserted in the Indian constitution. Since 1954, both the parliament and the state legislature made a number of various attempts to restrict this right of the minority. (Massey, 2003:89) The first attempt in this regard was made by the Member of Parliament who introduced the bill, known as the Indian converts (regulation and Registration Bill), but it was withdrawal in the face of opposition from the religious minorities. It was again introduced in 1960 and almost two decades later, again introduced in 1979 with the purpose of controlling the conversion of Indic- origin religious minorities to non-Indian origin religion such as Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism out of the use of force, fraud, inducement, and minor. The definitions of “induced,” “fraudulent,” or “coerced” are broad to the extent that they could be interpreted as prohibiting any form of conversion, whether consensual or not. (Osuri, 1992) In the absence of a proper definition of these terms used in these legislatures, even the religious minorities who are out of free will have been faced harassment by the rightist forces. In the same vein, at the state level too, various states have passed similar anti-conversion laws, such as Madhya Pradesh (1968), Rajasthan, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh (2006), Jharkhand (2017) which run counter to the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Article 25(1) of the constitution. This thing was also mentioned by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom in its report. Although the anti-conversion laws do not explicitly prohibit conversions, in practice, they infringe the right of individuals to convert, to favour Hinduism over minority religions, and represent a significant challenge to Indian secularism.” These acts are generally referred to as Religious Freedom Acts but actually, they are the anti-religious freedom act for the religious minorities, since the real purpose of these acts is to restrict the conversion of Indic origin religious minorities to non- Indic religious minorities, not more than that. The RSS and its offshoots also use threats, violence, and even the allurements of money- to convert non-Hindus, both Muslims and Christians, to Hinduism. The RSS repeatedly maintains that the ancestors of all Indian Muslims and Christians were once Hindus and, therefore, it is “technically” only “reconversion”, which it has designated “Ghar Wapsi”, or homecoming. In the case of forced or induced conversions of non-Hindus to Hinduism in homecoming or “Ghar Wapsi”, the ceremonies, the attention of state authorities is not drawn in the same way as conversions away from Hinduism. (South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre, 2008). In 2014, Amit Shah stated to leaders of different parties that they should come together in Parliament and unanimously pass a law to end conversions. While Amit Shah, the party president of the BJP, has urged in favour of framing national laws that criminalize conversions away from Hinduism if his party had an absolute majority in the upcoming election. (The Hindu, 2015) Now the NDA government won an absolute majority in 2019 that creating apprehension among the religious minorities that such type of law would be passed at the national level which further increases the problems of religious minorities.

Way Forward

Albeit Indian constitution has provided several provisions that emphasize legal equality of its citizens, regardless of their religion or creed, and prohibits any kind of religion-based discrimination. It also provides safeguards, though limited ones to religious minority communities. However, religious minority communities have faced discrimination and persecution under Congress Party and BJP-led governments due to a combination of overly broad or ill-defined laws, an ineffective criminal justice system, and a lack of consistency in jurisprudence. In particular, since 2014, hate crimes, social

boycotts, assaults, and forced conversion have escalated dramatically. In order to protect the minority communities from these assaults, following step should be taken.

- The government of India should expand training opportunities for members of its legislature, police, and the judiciary on human rights and religious freedom standards and practices.
- The term “minority” should be operationalized in its union laws and comply with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious, and Linguistic Minorities.
- India should drop explanation II in Article 25 of its constitution and should recognize Sikhism, Buddhism, and Jainism as distinct religions with their own separate religious identities. Further, it should not impose Hindu personal laws upon Sikhs, Buddhists, and Jain communities rather should grant them the freedom to have their personal laws.
- It should reform the anti-conversion laws and appreciate that both conversion and reconversion by use of force, fraud, or allurement are equally bad and infringe upon a person's freedom of conscience.
- The Indian government should grant constitutional status to National institutions established for religious minorities such as the National Commission for Minorities, the National Commission for Educational Minority Institution, etc., in the same way as it is granted to other institutions, such as National Commission for SCs, National Commission for STs, National Commission for Other Backward Classes in order to make them functional, not to namesake for them.
- The principle attributes of positive secularism is that it does not obstruct the government to provide the political representation right to religious minorities if it promotes the values and principle of peace and toleration among communities. Thus, granting the right of political representation to religious minorities based on their under representation in the political sphere is not objectionable if it enhances the value of civic friendship and diminishes alienation among citizens, then such rights must be granted.
- The proactive approach should be adopted towards the recommendations of various committees and commissions appointed on the issues of social, economic, and political being faced by the religious minorities should be followed in order to resolve their problems.
- No Initiative is to be taken for implementation of the Uniform Civil code which will otherwise, jeopardize the religious freedom of religious minority groups as it will bring changes in the personal laws of religious minorities.

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Performance of People's Democratic Party in the Politics of Jammu and Kashmir since 2002 to 2019

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ABSTRACT

The paper deals with the party politics in Jammu and Kashmir with special reference to the People's Democratic Party. In the context of the one party dominant system which prevailed in this erstwhile state, the emergence of PDP had very positive implications for the democratic politics here. Prior to its emergence, people did not have any democratic alternative, especially in Kashmir's mainstream politics because the National Conference mostly operated as a hegemonic party. Capturing most of the democratic political space, NC did not feel the pressure of accountability. However with PDP in place, there was a very intense competition in the democratic space. It is in this context of competitive politics that the paper traces the history of PDP and its performance from 2002 to 2019 elections. It places special focus on the ideology of this party and raises important questions about the party politics, about the nature of democratic space in Kashmir. Thus it seeks to answer the questions like: Why the National Conference dominated the entire political scenario in Jammu and Kashmir? What was the reason behind the formation of PDP? How PDP took a stand against one-party dominance in Jammu and Kashmir? What are the reasons which led to the downfall of the party? In this paper, an attempt has been made to answer these related questions.

Key Words: State, Party, Politics, PDP, Dominance

Introduction

Party System in Jammu and Kashmir before the Emergence of PDP

The electoral scene of Jammu and Kashmir was monopolized by the National Conference. The dominance of the National Conference was not only in the first Assembly election but continued in other elections also. During the first legislative election held in 1951, there was the presence of Praja Parishad in the oppositional space, but the party boycotted the election due to the rejection of nomination papers of its candidates with the result all the seats were won by the National Conference. In the next election which was held in 1957, the National Conference won 68 seats out of 75 seats in the Legislative Assembly, though Praja Parishad gave some challenge to the dominant party but captured only three seats. The hegemony of the National Conference continued in the 1962 election also when it captured 70 out of 75 seats. The state machinery entirely backed the then ruling party to win these three Assembly election. From 1951 to 1965 National Conference dominated the electoral politics of Jammu and Kashmir. In 1965 the National Conference was dissolved and merged with Indian National Congress. After the merger the 1967 Assembly election was contested. In this election, the Congress captured 60 out of 75 seats.

The party politics entered into another phase after the revival of the National Conference.

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Replacing the Congress party in 1972 elections, Sheikh Abdullah was given the opportunity to come to power after the Indira-Sheikh Accord which was signed in 1975 (Chowdhary,2016:29). Revived in 1975 National Conference (NC) remained hegemonic in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir. In post - 1975 periods, some space for opposition evolved, but that remained confined to Jammu region only, National Conference was still dominant in the Kashmir region. The Assembly election of 1977 was considered to be the fairest election in the history of Jammu and Kashmir politics. Moreover, the rise of Indian National Congress (INC), and the emergence of Janata Party made it more competitive, especially when the INC gave tough competition to NC. The emergence of competition and opposition was the high point of this election. Though the opposition parties were not in a position to provide an alternative to the ruling party, but the electoral space became somewhat competitive (Chowdhary, 2019:164). This phase marked the electoral divide on regional basis. The Kashmir region was totally dominated by the NC, whereas the INC made its grip strong on Jammu region. However, NC still maintained to control and regulates the power politics of the state, but the two regions followed different patterns, the NC successfully managed its hegemony to control the Kashmir region. Whereas the Jammu region had experienced multiplicity of political parties as few other parties like Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), National Panther Party (NPP) and Janata Dal also registered their existence in the electoral space of the region. Also, in 1987 the entry of the Muslim United Front in the election changed the entire perspective of the electoral politics in the state. The situation in Kashmir became worse because of the Rajiv-Farooq Accord. When Farooq Abdullah decided to join hands with Congress, the politics in Kashmir was de-stabilized. Assembly elections which was held in 1987, turned out to be a milestone in holding farcical elections in Jammu and Kashmir. The newly formed Muslim United Front secured 30 per cent of the votes polled but could secure only four seats. In this elections, rigging and the arrest of defeated candidates added distress among the people. The Muslim United Front was able to mobilize the people because of their dissatisfaction from National Conference led by Farooq Abdullah and his alliance with Congress. The popular disillusionment of the election resulted in the expansion of separatism and militancy in the state (Chowdhary, 2019:38-39). This led to the erosion of the political process in the state and the state was put under governor rule. It was in the context of de-legitimization and armed militancy an effort was made to conduct 1996 Assembly election. In this election National Conference like earlier elections dominated the electoral space in Kashmir region and also had a dominant position within the state Assembly. It captured two-third of the total seats in the Assembly. (57/87). From 1951 to 2002, though, the state had witnessed many up and downs in the political atmosphere. But the NC always made it possible to register its success and to enjoy the status of single largest Political party of the then state. Thus it has not left a narrow space for the opposition in the power politics of J&K. In 2002 Assembly elections the party lost its electoral hegemony for the first time and adorned the role of an opposition party (Para, 2019). There were various reasons which led to the one party dominance in the state:

1. National Conference assumed great importance in the state as it was perceived as a movement that brought an end to the autocratic rule in the state.
2. There was a lack of opposition in state politics. Except Congress there was not any strong opposition in the state. Praja Parishad which decided to enter into electoral politics after independence, failed to make much appeal among the masses.
3. Another important reason was the rigging of elections from the very first Assembly election. The ruling party used fraudulent means to capture the seats.

Emergence of PDP

The decade of 1990s was one of the worst phases in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir, militant activities and atrocities were at its peak. After a decade of militancy in J&K, there was a normal decline in the militancy and terror activities in the state. After this some sigh of relief, there was a strong urge of peace and normalcy in the state. During this time People Democratic Party (PDP) lead by Mufti Mohammed Sayeed came into existence. Its existence formed some sense of vibrancy within the mainstream politics of Kashmir in particular and in Jammu and Kashmir at large. People were struck between the guns of security forces on one side and militants on the other. Though there was some hope for the restoration of democratic processes with the formation of government in 1996 but new law like POTA was framed though AFSPA was already in force. The mainstream parties remained completely silent during that period on conflict-related issues and their only focus was government formation and developmental work. The formation of PDP altered the dynamics of politics in Jammu and Kashmir in many ways. The political space was dominated by NC on the one hand and separatists on the other hand, PDP situated its politics in between these two. The emergence of PDP provided an alternative to NC for the first time. This alternative in the form of PDP that was also a Kashmir based party, has completely changed the discourse of power politics in J&K, and uprooted the dominance of one-party system. Moreover, PDP had adopted a very people friendly approach to deliver governance. PDP also made it possible to reduce the gap between the aspiration of the people and power politics.

Impact of PDP on J&K Politics -Shifting Dissent from Separatist Space to Mainstream Politics

Formation of PDP filled the vacuum of opposition party in the Kashmir Valley. Since dissent in the Valley had been pushed into separatism and militancy as there was nobody to exploit anti-incumbency from within the mainstream or pro-India parties only the separatist group, the Hurriyat Conference benefited from the anti-incumbency against the Abdullah dynasty. The People's Democratic Party was created as an alternative force to channelize this anger within Kashmir (Mufti, 2019).

The Role of Mehbooba Mufti in the Success of PDP - Although the PDP was launched in 1999 with Mufti Mohd. Sayeed as its president and Mehbooba Mufti as its vice president but much of the credit for building the party goes to her. She braved threats and moved ahead to go through the litmus test of politics in a volatile Kashmir valley that had been reeling under a separatist insurgency since the late 1980s. Her election in a conservative society like Kashmir was significant. At the peak of militancy, when Indian armed forces were often accused of human rights, she struck a chord of visiting the families of militants who had been killed(Talk,2019).Her entry in politics gave first women Chief Minister to the people of J&K. Thus, she broke the notion of gender, also streamlined and redefined the political atmosphere in the state. She introduced a new phase in the cultural politics in Jammu and Kashmir, underlining the space and accessibility of a woman in politics not just as a participant but as a decision-maker (Khan,2019).

The party was set up by Mufti Mohd Sayeed, but his daughter was the leading spirit behind the party's victory. She travelled every corner of the state, visiting homes where people had fallen to militant bullets and also to the villages where the militants committed atrocities. She worked hard at the grass- root level. As a result, she emerged as the charismatic face of the party. She provided that softer approach by visiting the homes of women who had lost sons, husbands and brothers in the conflict. It was this political persona a woman from an elite political family who understood the pain of an ordinary Kashmiri woman that laid the foundation of her career. How she handles the issues like

supporting those displaced by the devastating flood in 2014 will largely determine her ability as a strong leader (Para, 2019).

Ideology of the Party - The party document that was released in 1999 focused on the sufferings and suppression of Kashmiri people in the preceding decade and identified unresolved Kashmir problem as a basic cause of this distressing situation. The main objective of the party was to mobilize public opinion to persuade the government of India for adopting the policy of understanding and reconciliation, to articulate grievances of people and redress them through constitutional means, to restore normalcy, democracy and rule of law in order to protect human rights of people, release of innocent people from jails and return of Kashmiri migrants. The party soon after assuming power in the state came with its proposal of "Self-Rule" document for resolving the Kashmir issue. This document was created to provide a framework to suggest an alternative for the resolution of Kashmir issue, without compromising the sovereignty of the state. Various proposals and measures that are elaborated in this document address both the internal and external dimension of the problem in Jammu and Kashmir. It is a formulation that is supposed to integrate the region without disturbing the extant sovereign authority over delimited territorial space. The vision document propounded by the party laid much emphasis on de-militarization and ending Human Rights violation in the state (Self Rule, 2008). The party advocated that India must make up its mind that the only way toward peace is a dialogue process and there is no room for armed intervention in the state. The party advocated that gun is not solution be it in the hands of army or the militants. The party believed that the way to end human rights violation lies with the gradual reduction of troops and revocation of laws which gives special powers to the troops to use arbitrary powers. 'Self Rule' document advocated limited constitutional changes in the context of centre state relation. The vision of the party is not only restricted to the political reorganization of the state but also its economic reorganization. The process of economic integration of the two parts of Jammu and Kashmir can start with a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA). In this agreement the two countries (India and Pakistan) would offer tariff reduction or elimination confined to the geographical boundaries of 'Greater Jammu and Kashmir', and restrict it to some product categories. The party's vision is to move towards economic union through Cross-LOC trade which would facilitate both sides to grow in economic terms (Mufti, 2019).

Healing Touch Policy - The party's discourse of healing touch policy aimed at providing relief to the people troubled by prolonged aggression and violence helped the party to gain popularity and facilitated the process of making power politics relevant in the given situation. Healing touch was a policy instrument of PDP led coalition government aimed at bringing peace and normalcy in the state. Mufti Mohd. Sayeed and his party, on several occasions through resolutions and policy statement delineated the broad contours of the healing touch policy. He projected it as an alternative policy of reconciliation and building trust in a conflict situation. It is a philosophy that encompasses various activities aiming at winning the hearts and minds of people. It also addresses alienation and providing jobs for victims of militancy. The policy also talks about good governance and checking regional discontent (Haque, 2010:16).

Manifesto of PDP - 2002 Election – In its election manifesto, the party came with a promise to provide a corruption free establishment, unconditional dialogue with militants, ending up of Special Operation Group (SOG). Moreover, the party also announced to give healing touch approach to the citizens affected with militancy directly or indirectly (Khan, 2019).

Regional Limitation of PDP - Party confined to Kashmir Region Mainly - Votes polled for PDP in 2002 Assembly election indicates that the party influenced only Muslim dominated areas and that too in

Kashmir region. The party adopted a very appealing approach towards separatist leaders and organizations to get their grip on Muslim vote bank in Kashmir region. With all these gestures and pro-citizens approach, it redresses the past injustice and in return it got popularity in Kashmir region. But after this election, the party remained confined not only to the Kashmir region but also extended its support base to other regions (Akhter, 2019).

To quote Rekha Chowdhary

Standing at the crossroads of the separatist and democratic politics beyond Kashmir it [PDP] has been able to create a space for itself with the Muslim majority parts of Jammu region. In 2008 the party was able to win two seats in the predominantly Muslim constituencies of Mendhar and Darhal in the Poonch Rajouri belt. In 2014 the party succeeded in winning three seats from the same belt... Though predominantly locating itself in Kashmir region the PDP started changing its political strategies in the post 2008 period... As a result the party in 2014 has been able to carve some space within the Hindu majority areas of Jammu region. Not only it won the seat of Rajouri which has significant position of Hindus, it also emerged as the runner up in the Hindu dominated constituencies of Nowshera and R.S. Pura. The party also extend its base in Ladakh region, here the party had no base till 2008 and also in 2014 the party has failed to capture any seat but it has registered a vote share of 11.77 percent. In Jammu region also its vote share increased from less than 2 percent in 2002 to 6 percent in 2008 in 2014 its vote share is around 11 percent (Chowdhary, 2015:9-10).

Role of PDP during Various Assembly Elections: 2002, 2008 and 2014

The approach that the PDP has used to counter equally the NC and the challenge of separatism was quite impressive, and it helped PDP to strengthen its cadre in J&K. It has adopted the same agenda and issues, that were earlier highlighted by the separatist leaders itself, even included the same in the 2002 Assembly election manifesto. The removal of Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA), Disturbed Area Act (DAA), and Suspension of Special Operation Groups (SOG). Besides, probing all cases of missing youth and also ensured for setting up of Commission to investigate the custodial deaths. These above mentioned were its main election issues. It also called for resolution of conflict through dialogue. On the basis PDP succeeded in getting a good number of seats from Kashmir region, but failed to formed government by their own. Consequently, a coalition government with the main support of INC and some other party like NPP came into existence. The main focus of the government was on dialogue as a key tool for beginning of long-term peace and the same was incorporated in the Common Minimum Programme (CMP) of the coalition government (Webb, 2005:88-89). The CMP was the main document to run the government and it called for 'unconditional dialogue' with militants' and other sections of the public opinion. On the other hand in 2002 Assembly election the J&K National Conference appeared as the main party with its presence in all the regions of the state and decided to sit in opposition. This type of arrangement in which NC was the opposition party echoed greater democratization of the politics in the state.

Moreover, the politics of Kashmir first time had experience competitive politics, wherein the parties gave tough competition to each other both in the election and on the floor of Assembly on numerous issues. Finally, on the Amarnath Land Row case the coalition government failed to complete their tenure as PDP withdraw its support. This leads to breakdown of government and

further dissolution of JK Assembly (Chowdhary, 2015:3). The Assembly election 2008 in Jammu and Kashmir were one of the most intensely contested elections in the state in terms of multi-cornered contest, number of rallies and the voter turnout. The result was no doubt a big surprise for the political analyst. There was a big surprise for the political parties also in the state as most of them had expressed their reservations regarding the holding of elections in the immediate aftermath of the Amarnath land controversy. After the agitation the mainstream parties persuaded the people that the state election had nothing to do with the issue of Kashmir freedom. PDP disconnected the election process from the freedom movement exploiting regional as well as religious sentiments, bridging the gap between the pro-freedom parties and National Conference presenting its "Self Rule" doctrine. The result of the 2008 elections highlights some new trends. The delinking of the freedom movement from the elections enabled the PDP to improve its position and expand its influence to Jammu, where it won two seats. In 2002 Assembly elections the PDP won 16 seats from the Valley, but in this election, the party got three more seats from the valley as compared to the 2002 election. It won 19 seats from Kashmir region. Its total share of seats in this election is 21. The overall picture indicates that the PDP is replacing the National Conference in the Valley and its rising popularity may prove to be a greater setback to the National Conference in future. In this election, the PDP not only increased its share of seats but also its share of votes was increased, this election was a direct result of the communal polarisation. PDP undoubtedly extended its base in Jammu region, but it won seats from the Muslim dominated areas in this region. The Communal effect was seen in this election as the BJP had also increased its share of seats and that too from the Jammu, a Hindu dominated region (Thakur, 2009:11). During this election the democratic space had been considerably stretched in Kashmir region because the people justified their participation merely for the governance purpose, and making a clear cut distinction between their right to vote and their demand for freedom. PDP always assured people that it would meet their aspirations and therefore used "Self Rule" doctrine for winning the elections.

Releasing the party's Manifesto for 2014 Assembly polls christened "Aspirational Agenda", Mehbooba Mufti says that if it comes to power, the party would strive towards making Jammu and Kashmir politically empowered, economically self-reliant, and environmentally safe, socially cohesive and culturally vibrant. She says that the party worked hard to make provisions regarding the strengthening of Article 370 as Article 370 impacts everything in Jammu and Kashmir from political discourse to personal responses, from economy to emotions, from society to sensibilities and from institutions to ideologies. The issue related to notifying "Disturbed Areas" and the way for the revocation of AFSPA was also highlighted (Baig, 2019). In its manifesto, the party also addresses the issue of Kashmiri Pundits and compensation for POK Refugees. Other important commitments which the party made in its manifesto are intra- Kashmir free trade and travel, normalization of relation with Pakistan and talks with Hurriyat. In 2014 Assembly elections, the PDP emerged as the single major political party of the state in terms of winning Assembly 28 seats out of 87. Interestingly, for the first time in the antiquity of Valley, the PDP pushed the National Conference in Kashmir to a poor second position and NC won only 12 seats with 29 percent of votes. Whereas, PDP had registered its success on 25 seats with 37% of votes in Kashmir region.

Performance of People's Democratic Party in the Politics of Jammu and Kashmir since 2002 to 2019

Table 1 : Performance of Peoples Democratic Party at State Level (2002 - 14)

Year	Number of Seats	Seats of Peoples Democratic Party	% of Votes Polled	% of Peoples Democratic Party's Share of Seats
2002	87	16	9.04	18.39
2008	87	21	15.39	24.13
2014	87	28	22.7	32.18

Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 2002, 2008 and 2014 to the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, Election Commission of India

Table 2 : Performance of Peoples Democratic Party in Kashmir Region (2002 - 14)

Year	Number of Seats	Seats of Peoples Democratic Party	% of Votes Polled	% of Peoples Democratic Party's Share of Seats
2002	46	16	24.51	34.78
2008	46	19	27.41	41.30
2014	46	25	37.30	54.34

Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 2002, 2008 and 2014 to the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, Election Commission of India

Table 3 : Performance of Peoples Democratic Party in Jammu Region (2002 -14)

Year	Number of Seats	Seats of Peoples Democratic Party	% of Votes Polled	% of Peoples Democratic Party's Share of Seats
2002	37	-	1.77	-
2008	37	2	6.8	5.40
2014	37	3	10.99	8.10

Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 2002, 2008 and 2014 to the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, Election Commission of India

Table 4 : Performance of Peoples Democratic Party in Ladakh Region (2002 -14)

Year	Number of Seats	Seats of Peoples Democratic Party	% of Votes Polled	% of Peoples Democratic Party's Share of Seats
2002	4	-	0.00	-
2008	4	-	0.54	-
2014	4	-	11.77	-

Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 2002, 2008 and 2014 to the Legislative Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir, Election Commission of India

Role of PDP in Coalition Politics of J&K

PDP, since its inception, formed two times coalition government in Jammu and Kashmir. Right from its origin, it assured to bring change in the state. This party introduces competitive spirit and it was the result of such competition that the phenomenon of coalition politics was started in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir.

Hung Assembly and Coalition Government

It is an arrangement where two or more than two political parties having different ideological background came together for the formation of government. In J&K this process reached at its zenith in 2002 Assembly election. It was for the first time in the history of J&K politics, when no political party was able to prove its majority to form the government. In case of hung assembly, a coalition government of Congress, PDP and other small regional political parties came into being in 2002(Mir, 2019). The Assembly elections of 2008 and 2014 also experienced the case of Hung Assembly. In case of 2008, NC-Congress lead by Omar Abdullah Government came into being. Whereas in 2014, after a long series of discussions between the PDP and BJP at Centre level, lead the formation of PDP-BJP coalition government. In its first term which started in 2002 with its coalition partner (Congress), the party brought many changes in the socio-economic and political sphere. Both the parties started Common Minimum Programme.

Governance and Policies- The party promoted tourism through the Bollywood film industry. The party took various initiatives which had a positive impact on tourism. The party build a favorable atmosphere for starting peace process and taking into consideration Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) to stabilize the relation between India and Pakistan. The beginning of the cross LOC trade, opening of Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch Rawalakote Road are the measures taken by the party to strengthen tourism through peace process. During the PDP led coalition government education sector has also given due importance. Kashmir University had given additional campuses, North Kashmir University campus will be set up at Delina Bramulla. Also, Baba Ghulam Shah University was established in Rajouri. Through its establishment, the party extended its influence in other region also. The PDP government had given priority to education, tourism, power, health, agriculture and allied sectors for activating economy of Jammu and Kashmir(Ali,2019).

Coalition Government with BJP in 2014 - The party formed its alliance with BJP despite having ideological differences. The coalition was based on a detailed written document called "Agenda for

Alliance". Bringing all the regions of Jammu and Kashmir closer to each other was the main objective of the alliance. But what the alliance contributed in its three years in power is opposite. The differences between the two parties were never bridged and were visible from the very beginning. During the three years of alliance, leaders from both the parties have complained that decisions and statement of the leadership of both the parties have adverse consequences for their vastly different constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir. In 2016, senior PDP leader Tariq Hamid Kara resigned from the party and Parliament. He accused the PDP of facilitating the design of the RSS and surrendering to the brutal policies of the BJP at the Centre. Leader of the BJP, too have complained of PDP ministers in the state government taking decision unilaterally on sensitive issues that could prove disastrous for the BJP in Jammu region(Rana,2019). When the two parties came together to form a government, they say that it was a governance alliance and an agreement to seek national reconciliation on the state. The agenda wanted to stabilize the relation with Pakistan and after due assessment of the security situation in the Valley observes the necessity for de-notifying disturbed areas. They finalized the agenda on a status quo on all the prevailing constitutional provisions, including Article 370(Bhatt,2019).

It was obvious from the first day that the BJP had made a big compromise and the citizens have assumed that the PDP was in upper hand. Though, as the government took charge in the state, the reality of the agenda of alliance between both parties began to come in public domain on various issues. Many -times the differences of opinions within the Cabinet was reported. The BJP members demanded changes in the constitutional arrangements. An appeal was filed in the Apex Court and challenging the validity and constitutional legality of Article 35A. The BJP was also prospered in elucidating the PDP as corrupt partner and incompetent and Mehbooba Mufti as a weak Chief Minister. On paper, the PDP-BJP coalition government represented both a vision and a roadmap for resolving the Kashmir conflict. But it remained only in papers. After the demise of Mufti Mohd. Sayeed, his daughter Mehbooba Mufti passively continued with the paralyzed and dysfunctional coalition government after renewed turmoil gripped the Valley from July 2016 until the BJP pulled the plug in June 2018(Kichloo, 2019). In 2019 Parliamentary elections, the party was not in a position to win a single seat. This election again highlighted the polarized nature of political landscape of the state. South Kashmir is considered a traditional bastion of the People Democratic Party. However, since PDP's decision to align with the BJP in 2014 to form the government in the states, its political fortune had been facing a serious backlash. The verdict in this election shows that the people have not forgiven the PDP for its alliance with BJP. The alliance between the BJP and PDP was based on the negotiations from both sides. The agenda of alliance was intellectualized by Ram Madhav of the BJP and Haseeb Drabu of the PDP. Both the parties were considered as the two poles Viz North Pole and South Pole because of their ideological difference. Due to all these differences, and deficit of trust, coalition government was ended in 2018(Rather, 2019).

Assessment of PDP Governments: Thus, after analyzing both the periods of PDP's government in power in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, it was concluded that first term is better than the second one. No doubt, during first term of its government, challenges were there but the party faced the challenges successfully and this was reflected in 2008 Assembly election and also in the Parliamentary elections which was conducted in 2009. In 2008 Assembly election the party not only increased its number of seats but also its share of votes was increased. Even in 2009 Parliamentary elections, it failed to win a single seat, but its share of votes increased as compared to 2004 Parliamentary election. The party in its second term was not in a position to handle the situation and the main reason behind this was the leadership vacuum in the party because of the demise of Mufti Mohd. Sayeed.

Crisis in PDP in Post 2018

Dissent and Split of Party - The fall of the government led to the rebellion within the PDP as most of the leaders revolted against Mehbooba Mufti's leadership, accusing her of nepotism and favouritism. Following its breakup with the BJP, most of the leaders left the party. Prominent among those who openly rebelled against the Mehbooba were influential leaders Imraan Abas, Javid Baigh, Yasir Rishi and even senior PDP leader Muzaffer Baigh put the party on notice, saying that he was not consulted on key issues including the party's decision to boycott the Urban Local Bodies Polls. Basharat Bhukhari and Peer Mohd Husain joined the PDP rival National Conference (Para, 2019). One of the major setbacks for the party was the resignation of the Khalil Bnadh. He won the Pulwama assembly seat for the party in 2002, 2008 and 2014. In a letter addressed to the PDP president, he says that he was feeling suffocated because his advice as a senior leader was always ignored after the death of Mufti Mohd Sayeed. Haseeb Drabu's resignation was another setback for the party (Akhter, 2019). The party sidelined him when he was dropped to be appointed as the Finance Minister in the Mehbooba led PDP-BJP government after he remarked that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir should not be seen as a political problem. Jammu And Kashmir State should not be seen as a conflict state or a political problem but a society with social issue. Muzaffer Baigh, who is the founding member of the party, also left the party over the seat-sharing agreement with other parties of Peoples Alliance for Gupkaar Declaration (PAGD). He quit the party after his recommended candidate was denied a ticket for the District Council Polls. The National Conference remained firm on a seat from Wagoora Block seen as bastion of Baigh, leading to his resignation from the party (Choudhary, 2021).

Conclusion

Peoples Democratic Party was formed in 1999 as an alternative to National Conference. First time in the history of Jammu and Kashmir politics, the one party rule was challenged. The National Conference alleged that PDP was created by Centre to weaken the NC after the party passed the autonomy resolution in the state. But the party patron Mufti Mohd. Sayeed says that the main agenda of the party is to solve the Kashmir issue. Whatever may be the reason behind the formation of PDP, its entry changed the context of mainstream politics in the state. The Kashmir issue which was earlier in the exclusive domain of the separatist politics is now openly debated by the mainstream politics.

The party also takes various initiatives to have dialogue with Pakistan on Kashmir issue to solve it in a peaceful manner. With its pro-people campaign, the party became popular among the masses and it resulted in its government formation after 2002 Assembly election. Its entry also started coalition era in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir. The party introduces vibrancy and to some extent there were democratization of the politics and the people of state got the choice of an alternative government. It also laid greater pressure on the ruling parties to be accountable to voters. The entry of PDP shows that people were dissatisfied with the NC because of its hereditary rule misgovernance and too much dependence on Centre. But after some time, the PDP had started doing the same thing which is the trend of NC that is the hereditary rule. As the coalition era was started in the politics of Jammu and Kashmir, the parties start making alliance despite having ideological differences. Both the parties (NC, PDP) use article 370 for their vote bank. They mobilize people during elections only because of article 370, but neither PDP nor NC makes any provision to strengthen Article 370, the result was the revocation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, which leads to chaos in the state. When we analyze the role of both parties in government after 2002, good governance remains the main issue. Neither NC nor PDP was in a position to tackle the problem of good governance.

Many institutions which are significant to governance process remain deteriorated for one reason or the other. The government's commitment towards these institutions was lacking and this was reflected from the fact that many of these are either not properly constituted or not properly supported by the state. After the revocation of Article 370, all political leaders were detained and there was complete political erosion in the state. Mehbooba Mufti, after her 14 months detention, was released and she called the revocation of Article 370 "robbery and insult" and declared August 5, 2019, as a black day. She had emerged as the strong opponent of the BJP government's decision to revoke Article 370. The party's stand on special status of Jammu and Kashmir and Mehbooba Mufti's decision to fight for the restoration of Article 370 had provided the party a chance to rebuild its image and revive which was hit due to its alliance with BJP. For this purpose, the party joined the "Peoples' Alliance for Gupkaar Declaration." So the party, through Gupkaar Declaration, have raised the issue related to Article 370 and declared its willingness to fight for the restoration of the pre-August 5 status. Now the time will tell that how this party remains committed for this cause? And how the party uses this platform to review itself and again find a place for itself in the mainstream politics of Jammu and Kashmir?

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Notes

1. The hegemonic control of the National Conference in Kashmir region was clearly contemplated with 39/42 seats in 1977 and 38/42 seats in 1983. But in Jammu the seats were divided between Janata Party (11), National Conference (7), Congress (10), and Independents in 1977 election and between Congress (26) and National Conference (7) in 1983 election.
2. National Conference was able to continue its hegemonic role in Kashmir region by capturing 40 seats with (48.15) percent of votes polled. But Jammu's electoral space by this time had become fragmented with seats shared between Congress (4), Bhartiya Janata Party (8), Panthers Party (1), and National Conference (14).
2. A 40 page document titled the "Self Rule Frame Work for Resolution "of Kashmir issue was released by PDP patron Mufti Mohd. Sayeed in presence of party president Mehbooba Mufti and senior leaders. The party prepares and offers this working paper as an act of hope. It is a formulation that will integrate the regions without disturbing the extent sovereign authority over delimited territorial space. It talks about a new regional superstructure that integrates the regions and empowers the sub regions. The comprehensive formulation of Self Rule has three subcomponents.
 - i. New Political Super Structure. The centre piece of the governance structure under self rule is the cross border institutions of Regional Council of Greater Jammu and Kashmir. It replaces the existing Upper House of the state assembly, and will be a kind of Regional Senate. Members of this council will be from both POK and J & K
 - ii. Economic Integration. In this document the party also lays emphasis on economic integration across the Line of Control. This can be started with Preferential Trade Agreement between India and Pakistan. It also talks about Dual Currency where the Indian and Pakistani rupee both should be the medium of exchange in J & K.
 - iii. Constitutional Restructuring. For Self Rule to function effectively there has to be a degree of restructuring the Constitutional relationship of the state. Article 356 which undermines the core of Self Rule has to be made non-applicable to Jammu and Kashmir. Article 249 applied to the state in amended form should be rolled back so that the parliament cannot exercise legislative jurisdiction over a matter which falls under state jurisdiction. Also Sixth Amendment of the constitution of the state which undermines its original scheme of a comprehensive and accountable executive must be repealed. Prior to this the head of the state (Governor) was elected by the state legislature.
- 4 PDP releases Election Manifesto 2014 which promised to pursue "Self Rule "as frame work for resolution of Kashmir issue, besides effective governance to fight corruption and to rebuild the shattered economy of the state.

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5. The All Party Hurriyat Conference an alliance of secessionist parties and leaders was formed on March 9, 1993 as a political front to further the cause of Kashmiri separatism. It came into existence to take upon itself the role of giving a political face to the popular separatist sentiment and armed militancy. It was formed with Maulvi Omar Farooq as its chairman. It included seven parties and 20 other groups and organizations. These included the Jamaat-e-Islami, People's Conference People's League, Awami Action Committee and JKLF. After its formation it came to occupy a central space in the separatist politics of Kashmir. It played the role of giving a political face to separatism
6. The Common Minimum Programme which was adopted by both the parties (Congress, PDP) had the following objectives.
 - (a) The institution of a revolving Chief Ministership with PDP leader Mufti Mohammad Sayeed occupying the position for the first three years followed by Congress (I) candidate for the final three years, (b) the removal of the controversial Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) which sanctioned detention without trial for suspected militants, (c) the disbanding of the Special Operations Group (SOG), (d) the release of prisoners charged with militancy-related offences, (e) a probe into all custodial deaths and violations of human rights by the security forces and strengthening of the state Human Rights Commission, (f) the establishment of a committee to inquire into complaints against government officials, (g) the granting of financial aid to victims of militancy, (h) cooperation with the government of India to curb cross-border militancy from Pakistan, (i) the return of all Kashmiri Hindus, or Pandits, to the Valley following their exodus in 1990.
7. On August 4, 2019 first Gupkar Declaration was signed before the abrogation of Article 370. The representatives of NC, JKDPDP, JKPC, CPI (M), ANC met at the Gupkaar residence of Farooq Abdullah to discuss the tensed situation triggered by the massive deployment of security forces and forced removal of tourists from the valley. Again on August 22, 2020 one year after the abrogation of Article 370 when most of the leaders released from the jail signed a statement titled "Gupkar Declaration 2" to collectively fight against the Abrogation of special status of Jammu and Kashmir. This declaration was signed by six political parties of Jammu and Kashmir, NC, PDP, INC, JKPC, JKPM and ANC. This alliance was meant to restore the Article 370 which was abrogated on August 5, 2019. This alliance was named as "People's Alliance for Gupkaar Declaration" and was given formal structure with Farooq Abdullah as its president and Mehbooba Mufti as vice-president.

Rise of Maoist Forces in Nepal: A Transformation in the Democratic Transition of Nepal

Natasha Manhas*

ABSTRACT

Nepal is one of the South Asian countries that present a unique example to the contemporary world, where democracy is related with the fall of communism and the emergence of neo-liberalism. The abolition of absolute monarchical rule in 1990 was led by the joint and organized struggle of democratic and communist forces in Nepal and with this the Maoists emerged as a major political force in the democratic transition of Nepal. The current political history of Nepal is usually described as a struggle for democracy and this struggle is incomplete without the role of Maoists in Nepal. This paper deals with the emergence and development of the Maoist movement causing violence and political instability in the Himalayan country that ultimately shook the centuries old feudal and centralized system of governance. This created a ground for Maoists to engage with the marginalized sections of society and earned the loyalty of masses. This support basis gave a new dimension to their line of struggle where other political forces changed their policies from concentrating on power to national issues.

Key Words: Maoist, Democracy, Transition, Transformation, Peaceful.

Introduction

The establishment of Maoist forces in Nepal can be traced back to 1949, when Pushp Lal Shrestha founded the Communist Party of Nepal (CPN). The CPN emerged as an ideological rival to the Nepalese Congress (NC), with the goal of bestowing sovereignty on the Nepalese people and electing an executive from a Parliament duly elected by the people. From a modest beginning in 1996 in a relatively small, isolated corner of mid-hills, the Maoist Movement soon engulfed most parts of the hitherto peaceful country and posed new challenges to the ethnic, religious and cultural fabric of the country. (Pandey, N. Nischal, 2005).

The rise of Maoist forces in Nepal can be divided into 3 phases:-

1. Phase of Growth (1949 – 1970)
2. Phase of Consolidation (1970-1990)
3. Phase of Action (1990 – 1996)

During the decade of 1940s, Nepal was undergoing a revolution against Rana regime in which Nepali Congress (NC) was the leading force. CPN was in its embryonic stage and was trying to mobilize people's support in opposition to NC. The second half of the decade of the 1960s was marked by significant developments in the International Communist Movement. Moreover, in India, a strong and a violent Naxalbari Movement began in West Bengal in 1967 under the leadership of Charu Majumdar. Influenced by this movement, a major turmoil emerged in Communist Movement of Nepal

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in 1974. This Jhapa uprising ultimately culminated in a separate Marxist-Leninist line within the Communist Movement. The decade of 1980s was highly significant from the point of view of Communist Movement in Nepal. It witnessed the rise of a number of Communist splinter groups and the consolidation of radical communist ideology. The Communist Parties also joined the struggle for the establishment of multi-party democracy in the country. (Nepali, Prakash, Subba, Phanindra, 2005). The People's Movement of 1990 was remarkable for the growth of leftism in Nepal. (Shneiderman et al., 2016). For the first time, leftist political parties including the most radical ones were thrown into competitive politics and were allowed to operate in the open. They had now savored the taste of a mass uprising in the form of a revolution and thought that it could be advanced into a full-fledged Socialist People's Republic. This movement launched the final phase of the growth of Maoist forces in Nepal with the formation of CPN (Unity Centre) by the hardcore Communists. It was only in the post-1991 period that CPN (Unity Centre) gradually lost its faith in the democratic process, and by 1995 became an aggressive hardcore organization. As a result, the years 1991-1995 were critical in the rise of the Maoists in Nepal. Prachanda's Unity Centre voted in March 1995 to abandon elections in favour of armed struggle. On February 4, 1996, they issued a list of 40 demands to the NC-led coalition government, including "nationalism, democracy, and livelihood" to be met by February 17, 1996. But, four days before the deadline, the Maoists launched a bloody decade-long war aimed at establishing a People's Republic of Nepal in six districts namely Rukum, Rolpa, Jajarkot, Salyan and Gorkha in Western Nepal and Sindhuli in the Eastern Nepal, which resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of people. (Thapliyal, Sangeeta, 2016).

In 1990, a new constitution providing for a democratic structure was introduced following a surge of pro-democracy protests in the early 1990s. Consequent upon the installation of the democracy, Nepal transformed from an absolute to constitutional monarchy. It was a remarkable development that radically changed the constitutional structure of Nepal in three significant ways: it shifted power from the King to the people; it formed a legislative form of government; and the constitution guaranteed the democratic rights of the people. Furthermore, the restoration of democracy in Nepal altered the political and social circumstances of oppressed groups as it made room for them to speak, organise, and mobilize and also prompted them to become assertive which resulted in their claims being accepted. However, the transformation of Nepal was not substantive as the political exclusion of oppressed communities which were a numerical majority increased and persisted after 1990. (Lawoti, Mahendra, 2008). The high hopes of the Nepalese rapidly turned to disappointment and disillusionment because of weak democratic regimes and disappointing political practices. This period of political instability, became a fertile ground for radical forces to take firm roots in the country that ultimately led the most vociferous struggle against the autocratic and dictatorial system of governance.

The politics of Nepal began to move fast and took a sharp turn since the beginning of the year 2005. The monarchical coup of February 2005 represented the changing political landscape of Nepal. Meanwhile, the political parties started to understand that the monarchy was the country's biggest challenge to the democratic stabilization. This recognition united the political parties and the Maoists. On November 17, 2005, the Maoists and Seven Party Alliance came to an understanding on a 12-point plan. It concentrated on re-structure of the state in order to bring about democracy in the region. Additionally, there was an agreement to get rid of the Absolute Monarchy. A Comprehensive Peace Accord was signed on November 21, 2006, which included a tripartite arrangement between the Maoists, the army, and the UN. This arrangement officially brought an end to the ten years long people's war and put the Maoists under UN oversight, with the placing of arms under United Nations

jurisdiction, enabling the rebels to return to the political mainstream and to plan elections for a constituent assembly to address the future of the state and to prepare a new constitution. The political transition entered into another phase with the successful election to the Constituent Assembly on 10 April 2008 with the emergence of Maoists as the dominant political force in the country. In order to facilitate its transition from an armed opposition faction to a viable political force, the CPN (Maoist) made some significant decisions. First was its commitment to a multiparty competitive system. Furthermore, it agreed to station its People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops in cantonments and store their weapons under UN control. Second, it abolished its parallel governments at all levels, from village to central, as well as its Jana Adalat (People's Courts). Third, it shed its military affiliated entities, discarded wartime tactics, and redefined its organisational structure to properly reflect the changes. Finally, it entered the Provisional Assembly and formed part of the interim administration and focused upon economic prosperity and development by accepting progressive nationalism. A coalition with the existing political parties led to a shift in the party's short-term priorities from the goal of founding a "New People's Democracy" (NPD) to a "Completion of Bourgeois Democratic Transformation" (CBDT). (Nayak, Nihar, 2012).

The Maoist vision of democracy: The establishment of new democracy was the ultimate goal of the Maoist revolution. The new democracy was possible only by eliminating the feudal and the imperialist elements. The restructuring of the Nepali state was viewed as an essential step towards the establishment of new democracy. They argued that monarchy represented feudalism and it was largely responsible for the failure of democracy in the country. Monarchy belonged to the class of oppressors. So the abolition of monarchy would be a major step towards establishment of the new democracy. In place of the Constitutional Monarchy, Maoists demanded to declare Nepal a Republican state. They believed that the free and fair competitive democratic politics could enter into Nepal only within a Republican form of government. Another important aspect of the restructuring of the Nepali state was to declare Nepal a Secular state to establish an Inclusive democracy. The Maoists also emphasized upon the need for the transformation of the Nepali society. The Nepali society had been traditionally structured on the basis of a hierarchical social order. The power and status was granted to the people on the basis of his place in the social hierarchy. It led to the development of an exclusive socio-political order in the country that established a 'Brahminic' social order. Introduction of land reforms ascertaining redistribution of land-to-land less people, restructuring of wage structures, fulfilling basic needs of the people were on the top of the Maoist economic agenda. In 2001 Prachanda gave a new thrust to the Maoist ideology which became popular as Prachandapath. It was a set of ideas developed and synthesized on the basis of Marxist ideology and local conditions. Thus, Prachandapath connoted a fusion of the urban insurrection and protracted guerrilla war with the fundamental aim to establish a new "people's democracy" (PD) with the ultimate goal of completing the bourgeoisie transition (CBDT).

Role of Maoist as a major stake holder of Nepalese politics: Since its formation in 1994 the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has undergone several radical changes, transforming from a guerrilla warfare unit to a major democratising power in Nepali politics. (Sunam, Ramesh and Goutam, Keshab, 2013). But, the zeal and vigour with which Maoists started their political journey didn't last long. Their struggle to earn the masses loyalty and trust could not yield the desired results as their first ruling tenure after 2008 elections did not last long and the prime minister of Nepal, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, stepped down on May 4, 2009, blaming the president's failure to accept his proposals for "civilian supremacy" over the Nepalese Army. The time during which the Maoist remained in power, the stability deteriorated, racial tensions flared, and pervasive corruption prevailed, with Maoist

cadres themselves becoming the flag bearers of political violence. The failure of the Constituent Assembly to frame the new Constitution was another setback for Maoists as the people blamed them for this failure within stipulated time. Instead of working with other political parties to gain public trust, Maoists repeatedly weakened the mechanism, making it more difficult to create new constitution. Although the assembly failed in drafting a new constitution, but it was successful on the contentious issue of federal restructuring of the state with the leading role played by Maoists. However, Maoists had to agree on geographical basis of restructuring instead of identity as proposed by them. It was a landmark achievement for the country as a whole but the dissolution of the Assembly left the country in a political and constitutional deadlock.

The 2013 Constituent Assembly elections in Nepal were another test for the Maoists. This time the results were much of a disappointment to Maoists as they went to third position in the legislature. Moreover, the Maoists got divided into two groups by November 19, 2013. Also, the people blamed the Maoists for the failure of the first Constituent Assembly in drafting constitution within stipulated time. Instead of working with other political parties to gain public trust, it repeatedly weakened the mechanism, making it more difficult to create new constitution. The political defeat of the Maoist was due to the fact that it was returning to conservative/oligarchic government, reversal of economic and political advances achieved by the revolutionary movement. (Devkota, Sisir, November 2013: 4200). In general, the Maoists got some success by establishing new laws using their own force extracted from the people. But, they failed as they laid down their weapons and followed the laws set out by the ruling class and the imperialists. An important milestone was achieved with the merger of Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre) with Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist- Leninist) i.e., Nepal's two major left-wing parties into Nepal's Communist Party on May 17, 2018. The basis of this merger was to lead the country towards socialism and economic prosperity with social justice. This merger of the parties raised the hope that for the first time since Nepal became a parliamentary democracy in 1990, a government will be able to rule for a full five –year term ensuring political stability in the country. However, intra-party conflicts soon became a dominant feature of the party and started interfering in the functioning and decision-making process of the party creating a ground for instability. This has eroded the basis of the merger of two ideologically distant powers to fulfill the dream of “Happy Nepalese and Prosperous Nepal” advocated by the Communist led government. (Sen, Rumela, 26 January, 2019).

Conclusion

The rise of Maoists from an insurgent group to one of the largest political forces in the country proved to be a turning point in the democratic transition of Nepal because of two reasons: first, the autocratic and centralized rule of monarch came to an end and second, the crucial issue of federal restructuring of state was brought into national political limelight. In fact, it was Maoist that brought this issue of federalism to the national front as a way to give recognition to the marginalized sections of the society. Identity assertion was an important issue of Maoist movement that was never given priority by other political parties. Maoist played a crucial role in bringing important and positive substantive changes in their struggle for a Democratic Nepal like establishment of Nepal from autocratic monarchy to Democratic Republic, change from exclusionary to inclusive governance with proportional representation for weaker and underprivileged sections of society like women and Dalits, specific focus on health and education as fundamental rights, successful integration of Maoist combatants in Nepal's army and the drafting of the Constitution of Nepal in 2015 to guarantee participation of all at every level. The major failure of the Maoists however was their inefficient approach towards important issues of national importance as a ruling party. The zeal with which the

party started its struggle and the chord it struck with the Nepalese people, particularly, the underprivileged and marginalized sections of society has been diminished as the leadership has lost its way in its struggle to achieve power. Until now, Maoists have prioritised Republicanism, Federalism, and an inclusive electoral system. However, in order to achieve a sustainable and participatory democracy in Nepal, the fundamental issue of stability, prosperity, and people's participation in decision making must be addressed. Although, it is not possible to achieve a perfect democracy, and it is too early to anticipate the desired results but the role Maoist have played in leading Nepal towards stability and prosperity after making choice in favour of democracy and progressive nationalism cannot be overruled.

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COVID-19 as a 'disaster': Necessary Reflections on Disaster Management Act, 2005

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ABSTRACT

Disasters may result from natural or human-induced processes of events with the potential to create widespread damage. It is the level of vulnerability of those exposed to the hazards that increases risk and the likelihood of a disastrous occurrence. As disasters know no boundaries, the meaning attached to them also varies according to geo-sectors, geological and social settings in which they are located. Every new disaster adds dimension to human sufferings. Disaster management is, thus, essential to reduce, or avoid the potential losses from hazards, assure prompt and appropriate assistance to victims of disaster, and achieve rapid and effective recovery. The rapid surge of COVID-19 pandemic has once again brought prevention and preparation strategies to mitigate disasters to the central stage. The outbreak of COVID-19 has created a serious public health concern worldwide. Its effects are however highly pronounced in Indian settings given the large population, high density, socio-cultural milieu, poverty and other related deep social inequalities. COVID-19 disaster has brought the Disaster Management Act to the front stage in all the discussions, including discussions focusing on the efficacy of the Act itself. It came in handy in the case of the epidemic due to its broad definition and already existent mechanism. However, the mere existence of a comprehensive legal framework would not suffice if not attended with strict implementation. Most notably, there is a lot that we can do at an individual level instead of blaming the administration for all failures.

Key Words: Hazards, Quarantine, Mitigation, Epidemic, Inequalities

Introduction

Disasters defy physical boundaries. Whether anthropogenic or natural, technological or chemical, it can hit at any moment anywhere, paving havoc in the present and future. Undoubtedly hazards are integral to our life and our environment. For centuries humans considered disasters as the work of the evil spirits or divine displeasure and tried to propitiate them with magic and other rituals, but later, he started manipulating nature. Unfortunately this attempt to control nature has exposed humanity to new threats. Disasters may result from natural or human-induced processes of events with the potential to create loss, but exposure to a hazard need not necessarily mean disaster. It is the level of vulnerability of those exposed to the hazard that increases risk and the likelihood of a disastrous occurrence. As disasters know no limits, the meaning attached to them also varies according to geo-sectors, geological and social settings in which they are located. Every new disaster adds new dimension to human sufferings.

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Since the incidence and gravity of disasters are on the surge, disaster management warrants the highest precedence. Heretofore, disaster management emphasizes primarily on post-disaster activity focusing: rescue, relief, and rehabilitation operations. The ubiquity of disasters, however, called for a paradigm shift from rescue and relief operations to disaster prevention and preparedness. The rapid surge of COVID-19 pandemic has once again brought prevention and preparation strategies to mitigate disasters to the central stage. The outbreak of current pandemic has created a serious public health concern across the globe, though, first emerged in late December 2019 in Wuhan, China. Till the first week of July, 2020, it had spread to more than 210 countries worldwide, infecting more than 11 million people. As COVID-19 is highly transmissible, along with a high mortality rate, countries across the globe have taken various precautionary measures, such as large scale COVID-19 screening tests, quarantine, social distancing, wearing of a mask, sanitization of hands, etc. but one thing is clear that the effective disaster management entails coordination between various institutions, Non-Governmental organisations and civil society to undertake various tasks at different levels of the disaster management cycle.

Disaster Management in India

India became one of the first countries after the Indian Ocean tsunami of Dec. 2004 to declare the national commitment to set up appropriate institutional mechanisms for more effective disaster management at the federal, state and district levels. Resultantly, Parliament passed the Disaster Management Act, 2005. The Act demonstrated the farsighted approach while laying more emphasis on pre-disaster awareness and preparedness than post-disaster response mechanism. It set forth the establishment of mandatory institutional apparatus for formulating and monitoring the implementation of disaster management plans by relevant stakeholders so that an integrated and prompt response can be undertaken to any disaster situation. Consequently, National Disaster Management Authority and authorities at federal and local level are established to plan, organize, coordinate and implement actions necessary for mitigation of risk of any disaster.

As per the Act, "disaster management" means a continuous and coherent exercise of planning, organizing, coordinating and implementing actions that are imperative for prevention, preparedness, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction to deal with risks or consequences associated with any disaster. The Act, among other things, deals with the provisions regarding the protection of human rights by providing specific guidelines concerning minimal standards of relief required by persons affected by a disaster as recommended by the National Authority, which shall include the basic amenities to shelter, drinking water, medical and sanitation. For affected populace, these are the basic minimums they deserve as a member of human creed. The same besides being highlighted under various international and regional instruments also finds special mention under the. These legal provisions are considered sacrosanct legislative measures to effectively manage different types of disasters and uphold the human rights of the disaster-affected people.

A very comprehensive definition of 'disaster' is provided under the Disaster Management Act, 2005, which is as follows:

Disaster can be classified as a natural and man-made disaster, and natural disaster can further be subdivided into five subgroups geophysical (e.g. earthquake); meteorological (e.g. storm); hydrological (e.g. flood); climatological (e.g. heatwave) and biological (e.g. epidemic). Here, it is to be noted that since biological disaster includes epidemic also, therefore, epidemic and most importantly the pandemic that we are facing today can be effectively managed from the perspective of disaster management.

The outbreak of COVID-19 appalled the human creed due to its rapid spread across all the countries of the World. Resultantly, it assumes the form of a pandemic that leads to death, disease and disaster in all big or small countries. Its effect on marginalised section was even more traumatising. Since the legislative intent of the Disaster Management Act is to provide for the effective management of disasters, a biological disaster in the form of COVID-19 pandemic has brought the Disaster Management Act to the central stage in all the discourses including discourses focusing on the efficacy of the Act itself. It is the first disaster being handled after the enactment of the Disaster Management Act in 2005. Government's response to COVID-19 pandemic involved a different kind of regulatory approach. At its most stringent, the government's national 'lockdown' introduced behavioural controls including measures previously unthinkable as forms of social regulation which heavily restricted physical movements of public members in outdoor and indoor environments alike. Insofar as preparedness is concerned, it was a challenge for developed countries also. However, the effects of this pandemic are highly pronounced in developing countries where health infrastructure has certain limitations. The situation in India is not so different. Doctor-patient ratio, availability of ventilators, availability of beds in hospitals, insufficiency of test kits, shortage of life saving medicines, PPEs and face masks, etc. has once again highlighted the displeasing trio of accessibility, availability and affordability of basic health services during the pandemic. Further, questioning the need of the lockdown in the wake its adverse effects on economy is another challenge. At this juncture, it is highly relevant to mention 'doctrine of election' which stipulates that one cannot approbate and reprobate at the same time, on one side we are suffering huge economic losses while on the other hand, our existence as a human race is in peril. It is high time to think as to which among them is really important for us.

Invocation of Disaster Management Act, 2005 to deal with COVID-19

NDMA is the apex body for coordinating disaster management operations, with the Prime Minister as its Chairperson. Similarly, State, District and Local-level Disaster Management Authorities are also established for integrated and proactive response towards disaster management.

Under Section 6 of the, 2005, NDMA is, among other things, empowered to issue guidelines for preparing action plans for holistic and coordinated management of all disasters. Accordingly, NDMA formulated thirty Guidelines on various disasters, including the. These guidelines intend to develop a holistic, coordinated, proactive and technology-driven strategy for managing biological disasters through a culture of prevention, mitigation and preparedness to generate a prompt and effective response in the event of an emergency. Even the National Disaster Management Plan, 2019 deals extensively with Biological Disaster and Health Emergency. Under this comprehensive legal framework, both Union and State governments initiate numerous activities to contain COVID-19.

The power conferred by DM Act on Central Government are capacious. Notwithstanding any law in force, the Central Government can issue any directions to any authority anywhere in India to facilitate or assist in disaster management. Most notably, any such orders issued by Central Government and NDMA must necessarily be followed by the Union Ministries, State Governments and State Disaster Management Authorities.

To achieve all these, the prime minister can exercise all powers of NDMA.

The present in order to contain the spread of Corona virus by taking appropriate social distancing measures. On the same day, additional guidelines were issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, being the Ministry having administrative control of disaster management.

To alleviate social sufferings, NDMA/SDMA are mandated to provide 'minimum standard of relief' to disaster-affected persons which inter alia includes shelter, food, drinking water, medical cover and sanitation, and ex gratia assistance on account of loss of life and for restoration of means of livelihood. In case of disasters of severe magnitude, the NDMA may recommend relief in repayment of loans or for grant of new loans on concessional terms to the persons affected.

It is pertinent to mention that in addition to DM Act, the State governments have used the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897 and the various State specific Public Health Acts to deal with the current crisis. Taking a hint from the several states have issued COVID specific Regulations. Overall, States have enough legal power to deal with this biological disaster, including

Most importantly, a combination of the DM Act, the Indian Penal Code, the Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897, the Essential Commodities Act and the Drug and Cosmetic Act provides more vigour to the mitigation efforts. Penal Codes are additional aid to such exigencies in during disasters. Albeit there is no need to have two different sets of machinery and punishment for one crime. Moreover, if any State Government believes that there are some

Challenges

Our social fabric thrives on interdependence, both emotional and economical, within families, relatives and friends. Moreover, our country is densely populated when compared with Italy, Spain, Iran and the USA. Thus, social distancing as recommended during this pandemic is unthinkable, especially in our socio-cultural settings and in the big cities with crowded streets, trains, buses and offices. Hand hygiene is largely absent. The latest data from the National Sample Survey Organisation reveals that only 36% of Indians wash their hands with soap before a meal. Even more distressingly, 160 lacs people do not have access to clean water to wash their hands. Further, people have resisted being screened and flouted quarantines with impunity. The awareness about disease dynamics is very low given illiteracy, poverty and related deep social inequalities. The issues of availability, accessibility and affordability of health facilities have further compounded the problem.

After successfully handling numerous challenges during the first wave, it seems that we have learnt very little since the second wave is ravaging the country. There was enough time for prevention and preparedness in order to mitigate this disaster. Still, we can see a rise in COVID cases at an alarming rate, leading to consequent stress on health-care facilities. The number of deaths shows a sharp rise of 10.2%. The shortage of hospital beds, oxygen, medicines and vaccines are witnessed in many cities. The issue of black marketing of specific health equipments and edible items has also hit the headlines. As per reports, it took eight months for Central government to take steps to build oxygen generation plants to reduce the reliance on pressurised liquid oxygen. Of the 162 plants approved, only 33 have been installed. Still, equitable vaccination coverage is a biggest challenge before us. These reports drive our attention to the qualitative aspects of policy research. Ethnographic tools such as participant observation demand more meticulous attention from the policymakers; and not mere data science, or theoretical conceptualising of people problems. It is, therefore urgent for policymakers to address realities before conceptualising policies that make these 'inequalities in outreach' even starker. It invites our attention to the fact that the current strategy needs complete overhaul in the local context and just not to ape or emulate the western model.

Conclusion

To conclude it can be said that the provisions under Disaster Management Act are sufficient to handle all types of disaster situations. It came in handy in the case of the epidemic due to

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its comprehensive understanding and well placed institutional mechanism. However, the mere existence of a comprehensive legal framework would not suffice if not attended with strict implementation. Most notably, there is a lot that we can do at an individual level instead of blaming the administration for all failures. Surprisingly even at this critical situation, people have reservations regarding the restrictions recommended by the government at local levels to contain COVID-19 spread. Is this not the time that we focus more on our fundamental duties as enshrined in our suprema lex and reach a common understanding of social solidarity as propounded by renowned sociologist Duguit to handle the current situation. We have to contribute our best and act in unison to tackle this national health emergency.

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India is densely populated: 464 people/km² compared with Italy's 206, Spain's 91, Iran's 52 and the USA's 36. It has a huge population: 1380 million (USA 330 million, Iran 83 million, Italy 60 million, Spain 46 million).

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Local Governance through the Prism of PRIs : Role and Structures in Jammu and Kashmir

Sakshi Sharma* & Hakim Singh**

ABSTRACT

PRIs have been instrumental in the process of Local governance in India. Despite turbulent context, the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir implemented it in way. In all subsequent amendments, a consistency with national laws could be seen. Locally, the process of rural governance largely depended on Panchayats only. The decentralized structure and functioning was for monitoring and execution of governance in general and various government schemes in particular. MGNREGA through engaging the citizens has to be a true driver of the rural governance. Various values of governance include accountability, transparency, social audit and people participation needs to be implemented by these local institutions. Thus, the current study was aimed at exploring the role of local government in the materialization of governance principles in few selected Panchayats of the Kishtwar district in Jammu and Kashmir.

Key Words : Panchayats, Local Governance, Schemes

Introduction

According to the M.K. Gandhi, the true democracy is a post-capitalist, post-imperialist and post colonialist social order that ends all inequalities based on possession and non possession, colour, race, creed or sex and the people become the owner of everything including land and state. It is the greatest good of all rather than greatest good of greatest number. It is an end to class struggle between have and have-nots based on contradiction between capital and labor. In the present world view, grassroots politics should be a diversion from hierarchy, elitism and patrician approach. Thus, rural governance has to lead significantly towards integrated development, transformation and modernization of rural areas. The governance in wider sense signifies a set of interaction among public, private and other agencies for providing the services to the people. And its implementation at local level in rural areas is called local rural governance. It can be also described a collaboration among local government (Panchayats), civil society and people. Currently, there is a need to look into the local government, its structural arrangement and role with reference to materializing the values of governance. In order to achieve the goal of equal distribution of the resources and values at local level, the local self-government plays a crucial role through monitoring, executing and implementing the policy. The institutions actively play in upgrading and developing the rural socio-economic and political infrastructures.

The state of contemporary liberal democracy is needed to look from socio-economic, political and local angle. In this paper, an attempt is made to locate governance at local level i.e. village through role of Panchayati Raj Institutions. It also deals with the different ingredients of governance which are

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supposed to get implemented by these local institutions within the ambit of people participation. There is a need to know that whether local governance has been a target of PRIs in its role through engaging the people. To what extent the Panchayats have succeeded in materializing the local governance and fulfilling the expectations and aspirations of the people viz. women, schedule caste, schedule tribe, etc. For Instance, the Panchayats should emerge as institutions of not only self-government but self governance. It structures need potentiality of bringing a change in the lives of villagers in different spheres. The current study tries to give answers to all these questions systematically in both qualitative as well as quantitative manner.

Objectives

1. To explore the genesis of Panchayati Raj in Jammu and Kashmir
2. To describe the role of PRIs with reference to local Governance

Methodology

This research paper is an exploratory and descriptive study derived from both secondary and primary data with a conceptual framework highlighting the structure and role of the PRIs. The structure of this paper covers the genesis of PRIs in Jammu and Kashmir, its organization and role for local governance. The researcher interacted with Gram Sabha Members and Panches of four Panchayats i.e. Ghan, Pora, Lundri and Kukerwas of Kishtwar district to collect the primary data on perception of respondents on nature of local governance. The role of PRIs was validated in two ways: functioning of PRIs in general and their role in implementation of programmes i.e. MGNREGA. The study was conducted before the reorganization of state into two separate union territories.

Genesis of Panchayati Raj

Historically, the local governance has gone through various political and administrative phases transcending from pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. Since the time immemorial, the villages were considered as little republics governing all the local affairs independently without any external interference. Later, during British phase, the little republics might become irrelevant but the local government continued as a tool in the hands of colonial powers for managing their affairs. The real functions and identity of these institutions was attained only after the independence of India. In post-independence, the institution attained more crystallized form to work for the local governance.

In 1952, there had been a community development programme accompanied by Grow More Food Enquiry Committee, also stressed on the rural development and integrated organizational structure for rural development respectively. The enquiry committee was a blueprint for various levels national, state, district, block and village. It provided the 'Taluq' as a development block covering 100-120 villages under the charge of development officer assisted by four technical officers (one each for agriculture, animal husbandry, cooperation and engineering) and village level workers, one each for 5 to 10 villages. It also reported for developmental activities at district levels. The blue print and community development programme followed by national extension services of 1953 covered the whole country in planning and integrated rural development in various fields' viz. agriculture, education, health, social welfare etc. based on self-help and public participation. The combination of various programmes to develop the villages in an integrated manner highlighted its collective and interactive approach of materialization of rural governance.

In post-independence, it started attaining a different position following various significant changes of which the most recent significant development was 73rd amendment. After initiating

various programmes to engage the villagers for their integrated development, a committee called Balwant Mehta Committee was constituted to provide a thorough review about the functioning of these programmes. According to the committee, there was a need to adopt decentralization of power to the basic level i.e. village, block and district. In addition, district rural development agency was created to deal with an overall function of planning and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programmes in a district. The role of district rural development agency (DRDA) included awareness, coordination and overseeing of surveys, preparation of the perspective plan and annual plans of the block and finally preparing a district plan and ensuring the effectiveness, securing intersectoral and inter-departmental coordination and cooperation. Currently, the Gram Panchayats as three tiers system has also to identify and preferred development schemes. These have to frame action plans accordingly with the approval of the Gram Sabha. The role of the gram Panchayat has increased significantly viz-a-viz the quantum of resources meant for the development. These institutions got constitutional status to deal with the overall governance at local level. The recommendations were made by various committees towards establishing these institutions for local governance under the recommendations of Balwant Mehta, Ashok Mehta, G.V.K. Rao, Singhavi etc. Following these committees, the local government institutions were strengthened to initiate the governance at local level. After the introduction of Panchayati raj, its working experiences were spread across the major states, also collected by G-Ram Reddy in his book highlighting the experiences of 16 major states of India. The work stressed on providing a holistic view of local governance that will trace the historical and structural evolution of Panchayats for materializing the local governance. The Constitution has empowered the state legislatures to give Panchayats relevant power in preparing plans for economic development and social justice including the subjects listed in the 11th Schedule of the Constitution. Thus, the local governance can be interpreted as a replacement of local government, with its attendant structures and procedures, participation of large committees.

Since 1990, the economic interdependence, process of globalization and changing technology also had brought many changes to local government not around the world but India also. The institution was treated as rural local self-government aimed better governance to the villages. Gram Sabha accompanied with its executive committee i.e. Panchayat were shouldered with handling the local socio, economic, political and administrative affairs. During British rule, it was used and manipulated to serve the elitist interest.

Structures of local Government and Local Governance

Initially, the Village Panchayat Regulation Act in Jammu & Kashmir provided for the promotion of Panchayati Raj in the State at village, block and district levels. Later the Panchayati Raj Act, 1989 was passed in March 1989 that confined to Panchayats at the village level alone.

In case of Jammu and Kashmir, the oldest party national conference has played a vital role in empowering the people through its progressive socialistic policy and initiatives. Its draft of naya Kashmir in real sense provided for an organization of village Panchayats with certain important powers and authority to serve the people at local. Currently, the Act provides for the three tiers of Panchayat. In order to hold the elections for village Panchayat, constituting Block Development Councils (BDCs) and District Planning and Development Boards (DPDB) was not though mandatory. The elections to BDCs are the recent developments of Union Territory. It only provided for Gram Sabha that is called as Halqa Majlis in Jammu and Kashmir. Accordingly, every Halqa Panchayat shall have Halqa Majlis comprising all the persons whose names are included in the electoral roll for such

Halqa Panchayat. The Sarpanchs has to convene at least two meetings of Halqa Majlis during a financial year. Ideally, a Block Development Council consisting of a chairperson, of all Sarpanchs of Halqa Panchayats falling within the block, and Chairpersons of marketing societies within the jurisdiction of the block is also categorically mentioned. The Block Development Officer is the secretary of the Block Development Council. The chairperson of Block Development Council will be a person who is qualified to be elected as a Panch. The role of the Block Development Council includes construction, maintenance and supervision of inter-Halqa Panchayat communication system; administrative and technical guidance to Halqa Panchayats and review of their work; supervising plans related to agriculture, rural development, animal husbandry/sheep husbandry, social forestry, education and public health; supervising and monitoring the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes; to carry out such other functions as may be entrusted to it by the Government or by the District Planning and Development Board. The laws provides for the constitution of a District Planning and Development Board (DPDB) comprises of Chairpersons of the Block Councils of the District; Members of Parliament representing the area; Members of the State legislature representing the area; Chairpersons of the Town Area Committees of the District; and President of the Municipal Council (if any) The chairperson of the DPDB is nominated by the Government from amongst the members of the DPDB. The District Development Commissioner is the Chief Executive of the Board to be assisted by district level heads. The main role of the DPDB includes considering and guiding the formulation of development programmes for the district and indicate priorities for various schemes and consider issues relating to the speedy development and economic upliftment of the district; reviewing periodically progress and achievements of development plans and schemes and make recommendations as it considers appropriate; acting as a working group for formulation of periodic and annual plans for the district; formulating and finalizing the plan and non-plan budget for the district; laying down the policy guidelines for the Block Development Councils and Halqa Panchayats; approving the budget of the Block Development Council and supervising and coordinating their work; undertaking special measures for alleviating poverty and employment generation and extending assistance to Halqa Panchayats in this behalf; promoting and assisting cooperative institutions; performing such other functions and duties as may be assigned or entrusted to it by the government from time to time.

The Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj system also mentions about its judicial mechanism i.e. Adalat for every Halqa-consists of panches not less than seven and not more than eleven including the Sarpanchs as the prescribed authority may fix from time to time. The mechanism is one of the significant features of Jammu & Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act particularly at the grassroots level. According to the provisions of the old Act, it shall comprise five members to be nominated by the government out of the panel prepared and recommended by the Halqa Panchayat out of its electorate. The person so recommended for a term of five years shall be literate, shall have attained



Figure No.1 : Organization of PRIs

the age of 30 years, not be a Sarpanchs or a panch and employee of the government or local body or corporation. The members of a judicial wing shall elect any member from amongst themselves as the chairperson. The secretary of the Halqa Panchayat shall serve as the judicial clerk to the wing. The wing shall not be competent to impose on any person convicted of an offence tried by it, any sentence other than a sentence of fine not exceeding one thousand rupees.

Panchayats and Local Governance in Rural J&K

The role of Panchayats in local governance can be drawn from their theoretical, structural and empirical features. The acquisition of constitutional status by the institutions has enabled them the major agencies of achieving the set targets of local governance in rural areas. The implementation of Panchayati Raj in Jammu and Kashmir is as old as birth of this erstwhile state. Various changes were incorporated from time to time to make it more democratic and participatory. At present also, it has every potential to achieve goal set by the constitution. Under Indian constitution and 73rd amendment, there is a Part IX to the Constitution of India, entitled as "The Panchayats" consists of provisions from Articles 243 to 243(O). The act provided a new Eleventh Schedule containing twenty-nine items of a Panchayat. Accordingly, the states in consonance with spirit have a major task of laying down a constitutional framework for establishing strong and viable Panchayati Raj System. On the other hand, the success of these institutions also depends to a greater extent on the commitment of the State governments in allowing the provisions of the amendment act to take material shape, providing favorable environment to these institutions to work for rural governance.

So far as Local governance in Jammu and Kashmiris concerned, the PRI can play a significant role for socio-economic development of people, establishing the local democracy, improving the legitimacy of administrative reforms by strengthening local service delivery. This is how the relationship between the central, state/union territory and local bodies is established. In order to achieve this, a local-centric socio-economic and political and administrative institution in all the regions called Panchayats, civil-society and other non-governmental bodies needs to be strengthened. The Local rural governance will cover not only formal local government i.e. local Panchayats (whether elected or state administrative), but also other institutions and actors, both formal and informal, that exercise authority in a given area.

The important hurdles that prevented the strength of Panchayats in the region included the lack of financial autonomy and compulsory, free and regular elections and security factors. The numbers of amendments were made to address the existing lacunas addressing the lack of people trust in the democratic process. Specifically, the Jammu and Kashmir Panchayati Raj Act of 1989 also could not establish the decentralization and democracy in its full essence lack many valuable ingredients in it to achieve the target. Various issues that effected autonomy of the Panchayats included government's intervention in its composition, lack of regular direct election, defective representation of weaker section i.e. women, schedule caste and schedule tribe. The Act also lacked the provision of separate election and financial commission to deal with the election and financial aspects of the local governments.

Thus, the subsequent changes were made to restructure the local government in Jammu and Kashmir on the terms of national laws which provides the adequate structure and functioning of a Figure No1: Organization of PRIs Halqa Panchayat, Halqa Majlis, Lok Adalat Block Development Council District Planning and Development Boards (DPDB) Panchayati Raj Institutions. For instance, constitutional status to the Panchayats including reservation for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes in proportion to their population and reservation of 33 per cent seats for women

through direct election were extended for better governance. The old principle of nomination was totally against the democratic nature of Panchayats in general and the representation of women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in Jammu and Kashmir in particular. Thus, the current structural and institutional understanding of Panchayats with the empirical aspect becomes very significant in assessing the nature of rural local governance. It includes exploration of potentiality of selected Panchayats and their field scenario with reference to engaging, empowering and governing the people through worldwide Governance indicators i.e. Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and absence of Violence, Government effectiveness, regulatory quality, and rule of law and control of corruption:

1. **Decentralization of Power:** The Seventy-Third Amendment Act, 1992 and local laws provides transfer of power to the Panchayats as no one can take away these powers, responsibilities and finance given to these institutions. There is clear cut process of decentralization in operation for managing the public affairs at local level. Under financial devolution, a state finance commission has been established to deal with financial status of Panchayats. It is mandatory for every state to constitute a state finance commission to deal with financial aspects of the Panchayats. The commission in every state has to submit their reports to their respective state governments which in return have to accept them either in their partial or modified forms. Recommendations that have to be made by the commission includes regarding tax assignment, tax sharing, own tax revenue, non-tax revenue, united grants, tied grants, expenditure assignment, distribution of state or central funds across different tiers of Panchayats and loans from the government and other financial institutions. The revenue aspect highlights the financial sovereignty of the institutions of rural local governance. The Panchayats own revenue includes income from tax revenue and non-tax revenue. Despite their dependence on funds from central and state governments, the quantum of grants from both the governments to Panchayats has increased significantly over the year.
2. **Empowerment and Engagement of Depressed Classes:** Every Panchayat is authorized by the law to implement the reservation of seats for schedule caste and schedule tribes on the basis of proportion of their population. For instance, one-third of the seats have to keep reserved for these categories that bridge the socio-economic and political gap of the society. Empowerment and engagement of these socially and economically deprived sections of the society through PRIs materializes the rural governance locally. The offices of the chairpersons in the Panchayats at village or any other level shall be reserved for schedule caste and schedule tribes in proportion to their population.
3. **Women Empowerment and Participation:** After considering the Schedule Castes and Tribes, the Panchayati Raj Act also envisages for empowerment of women in rural areas. It provides 33 percent of reservation for women in every Panchayat to confirm her participation in local politics in different ways. Not less than one-third of the total number of seats to be filled by the direct election shall be reserved for women. One third of the total number of chairperson's offices in the Panchayats at each level shall be reserved for women.
4. **Development Activities:** The Panchayats have power and responsibility of planning and execution of economic development programmes. The Panchayats have to make plans

for economic development and social justice. The development activities undertaken by these institutions covers different fields viz. economy, education, Health, Welfare, Infrastructure etc. Economically, the institutions have to work for implementing the schemes and programmes namely MGNREGA, JRY, PMGSY, etc. The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) may further cover the various other crucial aspects such as employment generation, land improvement, flood control, water harvesting, forestation, irrigation, etc. Educationally, it covers primary and secondary school education, formal and non-formal education, libraries and other co-curricular activities. In case of health, it deals with health, sanitation and family welfare services. In addition, the Panchayats also work for general welfare of people including welfare of women, children or any other weaker section of the society. It plays its vital role in infrastructure development viz. maintenance of community assets, providing electricity, drinking water, roads and housing facilities.

5. **People Participation In General:** People participation is a significant feature of governance at local level through the Panchayats. In the aftermath of establishing local governments and recognizing them constitutionally, the Panchayats are responsible legally and politically for people participation in managing the public affairs.
6. **Collective Approach:** The Panchayats get strengthened through its significant network with other players' viz. Non-governmental Organization, educational institutions, village educational committees, civil society, and political leaders at various levels. Building such networks share experiences and extend mutual support to each other for achieving the set target efficiently and effectively. Panchayats with other agencies has to help in undertaking the important activities i.e. people awareness, capacity building, micro-planning, policy advocacy, research, preparation of educational materials, strengthening of Gram Sabha, organization of meetings, workshops, seminars, publication of newsletters and bulletins. The collaboration has to among Panchayats, state, Youth club/Anganwadi members, NGOs, government officials and media.
7. **Political and Administrative Accountability:** According to the 73rd amendment 1992, every village shall have an elected Gram Sabha that is enough competent to represent their demands. It has final authority to give its approval to all the plans, programmes and projects for socio-economic and political development in rural areas. It identifies and selects the persons as beneficiaries under various schemes and programmes. Every Panchayat has to receive the certificate of utilization of funds from the Gram Sabha only. The members of Panchayats are accountable to the Gram Sabha that ultimately represents the will of common masses.
8. **Transparency:** In order to bring the transparency at local level, Gram Sabha plays a vital role through monitoring the execution of works within a Gram Panchayat. It conducts social audits of all the projects under various schemes and programmes working in a particular Panchayat regularly. It has also to review all the documents consists of muster rolls, bills, vouchers, measurement books, copies of sanction orders and other related papers.

Status of Selected Panchayats and Governance Scenario : Field View

The paper also draws on the experiences of selected Panchayats viz. Ghan, Pora, Lundri and Kukerwas. The efforts have been made to collect the various ongoing practices related to role of

Panchayats in local governance. The field study shows mismatch with theory and constitution of Panchayat with reference to governance. The status of awareness, accountability, transparency, equal people participation and proper functioning of the various structures of Panchayats in the covered areas are highlighted as below:

Table No. 1. : Characteristics of Governance implemented at Local Level

S.No.	Governance Parameters	Panchayats			
		Ghan	Pora	Lundhari	Kukerwas
1.	Social Audits Conducted by GS	No	No	No	No
2.	Transparency Practiced	No	No	No	No
3.	Women Participation in GP/GS	No	No	No	No
4.	Regular Meetings of GS/GP	Yes	No	No	No
5.	Political/Administrative Accountability	Yes	No	No	No
6.	People's Participation in GS meetings	Yes	No	No	No
7.	People's Awareness about role of Panchayat	No	No	No	No

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The PRIs represent the values of governance to local level and have responsibility of implementing them as well. These not only have to play a role at local level but to work a bridge between people and state and central governments. The above table reveals about the various practices of PRIs in selected areas. Except Ghan, there has been a worse experience in all the Panchayats so far as utilization of transparency, accountability, women participation, social audit and effective functioning of PRIs is concerned. The Panchayats Pora, Lundri, Kukerwas were found running through bypassing of the above characteristics. All these Panchayats could not record any role in conducting the social audit, performing the work in a transparent way. There was lack of accountability towards the public issues and questions. Women participation has been recorded at zero level in all cases. Though, in the Ghan, the current Sarpanch to some extent has been accountable towards the public issues, development and questions.

Since last five years, the institutions in all the selected areas were unable to materialize the good governance and its characteristics. The villagers are unaware of role of local institutions towards them. The dominance of single gender i.e. male in every meeting or Sabha further confirms the argument. The ignorance among the common villager and panches about role of PRIs not only reflect the bad local governance but also weaken performance of local bodies. The lack of awareness, irresponsiveness, inequality etc. has facilitated irresponsible government rather local governance.

Execution and Monitoring of Various Programmes and Schemes and Governance at Local Level : MGNREGA

The laws dealing with Jammu and Kashmir local government mention about role of Panchayats towards implementation of schemes and developmental plans. The Halqa Panchayats

has duty of making provision for preparation of the plans for the development of Halqa and taking measures to implement the developmental plans subject to availability of funds. At block level also, plans are formulated after consolidating the information received from the village Panchayats through the Secretary Panchayat i.e. Village Level Worker/Gram Savika. For instance, the plans are first consolidated at the block level and then at district level. Thereafter, the estimates of the works covered and approved are prepared by the junior Engineers of the concerned block. The secretaries place the proposal of works before the Halqa Majlis for their consideration and after passing a resolution, the Halqa Majlis nominates the person through whom the work is to be got executed who also has to get work allotment from the Block development Officer on the basis of guidelines of the schemes. All the schemes and programmes under the implementation through Rural development department i.e. MGNREGA, PMAY (G) CDPS, Model Village (Prime minister's Reconstruction Programme etc. are executed and monitored by the Panchayats at local level. For instance, various works covered under the MGNREGA includes conservation and water harvesting, Drought proofing (afforestation and tree plantation), irrigation canals (micro and minor irrigation works, Renovation of traditional water bodies, Flood Control and protection works including drainage in water logged areas, Rural Connectivity, creating durable assets etc. are executed by the Panchayats and respective Gram Sabha. As per the rule, the District Programme Coordinator, the Programme Officer and the Gram Panchayat implementing the scheme shall prepare annually a report containing the facts and figures and achievements relating to the implementation of the scheme within his or its jurisdiction. All accounts and records relating to the scheme shall be made available for public scrutiny and any person desirous of obtaining copy or relevant extracts from these may be provided such copies of extracts on demand and after paying such fee as may be specified in the scheme, highlights the role of PRIs and related agencies in materializing the governance at the local level. The Gram Panchayat has to deal with over all delivery and grievances redressal related to services in the process of execution and monitoring of the scheme and programme. It prepares and maintains registers, vouchers and other documents in such a manner as may be specified in the scheme containing particulars of job card and pass books issued, name, age and address of the head of the household and the adult members of the household registered with Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat has to send such list or lists of the names and address of households and their adult members registered with it and supply such other information to the concerned Programme Officer at such periods and in such form as may be mentioned in the scheme.

Under special status, the act NREGA 2005 was not applicable to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, as nothing can be extended to the state by the centre without taking into consideration the prior consent of state's constituent assembly which is now replaced by state legislature. However request for extending the jurisdiction of the act to Jammu and Kashmir was made to the government of India. Thus implementation of the scheme was carried out through the real employment guarantee scheme of the state. NREGA bill was passed by in 2007 and an important amendment was made to the section one of the act to make it applicable to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. At starting phase, the scheme was introduced to three districts – Doda (Kishtwar then was a tehsil), Kupwara and Poonch of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Table No. 2. : Implementation of Governance through NREGA

S.No.	Governance Parameters	Panchayats			
		Ghan	Pora	Lundhari	Kukerwas
1.	Scheme Implemented	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2.	People's Participation in Plans	No	No	No	No
3.	Women Participation in the Scheme	No	No	No	No
4.	Availability of Services on Working Site	No	No	No	No
5.	Work Visibility at sites	Yes	No	No	No
6.	Timely and Complete Wages for work	No	No	No	No
7.	Unemployment Allowance for the delay	No	No	No	No
8.	Preferences to Women/weaker Section	No	No	No	No

Source : Field Survey (2020)

The implementation of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) has to be also based on the parameters of the good governance. The PRIs have a significant role in ensuring the allocation of timely work and wages to the villagers. The scheme has not to be treated only an employment guarantee but providing various basic services within the ambit of transparency, timeliness, equality, participation. The above data reveals that the scheme has been implemented in all four Panchayats. But there has been lack of allocating complete and timely wages to the MGNREGA workers. No unemployment allowances are given for delay in employment. The women are job card holders but could not participate in the scheme. The plans are formed and executed by the Panchayat members and officials exclusively without people's active participation. The lack of participatory approach to implement the scheme highlights the lack of local governance in all the Panchayats.

The multifaceted Act namely MGREGA could not address the socio-economic and political gaps of the society in these areas. Despite the Act has been introduced, the village woman cannot participate beyond kitchen and end her financial dependence on her husband or other male members. She doesn't own the wages while working as a laborer under the scheme. The whole money earned by her through the Act is taken either by her husband or family. The working sites lack favorable environment for women due to unavailability of adequate facilities. The delay in work allotment, wage disbursement accompanied with no unemployment allowances and compensation has affected the implementation of the Act very badly. Its focus merely on filling the bank accounts of few without proper social audit has made the Act irrelevant and insignificant. Its aim to change the rural areas economically, socially, politically and geographically seems yet to achieve.

Conclusion and Suggestions

On the basis of above discussions, it can be inferred that in order to make local rural governance visible, the Panchayats setups across the country in general and in Jammu and Kashmir particularly are main agencies to play their role. These bodies in collaboration with other players have to engage people in governing them. These are the significant institutions to implement, execute and monitor the all developmental plans and schemes in the villages. The role of Gram Sabha as local people's body indicates the active role of common masses in the process of

governance, needs to be strengthened. For that there has been a uniform three tier system of Panchayats at village, intermediate and district levels. In the context of recent political changes, the environments in which local governments have to operate are undergoing a continuous change. The grievances of the people at local level need to be addressed through their active participation by the Panchayats. There is a need to address the recorded crisis of legitimacy, lack of transparency, women participation, social audit, accountability. The gap between what is promised and what is delivered needs to be removed.

Most importantly, the Gram Panchayats are to be made responsible and accountable for social auditing and reviewing the work in all cases. The lack of an adequate staff viz. Lack of engineers, other technical persons and Non-availability of adequate training support to PRI staff members in selected Gram Panchayats needs to be overcome to prevent the inefficient and defective implementation of governance activities. There is a need of integrating various line departments with PRIs and implement the guidelines of Planning Board/Local Administration Department strictly. The absence of competency among the functionaries working in PRIs may prevent them from performing their duties and responsibilities effectively. This affects the overall functioning of local bodies and materialization of local governance. It also affects the participation of people especially women, schedule caste and schedule tribes in the work of Panchayats. To provide a favorable platform, the Panchayats need efficient and effective machinery at work. There has to be a linkage between different organs of the Panchayati Raj System and other players at different levels for addressing the socio-economic and political and developmental issues. The collaboration also helps in bringing the accountability, transparency and effectiveness in the system. The lack of awareness among the members of these Panchayats and Gram Sabha and their only role to follow the orders from higher authorities has ruined the real purpose of the local rural self-government or local rural governance. Due to this, the local government had always played a negative, authoritarian, undemocratic face in these villages which were supposed to enjoy their autonomy in many ways. On other side, the issues like corruption, nepotism, red-tapism, favoritism also hijack the processes of governance. The defective functioning of the Panchayats and its various organs has led to trust deficit among the common masses. Under such a scenario, the agriculture based society could not participate in the meetings of Panchayats on a daily basis. The factors namely Political Party interference, casteism, communalism, patriarchy, local conflicts etc. also contribute to the problem.

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BUSINESS STUDIES

Impact of Capital Structure on Profitability of Sri Lankan Listed Consumer Services Companies

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the effect of capital structure on the profitability of the Sri Lankan consumer services companies listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE). The study used a sample of 34 consumer services companies and panel data for the period 2014-2019. Data were extracted from the annual audited financial reports available through the official website of CSE. The data were analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics; while the hypothesis was tested using the regression coefficients based on the results of the multiple regression models in this study. This study measures the capital structure in terms of debt to equity ratio and debts to assets ratio whereas profitability is measured in terms of return on assets and return on equity. The study findings suggest that there is a negative significant relationship between capital structure and profitability of consumer services firms in Sri Lanka. Further, regression results indicate that capital structure has a low impact on profitability based on the R2 values of both profitability measures on return on assets and return on equity. These findings generally agree with the predictions of the Modigliani-Miller theory and the signaling effects of capital structure decisions of firms. The concerned companies must have to concentrate their debts to equity and debts to assets position that negatively correlated with profitability measures, its growth and continuity of the firms.

Key Words: Capital Structure, Profitability, Listed Consumer Services Companies, Colombo Stock Exchange, Sri Lanka

Introduction

All of the aspects of capital investment decision, capital structure decision is the vital one since the profitability of such enterprise is directly affected by such decision (Nimalathan & Brabete, 2010). Therefore, the key responsible administrators should keep reasonable care and attention while determining the optimal capital structure decision. It emphasizes the firm's financial framework and refers to the various financing option of the assets by a firm. The capital structure is how a firm finances its overall operations and growth by using different sources of funds. It is most likely referring to a firm's debt-to-equity ratio. Debt comes in the form of bond issues or long-term notes payable, while equity is classified as common stock, preferred stock, retained earnings, and reserved funds. In general, a firm can choose among many alternative capital structures. It can issue a large amount of debt or very little debt. Usually, a company more heavily financed by debt poses a greater risk. A firm can issue the number of distinct securities in countless combinations; however, it attempts to find the particular combination that maximizes its overall market value (Abor, 2005).

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Financing decisions significantly influence the performance of a company, on which the decisions of the key stakeholders are based. An organization can be funded through equity and debt sources and the proportionate combination of the equity and debt is known as the capital structure of an organization. A company's capital structure describes the composition of a company's permanent or long-term capital, which consists of a combination of debt and equity. Cash flows available in the organization and its profits are fully attributable to equity holders when the organization is entirely financed from equity sources. Accordingly, those will be attributed among both equity and debt holders when the organization has been funded from both sources (Brealey & Myers, 2003). In addition, to identify capital structure is the proportions or combinations of equity share capital, preference share capital, debentures, long-term loans, retained earnings, and other long-term sources of funds in the total amount of capital that a firm should raise to run its business.

The four major types of capital include debt, equity, trading, and working capital. Companies must decide which types of capital financing to use as parts of their capital structure. Many factors influence the capital structure. Risk of cash insolvency, Risk in the variation of earnings, Cost of capital, Control, Trading on equity, Government policies, Size of the company, Needs of the investors, Flexibility, Period of finance, Nature of business, Legal requirements, Purpose of financing, corporate taxation, cash inflows, provision for future and profit-earnings per share analysis.

Many important factors are affecting the choice of capital structure, such as cash flow position, interest coverage ratio, debt service coverage ratio, return on investment, cost of debt, tax rate, cost of equity capital, floatation costs, risk consideration, flexibility, control, regulatory framework, stock market conditions and capital Structure of other companies.

Firm capital structure plays a determinant role in profitability. It is suggested that the utilization of different levels of debt and equity in the firm's capital structure is one such firm-specific strategy used by managers in search of improved performance. A business can go for different levels of the combination of equity and debt or other financial facilities; that may be lease financing, team financing, debentures and direct loans from banks, etc. with equity capital (Raheman et al., 2007). Managers who are judicious enough to identify and set up the appropriate mix of debt and equity are fully rewarded in the marketplace, because, all things being capital, this appropriate mix of debt and equity minimizes a firm's cost of financing.

An optimal capital structure is usually defined as one that will minimize a firm's cost of capital while maximizing firm value. Researchers continue to analyze capital structures and try to determine whether optimal capital structures exist. Modigliani and Miller (1958) found that in a perfectly competitive market; the capital structure doesn't influence the market value of the company, which will be settled by the composition of its assets. And also found that under the perfect capital market conditions; a firm's value depends on its operating profitability rather than its capital structure.

A company can finance its operations by either debt or equity or different combinations of these two sources. But it is a difficult decision for the firms to determine the proportion of the equity and the debt in the optimal capital structure to maximize the profit and minimize the risk and the cost of capital. Nirajini and Priya (2013) explained that capital structure decisions have a significant impact on the profitability of the firm. Exactly how firms choose the amount of debt and equity in their capital structures remains an enigma and it is not an easy task for every company and its managers, while many empirical studies are emerging all over the world and still straggling to fix a suitable proportion of the capital structure. An optimum capital structure is critical decision-making for any organization. But the capital structure decision is important for the need to maximize return to various organizational

constituencies, and also this decision has on an organization's ability to deal with its competitive environment (Subita & Aslawalhah, 2012).

In the recent past, the capital structure on profitability was concentrated by too many researchers at an academic level. From the prior emphasis based on the available empirical literature, it is pivotal clear that results from investigations into the impact of capital structure on profitability are inadequate and require more empirical work. This debatable concentration is one that we have received considerable attention in the finance literature. The paper will help us to know the potential problems on the capital structure on profitability. At present, consumer services companies conduct their business operations in a highly complex and competitive business environment. Therefore, the findings from this study will be fruitful to select the optimal capital structure and to achieve the optimum level of firm profitability. Therefore, this study is conducted This study is carried out to discover the impact of capital structure on the profitability of the consumer services companies listed in the Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE), Sri Lanka.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The sectors of the share market in the Colombo stock exchange have been reclassified under the Global Industry Classification Standard (GICS) classification and there are more than 290 companies listed under the specified twenty sectors listed in (CSE). Out of these sectors, the Consumer services sector is considered as an important business sector as well as more profitable business firms than that of other sectors. The ultimate target of these companies is to achieve maximum profitability and to minimize the cost of operations. Indeed, this sector has a pivotal role to fulfill the day-to-day living requirements and appliances of the general public in the country's economy. Therefore, the companies have must keep long-term capital to keep the optimal level of liquidity as well as sustain the optimal level of profitability regularly. Except for a few mixed studies, it is very rare to find any research study relating to this particular sector Also, most of the researches on the impact of capital structure on profitability are conducted for the popular business sectors; banking, manufacturing, and trading, etc. Rajakumaran and Rathirane (2015) emphasized that the finance cost mainly the interest for the debts one of the main components of the cost structure. Further, most of the researchers are of the view that the impact of capital structure on profitability is a major concern in terms of the significant impact of leverage or debt on profitability in their research or studies. However, other authors put forward different opinions, thus they found out an insignificant impact of debt levels on profitability in their studies. Within these two sides of arguments, there is necessary to do this empirical research to explore the impact of capital structure on profitability of the consumer services companies in Sri Lanka.

From the above discussion, the researcher developed the following research questions.

1. Does the capital structure have an impact on the profitability of the consumer services companies in CSE in Sri Lanka?
2. To what extent the capital structure contributes to the profitability of the consumer services companies in CSE in Sri Lanka.
3. Does the capital structure have a significant relationship with the profitability of the consumer services companies in the CSE in Sri Lanka?

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to find out the capital structure and its impact on Profitability in listed consumer services companies in Sri Lanka and specific objectives are:

To find out the significant relationship between capital structure on profitability of listed consumer services companies in Sri Lanka.

To investigate the significant impact of capital structure on profitability of listed consumer services companies in Sri Lanka.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Most of the previous researches has been conducted on the effect of Capital Structure in the manufacturing sector and bank insurance sector. But this study has been done on the effect of Capital Structure on the profitability of the consumer services sector in Sri Lanka. This study will contribute to the body of knowledge by identifying how Consumer Services companies manage their Capital Structure with Profitability. Then it will be useful to decision-makers, policymakers to think about the future. Therefore, we have to concentrate more on these concepts to conduct profitability in a good manner. As well as the results of this study will be helpful for academic and industry experts for policy-making and control purposes.

Most of the studies are focused on the listed companies. But there is no attention to the Consumer Services sector of listed companies. Therefore, this study focuses Consumer Services sector in Sri Lanka to fulfill that gap. As well there are no extensive studies in the Sri Lankan context about this area. But there are many studies about this topic in foreign countries. So, this study uses listed companies in Sri Lanka. Therefore, this study is very useful to relevant companies and related stakeholders in Sri Lanka. Finally, the research would be a partial guideline for concentrating the decision-making on financial management, because they need to keep on track regularly to maintain the optimal liquidity-profitability relationship with maintaining the optimal capital structure to achieve the profitability of the consumer sector companies, as they need to maintain the continued consumer satisfaction through the supply of quality goods and services to their clients

5. LITERATURE REVIEW

Modigliani-Miller in 1958 argued that capital structure is irrelevant in determining firm value. This argument was done under very restrictive assumptions which as; perfect capital markets, investors' homogenous expectations, tax-free economy, and zero transaction costs. According to this proposition, a firm's value is determined by its real assets, not by the mix of securities it issues and under arbitrage situations if possible. However, these restrictive assumptions do not further exist in the real complex world and then this theory later became known as the "Theory of Irrelevance" (Schwartz and Aronson, 1979). Then they attempted to find the reasons for a higher rate of return when the debt ratio was increased. It stated that the higher expected rate of return generated by debt financing is exactly offset by the risk incurred, regardless of the financing mix chosen (Pratheepkanth, 2011). Ebaid (2009) further says this situation has led many researchers to introduce additional rationalization for this proposition and its underlying assumptions showing that capital structure affects firm's value and performance.

As expressed by Abor (2005), concerning the relationship between total debt and return rates, he identifies a significant positive association between the ratio of total debt to total assets and return on equity. Further, he finds that there is a significant positive relationship between the ratio of short-term debt to total assets and Return on Assets (ROE) while long-term debt to total assets and ROE has a negative relationship. Further, Roden and Lewellen (1995) revealed the positive relationship between total debt and ROE. Niranjani and Priya (2013) stated that there is a positive relationship between capital structure and financial performance through their study by using listed trading

companies in Sri Lanka. Dawar (2014) identified that; when debt increases, corporate governance can change from internal to external control thereby having a positive impact on a firm's profitability.

Huang and Song (2002) found a negative relationship between capital structure and performance in the study of property and construction companies in Hong Kong. The study done by Shubita and Aslawalhah (2012) also evidenced a negative relationship in industrial companies listed on Amman Stock Exchange. Zeitun and Tian (2007) found a negative impact in both the accounting and market performance measures. Though, Dawar (2014) suggested that leverage has a negative influence on the financial performance of Indian firms in 2014.

Nimalathan and Brabete (2010) pointed out the capital structure and its impact on profitability: a study of listed manufacturing companies in Sri Lanka. The analysis of listed manufacturing companies shows that the debt-equity ratio is positively and strongly associated with all profitability ratios (Gross Profit, Operating Profit, and Net Profit Ratios). Pratheepkanth (2011) conducted a study regarding the capital structure (level of debt) and financial performance of business organizations in Sri Lanka. As per their study, there is a negative relationship between capital structure and the financial performance of companies.

Panigrahi (2010) analyzed the changing trend in the financing patterns of Indian companies in different sectors. As per their study nature of the industry to which the firm belongs, the size of the firm, years of existence, and location of the firm play a major role in deciding the capital structure of companies in the Indian scenario. Indian corporate is predominantly dominated by long-term debt and retained earnings are the most preferred source of financing. Also, Onalapo and Kajola (2010) have concluded from their study that the debt ratio has a significantly negative impact on the firm's financial measures. They have employed ordinary least squares as a measure of estimation. The variables used for financial measures in the paper were ROA and return on equity. San and Heng (2011) have investigated the relationship between capital structure and financial performance. ROA has been taken as one of the variables for financial performance. Their paper concluded that there is a significant relationship between capital structure and financial performance.

In Sri Lanka, several studies have been done on the relationship between capital structure and firms' performance and these studies have found contradictory results. For example, the study conducted by Pratheepkanth (2011) by using companies listed on the Colombo Stock Exchange from 2005 to 2009 has found a negative relationship between capital structure and firm performance. Hamidon and Ranjani (2015) found that the relationship between capital structure and firm performance of Sri Lankan Manufacturing sector and revealed that capital structure is not a major determinant factor affecting the firm's financial performance where it's evident that there is no significant association between capital structure components and firm's financial performance. Nirajini and Priya (2013) revealed a positive relationship between capital structure and financial performance.

Sheikh and Wang (2011) conducted a study on the factors determining the capital structure of 160 firms listed in the Karachi Stock Exchange during 2003–2007. They have found that the factors; profitability, tangibility, earning volatility, and liquidity are negatively related to leverage, while the firm size is positively related to leverage. It is also observed that the non-debt tax shield and growth opportunity have no significant influence on the capital structure. In parallel, Simon and Afolabi (2011) conducted a research on the impact of capital structure on industrial performance in Nigeria for listed firms from 1999 to 2007. The study variables are; debt to equity finance (measured by) gearing ratio) and firm's performance (measured by profitability). The findings showed a positive association

between a firm's performance and equity financing and a positive association between a firm's performance and debt-equity ratio. Though, a negative association exists between a firm's performance and debt financing. In addition, they have suggested that a better use of borrowed funds is very important and efficient for the financial management of a firm.

Velnampy and Niresh (2012) revealed that there is a negative association between capital structure and profitability except the association between debt to equity and return on equity. Further, they have suggested that 89% of total assets in the banking sector of Sri Lanka are represented by debt, confirming the fact that banks are highly geared institutions.

Akinyomi and Olagunju (2013) studied the determinants on the capital structure of the companies listed on the Nigerian stock exchange and the findings revealed that leverage has a negative relationship with size and tax, and positive relation with profitability and growth. Chisti et al., (2013) found that the impact of capital structure on profitability of listed companies (Evidence from India), the findings of the study have put forth that capital structure does have a statistically significant impact on the profitability of firms. To link the aforesaid two findings; Arindam and Anupam (2014) found in their study that, debt service capacity (interest), financial leverage, and size (Log assets) are significant variables to determine the profitability of the firms in the Indian iron and steel industry. Azhagaiah and Gavoury (2010) in a research on the impact of capital structure on profitability of the IT Industry in India proved that there has been a strong one-to-one relationship between capital structure variables and profitability variables; ROA, ROCE, and the capital structure has a significant influence on profitability. Further, it was noted that an increase in the use of debt funds minimizes the net profit of the IT firms listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange in India.

Velnampy (2013) conducted a study to analyze corporate governance and firm performance in Sri Lanka the firm performance covered the financial performance of the firms here it includes profitability of the firm. Pratheepkanth (2011) conducted a study on the capital structure and financial performance to selected business companies in Colombo stock exchange Sri Lanka and Nimalathasan and Brabete (2010) did a study on Capital Structure and Its Impact on Profitability to Listed Manufacturing Companies in Sri Lanka which studies are related with this study.

Nilesh (2015) in his paper on "A Study on Capital Structure Analysis and Profitability of Indian Tires Industry" found that there is a significant relationship between the capital structure and profitability of tire companies. Rosairo and Chavali (2019) iterated that the capital structure plays an important role in the service sector like the hotel industry. Capital structure decisions are vital as they to a large extent determine the profits earned by a firm. In this study, an attempt has been made to analyze the financial data of 22 companies in the hotel industry in India to establish the relationship between the capital employed and profitability. It is observed that nearly 58% of the assets of the industry are funded by debt, indicating that the industry is not highly geared. The correlation analysis indicates a positive relationship between debt variable and profit but a slightly negative correlation among other variables.

Capital structure decision is very important influential factor to a firm's profitability. Suitably, the capital structure affects the firm to achieve better performance ensuring the operational sustainability of a firm (Rajakumaran & Rathirane, 2015). Further, the findings revealed that the capital structure is positively related to the profitability of Sri Lankan listed trading firms. Also, this study may be helped to the entrepreneurs, board of directors, and policymakers to design better decisions in the optimal debt-equity choice to maintain the profitability.

Though many kinds of research and reviews have been undertaken in the disciplines of capital structure and profitability, this thematic research area is most important to process key financial management decision making of any business firm, However, there were few studies have been conducted to find the impact of capital structure on profitability parallel to the companies who provide consumer-type products and services. Therefore, based on the above mentioned spiritual findings, it is evidenced that this research has been conducted to fill this specific gap in the literature

6. CONCEPTUALIZATION

Based on the research question, the following conceptual framework has been constructed. This model of capital structure in the consumer services sector introduces new constructs and uniquely combines them in specifying that profitability is a function of debt to equity and debt to assets in the capital structure. Here there are two variables; the independent variable that is the capital structure of the firm is measured in terms of the Debt to Equity ratio and Debt to Assets ratio. Two profitability ratios; return on asset (ROA), and return on equity (ROE) are used as the dependent variables for the study.

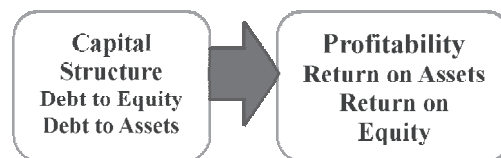


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Developed by Researcher deduced from the literature

According to the conceptual relationship based on the above framework, the following two specific hypotheses were formulated.

H₁: Capital Structure and Profitability of the Sri Lankan listed consumer services companies are significantly correlated.

H₂: The capital structure of the Sri Lankan listed consumer services companies has an impact on Profitability.

3. METHODOLOGY

Data Collection

Data Collection is a process by which the researcher collects the information from all the relevant sources to find answers to the research problem, test the hypothesis and evaluate the outcomes (<https://businessjargons.com/datacollection>). In addition, data collection is one of the vital functions of any research because the quality of the research is mainly depending on the quality of data. Therefore, data collection should be relevant, complete, and understandable to meet the objective of the research. This study is based only on secondary data. Secondary data means data that are already available and collected by someone else. When using secondary data researcher have to consider many factors, because it is not confronted with the problem than original data. Secondary data in a general academic understanding is a secondary reference that will support the notion of the actual research topic or framework. Moreover, secondary data are related to research data to present the research task. Researches use secondary data to get the evidence under the

literature. According to that evidence can get support for data collections. This research is used secondary data because independent and dependent variables are measured by using secondary data. All the relevant financial data obtained in annual financial reports of selected companies for the year of 2014 as of 31st March and 31st March of 2019 were used as an instrument of the secondary data collection method. For this study, the researcher has used the following secondary data sources such as websites, annual reports; journal articles, books, and other prescribed reading tools, etc.

Sampling Design

Because of the data collection, the generalization about the population from data collected using any sample is based on probability. To be able to generalize the research findings to the population, it is necessary to select samples of sufficient size. Large sample size will in general improve the quality of the research. Large sample size is always better than a small one. Saunders, et al., (1996) also point out that the larger the sample size, the lower the likely error in generalizing the population. To be able to simplify the research finding to the population and it is essential to decide enough sample size. The Colombo Stock Exchange (CSE) has listed 38 companies in the consumer services sector. Considering the availability of data and other limitations of this study, the researcher considered only 34 consumer services companies from the entire sector which are listed on the CSE in Sri Lanka, covering the five-year study period from the year 2014 to 2019.

Mode of Data Analysis

The data gathered will be used to determine the capital structure adopted by the consumer services listed in CSE and their effects on profitability. To present the findings of the study researcher has used tables, charts, and graphs. In addition, to determine the relationship between consumer services and profitability of the selected companies; the researcher used the financial ratios and statistical analytical techniques. The data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression analysis.

Descriptive statistics are used to describe the characteristics of a data set or the nature of the data set of the sample within the data description of the study. The researcher used Regression analysis to understand the impact of capital structure on profitability. Regression analysis is used to understand which among the independent variables are related to the dependent variable, and to explore the forms of these relationships. By using this method researcher will be able to identify the significance of individual capital structure components to the model and also the significance of the overall model in consumer services. For this purpose, the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software was used to run the regression.

Data Analysis Model

Data were collected and entered into the SPSS software program to meet the computations of independent variables of capital structure and dependent variables of company profitability. Data were analyzed using the summary of descriptive statistics and multiple regression statistical tools, to find out the impact of capital structure and profitability trend of selected listed consumer services companies. This study used a data set of thirty-eight listed consumer services companies using a period from 2014 to 2019 to measure the relationship between capital structure and profitability. The way of computations of all predictors and outcome variables of the study is as follows.

Table 1 - Calculations of Capital Structure and Profitability Variables

Capital Structure Ratio (Predictors)
Debt/ Equity Ratio (DER) = Long term debts/ Shareholders' funds or net worth
Debt/ Assets Ratio (DAR) = Total debt/ Total assets
Profitability Ratio (Outcome Variables)
Return on Assets (ROA) = Profit After Tax / Total Assets X 100
Return on Equity (ROE) = Profit After Tax / Total Shareholders Fund x100

Source: Theoretical synthesis

The following base model was used, a multiple regression equation used by a researcher for predictions purpose.

$$Y = \lambda + \beta X_{it} + \mu_{it} \quad \text{Or} \quad Y = a + b x$$

Where,

- Y - dependent variable
- λ - intercept term
- β - a vector of parameters explained on the explanatory variable
- X_{it} - vector of observations on the explanatory variables
- t - time period t=1
- i - cross section i=1

The following five regression equations were used by the researcher to test the relationship between the variables.

$$ROA = \alpha + \beta_1 DER + \beta_2 DAR + \varepsilon \quad \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

$$ROE = \alpha + \beta_1 DER + \beta_2 DAR + \varepsilon \quad \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Where,

- ROA - Return on Assets
- ROE - Return on Equity
- DER - Debt to Equity Ratio
- DAR - Debt to Assets Ratio
- β_1, β_2 - Model coefficients

α - constant

ε – Error term.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The purpose of this section is to present analyzed data in a meaningful manner to obtain a successful conclusion regarding the research topic. The research is based on secondary data from the annual report of sampled companies. Data have been collected in the year 2014. In addition to that, some data and some information have been collected from the websites of sampled companies, articles, and papers. According to analyzed data, the researcher is going to find out the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable which has been described in chapter three.

In this chapter, the findings of the data analysis are carried out to examine the main research question of the study. Correlation analysis is used to determine the relationship between variables and also multiple linear regression models have been used to identify the relative contribution of each factor. The researcher used SPSS analytical software to analyze the data. The researcher has used tables and graphical representation methods, to present the data in a meaningful and understandable manner.

Here are going to use normally descriptive statistics and explain the impact by using regression. The researcher hoped to use SPSS software for data analysis purposes and excel worksheets for data presenting purposes. Finally, this chapter helps to prove the hypothesis that has been developed by the researcher to conclude.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 provides a summary of the descriptive statistics of the independent and dependent variables for the selected consumer services companies from the year 2004 to 2018 with a total of 26 observations. The table shows the no of observations mean, standard deviation, minimum, and values of the dependent and independent variables in this study.

Table 2 - Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
DER	130	.00	1.70	.2624	.34540
DAR	130	.00	.54	.1492	.15514
ROA	130	-.50	.23	.0265	.07606
ROE	130	-1.00	.29	.0223	.13508
Valid N (listwise)	130				

Source: Results from the SPSS Data Analysis (2020)

The above table shows the average indicators of variables computed from the financial statements and the standard deviation that shows how much dispersion exists from the average value. Brooks, (2008) revealed that a low standard deviation indicates that the data point tends to be very close to the Minimum, whereas a high standard deviation indicates that the data point is spread out over a large range of values. Therefore, the Descriptive statistics in table 4.1 indicate that Debt to Total Equity (DTE) and Debt to Total Assets (DTA) as the proxies of the independent variable as well as Return on Assets (ROA) and Return on Equity (ROE) as dependent variables. The data contains 130 observations based on the calculated ratios by using the data extracted from the annual reports of the respective sample companies.

Independent Variables

Debt to Equity Ratio (DER)

Table 2 shows, Fluctuation of DER around a minimum of 0.00. The maximum ratio is about 1.70 and it shows the range mean, and standard deviation value as 0.2624 and 0.34540 respectively.

Debt to Assets Ratio (DAR)

Table 2 shows, fluctuation of DAR around a minimum of 0.00. The maximum ratio is about 0.54 and it shows the range mean, and standard deviation value as 0.1492 and 0.15514 respectively.

Dependent Variables

Return on Assets (ROA)

Table 2 shows, fluctuation of ROA around a minimum of -0.50. The maximum of ROA is about 0.23 and also according to the table it shows the range mean, and standard deviation value as 0.0265 and 0.07606 respectively.

Return on Equity (ROE)

Table 2 shows, Fluctuation of ROE around a minimum of -1.00. The maximum of Age is about 0.29 and it shows the range mean, and standard deviation value as 0.0223 and 0.13508 respectively.

Correlation analysis

The most widely-used type of correlation coefficient is Pearson r, also called linear or product-moment correlation. The values of the correlation coefficient are always between -1 and +1. A correlation coefficient of +1 indicates that the two variables are perfectly related positively; while a correlation coefficient of -1 indicates that two variables are perfectly related in a negative linear sense. As per the significance that Gujarati (2004) emphasized, a correlation coefficient of 0, indicates that there is no linear relationship between two variables. To analyze the association between the dependent and independent variables, a correlation analysis is undertaken and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3- Correlation Analysis

	DER	DAR	ROA	ROE	
DER	Pearson Correlation	1	.861**	.244**	-.199*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.005	.023
	N	130	130	130	130
DAR	Pearson Correlation	.861*	1	.331**	-.282**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.001
	N	130	130	130	130
ROA	Pearson Correlation	.244*	-.331**	1	.955**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.000		.000
	N	130	130	130	130
ROE	Pearson Correlation	.199*	-.282**	.955**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.001	.000	
	N	130	130	130	130

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). Source: Results from the SPSS Data Analysis (2020)

The table shows the correlations on the relationship between the dependent variable (DER, DAR) and independent variables (ROA, ROE). The values of the correlation coefficient range from -1 to 1. The sign of the correlation coefficient indicates the direction of the relationship (positive or negative).

The correlation coefficient shows that the independent variable which is ROA negatively correlates with DER and DAR (-0.244 and -0.331). This means that if DER increased by 100% the impact on Return on Assets will be 24.4% percentage negatively and DAR increased by 100% the impact on Return on Assets will be 33.1% percentage negatively.

The correlation coefficient shows that the independent variable which is ROE negatively correlates with DER and DAR (-0.199 and -0.282). This means that if DER increased by 100% the impact on Return on Equity will be 19.9% percentage negatively and DAR increased by 100% the impact on Return on Equity will be 28.2% percentage negatively. In addition to the correlation coefficient shows that the dependent variable which is DER positively correlates with DAR (0.861). This means that if DER increased by 100% the impact on DER will be 86.1% percentage negatively.

Regression analysis

The multiple regression analysis was used to find out the impact of capital structure on profitability.

Table 4 - Predictor of Profitability (ROA) – Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.341 ^a	.116	.102	.07206

Source: Results from the SPSS Data Analysis (2020)

Table 4 provides the R and R² values. The R-value represents the simple correlation and is 0.341, which indicates a low degree of correlation. The R² indicates that only 11.6% (approx.) variation in ROA can be explained by the capital structure and the other 88.4% (approx.) variation come from other factors.

Table 5 shows the results from the ANOVA test, which reports how well the regression equation fits the data (predicts in ROA). Table 5 indicates that the regression model predicts the dependent variable ROA significantly well. This indicates the statistical significance of the regression model that was run. Here the P-value is 0.000 which is less than 0.01 and indicates that the regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable. This means that it is a good fit for the data.

Table 5 - ANOVA Test

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	.087	2	.043	8.359	.000 ^b
Residual	.660	127	.005		
Total	.746	129			

Source: Results from the SPSS Data Analysis (2020)

Table 6 provides us with the necessary information to predict ROA from DER a DAR as well as determine whether ROA and DER contribute statistically significantly to the model. When considering ROA, the beta coefficient values are 0.035 respectively. Among these variables; DER is significantly associated with ROA at a 1% significant level ($p < 0.1$). Also, t values of DER are 0.334 which are not significant.

Table 6. Beta Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Beta	Tolerance
(Constant)	.052	.009		5.843	.000		
1 DER	.035	.036	.159	.971	.334	.258	3.876
DAR	.230	.081	.469	2.854	.005	.258	3.876

Source: Results from the SPSS Data Analysis

$$ROA = .052 + .035 DER - 0.230DAR + \epsilon$$

Further to Table 6, there is a positive relationship between the Debt to Equity and Return on Assets. In this case, beta values between DER and ROA valued as 0.035 means that if DER increased by 100% the impact on Return on assets will be 3.5% percentage positively and it will be a small impact on the dependent variable, which valued less than 50%.

On the other hand, DAR between ROA shows a relatively negative relationship, which valued -0.230 means that the percentage impact on DAR to the ROA is valued as 23.2%.

Table 7 - Predictor of Profitability (ROE) – Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.295 ^a	.087	.073	.13008

Source: Results from the SPSS Data Analysis

The above table provides the R and R² values. The R-value represents the simple correlation and is 0.295, which indicates a low degree of correlation. The R² indicates that only 8.7% (approx.) variation in ROE can be explained by the capital structure and other 91.3% (approx.) variation come from other factors.

Table 8 - ANOVA Test

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	.205	2	.103	6.059	.003 ^b
Residual	2.149	127	.017		
Total	2.354	129			

Source: Results from the SPSS Data Analysis (2020)

Table 8 indicates that the regression model predicts the dependent variable ROE significantly well. This indicates the statistical significance of the regression model that was run. Here the P-value is 0.003 which is less than 0.01 and indicates that the regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable. This means that it is a good fit for the data.

Table 9 -Beta Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Beta	Tolerance
(Constant)	.061	.016		3.797	.000		
DER	.067	.065	.171	1.022	.309	.258	3.876
DAR	-.374	.145	-.429	-2.571	.011	.258	3.876

Source: Results from the SPSS Data Analysis

$$ROE = 0.061 + 0.067DER + -0.374 DAR + \epsilon$$

The coefficients table (Table 9) provided us with the necessary information to predict ROE from DER a DAR as well as determine whether ROE and DER contribute statistically significantly to the model. When considering ROE, the beta coefficient values are 0.067 respectively. Among these variables; DER is significantly associated with ROE at a 1% significant level ($p < 0.1$). Also, t values of DER are 1.022 which is not significant. According to the coefficient table, there is a positive relationship between the Debt to Equity and Return on Equity. In this case, beta values between DER and ROE valued as 0.067 means that if DER increased by 100% the impact on Return on Equity will be 6.7% percentage positive and it will be a high impact on the dependent variable, which valued less than 50%. On the other hand, DAR between ROE shows a relatively smaller negative relationship, which valued -0.374 means that the percentage impact on DAR to the ROE valued as 37.4%.

Testing multicollinearity

The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is used to measure the impact of collinearity among the variables in a regression model. VIF is $1/\text{Tolerance}$, it is always greater than or equal to 1. There is no formal VIF value for determining the presence of multicollinearity. Values of VIF that exceed 10 are often regarded as indicating multicollinearity, but in weaker models values above 2.5 may be a cause for concern.

Table 10 -Testing Multicollinearity (VIF values)

Variable	Variable inflation factors (VIF)	Tolerance (1/VIF)
DER	4.537	0.2204099
DAR	4.537	0.2204099
Mean VIF	4.537	

Source: Results from the SPSS Data Analysis

By referring to the above table it is possible that no VIFs are greater than 10 and the mean VIF is greater than 1, but not deviating much. It is pointed out that there is no having multicollinearity issue between predictions utilized to run the multiple regressions in this model.

3. CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Conclusion

The research explores the effect of capital structure on the profitability of consumer services companies in Sri Lanka. There are 38 consumer services in Colombo Stock Exchange. But in this study, the researcher selected only 26 listed companies as a sample. The data was collected from annual reports of the company for publication as purposive with secondary aspects without having professional consents from the decision-makers as fund administrators. Also, in this study, two independent and dependent variables were considered for study purposes without concentrating much more on the discipline.

The research model was developed based on past research from literature capital structure. This research was evaluating the impact of capital structure on the profitability of Sri Lankan listed consumer services. The result of regression analysis in Model 1 indicates all the two components are related positively to the profitability of listed consumer services companies in Sri Lanka as measured on ROA. The result of regression analysis in Model 2 indicates all the two components are related positively to the profitability of listed consumer services companies in Sri Lanka as measured on ROE.

This study aimed to investigate the impact of capital structure on the profitability of consumer services companies in Sri Lanka. The findings of the study for 2009-2018 and analysis revealed that there is a positive significant relationship observed between Capital Structure and profitability at 0.01 levels. Therefore, the capital structure has a strongly significant impact on the profitability of consumer services companies in Sri Lanka.

Recommendations

Furthermore, the findings of the study can be considered as helpful for managers and users who are concerned to develop financial description quality and practices of performance of the capital structure, and may help the businesses and company officials to formulate a policy for the consumer services sector in Sri Lanka that may enhance the decision-making as follows:

1. This study shows that capital structure matters in the consumer services sector in Sri Lanka, therefore top finance managers should give more considerations to each factor that may influence their capital structure to attain an optimal one.

2. The utmost concentration on capital structure determinants like profitability of firms, non-debt tax shields like depreciation, more collateral net fixed assets, earnings volatility, size of firms, net commercial trade position, and firms' profits should be kept to have a considerable effect on the capital structure choice. Therefore, these factors may be given more consideration while deciding the optimal profitability and leverage of firms in the capital structure of the consumer services sector in Sri Lanka.
3. According to the analysis, it is evident that most of the Sri Lanka consumer services companies have invested a huge amount of money in their daily trading activities than their fixed assets and other long term commitments and therefore it is affirmed that the companies should effectively manage their funds and loanable funds through their optimal financial structure in order achieve the profitability and the firm values. So that the company management staff and shareholders can get the benefits in all aspects to sustain the company image through their functional management and financial policy with the profitability of Sri Lankan listed financial firms.
4. The management of consumer services firms should avoid accumulating too much short-term financing as it discourages performance. This may be a result of strict credit terms that are mostly associated with short-term facility especially as these firms need short-term funds for their daily operating activities. Therefore, the administrators of consumer service companies should encourage the management by extending approval to explore the benefit of long-term financing of debt from the lending institutions as it is positively improving the performance of these companies.
5. Companies are striving to gain sustainable competitive advantage by utilizing their resources efficiently and effectively through a careful concentration of the capital structure to an optimal so that the level of profitability can be maintained in a strategic way to increase. Therefore, the managers can create profits for their companies by handling correctly the capital structure and keeping each different component to an optimum level.
6. According to research findings researcher argued that the firm may have to adopt all or any one of the following strategies to maintain an efficient level of Capital Structure. As given below.
 - (i) Profitable Company: The shares can be issued as well as various amounts of loans can be obtained to get the capital for a company. The use of debt financing would be more beneficial to the profitable company since it gives a tax shield benefit on interest payments and also ownership will not be diluted hence owners can retain control over the business. However, excessive debts will be increased the financial risk of the firm and also the management has to carefully decide the percentage of the debt component of the total capital structure.
 - (ii) Non-Profitable Company: For the non-profitable companies which have creditworthiness issues and limited access to the debt market, it is more beneficial to choose equity financing since there are no fixed payments like in the case of debt financing. Dividends will have to be paid only at the discretion of the company's management. Finance cost will not be added compared with debt financing. However, some disadvantages exist when choosing equity financing. Management would have to incur higher initial costs and ownership will be diluted. The higher dividend will have to be paid in the profitable periods. Dividends are deducted from

the after-tax profit and the tax shield benefit would not be received on the interest expense like in the case of debt financing.

- (iii) The companies should determine their optimal capital structure to finance their assets. In this case, they could have implemented their capital structure policy by maintaining a lower level of equity and a higher level of debts or purely equity financed with no debts. Management of the company is to decide the correct mixture of the equity and debt capital to remain the effective cost of capital the weighted average cost of capital which is the weighted average of the cost of debt and the cost of equity. The weightings are proportionated to the market values of debt and equity. As a result, the proportions of the debt and equity will be varying and the weighted average cost of capital also varies. The lower weighted average cost of capital will lead to an increase in the firm value and also increased shareholder wealth. Therefore, the lowest weighted average cost of capital is required when determining the optimal level of capital mix in their financial management practice.

Directions for future research

Furthermore, this study recommends that a comparative study is to be conducted within the services sectors at CSE to find out the comparative effects on this theme. Capital structure policies as well as the policies on financial performance and profitability measures vary the sectors. Researchers can compare findings and make a logical conclusion so that a related study can be done using gross profit margin, operating profit margin, net profit margin (profit before and after-tax) return on assets, and return on equity, as the dependent variables being the important profitability measures that compare a firm's profitability annually to the money raised by the shareholders. Any company aims to make the best use of the wealth of shareholders and these profitability measures are the utmost measure of returns realized from the investment made by the shareholders. As a result of technological changes and regulatory framework, future researchers should conduct a comparable study after a long duration (period starting from the date of incorporation to the date based on CSE data) contrasting and drawing conclusive results that are built on facts.

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ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Communicative Language Learning Through Local Literary Texts

Parveen Kumari*

ABSTRACT

English, the most read and written language in India, also occupies an imperative space in legal, financial, educational, business, political arena. English is often comfortably mingled with other Indian languages in conversations. As Raja Rao in his Foreword to Kanthapura states, "It is the language of our intellectual make up—like Sanskrit or Persian was before—but not of our emotional makeup.... The tempo of Indian life must be infused into our English expression" (Rao, Foreword iii). Hence, English over a period of time has become an Indian language : as a language belongs where it is spoken/survives.

In this context the issues that require close attention are—the use of English, correct punctuation, the difference between language of intellectual and emotional makeup and the issue of 'style'. The present paper makes a comparative study of two poems "Saturday Market" written by Charlotte Mew, a British writer and "In The Bazaars of Hyderabad" written by Sarojini Naidu an Indian women poet called "the Nightingale of India" to underscore that in order to improve the English communicative skills among Indians, the literary works written by Indian writers need to be prescribed as local writings play a pivotal role to prepare them for glocal communication.

Keywords: *Communicative skills, Language, Literary works, Local, Glocal*

Paper

South Asia, also called as "Southern Asia" comprises of the "territories of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka" ("Wikipedia"). South Asia contributes about "40 million users of English" and hence becomes "the 3rd-larger English using area after USA and Great Britain" (Amador). English, in India, spread because of British colonialism. In the early eighteenth century, the British Empire took steps to modify the educational system in India, so that Indians could cope with scientific and industrial revolution and mass education could be possible. For this, Thomas Babington Macaulay, first Baron Macaulay (1800-1859) was called to India in 1834. On February 2, 1835, he came up with his famous "Macaulay's Minute on Education" in which he claimed:

...it is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, -a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population. (Macaulay)

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Victorian and modern periods are known as ages of science and most of the knowledge in science was written in English. The knowledge which was written in Indian vernacular languages was religious and sacred which “procure[d] for them [Indians] neither bread nor respect” (Macaulay). In order to educate masses, the English books had to be translated into Indigenous languages, which was an expensive, hectic and time taking process. Therefore, Thomas Babington Macaulay stressed to create a class of Indians who would be educated in English and well-furnished in Western knowledge and would act as interpreters/ medium of communication between rulers and ruled and disseminate Western knowledge to Indians as they would be future translators. As a result, “English developed as a medium of control—administration, education, etc.—in the period of the British Raj (1765-1947), creating an English-based subculture in the subcontinent” (Amador). Consequently, English became the official and administrative language. However, even after independence, India could not give up English:

Nehru conceded that it would be foolish to drop English altogether. It had already gained ground in India, was becoming an important world language and was indispensable for the advance of science and technology to which Nehru attached much importance in building a modern and forward-looking India. So Nehru wished English to be studied as a second language and for most people as a language of comprehension... (Gopal)

English, today, a global language, is a key to the world for Indians. Moreover, English which had already developed its roots in India and “The first generation of independent India’s leadership had no such complexes and were of the view that a language belongs to all those who speak it” (Gopal) was readily adopted by the second and consequent generations. This argument is further substantiated by Raja Rao in his Foreword to *Kanthapura* in which he states, “English is not really an alien language to us” (iii), as “language communicates experience, it can transcend the boundaries of the culture of its origin” (Gopal). Braj B. Kachru too points out, “‘White man’s burden’ has practically ended in a political sense, and the Raj has retreated to native shores, the linguistic and cultural consequences of imperialism have changed the global scene....English has become an integral part of this new complex sociolinguistic setting” (“The Alchemy” 272). The burden of language which was imposed by the British rulers resulted into a boon for Indian society because it became the language of connection for Indians not only internationally but also at the regional and the local levels after independence.

In twentieth century, human society experienced various progressions in science and technology which resulted into new methods of business and information sharing: “India’s international commercial activities led to the need for acquiring proficiency in English as an international language” (“History”). English is not “just the language of the administrators and policy makers” but also has become “the language of the business and the professional class” (“A Historical Sketch”). During the learning process, learners often find difficulty in learning because of foreign names of dishes, dresses, places, and also due to the style of writing of the foreign authors which reflects their culture and traditions to which Indian learners are unknown and not able to relate with them. The present paper makes a comparative study of two poems “Saturday Market” (1921) written by Charlotte Mew a British writer and “In The Bazaars of Hyderabad” written by Sarojini Naidu an

Indian women poet called “the Nightingale of India” to underscore that in order to improve the English communicative skills among Indians, the literary works written by Indian writers need to be prescribed as local writings play a pivotal role to prepare them for glocal communication/capableness.

Charlotte Mary Mew was a British poet. Her literary works covers the period between Victorian and Modern era. She was born in 1869 in Bloomsbury, London. She was the daughter of Frederick Mew, an architecture, who planned the construction of Hampstead town hall. Her mother was Anna Maria Kendall. Charlotte Mew’s father died when she was very young and her family suffered economically. Two of her siblings Henry Herne (1865-1901) and Freda Kendall (1879-1958) suffered from schizophrenia and spent their last years in the care of mental institutions. Charlotte and her sister, Anne along with her mother lived together at 9 Gordon street, London. Charlotte Mew never married or bore children out of fear of passing on insanity to the children.

Charlotte Mew, best known as an English poet, started her career as a fiction writer and published her short story titled “Passed” in literary magazine *The Yellow Book* in July 1894. *The Farmer’s Bride* was her first collection of poetry which was “published in 1916, in chapbook format, by the Poetry Bookshop; in the USA, it was entitled *Saturday Market* and published in 1921” (“Charlotte”). Her poetry gained her the appreciation of Sydney Cockerell, Virginia Woolf and Thomas Hardy. Thomas Hardy wrote, “Miss Mew is far and away the best living woman poet who will be read when others are forgotten” (Davis 143).

Her poems are replete with varied themes. For example “Madeleine in Church” is a fervent discussion on faith in God; others like “In Nunhead Cemetery” are “proto-modernist in form and atmosphere” (“Charlotte”). Her other poems are “A Farewell”, “A Quoi Bon Dire”, “Absence”, “Fame”, etc. Charlotte Mew died in 1928. After her sister’s death, she went into depression and “was admitted to a nursing home where she eventually committed suicide by drinking Lysol” (“Charlotte”).

Sarojini Naidu was an Indian poet, playwright and Indian independence activist. She was born in Hyderabad in 1879 in a Bengali family. She grew up in an ambiance of culture and refinement. Her father Dr. Aghomath Chattopadaya was a scientist and philosopher. Her mother Varada Sunderi Devi was a poet. Many languages were spoken in the Chattopadhyaya household. Sarojini herself spoke Urdu, Telgu and English. She went abroad to study at King’s college, England on the scholarship which she won on the play *Maher Muneer* written by her and sent to the *Nizam* (ruler) of Hyderabad. She returned to India when she was nineteen to be married to Govindarajulu Naidu, a general physician, and had four children with him. She joined the Indian freedom struggle in 1905 and met noted figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Sarojini Naidu was appointed as the President of the Indian National Congress in 1925 and later became the Governor of the United Provinces in 1947. Sarojini Naidu’s poetry earned her “the sobriquet ‘the Nightingale of India’, or ‘Bharat Kokila’ by Mahatma Gandhi because of colour, imagery and lyrical quality” (“Sarojini Naidu”) of her poems. Her well known collections of poems are: “*The Golden Threshold* (1905), *The Bird of Time* (1912), *The Broken Wing* (1917) and *The Feather of Dawn* (1961)” (Geetanjali 1047). Her poetry can be divided into different categories based on the different subjects dealt in her poems like “nature, love, life and death, the Indian folk life and patriotism” (Ashraf 4).

The poems “Saturday Market” and “In The Bazaars of Hyderabad” mirror the distinct style of both poets which originates from distinct societies, that is English society and Indian society respectively. The title of the poem “Saturday Market” published in 1921 suggests and describes the market which is open on Saturday because Saturday is observed as holiday in English culture as per Christian calendar. The market on Saturday reflects the Western tradition as “Christ “rested” on the seventh day. It makes sense to me that seventh day of rest should follow the six days of labor. Sabbath means “rest” and labor should come before rest (Exodus 20: 9-10). Saturday is the last day of the week—the day of REST” (Pittack and Divinity 102). The day Saturday is considered as rest day and there is holiday, therefore, people can rest, have fun and can go to market to buy the necessary items. Again Charlotte Mew says:

In Saturday’s Market there’s eggs a ‘plenty
And dead-alive ducks with their legs tied down,
Grey old gaffers and boys of twenty—
Girls and the women of the town—
Pitchers and sugar-sticks, ribbons and laces,
Poises and whips and dicky-birds’ seed,
Silver pieces and smiling faces,
In Saturday Market they’ve all they need. (Mew)

“Eggs a’plenty”, “dead-alive ducks”, “Grey old gaffers”, “Pitchers and sugar-sticks”, “ribbons and laces”, “Silver pieces” (Mew) echo the culture of English society. For instance “egg” is considered as the most important item in the breakfast in London: “For breakfast, of eggs, coffee, bread, fish” (*The London Encyclopedia* 714). Furthermore, egg has religious significance in London society, for example Easter egg. “Duck” is the most important part of “Sunday roast”, a “British and Irish meal” (“Duck as Food”, and “Culture of England”). Moreover, an English Christmas dinner traditionally consists of roast goose, duck or turkey (“Culture of England”). The word “gaffer” is used for “an old man, a boss or supervisor” (“Gaffer”, *Dictionary.com*) in British informal. “Pitcher” in British and American language is called as “Jug” (“pitcher”, *Cambridge Dictionary*). “Sugar-stick” also called as “candy cane” often associated with Christmas tide as well as Saint Nicholas Day (“Candy cane”). “Ribbons” has a great significance in English culture. It is used for decoration during celebration: “A ribbon of colour is being used to brighten Coventry during its City of Culture year” (BBC). Ribbons are used by English women to decorate their hair and dresses (Parmal). “Lace” in 1500s in England was mostly “cutwork” (“Lace”) which is an: “openwork embroidery in which the ground fabric is cut out about the pattern” (“cutwork”, *Dictionary.com*). “Silver pieces” also known as “silver coins” or “silver sceattas were a popular type of coin in England, the Netherlands and the Frisian region. The penny was a popular interregional silver coin, thus being known in several different languages as ‘penny’ (English)” (“Silver coin”). The language of the poem “Saturday Market” is simple and easy to understand but when it comes to Indian learners, they have to search for the background of these mentioned things and words for comprehension.

The poem “In The Bazaars of Hyderabad” published in 1912 reflects the “Indian life” (Rao, Foreword iii) as it is rooted in Indian culture: “The tempo of Indian life must be infused into our English expression...” (Rao, Foreword iii). Indian style of expression must be infused when Indians express

themselves in English. The words like “Turbans of crimson and silver”, “Mirrors with panels of amber”, “Daggers with handles of jade”, “Saffron and lentil and rice”, “Sandalwood, henna, and spice” and a maiden is grinding, “anklet”, all are reflections of indigenous culture. “Turban” in Indian culture is commonly called as “*pagri* meaning the headdress that is worn by men and is manually tied.” The colour, shape and size vary according to the “region or religion.” Colours of the *pagri*:

...are often chosen to suit the occasion or circumstance: for example saffron, associated with valour...is worn during rallies; white, associated with peace, is worn by elders; and pink, associated with spring, is worn during that season or for marriage ceremonies. (“Turban”)

“Mirrors with panels of amber” refers to traditional looking mirrors having orange/yellow edges in India. “Daggers with handles of jade”: “Dagger” is “a short, pointed knife” (“dagger”, *Cambridge Dictionary*), “with handles of jade”-“Jade” is “a bright green colour” (“jade”, *Cambridge Dictionary*). India is well-known “for its craftsman tradition of using large amounts of green serpentine or *false jade* obtained primarily from Afghanistan in order to fashion jewellery and ornamental items such as sword hilts and dagger handles” (“Jade”, *Wikipedia*). “Saffron and lentil and rice”: “Saffron (kesari)” in India is used to impart:

...sweet, slightly bitter flavor and a bright-yellow color to meat and rice dishes, especially *biryanis*, and to milk-based desserts. A few strands soaked in water or milk are added to a dish at the very end of cooking...saffron was introduced by the Mughals to India. It also plays a role in Hindu rites and is used to dye the robes of Hindu and Buddhist priests. (Sen 59)

In India “lentils are staple” (“Lentil”). Sandalwood (*Santalum album L./S. album*) has great significance in Indian Culture:

Indian sandalwood has been inseparable part of Indian culture and tradition. Its utilization has been witnessed from the Indus valley civilization to the present modern era. Sandalwood tree is being grown in the home gardens of many households in south Indian states. Traditionally, it is believed that growing *S. album* in one’s backyard would bring prosperity in life (as Goddess Lakshmi resides in), wards off evil spirits and delete the harmful effects of black magic. Thus, it could be said that this traditional belief knowingly or unknowingly has paved the way for effective conservation of this flagship species. Furthermore, the present era has tremendous commercial value for Indian sandalwood in National and International markets. *S. album* has always held important place not only in Hindu religion but in almost all the religions. The Epics, Scriptures, Vedas, Puranas and Buddhist literatures are contained with reference of the significance of *S. album*. The sacredness of *S. album* is also witnessed in Indian mythology. All these factors signify its importance to mankind and should be considered for conservation in its natural stands. (C. and Manohara 239)

Similarly, “henna, and spice” are the integral ingredients of Indian culture.

The echoes of indigenous culture can be found in the writings of other writers who write in English, for example R.K. Narayan's novels like:

'CONQUER TASTE, AND you will have conquered the self'....Jagan sat under the framed picture of the Goddess Lakshmi hanging on the wall, and offered prayers first thing in the day by reverently placing a string of jasmine on top of the flame; he also lit an incense stick and stuck it in a crevice in the wall. The air was charged with the scent of jasmine and incense and imperceptibly blended with the fragrance of sweetmeats frying in ghee, in the kitchen across the hall. (Narayan, *The Vendor* 1)

When Indian writers write in English, their writings reflect Indian ways of living and thinking, Indian rituals, etc, "In recent years the socio-cultural impact and the linguistic setting of many non-English speaking countries have contributed towards the growth of a *new idiom* of English especially in West Africa, India, the Philippines, etc." (Kachru, "The Indianness" 393). One cannot deny social and cultural impact on the formal features of English language. Hence, the poem "In The Bazaars of Hyderabad" composed by Sarojini Naidu is replete with images of Indian culture and tradition.

According to Raja Rao, English language is not an alien language to Indians "English is not really an alien language to us" (Rao, Foreword iii) as a language belongs where it lives but Indians should bring "Indianness" (Kachru, "The Indianness" 391) to English language as an Indian thinks like an Indian, speaks like an Indian, understands like an Indian, that is a native's thoughts and likings are deeply rooted in the Indian social environment and culture. Raja Rao further adds a new dimension to the perspective when he states: "We cannot write like the English. We should not. We cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as part of us. Our method of expression therefore has to be dialect which will some day prove to be distinctive and colourful..." (Rao, Foreword iii). Raja Rao states that we neither write like English nor we write like Indians as exposure to the world and different cultures of the world has brought changes and modifications in Indian culture. Further, English is a global language; Indians have to acquire skill in this language as it is a key to the global world. However, when we express ourselves in English, we cannot help to avoid our 'Indianness' into it. Hence, English remains "...the language of our intellectual make-up...but not of our emotional make-up" (Rao, Foreword iii). In private and emotional expressions, Indians can never be the English but only Indians as they are rooted in 'Indianness'. Sarojini Naidu in the poem "In The Bazaars of Hyderabad" retains the Indian subjects and words like "Turbans of crimson and silver", "Saffron and lentil and rice", "Sandalwood, henna, and spice" and a maiden is "grinding", "anklet", "Sheets of white blossoms new-garnered To perfume the sleep of the dead", "Cithar, Sarangi, drum" (Naidu) so that the Indian readers identify and understand and appreciate the nuance of thoughts expressed by the poet. Even the contemporary Indian writers and novelists like Bharati Mukherjee also keep hold of 'Indianness' in her writing, for illustration the title of her novel *The Tree Bride* (2004).

It is obvious that the touch and taste of local/regional languages will intrude into English language. For example dishes like *Halwa*, *Pani Puri*, *Ladoo*, *Jalebi* are easily understood by Indians. However, when the indigenous words 'Halwa' is translated into 'pudding' or 'porridge' and 'Pani Puri' into 'water balls', 'Ladoo' into 'sweet balls' and 'Jalebi' into 'funnel cake' it creates confusion in the minds of the native students. According to Braj B. Kachru, "Indian user does not have command over a

wide REGISTER-RANGE in English, and this, naturally, results in REGISTER-CONFUSION. By register-confusion I mean the use of a REGISTER-BOUND item in another register of English where such an item is not normally used in the natively used varieties of English" (Kachru, "The Indianness" 396).

Similarly, "Saffron" and "Henna" (Naidu) are the items which can be found in specific Indian regions and which only local students can understand what items are talked about: "In India an *idiom* of English has developed which is Indian in the sense that there are formal and contextual exponents of 'Indianness' in such writing, and the *defining-context* of such idiom is the Indian setting. I believe that the Indian deviations can be better understood after one takes into consideration the linguistic and cultural setting of India" (Kachru, "The Indianness" 396).

The other problem which Indian English learner faces is grammatical structure because "We have neither punctuation nor the treacherous 'ats' and 'ons' to bother us" (Rao, Foreword iv). In Indian languages which come to Indians as mother language and first language, has no such botheration of punctuation and preposition. Hence, the process of English learning should include "Indianization" (Kachru, "The Indianness" 399) to prepare the Indian English learners for glocal period as only Indian writers and Indian teachers know what problems are faced by Indian English learners.

To conclude, Indian English is bonded in the socio-cultural setting of India and the "competence and proficiency of "educated" Indians varies significantly in their uses of English" Kachru, ("The Indianness" 393). Further, the "phonological and grammatical deviations are only a part of this process of Indianization" (410). Hence, in order to improve the English comprehension and communication skills among Indians, the literary works written by Indian writers need to be prescribed as local writings play a pivotal role to prepare them for glocal, which is both global and local communication.

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