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Contents

IS MARKETING IMPORTANT FOR THE SURVIVAL OF INDEPENDENT RETAILERS IN SOUTH AFRICA? VINCENT FUNANI MAKHUBELA, LOUISE VAN SCHEERS & KHATHUTSHELO MAKHITHA	1 - 10
GREEN MARKETING IN INDIA: EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES Dr. T. DANALAKSHMI	11 - 20
MARGINALIZATION IN THE MIDST OF HIGH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: MARINE FISHERMEN COMMUNITY IN KERALA Dr. S.R. SHEEJA	21 - 26
THE ISSUE OF SECOND GREEN REVOLUTION-A PATH TO NEW AGRICULTURE Dr. M. MANI	27 - 32
BANK SIGNATURE VERIFICATION AND AUTHENTICATION Dr. V. S. SOMANATH	33 - 38

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Contents

DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MICRO-CREDIT FINANCE AND SHGS TO SHARE – A SELECTED CASE STUDIES K.PRABAKARAN & Dr. G. YOGANANDHAM	39 - 48
PROTEST SYNDROME- A CRITICAL STUDY ON K.A.GUNASEKARAN'S "SCAR" D. SOLOMON PAUL RAJ & Dr. T. MURALEESWARI	49 - 54
CASTE SYSTEM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN CULTURE Fr. M.G SELVINRAJ SJ	55 - 72
HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN AND THE SATANIC VERSES S. ANANDH RAJ & S. GOPI KRISHNAN	73 - 80
CROSS BORDER E-COMMERCE IN INDIA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES Dr. V. S. SOMANATH	81 - 92
NATURE & THE THIRD GENDER; ASSIGNING TRANSGENDERNESS TO NATURE G. RAJKUMAR	93 - 98

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IS MARKETING IMPORTANT FOR THE SURVIVAL OF INDEPENDENT RETAILERS IN SOUTH AFRICA?

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Abstract

In this secondary research study the question researched was, is marketing important for the survival of independent retailers in South Africa (SA). The study has investigated the marketing challenges that have an impact on the survival of independent retailers in SA. Furthermore, an investigation on which marketing strategies of small independent retailers in SA can adopt to be competitive was conducted. Thus, the research concludes that marketing strategy plays a vital role in the survival of independent retailers in SA. The findings of the study demonstrate that competition is the major challenge that independent retailer's in SA face in order to survive, which is supported by existing research findings.

Key Words: Independent retailers, Marketing, Marketing communication, South Africa and Competitive advantage.

1 INTRODUCTION

Marketing in small independent retailers is limited and often relies on the application of marketing theory that has been developed for large companies and which is then applied to smaller companies (Gabrielli & Balboni, 2010:278). Therefore, Cant (2012:1107) support the statement by highlighting that not much marketing is utilised by small independent retailers, and this could be a contributing factor to the failure rate among small independent retailers in South Africa. Marketing contributes

positively towards the development of small independent retailers (Walsh & Lipinski, 2009). Hence, Van Scheers (2011:5049) mentions that there is a great need for managers in small independent retailers to recognise and expand the marketing plan for their goods and services, as marketing determines the success of small independent retailers in the long term. Therefore, it is essential for small independent retailers to formulate and maintain sound marketing strategies in order to survive and to successfully compete with other large retailers in South Africa.

2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research undertook secondary research to establish whether marketing is important for the survival of independent retailers in SA. The study was essentially word-based as the reviews of several literatures were consulted.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Several relevant authors were reviewed to understand the impact that marketing plays in the survival of independent retailers in SA. The study will first define independent retailers, discuss the survival of the independent retailers in SA, marketing communication; and discuss why marketing is important for independent retailers in order for them to gain a competitive advantage.

DEFINING INDEPENDENT RETAILERS

Levy, Weitz and Grewal (2014:7) define retail as a place where final products and services are made available to the end user. Therefore, with regards to small business, a small business is defined as an independent and separate business that is managed by a single owner (Kruger, 2012:7). Furthermore, small business is an independent and a separate business that is managed by a single owner (Kruger, 2012:7). South African small independent retailers' fall into the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) definition of small, medium, and micro enterprise (SMME) and they are businesses which are privately owned; and do not belong to any large retailer (Makhitha, 2016:258). Given the above definitions, in general, independent retailers are small businesses that are independently and privately owned and do not have branches in other locations as they do not belong to any large retailer. Small independent retailers such as Spazashops, independent supermarkets, and general dealers are known intermediaries for selling goods and services for consumption use. For the purpose of this article, small businesses, SME's and SMME's will be referred to as small independent retailers.

MARKETING STRATEGY FOR SURVIVAL OF INDEPENDENT RETAILERS

Wiid (2014:6) explain marketing strategy as a planning process that establishes and maintains the relationship with new and current consumers. The statement above is supported by Mongay (2006:3) to highlight that marketing strategies are methods used by companies to analyse and exploit opportunities to sustain a competitive advantage and to attain maximum sales through market research and advertising. Marketing strategy begins with a market research which includes assessing attitudes and competitor's products; and continues through customer services, promotion, distribution, packaging, sales and advertising (Chiliya, 2009:70). According to Cant

and Van Heerden (2010:17), the marketing strategy process is well known as the four Ps; namely the product that is sold at the store, the place where the product is stored and distributed, a price that reflects the value of the product; and promotion which is the marketing strategy to inform the consumers about the product.

The function of marketing within the company refers to the tasks which enable the company to identify and source products for the market; and then recommend them by ensuring that they differentiate themselves from their competitors (Business Dictionary, 2014). Customarily, additional function of marketing within the company comprises marketing research, marketing planning, developing product, advertising strategy, distribution channel, promotion, public relations and providing an excellent customer service (Business Dictionary, 2014).

According to Reijonen (2009), marketing is relevant to both large and small businesses and basic marketing principles are equally pertinent to both. However, marketing is the big challenge that small independent retailers encounter whilst running their businesses and this is caused by the fact that entrepreneurs have a poor understating of the marketing theory (Simpson & Taylor, 2002). Churchill and Lewis (1983) discuss that marketing is an issue in the business lifespan and therefore, entrepreneurs are responsible for taking care of the marketing function within the business.

Entrepreneurs have different priorities and utilise different marketing activities during the development of their businesses (Harker & Lam, 2013). The small independent retailers market their businesses different from large retailers and they are compensated for the absence of marketing knowledge by focusing on other marketing activities either than networking or engaging with consumers (Brindley et al., 2011). Kirby and Siu (1998) argued that a large number of small independent retailers during their formative stage do not have marketing activities or formal marketing systems in place. Similarity, Holliman, Parrott and Roomi (2010) discussed that small independent retailers have a tendency of relying on local knowledge, connections, contacts and networks in order to reach out to the market. Small independent retailers do not implement formal marketing strategies because they rely entirely on gut feelings and their associates to reach out to the market.

Small independent retailers start to create formal marketing strategies when the business becomes more in tune with the market and can provide excellent opportunities to consumers, together with the value offer which have a distinctive capability (Parnell & Spillian, 2006). Small independent retailers which involve marketing strategies tend to have characteristics such as an excellent product and service decision making skills, a decent relationship with consumers, sound competitor analysis and become knowledgeable about the industry they operate in (Carson, Gilmore & O'Dwyer, 2009).

A number of small independent retailers do not have the resources and skills to plan the marketing activities that might have dire consequences down the line (Jones & Rowley, 2012). Marjanova and Stojanovski (2012) further this notion by highlighting

that small independent retailers are faced with a challenge of having a shortage of marketing skills and knowledge. However, some marketing skills could develop or progress over time. Mpofo and Chigwende (2013) further this discussion by emphasising that due to limited essential resources, small independent retailers within the retail industry do not have marketing activities, which leads to these businesses running a trial-and-error strategy. As a result of trial-and-error strategy, marketing implemented by small independent retailers is characterised as easy-going, negligent, not clear and impulsive marketing strategy, that are seen as undesirable implications for an organisation (Rabie, Cant & Wiid, 2015:80). Therefore, since small independent retailers have limited resources, they will end up planning and implementing simple and less complicated marketing strategies (Coveillo, Brodie & Munro, 2000). Holliman et al, (2010) argued that most small independent retailers overestimate the efficiency of their marketing activities and subsequently fail to exploit the benefits of a sound marketing practice, instead of depending on a gut-feeling when it comes to making decisions regarding marketing strategies and practices.

Small independent retailers utilise marketing strategies which are simple in nature due to limited resources (budget) available to them, and as a result they are not able to take advantage of the marketing benefits such as attracting and retaining consumers, instead, they rely on a gut feeling.

Mpofo and Chigwende (2013:82) mentioned that small independent retailers do not utilise marketing because they have limited marketing resources. For instance, large retailers can afford expensive marketing tools such as advertising using television, national radio stations and employ professional marketing companies such as Premedia and Your Turnkey Digital Marketing Solution. Lekhanya (2010:84) mention that small independent retailers have a limited budget to utilise sales training, sales assistance and other marketing support. Thus, it is not financially feasible for small independent retailers in SA to advertise through television and professional marketing companies and public relation.

Marketing professionals have emphasised that small independent retailers understand marketing in a different way, when compared to large retailers (Wilkes, 2008:5). Wilkes (2008:5) further mentioned that marketing in small independent retailers does not play a vital role as marketing is used instinctively without any strategic plan.

Additional, Carson and Gilmore (2000) highlight that marketing in small independent retailers is dedicated by two pre-requisites which are; the small independent retailer phase of life-cycle and the standards of the industry in which they operate, therefore, as a result they are not able to perform the full scope of conventional marketing strategy. Carson and Gilmore (2000) further suggest an alternative model of small independent retailers marketing, depicted in Figure 1 below.

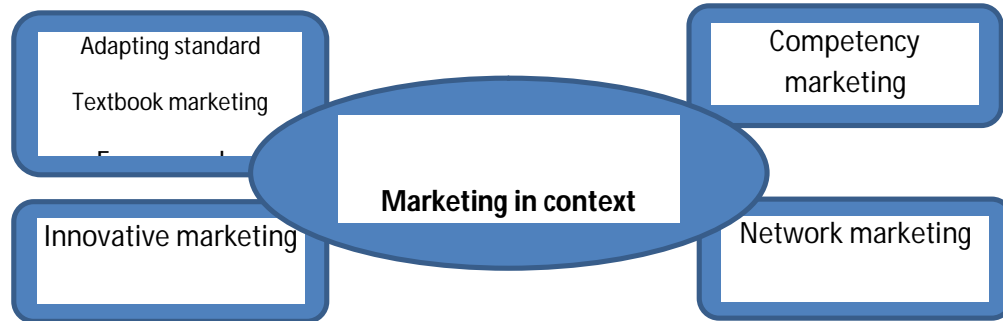


Figure 1: A model of small independent retailers marketing (Carson and Gilmore, 2000)

Large retailers utilise marketing strategy such as purchasing their merchandise in vast quantities in order to receive discount prices (Chikweche, 2015:128). Therefore, independent retailers should also adopt such a marketing strategy. Marketing strategies enable the business to sustain the demand within the market without adjusting the price of their goods and services (Leung, 2015:1). The objective of a marketing strategy is to attract new consumers by assuring them better prices, build a long-term relationship by ensuring customer satisfaction in order to retain them (Kofi & Frimpong, 2014:39).

According to Nair and Chisoro (2015:1) supermarkets provide a wide range of products and services at low prices compared to independent retailers. But even though large retailers set lower prices than independent retailers, independent retailers will still be able to compete efficiently within the retail industry by implementing a price marketing strategy (Bressler 2012:2). The price marketing strategy is seen as a tool to measure the quality of the product, as setting too low prices on products may be perceived as the products being of poor quality (Mariotti & Glackin 2012: 170). Independent retailers are most likely to implement marketing strategy by offering low priced products to the consumers (Deakins & Freel 2012: 223). Box and Miller (2011) indicate that small independent retailers should implement diverse means of differentiating their products, rather than lowering their prices to gain a competitive advantage.

MARKETING COMMUNICATION

The essential marketing strategy for small independent retailers is to engage in communication with the existing consumers (Volkov, 2011:13). Most South African businesses fail because they are not in contact with their consumers on a daily basis and do not provide product information to their consumers (Mbonyane & Ladzani, 2011:553). Hence, the marketing communication strategy assists the independent retailers to be in contact with their customers and to maintain their customer base by enforcing purchasing behaviour with the additional information being communicated to the customer (Abiodun, Stephen, Stephen, Sulaiman & Olumide, 2012:10).

Abiodun et al, (2012:09) explain marketing communication as a key element within any business, and as such an excellent marketing communications strategy provides the customers with the sense that they are making informed decisions with regards to the products they are purchasing. Gabrielli and Balboni (2010:278) observe that small independent retailers use marketing communication that is likely to be unstructured, informal and which conforms to the industry environment of larger business context. As the role of a marketing communication strategy serves to notify, encourage and remind customers about the merchandise they are selling (Kotler & Keller, 2012:476).

The purpose of a marketing communication strategy is to create trust and assurance by laying the foundation for gaining a sustainable competitive advantage and making a profit for a medium-long period (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Therefore, Davidavičienė, Sabaitytė, Davidavičius and Potapov (2014:1265) further state that a marketing communication strategy can be utilised to exchange information between the business and consumers in order to acquire, develop, convey information, improve, understand and gather information about the consumers.

Marketing communication plays a vital role within a business and is used to create awareness and arouse the interest of customers so that they aspire to buy the merchandise (Tsikirayi, Muchenje & Katsidzira, 2013:5). Abiodun et al., (2012:9) state that the marketing communication components include advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, public relations, sponsorship and direct marketing

The marketing communications strategies utilised by businesses can differ in their communication content about the product offering or the operations of the business (Gabrielli & Balboni, 2010:227). Therefore, the marketing communications strategy utilised by large retailers will differ from the marketing communication strategy utilised small independent retailers.

Although small independent retailers do not utilise all the marketing communication elements, they do utilise some marketing communication elements such as advertising, sales promotions and personal selling (word-of-mouth) (Mapheto, Oni & Matiza, 2014:116). Centeno and Hart (2012:260) argued that small independent retailers engage in marketing communication strategies, as the small independent retailers utilise the communication strategies to boost business sales.

IMPORTANCE OF INDEPENDENT RETAILERS

Small independent retailers are informal businesses which are broadly recognised as businesses that are not registered, and their economic activities contribute towards the gross domestic product (GDP) (Ligthelm, 2005:200). These small independent retailers provide a foundation in developing the economies of countries and some countries further initiate's strategies, financial and counselling programmes to support the small independent retailers (Akorsu & Agyapong, 2012:136). Small independent retailers play an important role internationally and further contribute over 50% towards the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and further contribute towards the economies of many countries around the globe (Ilegbinosa & Jumbo, 2015:203).

According to Van Scheers (2011:5048), 90% of the business environment in Africa comprises small businesses and they contribute more than 50% of African employment. In South Africa alone, there are 2 251 821 small businesses, of which 667 433 are formal small businesses, and 1 497 860 are informal small businesses (Anon, 2016:1). Formal businesses operate in the legitimate developed economy and fiscal structure where the business pays tax to the government (Badenhorst-Weiss, Cilliers & Eicker, 2014:369). Small independent retailers contribute between 36% and 45% towards the South African GDP and constitute 60% of the labour force (Naidoo, 2016:8).

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

According to Wiid (2014:172) competitive advantage is defined as the advantage that a business holds as an improvement against its competitors by providing an excellent service that is impossible to replace. As noted by Brinckmann, Grichnik and Kapsa (2010), competitors are part of the industry that may influence the way a business progress. When the business owners are in the planning stage, they should keep in mind their competitors so they can plan ahead their competitors (Brinckmann et al., 2010). Overall, in truth, it is known that South African business owners take their competitors into consideration when they are in the planning stage. Small independent retailers that are successful, sustain competitive advantage by remaining proficient, ensuring consumer's satisfaction and building a long-term relationship with their consumers (Badenhorst-Weiss et al., 2014:2). South African small independent retailers are losing consumers to large retailers because there is ample access for locals to visit the large retailers in SA and consumers are spending more money at these large retailers (Durhum, 2011). Since the development of malls such as Dobsonville shopping centre, Jabulani shopping complex, Maponya mall and Mall of Africa was built; small independent retailers are now being forced to close down due to high levels of competition.

Small independent retailers do not survive a long period within the retail industry because of the high level of competition from their competitors. A lifespan of many small independent retailers is estimated to survive no longer than 5 years (Ligthelm, 2011:169). According to Marjanova and Stojanovsk (2012) the failing rate of small independent retailers is high, regardless of the fact they play a significant role in developing and sustaining the country's economic growth. The reason which has been acknowledged in the study is that there is a high failing rate of small independent retailers is their absence of marketing knowledge and skills to implement marketing strategies which might lead to lower sales and not being competitive active.

Since 2005 South African independent retailers are faced with severe competition from stores owned by immigrants (Charman, Petersen & Piper, 2012:78). In the extreme, South African independent retailers are faced with competition, both from large retailers and retailers owned by immigrants, with the above mentioned,

survival of independent retailers is important, as they contribute to the South African economy.

Das (2015:3) explains that immigrant independent retailers position themselves to compete with South African small independent retailers for their very own survival. Their marketing strategy is to implement discount pricing strategy, where they stock in bulk, then sell the products at a lower price to their consumers, capturing the market from well-established South African stores and are thus becoming favoured by local customers (Das, 2015:3). Immigrant independent retailers employ inexpensive labour by recruiting Somalians; reinforce contractual arrangements networking with a group of elders to oversee the business agreements (Liedeman, Charman, Piper & Petersen, 2013:3). The Somali entrepreneurship business model is essentially based on price competition by purchasing in groups to ensure discounts, to enable micro finance, formulate business partnerships, combined procurement and large distribution networks (Liedeman et al, 2013:3).

Large retailers and immigrant small retailers have a competitive advantage over South African retailers because many South Africans visit the immigrant small retailers and large retailers in shopping malls and neglect South African small retailers. Makhitha (2016:258) discuss that, with the influx of large retailers in South African townships, an increase in small independent retailers closing down is caused by a decline in profit due to the high level of competition that can be observed.

Solomons (2014:32) opine that small independent retailers fail to remain competitive within the retail industry due to the fact that they do not have related experience of the industry, therefore as a result they may misinform the consumer and the consumer may have negative views about the business. Solomons (2014:35) further mention that small independent retailers tend to ignore the competition and believe in the loyalty of their consumers.

4 CONCLUSION

In this secondary research study the question was researched to establish whether marketing is important for the survival of independent retailers in SA? Small independent retailers in SA contribute significantly to the South African employment and economic growth even though they are in the course of setting up and operating, they are faced with marketing difficulties. Marketing challenges have the tendency to slow down the growth of the small independent retailers; the other challenge that is often highlighted is that of communicating effectively with their customers by putting marketing strategies in place.

Lastly, South African small independent retailers are faced with competition from both large retailers and immigrant retailers as there is ample access for local customers to visit these stores. Therefore, there is a great need for owners/managers in small independent retailers to recognise and expand the marketing plan for their goods and services, as marketing determines whether small independent retailers will be successful or not successful in the long run. In addition, small independent

retailers need to utilise marketing strategies to attract and retain local customers, as marketing is important for the survival of small independent retailers in SA.

This research concludes that South African independent retailers do not market their wares effectively and this may be the reason as to why they cannot survive more than five years in the South African retail industry. Therefore, for the survival of independent retailers in SA, it is important for independent retailer owners in SA to adopt the large retailers marketing strategies by implementing, particular marketing strategies, together with utilising marketing communication strategy.

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GREEN MARKETING IN INDIA: EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

*Environmental issues have gained importance in business as well as in public life throughout the world. Green marketing is a phenomenon which has developed particular importance in the modern market and has emerged as an important concept in India as in other parts of the developing and developed world, and is seen as an important strategy of facilitating sustainable development. Green marketing is a tool used by many companies in various industries to follow this trend. Some businesses have been quick to accept concepts like environmental management systems and waste minimization and have integrated environmental issues into all organizational activities. The phrase Green Marketing **green denotes earth** and **marketing means eco-friendly innovation**. Thus green marketing plays an important role to promote and reinforce the idea of environmental protection and sustainable development in the minds of the firms and customer. Many global players in diverse business are now successfully implementing green marketing practices. So, smart business houses have accepted eco-friendly consumption called as green marketing. Green Marketing is nothing but the process of developing products and services and promoting them to satisfy the customers who prefer products of good quality, performance and convenience at suitable cost. The paper identifies the three particular segments of green consumers and explores the challenges and opportunities businesses have with green marketing. The paper also examines the present trends of green marketing in India and describes the reason why companies are adopting it and future of green marketing and concludes that green marketing is something that will continuously grow in both practice and demand. It also focuses SWOT analysis of Green Marketing various challenges and opportunities. some of the problems with green marketing.*

Key Words: Green marketing, Sustainable development, Eco-friendly, Environmental issues. SWOT.

Introduction

Green marketing refers to holistic marketing concept wherein the product, marketing consumption on disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of global warming, non biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc., both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for switch into green products and services. Many people believe that green marketing refers solely to the promotion and advertising of products with environmental characteristics. Generally terms like phosphate free, recyclable, refillable, ozone friendly and environment friendly are most of the things consumers often associated with green marketing.

According to the *American Marketing Association*, green marketing is the marketing of products that are presumed to be environmentally safe. Thus green marketing incorporates a broad range of activities, including product modification, changes to the production process, packaging changes, as well as modifying advertising. "Green Marketing" refers to holistic marketing concept wherein the production, marketing consumption an disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc., both marketers and consumers are becoming increasingly sensitive to the need for switch in to green products and services. While the shift to "green" may appear to be expensive in the short term, it will definitely prove to be indispensable and advantageous, cost-wise too, in the long run.

GREEN MARKETING: CONCEPT

According to Charter (1992), green marketing is defined as 'greener marketing is a holistic and responsible strategic management process that identified, anticipates, satisfies and fulfill stakeholder needs, for reasonable reward, that does not adversely affect human or natural environmental well being'. "Green Marketing" refers to holistic marketing concept wherein the production, marketing consumption an disposal of products and services happen in a manner that is less detrimental to the environment with growing awareness about the implications of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of pollutants etc.

There is a dire need for the marketers and consumers to move to the eco friendly products and services. It was in late 1980s that the concept of green marketing became prominent. The green marketing has evolved over a period of time. According to Peattie (2001), there are three phases of green marketing evolution. • –Ecological|| green marketing • –Environmental|| green marketing • –Sustainable|| green marketing

Challenges in Green Marketing Need for Standardization:-

It is found that only 5% of the marketing messages from “Green” campaigns are entirely true and there is a lack of standardization to authenticate these claims. There is no standardization currently in place to certify a product as organic. Unless some regulatory bodies are involved in providing the certifications there will not be any verifiable means. A standard quality control board needs to be in place for such labeling and licensing.

New Concept:- Indian literate and urban consumer is getting more aware about the merits of Green products. But it is still a new concept for the masses. The consumer needs to be educated and made aware of the environmental threats. The new green movements need to reach the masses and that will take a lot of time and effort. By India's ayurvedic heritage, Indian consumers do appreciate the importance of using natural and herbal beauty products. Indian consumer is exposed to healthy living lifestyles such as yoga and natural food consumption. In those aspects the consumer is already aware and will be inclined to accept the green products.

Patience and Perseverance:- The investors and corporate need to view the environment as a major long-term investment opportunity, the marketers need to look at the long-term benefits from this new green movement. It will require a lot of patience and no immediate results. Since it is a new concept and idea, it will have its own acceptance period.

Avoiding Green Myopia:- The first rule of green marketing is focusing on customer benefits i.e. the primary reason why consumers buy certain products in the first place. Do this right, and motivate consumers to switch brands or even pay a premium for the greener alternative. It is not going to help if a product is developed which is absolutely green in various aspects but does not pass the customer satisfaction criteria. This will lead to green myopia. Also if the green products are priced very high then again it will lose its market acceptability.

COST FACTOR-

The green products are more expensive as a lot of money has to be spent on R&D programs for their development and subsequent promotional programs. Green marketing involves marketing of green products or services, green technology, green power/energy.

CONVINCING CUSTOMERS-

The customers may not believe in the firm's strategy of Green marketing, so the organization should ensure that they undertake all possible measures to convince the customer about their green product, the best possible option is by implementing Eco-labeling schemes.

NON COOPERATION-

The firms committed to Green marketing have to make every effort to persuade the stakeholders and many a times they may fail to convince them about the long term benefits of Green marketing as compared to short term expenses.

SUSTAINABILITY-

When the company switches over to green marketing, the profits are very low since renewable and recyclable goods and green technologies are more costly. Therefore, the business plan has to be for long term rather than short term. The companies should also strive not to fall into the luring of unethical practices to make short term gains.

Some other challenges ahead in green marketing

- Green products require renewable and recyclable materials, which is costly.
- Requires a technology, which requires huge invested in Research and Development.
- Water treatment technology, which is too costly.
- Majority of the people are not aware of green products and their uses
- Majority of the consumers are not willing to pay a premium for green products.

Remedies for Green Marketing Challenges:

- Green Marketing campaign and green advertising is good step towards for educating and make aware of the environmental treats to consumers.
- Make sure that consumer feel that they can make a difference. This is called “empowerment” and due to this main reason consumers will buy greener products.
- Reduce production of harmful goods or by products.
- Modify consumer and industry’s use or consumption of harmful goods.
- An enterprise getting into a green marketing portfolio must be totally aware of what is been expected by its customers as well as the society.
- Green Marketing Strategy should commit everyone in the enterprise management.
- The principles of a green marketing strategy should be strictly defined and controlled periodically.
- The green marketing principles must be communicated to all stakeholders and to the public.
- **Golden rules of Green MarketingØ**
- **Know your customer:** If you want to sell a greener product to consumers, you first need to make sure that the consumer is aware of and concerned about the issues that your product attempts to address.
- **Empower consumers:** Make sure that consumers feel, by themselves or in connect with all the other users of your product, that they can make a difference. This is called “empowerment” and it’s the main reason why consumers buy greener products.
- **Be transparent:** Consumers must believe in the legitimacy of your product and the specific claims you are making. The rest of your business policies are consistent with whatever you are doing that’s environmentally friendly.

- **Reassure the buyer:** Consumers must be made to believe that the product performs the job it's supposed to do they won't forego product quality in the name of the environment.
- **Consider your pricing:** If you are charging a premium for your product and many environmentally preferable products cost more due to economies of scale and use of higher-quality ingredients-make sure that consumer can afford the premium and feel it's worth it. Many consumers, of course, can't afford premiums for any type of product these days, much less greener ones, so keep this in mind as you develop your target audience and product specifications.
- **Social Responsibility** Many firms are beginning to realize that they are members of the wider community and therefore must behave in an environmentally responsible fashion. This translates into firms that believe they must achieve environmental objectives as well as profit related objectives. This results in environmental issues being integrated into the firm's corporate culture. Firms in this situation can take two perspectives:
 - **Opportunities**
 - It appears that all types of consumers, both individual and industrial are becoming more concerned and aware about the natural environment. Nowadays, firms marketing goods with environmental characteristics have realized a competitive advantage over firms marketing non-environmentally responsible alternatives. There are numerous example of firms who have strived to become more environmentally responsible, in an attempt to better satisfy their consumer needs.
 - 1. McDonald's replaced its clam shell packaging with waxed paper because of increased consumer concern relating to polystyrene production and Ozone depletion
 - 2. Tuna manufacturers modified their fishing techniques because of the increased concern over driftnet fishing, and the resulting death of dolphins
 - 3. Xerox introduced a "high quality" recycled photocopier paper in an attempt to satisfy the demands of firms for less environmentally harmful products.
 - **4. Government Pressure: +**
 - As with all marketing related activities, governments want to —protect|| consumer and society; this protection has significant green marketing implications. Government regulation relating to environmental marketing are designed to protect consumers in several ways, Reduce production of harmful goods or by-products modify consumer and industry's use and consumption of harmful goods .Ensure that all types of consumers have the ability to evaluate the environmental composition of goods. Governments establish regulations designed to control the amount of hazardous wastes produced by firms.New Delhi, the India's capital was getting polluted gradually at a very fast pace till Supreme Court of India forced a change of fuel on it. In 2002, a directive was issued to completely adopt CNG in all public transport systems to curb pollution. One of the more recent publicized environmental regulations

undertaken by governments has been the establishment of guidelines designed to "control" green marketing claims. These regulations include the Australian Trade Practices Commission's (TPC) "Environmental Claims in Marketing - A Guideline", the US Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) "Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims" and the regulations suggested by the National Association of Attorneys- General. These regulations are all designed to ensure consumers have the appropriate information which would enable them to evaluate firm's environmental claims 4)

- **Competitive Pressure** Another major force in the environmental marketing area has been firms' desire to maintain their competitive position. In many cases firms observe competitors promoting their environmental behaviors and attempt to emulate this behavior. In some instances this competitive pressure has caused an entire industry to modify and thus reduce its detrimental environmental behavior.
- **Social Responsibility:** Many firms are beginning to realize that they are members of the wider community and therefore must behave in an environmentally responsible fashion. This translates into firms that believe they must achieve environmental objectives as well as profit related objectives. This results in environmental issues being integrated into the firm's corporate culture.

Marketing Mix of Green Marketing:

There are 7 P's like product, price, place, promotion, people, process and physical evidence in marketing, we have 7 P's in green marketing too, but challenge before marketers is to use 7 P's in an innovative manner.

1. Green products:

The products have to be developed depending on the needs of the customers who prefer environment friendly products. Efficient products not only save water, energy and money, but also reduce harmful effects on the environment. The marketer's role in product management includes providing product designers with market trends and customer requests for green products attributes such as energy saving, organic, green chemicals, and local sourcing. E.g. The Sony company has set forth the Sony Group Environmental vision, the goal of which is a zero environmental footprint of their corporate activities. They will strive to achieve this by 2050; their goals for the first phase, which continues through 2015, are outlined in Green Management 2015.

2. Green Price:

Green Pricing takes into consideration the people, planet and profit in a way that takes care of the health of employees and communities and ensures efficient productivity. Most of the consumers will pay additional value if there is preparation of extra product value. E.g. Wall Mart unveiled its first recyclable clothing shopping bag.

3. Place:

Aiming to reduce carbon foot print by way of managing logistics to cut down transport emanations. e.g. instead of marketing an imported mango juice in India it can be licensed for local production. This avoids shipping of the product from far away, this reducing shipping cost more importantly, the consequent carbon emission by the ships and other modes of transport.

4. Green Promotion:

Green Promotion includes configuring the tools of promotion, such as advertising, marketing materials, signature, white papers, web sites, videos and presentations by keeping people, planet and profits in mind. Indian Tobacco Company has green marketing in India introduced environmentally friendly papers and boards, which are free of elemental chlorine.

5. People

'People' is one of the very important elements of service marketing mix. Here people refer to those who are involved in providing the green services. The most important criteria for the provider of the green services is that the people must be 'green' in their mindsets and in their activities otherwise the performance of green services will be at stake.

6. Process

Process is another very important element of service marketing mix. Here process refers to the pedagogy and methodology with the help of which the green services will be provided. It is also very important that the process should be executed such a way so that the main objective of green marketing can be taken care of. The process of green marketing must be executed keeping in mind the greenness of the entire system.

7. Physical Evidence

As services are basically intangible in nature so for increasing the credibility and reliability of the service we need to give some tangible touches to the intangibles and that can best be done by giving some physical evidences. In case of Green Marketing the physical evidences must be given from a very much holistic point of view so that the purpose of keeping the greenness of the entire system safely protected

GREEN MARKETING: SWOT ANALYSIS

As in formulation of green strategy, a firm may evolve it from a SWOT analysis Environmental Audit

STRENGTHS:

- Marketers get access to new markets and gain an advantage over competitors that are not focusing on—greenness.
- Marketers can charge a premium on products that are seen as more eco-responsible.
- Organizations that adopt green marketing are perceived to be more socially responsible.

- Green marketing builds brand equity and wins brand loyalty among customers
E.g. research and development capabilities for clean processes and green products and human resources committed to environmental protection.

WEAKNESS:

- Most customers choose to satisfy their personal needs before caring for environment.
- Overemphasizing greenness rather than customer needs can prove devastating for a product.
- Many customers keep away from products labeled –Green|| because they see such labeling as a marketing gimmick, and they may lose trust in an organization that suddenly claims to be green. E.g. products cannot be recycled, and hazardous wastes of a company.

OPPORTUNITIES:

- Marketing to segment which are becoming more environmentally aware and concerned. These consumers are demanding products that conform to these new attitudes.
- Organizations perceive green marketing to be a competitive advantage, relative to the competitors. Firms, therefore, strive to improve upon their societal awareness.
- This complements the increase in consumers' socially conscious behavior and will therefore give them an advantage over competitors who do not address these issues E.g. offering an environmental friendly product and saving resources, and relating them .

THREATS:

- Uncertainty as to the environmental impact of present activities, including that is perceived to be less environmentally harmful.
- Uncertainty as to which green marketing activities are acceptable from a government perspective.
- The possibility of a backlash from consumers or government based on existing green marketing claims, threat one and two above may cause backlash to arise .E.g. competitors gain market shares with green *products and increased environmental regulations*).

Suggestions:

Green marketing is still in its infancy and a lot of research is to be done on green marketing to fully explore its potential. There are some suggestion that an organizations should implement for catering challenges of green marketing and successful exploitation of green marketing. Those are

- Consumer needs to be made more aware about the merits of Green products. It is still a new concept for the masses.

- The consumer needs to be educated and made aware of the environmental threats. It should be made sure that the consumer is aware of and concerned about the issues that your product attempts to address.
- Green Marketing campaign and green advertising is good step toward it.
- Consumers must be motivated to switch brands or even pay a premium for the greener alternative. Make sure that consumer feel that they can make a difference. This is called –empowerment|| and due to this main reason consumers will buy greener products.
- For effective and efficient implementation of this concept of Green Marketing the factor that plays a major role is the Government. Unless the government creates specific and stringent laws and utilizes its authority to implement them the concept cannot be conceptualized.
- If the Consumer, the Organization and the Government work in unison towards the common goal of minimizing the detrimental environmental impact of their activities,
- Green Marketing In India: Emerging Opportunities And Challenges www.iosrjournals.org 73 | Page then they can surely save this environment and make this world a better place to live in. Thus leading brands should recognize that consumer expectations have changed. It is not enough for a company to green its products; consumers expect the products at they purchase pocket friendly and also to help reduce the environmental impact in their own lives too.
- Today's consumers are becoming more and more conscious about the environment and are also becoming socially responsible. Therefore, more companies should become responsible to consumers' aspirations.
- Many companies want to have an early mover advantage as they have to eventually move towards becoming green. Green marketing is very low on the agenda of most businesses and therefore its still an underleveraged USP (Unique Selling Proposition). Therefore, effective green marketing targeted at the right audience will make a difference.

Conclusion

Now this is the right time to select –Green Marketing|| globally. It will come with drastic change in the world of business if all nations will make strict roles because green marketing is essential to save world from pollution. From the business point of view because a clever marketer is one who not only convinces the consumer, but also involves the consumer in marketing his product. With the threat of global warming looming large, it is extremely important that green marketing becomes the norm rather than an exception. Recycling of paper, metals, plastics, etc., in a safe and environmentally harmless manner should become much more systematized and universal. It has to become the general norm to use energy-efficient lamps and other electrical goods. Marketers also have the responsibility to make the consumers understand the need for and benefits of green products as compared to non-green ones. In green marketing, consumers are willing to pay more to maintain a cleaner

and greener environment. Green marketing assumes even more importance and relevance in developing countries.

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MARGINALIZATION IN THE MIDST OF HIGH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: MARINE FISHERMEN COMMUNITY IN KERALA

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Abstract

The state has received world-wide attention for accomplishing very high level of human development. However, a close examination of Kerala's development experience reveals the presence of some 'outlier' communities within the state's socio- economic fabric. The present paper attempts to highlight the deprived socio-economic conditions of marine fisher folk in Kerala. Despite all the welfare measures implemented by the state and central governments, the fisher- folk continue to be one of the most deprived communities in the state. Unlike other vulnerable sections of the society like SC and ST, the extent of marginalization is not uniform among the fisher-folk and there are inter-regional and inter- district variations among fishermen community. The marine fisher-folk of Thiruvananthapuram district are found to be the most vulnerable among fishermen community in Kerala. The paper points out that local governments, voluntary agencies and social action groups have a critical role in enhancing the well being of the fishermen community.

Key Words: Deprivation, Fisher –folk, Livelihood, Marginalization.

Introduction

Among various states in India, Kerala's achievements in social sector development are remarkable. Compared to other states, it has very high levels of literacy, life expectancy, lower birth rate, lower death rate, lower infant mortality rate, favourable sex ratio etc. The state has received world-wide attention for accomplishing very high level of human development with low per capita income. Of course, historical factors and successful implementation of several policies in the field of land reforms, health and education have contributed to this. A close examination of Kerala's development experience reveals the presence of some 'outlier' communities in

the in the state's socio- economic fabric (Kurien, 1995) such as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the fisher-folk. There is the co-existence of exclusion in certain areas with very high social sector development in general and this has been considered as a major limitation of 'Kerala model of development'. Even during the turnaround phase no significant improvement was found in the living conditions of these marginalized communities.

Kerala has a coast line of 590 km, spread over 9 districts, which accounts for approximately 10% of India's coast line. Thiruvananthapuram, Kolam, Alappuzha, Eranakulam, Trissur, Malappuram, Kozhikkode, Kannur and Kazargod are the marine districts of Kerala. Fisheries is an important sector of the state's economy. Kerala contributes about 20% of marine fish production and 16% of sea food export earnings of India. At present, the contribution of fisheries sector to Kerala's state domestic product is 1.58% while the share of fisheries in national GDP is only 0.78%. Moreover, this sector accounts for nearly 10.13 % of the Kerala's SDP from primary sector while the corresponding figure for the national economy is 4.47% (Government of Kerala, 2014). Total amount of foreign exchange obtained by the export of marine products from the state is around Rs.1700 crore. Europe, Middle East, Japan and USA are the major export destinations of marine products of the state. All these figures point out the importance of fishing and allied activities in Kerala economy.

Most of the people in coastal areas of Kerala depend on fishing and allied activities for their livelihood. To traditional fishermen living in the coastal areas, fishing is their only means of livelihood. There are 222 fishing villages in the state and the total fishermen population is estimated to be around 10.18 lakh. Unlike the case of general population in the state, the proportion of child population is higher among the fishing community (Government of Kerala, 2012). This is an indicator of the backwardness of the fisher-folk in demographic transition. It is ironic that, despite the remarkable contributions of fisheries sector to Kerala economy, fisher-folk of in Kerala are still under the clutches of poverty, illiteracy and malnutrition. An attempt has been made in this paper to highlight the deprived socio-economic conditions of marine fisher folk in the midst of high human development achieved by Kerala.

Marginalisation of Marine Fisher - folk

The fishermen community, which constitutes nearly 3.5% of Kerala's total population occupies a significant position in the socio-economic composition of the state. Out of the 10.18 lakhs of fishermen in Kerala, 7.75 lakhs are marine fishermen. The fishermen community suffers from a large number of social and economic impediments. Both the central and the state governments have implemented a large number of welfare activities including housing schemes, educational concessions, savings cum relief schemes, pension schemes, and insurance coverage to the marine fisher-folk to improve their socio- economic conditions. All these schemes aim to provide social security and livelihood support to the fishermen. Certainly, these government initiatives have provided many facilities in the coastal regions. However,

despite all these welfare measures, the fisher- folk continue to be one of the most deprived communities in the state.

There are a large number of reasons for the extreme deprivation of the fishermen community. Since 1970s there has been considerable decline in the output of fisheries sector and in its contribution to Net State Domestic Product. Fishing is the only means of livelihood for a traditional fisherman and factors like variability in catch, technology upgrades, over capitalization, rising costs, aggressive fishing, overcrowding, etc. make income from fishing and related occupations uncertain. Within the fisheries sector, a highly organized sector using massive capital inputs exists along with traditional subsistence sector. There is wide disparity between the income of people engaged in these two sectors. In the process of modernisation and commercialisation, the most affected segment is the traditional fisheries sector. Increasing capital requirements and low disposable income available with the traditional fishermen do not allow them to go for modernisation and come out of vicious circle of low income, poverty and indebtedness. Depleting marine resource base and decreasing number of working days intensifies the problem.

Depletion of marine resources particularly the commonly caught varieties along the coastal areas of the state make the life of traditional marine fishermen community deplorable. The preference of fishing community to live near the sea increases the pressure on coastal resources, often, leading to overcrowding and conditions of poor hygiene and sanitation. Increase in population density adversely affects ownership of land, housing conditions and sanitation facilities. The issue of landlessness is a serious issue among the fisher-folk and most often majority of the fishermen are unable to benefit from the housing schemes due to lack of ownership of land. Declining catches and increasingly vulnerable livelihoods force fishermen to borrow money from moneylenders, who exploit them with high rates of interest. Other factors like the absence of clear rights to the marine resources, the interference of middlemen in the fish market, perishable nature of the commodity, seasonal nature of the catch etc. also have a bearing on the backwardness of the marine fisher-folk (Kurien, 1995). Moreover, traditional fishing communities are extremely vulnerable to natural calamities, such as cyclones and tsunami. Either too market centric or a wholly conservation oriented approach of the state also affect the livelihoods of millions of fishermen who have no alternative other than fishing and allied activities.

While the state and the national economy is driving towards a structural transformation from primary to other sectors, the marine fisher folk of Kerala is still trapped in their traditional occupation which often fails to provide minimum necessities of life. Certainly, the marine fishing community has been able to catch up with others in terms of elementary education. However, the fisher –folk depicts a dismal picture in higher education as their performance is much worse than any other deprived community of Kerala (Kerala state Planning Board, 2009). Similar to the case of education, fishing villages are comparatively back ward in health related aspects also. The community is deprived of basic facilities such as drinking water, sanitation and hygiene.

Demographic indicators like population growth rate, sex ratio and infant mortality among the fisher folk reveal the prevalence of gender injustice. Contradictory to the general case of Kerala, sex ratio among the fisher- folk population is very low (Government of Kerala, 2009). In comparison with their male counterparts, women in the fishing community are in a much more disadvantageous position. Despite having high participation of women in fisheries related work, fisher women suffer from sustained deprivation even in basic aspects of well being.

Inter-District Variations

Although there are nine coastal districts in Kerala, nearly 47.40% of marine fishermen population in the state belong to three districts: Thiruvananthapuram, Alappuzha and Kozhikkode. Maximum number of fishermen families and marine population (22.2%) are in Thiruvananthapuram district followed by Alappuzha (13.90%) and Kozhikkode (12.30%). Within Thiruvananthapuram district fisher- folk constitute 4.4% of total population.

The extent of marginalization is also not uniform among the fisher folk and there are inter- regional or inter- district variations among fishermen community. Fisher folk of Kerala belong to three religious groups such as Hindus, Muslims and Christians. While Latin Catholics dominate the southern districts, Muslims dominates the northern districts and larger number of Hindus are found in the central part of Kerala. Unlike other vulnerable sections of the society like SC and ST, socio-economic conditions of fishermen vary across regions and religious groups.

As compared to the general population and other marginalised communities, landlessness is a serious issue among the fisher-folk. A district-wise distribution of the proportion of landless fishermen and population density in the coastal area is given in Table 1. Among the five districts, highest percentage (68%) of landless households are in Thiruvannanthapuram district followed by Kannur where 56% of the fisher folk are landless. Highest population density along the coastal area is also found in Thiruvananthapuram district. Malappuram occupies the second position regarding population density. According to Human Development Report HDR of Fisherfolk (2009), Thiruvananthapuram has the largest percentage of households closer to the sea as well as the largest percentage of damaged houses also. Housing condition is also worse in Trivandrum district as compared to other districts.

Table 1
District –wise Distribution of Landless Households
And Population Density in the Coastal Area

District	Land less households (Percentage)	Population Density
Thiruvananthapuram	68	3752
Alappuzha	42	2245
Eranakulam	18	1830
Malappuram	5	2803
Kannur	56	682

Source: HDR Fisherfolk (2009), CMFRI 2010

According to Human development Report of Fisher folk of Kerala (2009), in terms of most of the indicators of well-being, the marine fisher-folk of Thiruvananthapuram are the most vulnerable among fishermen community in Kerala. On the basis of a deprivation index constructed to gauge the vulnerability of the community, the report highlights the fact that relative deprivation of fisher folk of Thiruvananthapuram district is much higher than that of both Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities. The relative deprivation index has been measured in terms of indicators like drinking water, electricity, sanitation and housing using the methodology used by UNDP.

Based on BPL survey 2009, Oommen and Shyjan (2014) constructed a deprivation index using landlessness also as an indicator of deprivation in addition to the indicators like drinking water, electricity, sanitation and housing using a slightly extended method of UNDP. As shown in Table 2, when landlessness was also included higher deprivation indices were obtained in all districts and also for the state. According to both the studies the deprivation index was found to be highest in Thiruvananthapuram district. This clearly point out that the marine fisher-folk of Thiruvananthapuram are the most vulnerable among fishermen community in Kerala.

Table 2
District-wise Deprivation Index for fisher-folk

District	Deprivation Index	
	2009	2014
Thiruvananthapuram	48.74	61.0
Alappuzha	37.32	54.1
Eranakulam	26.79	35.8
Malappuram	24.44	60.4
Kannur	7.19	25.6
Kerala	28.34	43.4

Sources: HDR Fisherfolk (2009), Oommen and Shyjan (2014)

In terms of educational attainment and health status also, marine fishing community of Thiruvananthapuram district is far behind their counterparts in other districts. Literacy rate of the fisher-folk in Thiruvananthapuram is much lower as compared to other districts in the state. More than 15 percent of the fishermen population in the district are illiterates (Human Development Report of Fisherfolk, 2009). Like educational attainment, deprivation in basic amenities has adversely affected the health status of the fisher men also. Relatively higher incidence of diseases in Thiruvannanthapuram district can be linked to relatively poor conditions in housing, sanitation, drinking water and hygiene etc. Deprivation indices constructed by various studies and data regarding education and health status clearly reveals the deplorable condition of marine fisher folk in Thiruvananthapuram district.

If some regions or some communities are lagging behind others, policy interventions are required to enable them to catch up with the rest of the world. Such interventions are essential to reduce economic inequalities as well as social disparities. Certainly, state's initiatives are instrumental in reducing the problems of marginalised sections in the society and government support is a mirror of how society values the welfare of the deprived.

Conclusion

Over past decades there have been many policy initiatives to address the problems outliers in socio economic fabric of Kerala. However, despite all these, the fisher folk continue to be one of the most deprived communities in the state and in certain regions the relative deprivation is much higher. To a great extent, sustainability of marine fisheries economy depends on the protection and promotion given to the traditional sector. Here, the question arises why public action does not permeate into the marine fishing community. It is high time to have a re-assessment of the role of state in the process of inclusion of the fisher-folk. As rightly pointed out in Oommen and Shyjan (2014), compared to the central and state governments, local governments can play a more critical role in enhancing the capabilities of poor fisher workers and thereby enabling them to participate and gain from new opportunities associated with growth. Similarly, voluntary agencies and social action groups also have very important role in promoting the well being of fisher-folk. The formation and activities of SHGs have been considered as instrumental mechanisms to facilitate fishermen who have traditionally been excluded from formal financial institutions. To conclude, some serious research attempts are required to examine how democratic decentralization and group efforts can increase the societal reach of economic progress and thereby include the historically marginalized communities into the mainstream.

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THE ISSUE OF SECOND GREEN REVOLUTION-A PATH TO NEW AGRICULTURE

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Abstract

In the last three decades, productivity increases for the major cereals, rice, wheat and maize, have been a result of the incorporation of scientific advances in plant breeding with technological packages that have allowed the yield potential of the crops to be realized more fully and under conditions experienced by farmers from developing countries. These increases have been called the green revolution. Scientific advances have been supported by significant growth in the commercial sectors providing inputs to agriculture; infrastructures have improved to cover large and small farmers previously beyond the reach of technological innovations. All over India rural revivalists are rejecting the corporatised, programmatic, high-input model of agriculture and following agro-ecological approaches in which shared, distributed knowledge systems provide ways to adapt to changing climate and a shrinking natural resource base. An attempt has been made to delve the issues related to the second green revolution and how it could lead path to new agriculture.

Key Words: Agriculture, Globalised, Bureaucracy and Ecological.

1. BACKGROUND

There are two schools of practice that are used to describe agricultural activity in India. One is the 'industrial', corporate view, developed by a sprawling and overweening bureaucracy that functions through a bewildering range of programmes, missions, campaigns and initiatives. India's agriculture officialdom sees the natural produce of its land and people as distilled into a few powerful equations. At the top of this reductionist, year-on-year corporate view reigns the APY equation --

area, production, yield. There are others, some just as old and some new -- for example 'logistics' and 'public-private partnership'. In this school of practice, the kisan and the cultivating household are treated as human collateral, ultimately incidental to the great task of feeding the nation, useful only to the extent that it obeys instructions. The other school of practice and method is diffuse and independent. Its practitioners come from a variety of backgrounds and some may even have been a part of the bureaucracy mentioned above. Others have been and are part of social movements whose origins lie in India's freedom struggle. They confound measurement, yet in their intellectual and practical independence lie the answers to many of India's right to food questions.

2. STRATEGIES FOR EVERGREEN RECOLUTION

Generations of our farmers and herders have developed complex, diverse and locally adapted agricultural systems, managed with time-tested, ingenious combinations of techniques and practices that lead to community food security and the conservation of natural resources and biodiversity. These microcosms of agricultural heritage exist all over India, providing ecological and cultural services and preserving traditional forms of farming knowledge, local crop and animal varieties, and socio-cultural organisation. These systems represent the accumulated experiences of peasants interacting with their environment using self-reliance and locally available resources. These agro-ecosystems have allowed our traditional farmers to avert risks and maximise harvest security even in uncertain and marginal environments, using low levels of technology and inputs.

It is a system (taken as a whole but including its many geographical and cultural variations) that has as little to do with the modern, hermetic understanding of 'food security' as it has to do with the post-1960s, western-dominated definition of organic agriculture and food. Humans, animals, trees (including grasslands) and agricultural fields were inseparable and harmonious components of a single system. The village household looked after the trees on their fields and also contributed to the maintenance of the community grazing land. They looked after animals owned by them, sometimes with the assistance of a grazing hand, and cultivated their fields with or without hired labour or sharecroppers.

Writing in *The Ecologist* 27 years ago, Bharat Dogra, the famous agriculture expert sketched out the harmony: "The trees provided fodder for the cattle. They also provided fuel for the villagers. The leaves that fell were put to uses beneficial to the agricultural fields. Meanwhile, their soil and water conservation properties were beneficial for the villagers and contributed to maintaining the fertility of agricultural fields, as well as providing shade during the scorching summer. Certain trees provided edible fruits, medicines, gum, toothpaste and a host of other commodities of everyday use. Cattle provided milk and milk products and contributed to the nutritional content of the villagers' diet. Cattle dung provided organic fertilisers for the fields, while the poultry provided eggs and meat. Not least, bullocks ploughed the fields. The fields produced foodgrain, pulses, oilseeds and vegetables for the villagers.

The residues of those crops, of no direct use to man who could not eat them, were fed to the cattle. Poultry birds scavenged the wasted scattered grain."

It took the gathering global alarm over climate change -- revealed by a new and nervous scientific method -- for us to turn back to agriculture and take a long look at what two decades of the reckless pursuit of GDP growth had wrought. Within India, such scrutiny was discouraged, for agricultural research and bureaucracies brook no falling out of line, even in the obvious face of yield plateaus and the growing evidence of widespread ecological damage caused by soil abuse. Within India, it was in those pockets where traditional agro-ecologies had been safeguarded that the answers lay, and the practitioners of such forms of cultivation (whether low-input, zero-chemical fertiliser, rishi-kheti and others) organised themselves into thriving sub-cultures. Cut off from official funding sources and still needing to find consumers who valued their produce, some cautiously reached out to the western 'organics' networks whose institutional strengths were superior. Outside India, new forms of rigorous enquiry into the impacts and effects of a globalised economy on climate were steering the focus towards industrial agriculture and its excesses.

For much of the 2000-2009 decade, even grudging official recognition that industrially-organised, centrally-programmed agriculture in India was falling short in delivering 'food security' came slowly. All the while, the evidence at both national and meta-national levels has been growing and becoming compelling. The horrendously long sequence of farmer suicides in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and other states exposed the tragic, needless human cost of India's corporatised agricultural control structures; the discovery that groundwater extraction rates in Punjab and Haryana were amongst the highest in the world exposed the appalling true cost of high-input cultivation techniques; the steady tide of migration to towns and cities by households all over the country revealed the millions forced to abandon their lands in the face of rising input costs and debt burdens. All these pointed directly at the core of the State's approach to agriculture and its utterly misplaced ends.

Outside, systematic study of why industrial agriculture was failing was driven by deep alarm at the staggering human costs, costs that were often unseen and unmarked. "The evidence from various developing countries reveals that sustainable agricultural practices, anchored in local knowledge, are the most effective in developing resilient food production systems," stated the bottom-line conclusion of one of the largest studies to analyse how agro-ecological practices affect productivity in the developing world. It was conducted by researchers at the University of Essex, in Britain, who analysed 286 projects in 57 countries. Among the 12.6 million farmers followed, who were transitioning towards sustainable agriculture, researchers found an average yield increase of 79% across a wide variety of crop types. These farmlands averaged 3 hectares, located in a variety of farming systems -- irrigated, rainfed, wetland, humid, highland, mixed and urban. The 2006 study bluntly said: "Sustainable agriculture is driven by local knowledge and resource-

conserving techniques, making the best use of nature's goods and services without damaging those assets. Investing in the capacities of small farmers to adopt sustainable practices will help secure higher yields and profits, and will promote local food consumption."

Thereafter came the most comprehensive analysis of world agriculture to date, with a consortium of United Nations, and the World Bank too, engaging more than 400 scientists and development experts from 80 countries over four years to produce the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science, and Technology for Development (IAASTD). The boldface conclusion? That our "reliance on resource-extractive industrial agriculture is risky and unsustainable, particularly in the face of worsening climate, energy, and water crises". The IAASTD was groundbreaking in its ability to address agriculture for what it is, an all-inclusive human activity. It also said that achieving a sustainable agro-ecosystem will take some time, especially since we have built up a tremendous debt in our agricultural soils and ecosystem services from the long-standing industrial abuses and historically poor practices in many subsistence agro-ecosystems. Typically, the insights contained in the IAASTD and the import of the study have been ignored by our Ministry of Agriculture, our National Agricultural Research System, and by the many agencies tasked with delivering 'development' to rural cultivators.

2.1.1 The Major reasons for the chronic unwillingness among Farming Community

First, agro-ecological systems cannot be defined in terms of the adoption of any particular technologies or practices -- there are no ready blueprints and off-the-shelf templates. Second, sustainable agricultural systems contribute to the delivery and maintenance of a range of public goods such as clean water, carbon sequestration, flood protection, groundwater recharge, and soil conservation. Few of these processes and outcomes -- to borrow managerial terminology -- have 'market' value quantifiable in terms understood by those advocating public-private partnerships (PPP), for example. Third, the cost benefit of conservation of resources can be determined by the scarcity value of those resources (will urban food consumers be willing to pay for watershed protection in a district they import food from?). But this mechanism can be used only after investing in public education -- so that the connections are made in minds -- and by building it into public policy at an institutional level, where it immediately runs into political and business interests.

Yet the pressure is mounting. Technological breakthroughs have been neutralised by unfavourable, declining, degrading soil-water ecosystems, by enhanced biotic and abiotic stresses, large post-harvest losses, dwindling national and global funding support to agriculture in general and agricultural research and education in particular, restrictive knowledge-sharing opportunities, stagnating capacity and skills, uncertain policy support, collapsing public service and support systems, and indifferent and inefficient governance. Expanding the area used to cultivate crops is curtailed on the ground directly by urbanisation, on the one hand,

and creeping environmental degradation on the other. When climate change impacts are added to this medley of obstacles -- extreme weather events that make sowing or harvesting impossible, seasonal shifts in the entire crop calendar -- cultivation as an income for rural households becomes less feasible.

Today's biotech-oriented PPP models of industrial agriculture -- linked intimately to financial and commodities markets -- rely on petroleum-based chemicals for pest and weed control, and rising amounts of synthetic fertiliser in an ultimately futile attempt to compensate for soil degradation. The inputs trap can simply not be disguised by any amount of financial and technological scheming. In stark contrast are the tenets of the agro-ecological system (for which, in this issue of Agenda, we shall use 'organic' as a synonym). These practices are defined by much more than just the absence of industrial inputs and the functioning of market mechanics. It is knowledge-intensive farming in which -- to borrow a modern term -- open source knowledge networks proliferate and thrive.

Organic farmers improve output by tapping a sophisticated understanding of biological systems to build soil fertility and manage pests and weeds through techniques that include intercropping, composting, manures, cover crops, crop sequencing, and natural pest control. The contrast is frightening both because of its crippling weaknesses and because of the disinformation used to disguise those weaknesses: herbicide-resistant weeds and pesticide-resistant pests, both contributing to reduce crop biodiversity. As commercial crop biotechnologies have oversimplified and industrialised simultaneously, they have made agriculture more vulnerable to the next problem. And that problem -- climate change -- has already stepped over our ecological threshold.

CONCLUSION

The medium-term future of conventional agriculture (and the massive State- and industrial-sponsored systems which sustain it) seems unsuitable or even implausible. There is, in addition, a major external factor, and that is oil. Conventional industrial agriculture, pursued in the corporate mode, researched as an adjunct to the global seed-pharma MNCs and distributed as a function of the financial markets, is utterly dependent upon oil. The future of fossil fuels is now known, and there again, while the central government pursues its GDP algorithms, it ignores the inevitability of that future. Local organics steps out of that doomed mathematics entirely, and there alone lies the importance of its role in the future of India's myriad agro-ecologies.

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BANK SIGNATURE VERIFICATION AND AUTHENTICATION

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Abstract

In a banking system, the signature of a customer serves not only as a means of personal identification but also serves as an integral part of security verification and authentication. The process of signature verification can be performed either Online or Offline based on the application. Online systems use dynamic information of a signature captured at the time the signature is made. Offline systems work on the scanned image of a signature. The present proposal deals with computerized signature verification of customers' signature in banking application.

Key Words: Banking Transaction, Signature Verification, Authentication, Automation.

1. Introduction

Signatures of a customer, bank officer, loan processing executive and the auditor play an important role in the banking transactions across the globe. As the banking sector is entering into a digital era with more and more digital banking products, secured authentication becomes not only relevant but also more critical in the operation. In the banking sector, signatures of a customer are essential for opening of account; be it a savings bank account or current account, withdrawal of money from the various accounts and for all transaction purposes. With the process of digitalization sweeping the banking industry, the threat of frauds, forgery and financial losses are on the increase threatening the core of the banking industry. Hence this calls for appropriate measure to identify and authorize the signature of the drawee and also the drawer.

Signature verification can be broadly classified into two types namely Online (dynamic) and Offline (static)¹. Majority of the online signature verification rely on dedicated digital devices such as the Tablets or Smart Pens—to capture, analyze and verify signatures. Digital technology is bringing innovation in every aspect of banking

transaction. By combining pressure-sensitive sensors, optical scanning, wireless connectivity and battery back-up, these amazing instruments are able to transfer sketching and writing from paper inside the digital domain of one's phone, tablet or computer amidst the very process. The online verification is primarily based on dynamic characteristics of the process signing and a person uses a special pen called stylus to create his signature. While signing an instrument, many parameters are calculated such as the total signature time, RMS speed, average horizontal speed, length to width ratio, horizontal span ratio etc. All these parameters are stored in the data base along with the signature. Whenever, authentication is required the customer is asked to sign on the writing pad where these parameters are calculated and compared with the stored data. If these parameters match the signature is accepted. From the scanned image of signature the static features are calculated such as height of the signature, width of the signature, distance between certain nodes, angle of inclination, length of the longest stroke etc. We also have a new method that utilizes motion sensors found in readily available hand-worn devices.

Recent market research shows that one out of six people already wear a smart watch and the market is expected to reach a size of 373 million devices by 2020. Signature verification technology addresses both random and skilled forgeries. A random forger does not have any information about the other person and uses his own signature style. Skilled forgers often practice copying a person's name as accurately as possible, which makes their forgeries harder to detect. The latest software uses motion data gathered from the movement of a person's wrist to identify the writer during the signing process. This information, compiled from accelerometer and gyroscope sensors, senses the various changes in rotational motion, alignment and positioning and trains a machine learning algorithm to distinguish between genuine or forged signatures.

Offline signatures are made using either ink pen or ball pen. While static signature verification is most suited technique for reducing fraud whenever payments are payment through cheques, money transactions across fax, payment orders etc.

2. Scope of Signature Verification:

Bank customers across the globe think that signatures are used less today and their place has been taken up by the Personal Identification Number (PIN). The truth is that the signature is an artifact that remains as a testament to one's consent. When a decision has been made, it could be used to complete a deal at the Point of Sale (POS). In all banking transactions the signature of the customer is still heavily relied upon. When a signature is contested, a forensic expert is called upon to give his legal opinion on the likelihood that the contested signature is a forgery, disguised or in fact a genuine. Jodi Sita² says that signatures that are illegible, with more line intersection, turning points and abnormal line directions tend to be more difficult to forge than those that are legible. She goes on to say that forgers spent more time looking at difficult signatures rather than getting their reproduction right.

Signatures are composed of special characters and therefore most of the time they are not readable. Also interpersonal variations and the differences make it necessary to analyze them as complete images and not as words and sentences. As signatures are the primary mechanism both for authentication and authorization in all banking transactions, the need for efficient and zero tolerance automated solutions for signature recognition and verification has considerably increased in this digital age.

Researchers have used various methods including the application of a number of statistical models. Normally the concept of correlation coefficient is used to find out the relationship between a set of data. In general correlation refers to the departure of two variables from independence, although it does not imply causation. Mohan Mandaogadeet ³ in their research on signature verification followed the concept of correlation to find out the amount of divergence in between the previously collected signatures using Artificial Neural Network (ANN). ANN is an information processing prototype that is inspired by the way biological nervous systems works. The key element of this paradigm is the structure of the information processing system. It is composed of a large number of highly interconnected processing elements (neurons) working together to solve specific problems. ANN is designed for a specific application, such as a data classification, through a learning process.

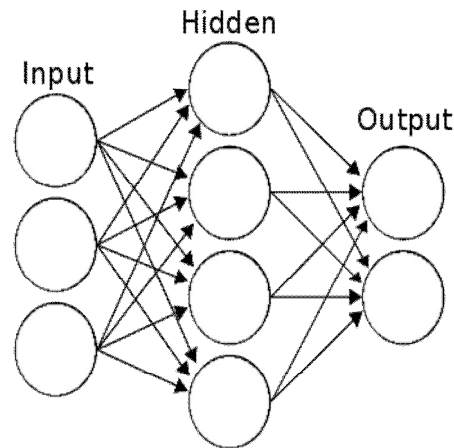


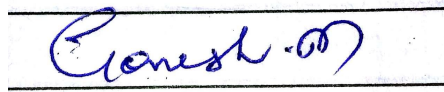
Fig 1: Simple Neural Network

A simple neural network can be represented as shown above. The ANN consists of input variables, hidden neurons, and output variables and is designed to recognize the signature.

3. Present Proposal

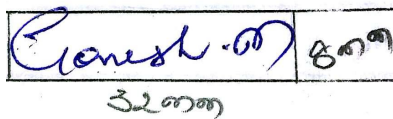
The present proposal is a simple process of identification and verification of signatures in the banking system. It comprises a sequence of seven steps as detailed below:

Step1: A specimen signature of the bank customer is taken along with his/her current signature for verification.



Step 2: The topmost point, bottom point, the start and end points are determined for both the signatures.

Step 3: With the help of these nodes, the height and width of the signatures are determined.

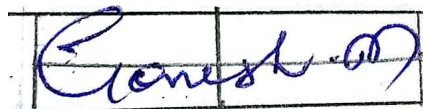


Step 4: If the difference between height and width of the two signatures crosses a given limit then the signature is rejected at that moment.

Step5: If the signature is not rejected then the distance between the nodes are calculated and checked against a certain limit. If difference is above the limit signature is rejected.



Step 6: Next four congruent segments of the signatures are compared pixel by pixel and percentage of match is calculated.



Step 7: If the average percentage of the four congruent segments is less than 90% then the transaction is rejected otherwise it is accepted.



Fig 2: Flow Diagram

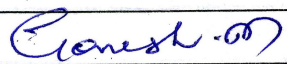
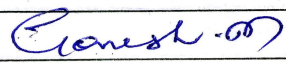
Customer Registration/ Authentication Form					
Log In / Password					
BANK					
IFSC CODE	MICR CODE		SERVICE TAX REG. NO		
Account No.					
Date of Opening					
Name			Customer ID		
			Aadhar		
			Occupation		
Address					
PIN					
Nominee					
Specimen Signature			Current Signature		
					
			MATCH		
Percentage of Similarity			90%		
Result		YES		NO	
Authenticate				Reject	

Fig 3: Registration/ Authentication Form

4. Conclusion

The present proposal helps the bank in dealing with the Know Your Customer (KYC) requisition. It helps the bank in identifying the customer through signature automation process that would enable the customer to open his account and carry out various banking transactions. It helps to build not only a strong security system but also improve the efficiency of the banks and helps in preventing frauds. The proposed system could also be coupled with biometrics to provide a secured system of the banking operations.

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DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MICRO-CREDIT FINANCE AND SHGS TO SHARE – A SELECTED CASE STUDIES

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Abstract

In India most of the women living in rural area are illiterate and trapped in a vicious circle of poverty and deprivation. It is, therefore recognized that the women have to be provided with vital educational and health inputs, if they are to become a powerful force in the developmental process. The socio-economic problems in micro credit finance are according to the stata to which they belong. Economic development is generally concerned and defined to mean growth in per-capita income in micro credit finance. This paper focused on role of rural micro credit to Women Entrepreneurs in the process of economic development. Participation of women in economic activity in India is very common from immemorial. Despite having wide network of rural bank branches in India which implemented specific poverty alleviation programmes that sought creation of self employment opportunities though bank credit, a large number of the poor, especially women, continued to remain outside the field of formal banking system. The role of SHAREs is to promote Education, savings and to credit for the productive and consumption purposes. SHARs contribute more to their household income for women Entrepreneurs.

Key Words: Women Entrepreneurs, Micro Credit Finance and Self Help Groups.

INTRODUCTION

In India most of the women living in rural areas. Rural women are illiterate and trapped in a vicious circle of poverty and deprivation. It is, therefore, recognized that the women have to be provided with vital educational and health inputs, if they are to become a powerful force in the society and gain foothold in the development process. The socio economic problems of women vary according to the strata to which they belong.

Micro-credit finance is the key to rapid economic growth of a country. Entrepreneurship is caused basically by motivation. Motivation is a process by which a need or desire is aroused.

A Country with able entrepreneurs in general and women in particular will always go faster on industrialization as compared with a country which has no entrepreneurs. Today participation of women in economic business and other income generating activities and their role in the process of economic development has been recognized throughout.

CONTEXT

Microfinance programs have been increasingly promoted in India for their positive economic impact and the belief that they empower women. Within the South Asian context, women empowerment is a process in which women challenge the existing norms and culture, to effectively improve their well-being. Most microfinance programs target women with the explicit goal of empowering them. However, their underlying premises are different.

Some argue that women are amongst the poorest and the most vulnerable of the underprivileged. Others believe that investing in women's capabilities empowers them to make choices, which will contribute to greater economic growth and development. Finally, some proponents emphasize that an increase in women's resources results in higher well-being of the family, especially children.

DEFINING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Naila Kabeer defines women's empowerment "as the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquires such ability. This ability to exercise choices incorporates three inter-related dimensions: resources which include access to and future claims to both material and social resources; agency which includes the process of decision-making, negotiation, deception and manipulation; and achievements that are the well-being outcomes".

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF MICROFINANCE ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The impact of a women's decision to buy cooking oil for the family is different in nature from her participation in a decision to buy a piece of land. Both these

decisions have different implications and magnitude of impact on her empowerment. As such giving equal weight to both these decisions does not make sense. At the same time, suggesting an arbitrary weight for these decisions is also inappropriate, as it is not for the researchers to decide the factor by which the latter decision contributes more to women empowerment.

Other studies use Item Response Theory, that credit programs allow women to take a greater role in household decision making; to have greater access to financial and economic resource; to have greater social networks and more bargaining power vis-a-vis their husbands; and to have greater freedom of mobility.

EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

In micro programs, women do not gain much in terms of decision-making power within the household. However, when loans are channeled through women's groups and are combined with more investment in social intermediation, substantial shifts in decision-making patterns is observed. This involves a remarkable shift in norm-following and male decision-making within the household.

The effect are even more striking when women have been members of a group for a longer period and especially when greater emphasis has been laid on genuine social intermediation. Social group intermediation further gradually transformed groups into actors of local institutional change.

Micro credits and gender equality

Another issue that needs further investigation is whether micro credits reinforce women's practical needs are closely linked to the socially defined gender roles, responsibilities and social structures, which contribute to a tension between meeting women's practical needs in the short-term and promoting long-term strategic change. By helping women meet their practical needs and increase their efficacy in their traditional roles, microfinance may in fact help women to gain respect and achieve more in their socially defined roles, which in turn may lead to increased esteem and self-confidence.

Although increase self-confidence does not automatically lead to empowerment, it may contribute decisively to a women's ability and willingness to challenge the social injustices and discriminatory system that they face. This implies that as women become financially better-off their self confidence and bargaining power within the household increase and this indirectly leads to their empowerment. Finally, given that empowerment is a process, the impact of the microfinance program may take a long time before it is significantly reflected on the observable measures of women empowerment.

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND MICRO FINANCE IN INDIA

There is a significant increase in women's empowerment of the Self Help Group members group. No significant change is observed on average for the members of the control group. The elegance of the result lies in the fact that even though the degree of change and the pace of empowering women are likely to vary the group of Self Help Group members experience a significant and high empowerment.

It is difficult to say which factors are more important for empowering women. The differences in pace of empowerment might be a result of various factors: household and village characteristics, cultural and religious norms within the society, behavioral differences between the respondents and their family members; and the kind of training and awareness programs that women have been exposed to.

For self Help Group programs, the results seem to indicate that the minimalist microfinance approach is not raising workshops and other activities over and above microfinance programs that merely focus on financial services are also an important determinant of the degree of its impact on the empowerment process of women. Future research needs to identify which factors in Self Help Group programs have a greater impact on women's empowerment.

In this contemporary world, women needs to gain the same amount of power that men have. Now, it is time to forget that men are the only holders of power. In India, women are still facing different obstacles in male-dominated cultures. The things are related to women's status and their future. However, I believe that Indian women are slowly getting empowerment in the sectors like education, politics, the work force and even more power within their own household. The worth of civilization can be arbitrated by the place given to women in the society. The national Policy for Empowerment of women 2001 aimed at bringing about advancement, development and empowerment of women in all spheres of life. However, a close examination of social and economic status of women, especially in the rural areas show unsatisfactory achievements in most human development indicators. Citing published facts and figures, evaluate the reasons growing feminization of poverty; exploitation of women in low paid, hazardous and insecure jobs in the unrecognized sector; wide gender gaps in literacy and in wage rate; and escalating violence against women and the rising incidence of female feticide and infanticide.

Statement of the Problem

Generally speaking a Women entrepreneur may be defined as a woman or a group of women who initiate, organize and run a business enterprise. According to Government of India, definitions of women entrepreneurs are based on women participation in quality and employment of a business enterprise.

Micro-Credit is one of the most important inputs in the modern economic development of a country. Micro-credit competence accelerates the economic growth, In India a State and private entrepreneurship co-exist. The small Scale industrial

sector and business are left completely to private entrepreneurs. It is therefore in this context that an increasingly important role has been assigned to the identification and promotion of women entrepreneurs for this sector.

The place of micro-credit finance now is well recognized. That micro-credit be developed through appropriately designed entrepreneurs development programmes. These motivations and sharpening of entrepreneurial traits and behavior project planning and development and guidance on industrial opportunities incentives and facilities and rules and regulation and developing managerial and operational capabilities.

Today, with the realization of the need and urgency of micro credit entrepreneurial development in the country many new initiatives have emerged in the form of Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDPS). The programmes contributed significantly in increasing a pool of first generation for the objectives set forth in this study had necessitated the researcher to look for the data. It is descriptive study and hence there was the need for the collection of data the study was mainly based on secondary data.

Further the collected data were to be possessed and consolidated suitable for the purpose of analysis. Further Sub tables were also carefully prepared to put them in order so that they could be meaningfully used for analysis and answering the objectives stated.

The analysis was carried on by applying simple statistical tools like percentage and averages and suitable diagrammatic representations (Pie and bar diagram) were also used in this study. The Calculations were done manually, the results were carefully noted and they were interpreted rightly keeping the stated objectives of the study in mind the report was written in lucid language and the same is given in the analysis chapter.

Accelerating industrial and economic growth the systematic and scientific approach adopted through EDPs has broken the myth that entrepreneurs are only born and not made. Now it has been established that they can be developed too.

After careful consideration in the light of the above different programmes have been launched under entrepreneurial education programme to develop the latent qualities of entrepreneurship among women and impart information on various aspects of micro credit enterprises, implementing them and successfully running the venture, resulting in job satisfaction and business satisfaction on the part of women micro-credit entrepreneurs. The micro credit enterprises promoted entrepreneurial activities and led to higher probability of success in new ventures thus proving the impact of Entrepreneur Development programmes.

Women as micro-credit entrepreneurs are now successfully gaining importance in men's world because of their economic independence, combined with the challenge of doing something on their own and the encouragement they get from

the members of their families. Their involvement in business less aggressive nature, patience, humanity and gentleness compared to those of men under similar condition, make Dalit women sound personal managers both outside and inside homes.

Generally a micro-credit women entrepreneur is perceived as engaged in making pickles, Masala Powder and house hold goods. Due to the efforts taken towards motivating Dalit women, they are now emerging as dynamic entrepreneurs and capable of running small and micro credit enterprises, breaking away from the beaten track and are exploring new vistas of economic participation.

CASE STUDY 1: RURAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN MICRO-CREDIT FINANCE

The National Credit Fund for Women or the Rashtria Mahila Kosh (RMK) is working exclusively for poor and women. Its loans are available solely and entirely to this target group. The reasons for this are several among the poor the Women are the most disadvantaged. They are characterized by lack of education and access to resources, both of which are required to help them work their way out of poverty and for upward economic and social mobility. The problem is more acute for women in countries like India despite the fact women's labour makes a critical contribution to the economic growth; this is due to low social status and lack of access to key resources.

Evidence shows that groups of women are better customer than other socially weaker sections. They are better managers of resource-benefits of loan are spread wider among the household if loans are routed through women mixed groups is worse than that of all women groups everywhere, India is also fast becoming one of the largest micro credit markets in the world especially with the growth of women's savings and credit groups (known in India as self help group) which are set to reach 17 million women by 2008, Here this research will focus on the economic empowerment of women through micro finance intervention in the commercial banks with special reference to Tamil Nadu.

Overall, in the modern days micro-credit in Vellore District of Tamil Nadu are emerging as a powerful instrument for poverty alleviation among the urban poor in general and rural women in particular in the new economy. It is a powerful instrument and has improved access of urban poor specially women.

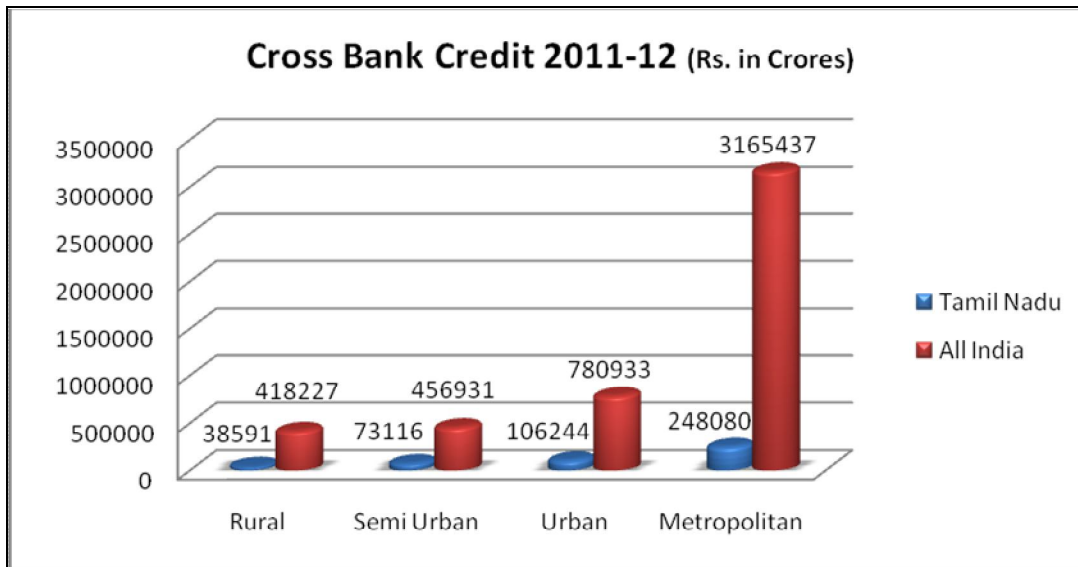
So, a study entitled, economic empowerment of women through micro finance intervention in the commercial banks with special reference to Tamilnadu was undertaken.

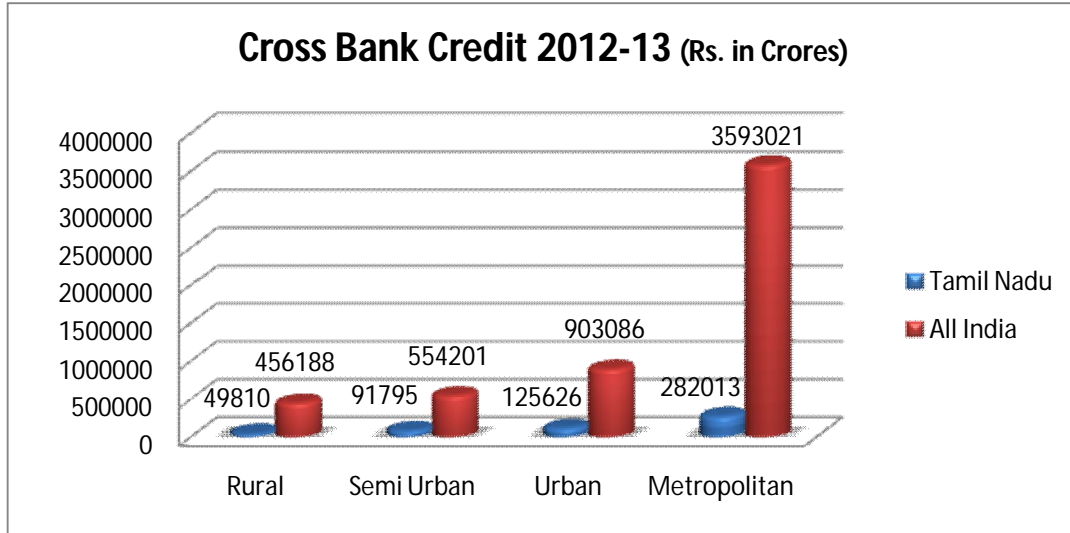
**Table : 1
GROSS BANK CREDIT**

(Rs. in Crores)

Region	2011-12		2012-13	
	Tamil Nadu	All India	Tamil Nadu	All India
Rural	38591	418227	49810	456188
Semi Urban	73116	456931	91795	554201
Urban	106244	780933	125626	903086
Metropolitan	248080	3165437	282013	3593021
Total	466031	4821528	549245	5506496

Source: Statistical Hand Book of Tamil Nadu PP:457





From the above Table :1 it is clear role of Rural Women entrepreneurs availing bank credit Rs.38591 cr in the year 2011-12 as against all India Rs.418227 this amount of credit much significant than the other type of Entrepreneurs namely Semi Urban, Urban, Metropolitan areas of Tamilnadu and India as well.

Similarly in the year of 2012-13 the available of bank credit to the Rural Entrepreneurs has got significant improvement compared to the other three type of Entrepreneurs.

Table : 2
MICRO SMALL MEDIUM ENTREPRENEUR MEMORANDUM ISSUED TO S.C. / S.T. ENTREPRENEURS

Year	Target	Achievement
2003-04	2500	2607 (104 %)
2004-05	2500	2618(104 %)
2005-06	2500	2741(109 %)
2006-07	2500	2860(114 %)
2007-08	2500	2939(117 %)
2008-09	-	2470
2009-10	-	2511
2010-11	-	2746
2011-12	-	2910
2012-13	2500	2928(117 %)

Source :Statistical Hand Book of Tamil Nadu PP:526

From the above mentioned we can easily endorse the role of Micro-credit in the economic development of women entrepreneurs. With the timely availability of bank credit it indicates that the importance of bank credit for rural entrepreneurs. Inspire of other money landing against, the role of instructional is highly recognized in the country.

Case Study 2 : Women Empowerment through SHGs to SHARE

Self Help Association for Rural Education and Employment is community based organization committed to Women and Children development by focusing on Education and Employment. Since 1992 it has been serving Vellore and Dindigul District Villages for the betterment of the needy in the direction of people to be empowered. Employment and Education are the two components with SHARE's Initiation. The community women independently run the events and this organization with the active support of State and Central Governments, NGOs and Volunteers. SHGs bring in all round development to the neglected and down trodden section of the population in the villages, having and initiating activities by empowering women in the line of solidarity. SHARE believes that true development lies in the women groups and communities taking all decisions concerning their lives. Self Help concept is the strength of the organisation. SHARE active support of the reputed Institution CHAD, Christian Medical College, Vellore and having the key aim of Development Focus on Empowerment towards change lives of the needy children, women and the disadvantaged in the local community where SHARE serves. SHARE is women, for women and by women

In order to remove the evils such as IGNORANCE, POVERTY, DISEASE in the community, frontline Founding, members conceived the concept of Education and Employment through Self-help. Make us to serve for

- Strengthening
- Awareness motivation Programmes
- Income Generation Activities for women
- Entrepreneur Development Programme
- Panchayat Raj Awareness
- Fair Trade Promotion Awareness
- Gender based Programmes
- Need based Education and Employment Programmes

SHARE'S -COLLABORATORS AROUND THE WORLD

- Community Health And Development, Christian Medical College, Vellore. India.
- Federation of South India Producer Associations (SIPA), Chennai.
- Development Commissioner (Handcrafts), Govt. of India.
- Kahdi & Village Industries commission, Govt. of India.
- FTO-World Fair Trade Organisation
- Fair Trade Fourm – India.
- WFTO Asia.

- Nationalised Banks.
- Skill share International.
- International NGOs.
- Rural Development and Women Development, Tamil Nadu State Govt.

FUTURE ACTION OF SHARE'S

Look forward guidance and support related to Education and Employment projects for empowering Women and the disadvantaged the Rural areas of Vellore and Dindigul District, Tamil Nadu, INDIA. Specific focus is being given to environmental promotion programme. Project such Vocational Training needs, opportunities for Livelihood, Gender Based Training and Awareness, Health Education and Awareness on HIV/AIDS, Communicable and Non Communicable Diseases are in our action oriented Agenda.

CONCLUSION

Self Help Group are playing a crucial role in the development of women through Self Help group. SHARE is the one of the development program for women entrepreneurs. Self Help Groups are expected to be one of the major programmes of women empowerment in India with full participation from the formal Mico-credit finance. However, considering the magnitude of women entrepreneurs, the outreach of the programme needs to be strengthened and enhanced.

Some of the Government Institution namely Social Welfare Department and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department of Tamil Nadu and other Non Governmental Organisations, are playing major role in the success of women Entrepreneurs of Tamil Nadu.

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PROTEST SYNDROME - A CRITICAL STUDY ON K.A.GUNASEKARAN'S "SCAR"

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Abstract

The origin of Dalit literature is in regional literatures in the late nineteenth century. Dalit literature doesn't follow any particular literary conventions and they have created their own localized languages that created a unique writing style. Real incidents are revealed in their languages. Dalit literature expresses the Dalit's knowledge of themselves as oppressed people and enables them to demand liberation through a revolutionary transformation of the system that oppresses them.

The Scar is an autobiographical work by K.A.Gunasekaran. He wrote about his childhood and youth in the Parayar caste, growing up as a Dalit boy in rural Tamilnadu during the post-Independence period:1950s and 60s. He tells the stories of blatant, unapologetic, caste-based discrimination including outright violence and hatred. It does so without claiming the status of a victim, free from emotional embellishment and always with an eye toward events and circumstances that somehow serve as enlightening, humane exceptions to the harsh social and economic realities of Tamil rural life.

This paper discloses the harshness faced by the Dalit community and the perilous situations they live in. The most striking thing about the paper is that it reveals the oppression in the modern form and the unchanged attitude of the so-called forward-thinking society.

Key Words: Dalit, Scar, Oppressed class, Downtrodden.

“If you are born into a low caste (Dalit), you are forced to live a life of humiliation and degradation until your death”. (*Karukku* 26)

This article focuses on a Dalit individual who has become a successful writer. Despite his achievements and success, society still has a negative attitude towards Dalits. This article aims to analyse how *The Scar* has portrayed the individual and a true picture of this community and his place in the Indian social setup.

Dalit literature is a literature of protest and rejection. “Dalit (oppressed or broken) is not a new word. Apparently, it was used in the 1930 as a Hindi and Marathi translation of ‘depressed classes’ a term the British used for what are now called the scheduled castes” (*Contemporary Dalit Literature* 1). The term ‘Dalit’ forcefully expresses their oppressed status. It comes from the Sanskrit root ‘dal’, which means to crack open, split, crush, grind and so forth and has generally been used as a verb to describe the process of processing food grains and lentils.

Dalits writing brings out their sorrows and suffering to the world. It narrates their pains and miserable conditions. The caste system in the Indian society is a dehumanizing system. The ‘untouchables’ are seen as a source of pollution and are ostracized from all aspects of social life. It is very difficult to understand why this system is given so much of importance in India.

The caste system has been one of the specific problems of Indian democracy. The Indian society has evolved from the rudiments of a class based society. The caste system exploits a particular group of people. It is believed, that along with sacrificial religions, the Aryans might have integrated a caste system into the country, dominating the darker skinned natives. Four castes predominate in India. The Brahmans, the priests and holy leaders are the highest class, which are followed by the Kshatriya, the princes and warriors. The Vaishyas are the farmers, merchants, and artisans of society, and the Shudras are the servants and workers. Even in modern India, Dalits are seen as a contaminated and polluting group. An upper class person who is touched by a Dalit or who comes in contact with the shadow of a Dalit must go through elaborate cleansing rituals to undo the “damage” done. Dalits cannot wear shoes in the presence of those in higher caste people and still encounter many barriers against practising their own religion. Even at present, the untouchables are often chased out of many temples for fear of contamination.

The Scar is an autobiographical work by K.A.Gunasekaran. He wrote about his childhood and youth in the Parayar caste, growing up as a Dalit boy in rural Tamilnadu during the post-Independence period:1950s and 60s. He tells the stories of blatant, unapologetic, caste-based discrimination including outright violence and hatred. It does so without claiming the status of a victim, free from emotional embellishment and always with an eye toward events and

circumstances that somehow serve as enlightening, humane exceptions to the harsh social and economic realities of Tamil rural life.

Gunasekaran's honest voice and simplicity make the readers encounter another way of life: very poor, usually hungry, often discriminated against by the upper castes but also rich in unique folkways and family connections. In the introduction to *The Scar* (2009), Ravikumar, a well known Tamil Dalit scholar, remarks: "At the national level, Ambedkar and Rettaimalai Srinivasan are the precursors of the Dalit autobiographical form as per research indicators at present" (*The Scar X*). K.A.Gunasekaran's father belongs to Marandai. He started his career as a teacher in Salaiyur. His relations lived in and around Ramanathapuram district. They used to meet at Elayankudi weekly "sandhai" (market). The area is largely populated by Muslims and Arya Vysyas. There is a famous Siva Temple where Gunasekaran has till now been denied entry. His family lived near Elayankudi high school and the habitation is called as Raasoola Samudram. The habitation is exclusively for Parayars and Chakiilyars (Arunthiyar). These people are the lowest of the low. They are forced to feel inferior so that the upper caste may feel superior and gratify their self by having a notion that someone is always under their feet. Irrespective of the age difference, people belonging to the Dalit community should address upper caste men "Ayya" and "Sami" and women should be called as "Nachiyar" or "Machi".

Gunasekaran belongs to the "Paraya" community, which is otherwise referred as the Scheduled Caste. The upper caste Hindus finds it hard to accept the people of low castes as equal human beings. But the irony is that they need these Parayars to work in their field. The matter of acceptance and rejection depends on the norms set by the upper caste people. "Whichever village we entered, the first questions would be 'who are you?' and the moment they knew we were parayars, they would not offer us drink in a vessel, but would pour it only in the folded palm leaf" (*The Scar 20*). Dalits have been converting to other religions. The main reason behind their conversion is the tyranny, harassment, discrimination and humiliation and compulsion which they have been experiencing at the hands of the high caste Hindus. It is inevitable for the Dalits to convert themselves to another religion which favours human and moral values.

Dalits conversion from Hinduism to Christianity ended in vain. Caste system is found even in those religions and they too treated them in an indifferent and inhuman manner. The Muslims adopted the caste rules in Hinduism and so the Muslims in India follow not only Islamic principles but also a few principles of Hinduism too. "There were fifty Muslim families and a mosque in Karunchutti. Even if we asked a Muslim household for water, they too would ask us, 'Who are you?' before they offered us water" (*The Scar 20*). Discrimination was practised even in worshipping God. The upper caste people abusively curse them as

"casteless fellows, fellows belonging to bad caste..." (*The Scar 26*). Most of the Dalits felt that they were alienated from their own land because they do not have equal rights to basic amenities, for instance, drinking water and food. "If anyone invites us to eat we would first ask for a sickle to cut the Palmyra leaf and make a bowl for ourselves" (*The Scar 29*)

Poverty is the most crucial problem in the lives of Dalits. Due to their poor economic condition people used to pay them a meager amount for the work they do. The entire family eats a decent food only during the festival times. "Most morning we would only have soaked tamarind seeds for breakfast. The skin of the roasted seeds would be peeled off and the white kernel would then be soaked. If we had idlis or dosais, it ought to be either deepavali or Christmas" (*The Scar 10*).

The high caste people made the Dalits to do the job that anyone else will resist. For instance, Dalits are sent as informers of death news. They take up this job without any inhibition because they would be paid a little amount of grain as wages. Their poverty made them accept any kind of work. The messenger was not paid for this service. But the persons receiving the news would give a measure or two of paddy, and that was accepted as wages" (*The Scar 29*).

One of the characters in this book harshly comments on their helpless situation: "One can die pulling out one's tongue instead of going from place to place carrying news of grief, to earn money for eating and seeing movies." (*The Scar 30*) But they have no other way than seeking the help from the caste Hindus.

On many occasions, Gunasekaran was humiliated deeply for no reason than his caste. People who belonged to other caste used to indulge in charity and donations, but when it comes to receiving a little help from a low caste man, they would die rather than accept their help. One such incident happened in the life of Gunasekaran. Gunasekaran and his machan (brother-in-law), Muniyandi find a man who had fallen down due to an epileptic attack. To their misfortune, the man belonged to the Konar caste. The two men gave him some water and helped him to regain his consciousness. As soon as he gained his consciousness, he was shocked to realise that he had received help from low caste people. He immediately shouted at them asking, "Who asked you touch me? How can you, a parayan, touch me? "Ayya, I was worried if anything would happen to you, "told my machan. He immediately said, "What would have happened? What if I die? Stand away!" (*The Scar 60*). The man brought the two men who helped him to the panchayat. He wanted them to ask forgiveness for touching him. Gunasekaran and Muniyandi had to seek pardon for the deed they had done in a public meeting.

Gunasekaran believed that inter-caste marriages would help to establish a casteless society. But it is very hard to make the other caste people to accept a low caste person as their family member. Even now in southern parts of Tamilnadu,

many murders take place due to inter-caste marriages, especially when a SC or ST person marries people of other communities. So the rate of inter-caste marriages is very low. He explains the difficulties in inter-caste marriages that he has seen first handed. He tells the readers about the problems of the character called Michael amma, who faced it because of her inter-caste marriage. She belonged to the Pallar community and the boy she loved belonged to the Udayar community. Once the love affair was known to the parents, they forced Michael amma to get engaged to one of their community boys, because marrying a poor-lower-caste-girl brings problems not only to the girl but to the entire family and relatives as well. There are many chances of receiving death threats from the rich-upper-caste-boy's family members. Even after this remedial action, Michael amma received death threats from the boy's family.

The upper caste boy felt offended for rejecting him and choosing a lower caste boy in his place. He tried to convince her to marry him. But his attempt ended in vain. His disappointment made him to kill Michael amma brutally. But in the case of Thangarasu and Tamilarasi, the story was different for they belonged to the same caste, loved each other and got married too. The writer mentioned that "it must be pretty difficult for intercaste marriage to happen if people of the same caste face so many difficulties to marry for love" (*The Scar* 39). Gunasekaran wishes that at least in future people will change their attitude towards the caste system and treat everyone as their equals.

Gunasekaran's is a religion of personal contact, convenience and availability rather than chosen doctrine and dogma or weekly worship. Festival seasons are beautifully practiced by Christians, for instance, with singing and receiving gifts from the local priests. Muslims are among Gunasekaran's best friends since they never engaged in harsh caste practices and always shared their food.

Gunasekaran ends his book as a social advancement and the completion of a college degree against so many odds comes his way. He is modest and his writing style is lucid; by the end of the book the readers gain an intimate, inside look into what it means for a rural, Parayar boy to finish college, earn honors, and receive pay and public recognition for his musical talents.

The emergence of dalit literature in itself is a support of a thoughtful change taking place in Indian society. His memory of childhood and youth in this creative work is expressive of the need of this section of society to create stories of miseries, struggles and final success in ways that would alter the present truth. Gunasekaran has productively transformed the entire aspect of the atrocities and disgrace suffered by his community into literary expression and experience.

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CASTE SYSTEM AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN CULTURE

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Abstract

Caste is an invisible component in the psyche of every Indian. It influences thoughts, words and behaviors of every Indian who is in contact with another Indian irrespective of various other differences found in them like religion, region and language. This paper deals with how caste originated and stabilized in Indian soil. What are the forces trying to eliminate caste and how it is reinforced through various factors? As a result, how do we understand this "Dalitization process?" This paper also critically analyses the "Swachh Bharat" programme of our country and highlights that the programme is not for toilet cleaners but meant for the toilet users only. Taking into consideration a caste-less society preached in Christianity, how caste does influence the Catholic Church in India. Finally the paper acclaims that the Constitution of India alone is the hope of the marginalized community of India – the Dalits !

Key Words: Dalits, Brahminic philosophy, Dalitization, Sangh Parivar, Swachh Bharat, Safai Karmacharis, Transformation, Catholic Church and Constitution of India.

*"The oppressor is solidary with the oppressed only when he stops regarding the oppressed as an abstract category and sees them as persons who have been unjustly dealt with, deprived of their voice, cheated in the sale of their labor — when he stops making pious, sentimental, and individualistic gestures and risks an act of love. True solidarity is found only in the plenitude of this act of love, in its existentiality, in its praxis. To affirm that men and women are persons and as persons should be free, and yet to do nothing tangible to make this affirmation a reality, is a farce."¹ — Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.*

1. Origin:

At the time of Aryan migrations (1500 BCE) to India, the aborigines were assimilated into the social order. By the time the Laws of Manu were codified, we have reference to a class called *the Chandala*, who were of mixed origin and were regarded as holding a definite place in the society below that of the *Sudras*. In Purusha Sukta or Purusha Suktamⁱ, the different parts of the Cosmic-being or Creator (Purusha) is mentioned. The Brahmana was made his mouth; the Rajanya (Kshatriya) was made his arms; the Vaishya was his thighs; and the Sudra made his feet.

The present out-caste communities include those despised peoples who occupy a position parallel to that assigned by Manu to the *Chandalas*, including the leather-workers of North and South India and also those who have been expelled from the caste communities for breaches of Hindu social law, for example, intermarriage with and acceptance of food from one of the out-castes. These peoples are sometimes referred to as *out castes* or *Avarnas* or the *Panchamas*, or *the harijans*, or *the schedule caste* or *fifth class*. They are considered least privileged, impure and the most despised among all. Their touch or even their shadow falling upon a man of dominant caste is being considered a source of pollution.

1.1. Functional Understanding of Caste:

The term 'caste' is inclined to be misleading, because it is not an Indian word. It originated from the Portuguese word *casta*ⁱⁱ, meaning race, lineage, breed or class, and began to be used by Portuguese sailors in the 16th century to describe the class divisions they found in India which seemed so curious to them. Even today Hindus use such other terms as *varna* (means color), *jati* (means birth or descent), *kula* (means family), and *gotra* (means race). Evidently the beginning of class divisions was purely functional. The *Brahman* fulfils the priestly and clerical offices. The *Kshatriya* was the prince and ruler. The *Vaisya* was the trader. The *Sudra* was the laborer. And the various sub-castes among the *Sudra* peoples were marked by specific occupations. The system had persisted throughout the centuries supporting the functional stability in a society.

1.2. Religious sanction to preserve Social order:

In this well knit Hindu society, professions and trades have been assured by birth or descent predetermined the individual's occupation as well as his status. At the same time the religious basis given to the system has enabled the dominant castes to enjoy its advantages and to perpetuate the differences among the oppressed castes. *Brahminic philosophy* itself makes us believe that God created human beings unequal. Hinduism was born out of *Brahminic philosophy*. The primary concern of the Hindu society is the preservation of the established Hindu social order rather than any effort at the improvement of human welfare. The only possibility of progress is within the caste. It is taken for granted that the accident of birth is the sole determinant of occupation and of status. The *Karma theory* of Hindu philosophy highly supports this view. Personality is subordinated to system. Value is judged in terms of origin within rather than service to the community. Certainly it deprives men of the potent motive, the desire to rise in the social ladder and to place one's children at a more advantageous starting point in life. Thus, a person born in an oppressed caste cannot dream of achieving higher status in the society.

1.3. Emergence of Untouchability:

The untouchables had the lowest economic position and were traditionally subjected to onerous social and civil disabilities. It is believed that the practice of untouchability began during the Pushyimitra's rule^{iv} established in 185 BCE, about 50 years after Ashoka's death. He was a Brahmin but the Commander-in-chief of the last Mauryan King Bruhadatra who was a *Shudra* by caste. Pushyamitra killed Bruhadatra and established Brahmin rule, which continued till 800 AD. He feared that the untouchables would attack him. So he asked Manu, a Brahmin pandit to suppress the revolution. He codified all inhuman and unethical laws against the *Shudras* in the name of religion. His work was later known as Manusmriti. Thus the Brahmins this time acquired the highest status in the society. It was the Kings who enforced the caste divisions. Their rule was to protect *Dharma*. *Varnashrama* Dharma was often supported, propagated and reinterpreted through the Upanishads, the Sutras, the Smritis and the Puranas. It was to keep the interest of the dominant caste intact. The ancient *Dharmasastra* of the Hindus imposed a series of social, political, economic and religious restrictions on the suppressed castes. The untouchables had no access to education or to learn Sanskrit language^v (Rajkumar 122-123).

1.4. Caste in the contemporary context:

The word "Dalit"^{vi} derived from Sanskrit root *dal*, means "ground," or "suppressed" or "crushed" or "downtrodden." Considered the lowliest people of all the castes, Dalits are typically associated with occupations regarded as ritually impure, such as those involving waste or carcasses. They are a people traditionally regarded as "untouchable."

Systematic oppression of Dalits and continual denial of opportunities down the centuries has made Dalits to internalize all their bitter experiences. They think of themselves lower than others. They consider their works dirty. They look at themselves ugly, lazy, disorganized, having low morale, less competent and intellectually incapable. Such understanding of themselves is deep in their psyche. They need to be reconciled with their own low self image. In the late 1880's the Marathi word 'Dalit' was widely used by Mahatma Jotiba Phule and later by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar for the Outcastes and Untouchables who were oppressed, suppressed, broken and crushed by Hindu society. It meant not just economical and political backwardness but socio-cultural and religious backwardness faced through their being born into a particular caste in the Hindu society.

1.5. "Dalits" as self assertion:

Dalits have chosen the "Dalit" label for themselves for at least three important reasons^{vii}. First, the label indicates that the condition of the Dalits has not been of their own making or choosing; it is something which has been inflicted upon them by others. Secondly, there is an element of militancy built into the label; Dalits seek to overcome the injustices and indignities forced upon them so as to gain the equality and respect hitherto denied them. Thirdly, "Dalit" also indicates that all these sub-castes called in different names in different states of India (Pallas, Pariahs, Pulayas Malas, Madigas, Mushars, Chamars, Mahars, Bhankis, etc.) share a common living condition and should therefore unite in a common struggle for dignity, equality, justice and respect under a common name.

The Dalits assert, saying that the Hindu *Manu Dharmasastra* successfully created a division among human beings. Manu says that Brahmins are superior, and then Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sudras and the untouchables are nowhere. Thus the whole country is made to believe that

some are always superior to others. Even Dalits believed that. But the Indian constitution says very clearly that everyone is equal.

2. Destabilization process of Caste:

Though caste is an integral part of everyone's life in India, there are many factors that affect its stability. Unlike rural villages, in urban cities we find people migrated from different parts of the country well settled, live together without much difference among them. Caste is not an issue to be considered the other lower than oneself. People's outlook on caste is changing over the years. We shall examine the destabilization process of caste on account of various factors.

2.1. Education:

Primarily education is undermining caste hierarchy not merely in the case of the educated, but also in the matter of treatment accorded to the less fortunately born. Education enlightened people's minds and made them understand their inner potential. The progress of education has involved the training of a growing number of men and women from the suppressed castes who are able to take their places abreast of the dominant caste people, and who resent the operation of any system which would rob them of the privileges they have earned. Education coupled with language proficiency brings change in every one's life style, attitude and mannerism and in particular in the lives of Dalits. They shake off their low self image and try to be in par with other non Dalits in every aspect of life. However, achieving equality among all is a tedious process.

2.2. Trade and Industrial Revolution:

A second influence that is working toward the corrosion of caste is the economic development. India under the British Raj has become vitally a part of a larger world. The East India Company which promoted trade in India with British and other oversea countries enabled people to move beyond their caste based labour. Industrial revolution in Europe also influenced the working class in India. The British owned cotton mills in India absorbed number of people into it irrespective of their traditional works in villages. Trade with Europe, America, and Japan has meant the introduction of commodities from these lands, enlarging the possibilities of the Indian market, and forcing competition upon some of the Indian industries. This has resulted on the one hand in a demand for broader economic opportunities than caste permits, and on the other hand in a necessity to choose other than caste-determined occupations through industrial rivalry.

2.3. New Economic Policy of India:

In an independent India introducing the New Economic Policy since 1991 has also played a major role in escalating this process of caste corrosion. Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG) policy of our country opened the gates of trade and commerce in India. Restrictions imposed on foreign trade were relaxed and structural adjustment policies (SAP) were implemented to suit their need. Thus many Multi National companies (MNC) and Trans National companies (TNC) had easy access to Indian markets through their Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). Basic Information Technology (IT) education coupled with job opportunities in those MNCs and TNCs absorbed many middle and lower middle class people into them. This not only brought a quick change in the life style of the Dalits but also made them in par with the other non Dalits working in the same environment. But, at the same time the poor and the lower middle class Dalits were pushed to the periphery since the small scale industries were forced to close down.

2.4. Modern Communication and Transport systems:

The vast expansion of transportation facilities in the recent past has also stimulated the tendency toward caste disintegration. The train service on the one hand refused to take cognizance of caste, and the oppressed caste man who pays for his train ticket has the same right to take a seat in any compartment along with a dominant caste man where there is room. It is absurd for any transport authority to reserve berths for Brahmins to the exclusion of the Dalits. During travel, one can eat whatever he/she wants without questioning the likes and dislikes of the other whether the person is a Brahmin or a Dalit. Same situation for everyone who afford to travel by bus, tram, air and ship without any discrimination what so ever! Physical proximity to one another in every mode of transport automatically negates untouchability.

2.5. Progressive and liberative understanding of Religion:

Another influence tending to undermine caste is the progressive and liberative understanding of religion which give importance to human dignity and self respect. The presence of Christianity has been more potent to that end. Christianity has at once spread the light of science and the doctrines of equality and fraternity. Since Christianity assures a casteless human society many oppressed caste people in Hinduism are drawn towards Christianity as it happened towards Buddhism in 6th C. BC. Unfortunately the people who are converted to Christianity also brought caste practices into it. We shall look into it later.

So, in reality we do find the prevalence of caste in Christianity. This is the same situation in Islam, and Buddhism which deny caste and promote caste less society in their sacred texts and preaching.

2.6. The new legal system & Constitution of India:

The new legal system, introduced by the British Government, has given a severe blow to the caste system in India. Equality before law irrespective of caste has been firmly instituted. Consequently, the age old discrimination against the lower castes has been removed. Further, with the establishment of law courts, the traditional caste Panchayats in villages have lost their power and effectiveness to punish the deviants. A number of Acts like the Untouchability Offences Act of 1955 and the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955 have abnegated the evil effects of the caste system. Indian Constitution bestows some fundamental rights on the citizens irrespective of caste, creed, colour or gender. It offers equal opportunities to all. Para 15(2) of the Constitution, which declares all citizens as equal, directly attacks the Hindu social order based on inherited inequality.

3. Factors that perpetuate Caste discrimination:

However we are educated and modernized still there are many factors play very important role in perpetuating caste discrimination in India. Caste is an invisible reality of human condition which influences our outlook on others. It is the mind set of everyone who practices caste. The system is maintained through the rigid enforcement of social ostracism (a system of social and economic penalties) in case of any deviations. **Inequality** is at the core of the caste system. Those who fall outside the caste system are considered "*lesser human beings*", "*impure*" and thus "*polluting*" to other caste groups. The work they do adds to the **stigmatization** they face from the surrounding society. The exclusion of 'caste-affected communities' by other groups in society and the inherent structural inequality in these social relationships lead to high levels of poverty among affected population groups.

3.1. Purity-Pollution:

Caste discrimination is so strong due to purity-pollution concept. The concept of purity and pollution in Hindu religion promoted by the Brahmins considers the Dalits impure and untouchables. Because Dalits are associated with dead-animals and leather works, which are considered impure. It creates a make believe situation that a pure Hindu will keep himself away from eating meat and practice vegetarianism in order to avoid pollution and defilement. Orthodox Hindus attribute holiness to cows and cows are worshiped. They believe that killing a cow and consuming beef (cow meat) is sacrilegious. Some recent alarming violent events in different parts of the country reveal that some Hindu fanatics even mercilessly beat, tortured and killed people who had eaten beef.

3.2. Matrimonial alliances:

The majority of persons marry only within their own caste. Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra all marry within their respective castes; Hindu community does not approve inter-caste marriage even now. Even among the Dalit sub-castes endogamy is much preferred. A person born in a particular caste marrying a person in the same caste keeps the caste hierarchy intact. In case of inter-caste marriage the couple's identity is determined by the caste of the bridegroom. A Dalit who marries a woman of a dominant caste can never climb in the social ladder.

3.3. Colour consciousness and inferiority complex:

To some extent, majority of the Dalit population are dark in their complexion. Their colour of the skin is dark because, they are exposed to hard labor under hot sun. Since they are involved in doing very menial jobs normally they are not well respected in the society. The dominant caste people look down upon them and expect them to be obedient. This colour consciousness also very much internalized by the Dalits and they feel very much inferior to the fair skinned people in the society. Somehow they feel that dark is an unwanted colour. This inferiority complex keeps them aloof from the rest of the community. Even others are reluctant to associate with them.

3.4. Community based works and trades:

The intensity of caste is very much felt in rural India because caste and community based works are interconnected. A cobbler's son continues to be a cobbler only. A scavenger's son automatically takes up the work of scavenging after his father. Due to poverty and lack of opportunity for education and other skills most of the children in Dalit villages continue the same works and family trades of their parents. Since all the members of the family involve in one particular work and they are identified with a particular caste, they are unable to take up any other works. This situation continues in many other parts of rural India.

3.5. Food habits determine one's caste affiliation:

In India caste system ensures what you are from what you eat. What you eat dictates who you marry, where you live, your job, your social status, whether you are "dirty" or "clean", whether you are entitled or deprived, and whether you can hold your head high or let it hang in shame, because the food you eat is a function of your caste. A dominant-caste person can only accept food or a drink from someone of a similar rank. If the food has been touched or cooked by someone of a suppressed caste, it must be rejected. When a dominant-caste person

gives food to someone of a suppressed caste, it is always dropped, rather than placed, in their hands, to avoid any contamination or pollution. Even today, food habits are used as a tool of social exclusion. Rich, dominant-caste Hindu landlords in many parts of our country use vegetarianism to keep out suppressed-caste tenants (and Muslims, too, of course) by specifying that flats can only be let to vegetarians. Dominant-caste Hindus refrained from eating meat because they could afford a range of vegetables and dairy products. These were items Dalits could not afford, so they took their protein where they could find it, from the pigs, buffalos and from cows, because beef was cheaper than mutton or chicken.

3.2. References in ancient Hindu Scriptures about Beef eating practice among Brahmins:

In general Dalits are economically poor. This community depends on rearing domestic animals and cultivating small portion of land available to them. Meat is a common food for them. Though, Cow is being considered a sacred animal in orthodox Hindu religion, nowhere in Hindu scriptures we find eating beef is forbidden. Rather we find references where even the Hindu Gods delighted in eating beef and how important for a Brahmin to eat beef from his religious view point.

The following references in Hindu scriptures will elucidate how the Brahmins used to eat beef in earlier days. · Hinduism's greatest propagator Swami Vivekanand said that one will be surprised to know that according to ancient Hindu rites and rituals, a man cannot be a good Hindu who does not eat beef. We find in Manusmriti that it is not sinful to eat meat of eatable animals, for Brahma has created both the eaters and the eatables. Maharishi Yagyavalkya said that he ate beef because it was very soft and delicious.

"On the occasion of a girl's marriage oxen and cows are slaughtered." Rig Veda (10/85/13)

"Indra used to eat the meat of cow, calf, horse and buffalo." Rig Veda (6/17/1)

"The cow should be slaughtered on the arrival of a guest, on the occasion of 'Shraddha' of ancestors and on the occasion of a marriage." Apastamb Grihsutram (1/3/10).

"If a Brahmin refuses to eat the meat offered to him on the occasion of 'Shraddha' or worship, he goes to hell." Vashistha Dharmasutra (11/34)

In ancient India, cow-slaughter was considered auspicious on the occasions of some ceremonies. Bride and groom used to sit on the hide of a red ox in front of the 'Vedi' (altar)^{viii}

A renowned historian R.C.Majumdar says: "this is said in the Mahabharat that King Rantidev used to kill two thousand other animals in addition to two thousand cows daily in order to give their meat in charity^{ix}". Actually speaking, prohibition of eating beef is a weapon in the hands of the Brahmins to uphold their Brahminical supremacy in Indian caste hierarchical society.

4. Dalitization Process:

Caste politics are taking different turn across the country. The term dalitization does not mean Sanskritization or Hinduization. Now the term has got a new realm of meaning that it is the process of getting the provisions vested for Dalit bahunans. Demanding for reservation is one such provision every community is running after.

4.5. Leading to affirming dignity of Labour:

Protests have sparked in various regions over gaining the 'Backward Caste' tag – Jats from Harayana , Kapus from Andhra Pradesh, Gujjars from Rajasthan, Patels from Gujarat, Marathas from Maharashtra also demanding the reservation for their community. They all want to be included in the OBC list. This renewed interest in claiming for backward caste tag, according to Prof. Kancha Ilaiah is called "Dalitization".

According to him a time would emerge when people would look for spiritual equality – 'Dalitised mode of thinking, God has made all humans equal.' Today the castes which did not want reservations, (Jat, Gujjars, Patels and Kapus) are asking for reservations, and the solution he says is to give them their position in the community. Then, "What is an open quota? In essence it is a Brahmin quota," he slickly pronounces. When the dalitization process happens more and more, the labor will be respected.

4.6. Leading from Dalit Identity assertion to Transformation:

Soon after the incident of the Dalit PhD scholar Mr. Rohith Vemula's suicide^{xi} at Central University of Hyderabad, Prof. Kancha Ilaia wrote that Dalit students like Vemula were creating a 'new cultural idiom'. It is a quest for transformation. "The struggles at JNU, University of Hyderabad, Jadavpur University, IIT-Madras's issue with Ambedkar Periyar Circle, beef festivals in Osmania or EFLU are 'not a struggle for identity' but these are about transformative, political, ideological issues" says Prof. Kancha Ilaiah.

He asserts saying, the eating of beef, exercising the right to freedom of speech and being a human without the politics of caste, are all about transformation of society where equality is the goal. These are not identity issues, but equality issues; these are issues of Indian democracy becoming mature. Identity is just a low grade of that, transformation is the next level.

4.7. Leading towards Self respect and freedom:

Valerian Rodrigues writes in Hindu editorial page^{xii}, "It is increasingly human dignity and worth and the capacity to be what one can be, that occupy the high ground. The reduction of freedom to one's birthmarks, and the social structures, institutions, prejudices and interactions that sustain such a state of affairs are seen as new forms of enslavement. A patch of land of one's own, a home where one can live on one's own terms, not to be condemned to certain occupations, or be treated as low and defiled stir Dalit imagination today as never before".

Valerian further writes, "The slogans that resound in the Dalit movement today indicate.....their choice of food, right to land, *Swabhiman* and *Atmabhiman* (Self respect), *Azadi* (Freedom) and dignity. They pronounce death knell to historic oppression, and freedom to define their own self-hood. Dalits also proudly announce the equality of women and their right to choose the kind of life they wish to live and denounce the surveillance of Hindutva brigades on them. The dragging out of Mohammad Akhlaq from his house and his killing by a local Hindu mob on the charge of storing beef at his house in Dadri, Uttar Pradesh, has become an important issue in Dalit struggles, woven around the right to food. As a result, we find the bonding together of large number of associations of these groups and communities".

4.8. Leading to Right to dissent:

Another event published in all social media on Oct 2, 2016, a Ph.D Student Velupula Sunkanna from Hyderabad Central University refused to accept his Ph.D Degree from the hand of the Vice Chancellor Mr. Appa Rao. Since, Mr. Appa Rao was accused as one of the culprits who was considered to be a cause for Rohit Vemula's suicide. Mr. Velupula Sunkanna refused to accept his Ph.D Degree from the hand of the Vice Chancellor Mr. Appa Rao. It is nothing but asserting one's democratic right to dissent. All that Mr. Sunkanna wanted is transformation in the mind set of every dominant cast man and woman.

4.9. Leading to pro-action move

As many as 200 cow vigilante groups have sprung up in Gujarat. They have become a law and order problem in Gujarat because of their aggression and the way they take law into their hands. These vigilantes are self-proclaimed *gau rakshaks* (Cow vigilantes) but in actual fact they are hooligans. Armed members of such groups often intercept vehicles transporting animals or raid slaughter houses where they suspect cows are being slaughtered. On 11th July 2016 four Dalit youth were flogged mercilessly by some cow vigilant group members in Una, Ahmadabad district, Gujarat^{xiii}. As a consequence of this event, the Dalits have taken a stand in Una not to get involve in disposing any dead animals. They are saying, "This is your cow, if it is your *mata* (mother), then please clean yourself and you don't throw it on us" It is neither reactionary nor revolutionary; it is just a question of common justice. It is amazing that Dalits cannot touch their [upper castes'] cow, but they have to carry the dead cow and bury them. Saying "no" to do their traditional work is a pro-action move towards transformation.

5. Swachh Bharat represents toilet users, not toilet cleaners 'the Dalits'

Bezwada Wilson, National convener of Safai Karmachari Andolan, and Magsaysay award winner explains how manual scavenging is a problem arising out of caste, class and patriarchy.

He says, "As the government plans to build 12 crore toilets by 2019 under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, who will clean these toilets and how many people will die cleaning them?"^{xiv} Explaining how manual scavenging is actually a problem arising out of caste, class and patriarchy, Wilson says that the government has failed to address either of these concerns in its cleanliness drive.

Manual scavengers are not only untouchables for the dominant caste; even the rest of the Dalit community is also not ready to treat them equally. These people have no names. This scavenging community is just known as "Bankis". They have no alternative works except cleaning toilets. So, Swachh Bharat represents the toilet users, there is no concern for toilet cleaners. It is an ideological problem. Actually Swachh means "pure". The scheme is for 'pure' people. The scheme doesn't consider the dirty hands of those who are cleaning Bharat for thousands of years. From the beginning, 'pure' represents the dominant caste and 'pollution' represents the oppressed Dalits.

5.5. The law to eradicate manual scavenging in India is totally ineffective:

The Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act was passed in 1993. Though the Act prohibits manual scavenging yet it had no effective plan for complete eradication.

When the National Commission for Safai Karmacharis was constituted in 1993, they were enthusiastic but within two-three years they realized that the Act was not going to change anything. When they went to file cases as per the Act, the police refused to register them because it [the Act] is not a law but is like any other government scheme. There is no provision of punishment in the Act. It did not mention whom to punish. It only mentioned that the district collector or the deputy commissioner is responsible for filing a case on behalf of scavengers. But how can a commissioner file a case against himself?

This Act dealt with toilets and was not for the liberation of scavengers. Moreover, it was proposed by the housing and urban poverty alleviation ministry and not by the social justice and empowerment ministry. Because sanitation is a concurrent subject, states have to rectify the Act in their legislative assemblies. After rectification, the state Government has to notify areas in which they will eradicate manual scavenging. This will never happen, not even in a single state.

Indian bureaucracy always works for the rich. The poor Dalits, Adivasis, minorities and other marginalized communities never get benefits from the bureaucracy.

5.6. There is no official statistics about the number of people employed in manual scavenging:

Since independence nobody has data about the manual scavengers in our country. Many efforts have been made but none has given any result. The Census of India in 2011 had given the number of dry toilets, but the issue was the numbers of scavengers. Then they said they would do the survey in a different manner, and finally found the number not more than 1,000-2,000 for the whole country. How is it possible? Even cities like Meerut, Ghaziabad and Lucknow have more scavengers.

According to Safai Karamachari Andolan survey^{xv}, there are not less than 1.6 lakh manual scavengers in the country, especially in states like UP, MP, Gujarat, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir and parts of Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

Dry latrines still exist. Septic tank and sewer line workers have not enumerated anywhere. That is why Indian railways is also not giving the data of manual scavengers. When a train stops at any station and someone uses the toilet there is a scavenger to clean. The railway minister has announced plans to convert 500 train toilets into bio-toilets every year. At this speed, it will take 200-300 years to complete. This is actually the problem of caste, but they don't want to identify that it exists.

5.7. Scavenging is a caste based occupation:

In today's context, actually, scavenging is a caste-based occupation. Otherwise how come 100 percent of scavengers in the country are Dalits? They may speak Hindi, Punjabi, Telugu, Urdu or any other language, but if they are doing scavenging they are Dalits. In dry latrine cleaning, 98 percent cleaners are women. So, it is the problem of the caste and patriarchy. The nation doesn't want to address these two issues. Without annihilation of the mindset based on caste and patriarchy, how can we make Bharat Swachh?

5.8. We need another ISRO:

On August 15, 2016 manual scavenging killed four men in Hyderabad^{xvi}. If the country is so technologically advanced, claiming to be a superpower, then why are there no machines to clean the sewer or septic tanks? They never think of it because they believe it is the work of Dalits. If ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] could be established to launch rockets and satellite, another ISRO – Indian Sanitation Research Organization – can also be established. Why can't the Government of India think of using technology to clean the sewer or septic tanks?

6. Hindutva Ideology and works of Sangh Parivar

The historical essence of Hindu fascism has been operating with the formation of modern Brahminic organizations like the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), the Bajarang Dal (BD), and so on. Here the youth belonging to Other Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are organized to provide the Brahminic muscle power for their programmes by giving them trishuls (tridents), chakras (sharpened throwing discs), bows and arrows (these two weapons are used by Brahmins to kill Dalit Bahujans in Ancient Hindu myths and legends).

The Sangh's propaganda machinery is working overtime on the cultural issues. Whether they bring Dalits, Muslims, OBCs or Adivasis, the main aim of the Sangh Parivar is to protect Brahmanical interest. They know it is not possible for them to be like Parshurama or Dronacharya who were not challenged because Brahmanism enslaved people mentally. Today, they will be challenged on all the fronts whether intellectual, political, social or cultural and they must be ready to face!

6.1. Brahmenic co-option of Religious festivals

Brahmanism survived in India by co-opting most of the festivals and 'redefining' them. When Buddha's teachings became popular and Buddhism started growing, it became a challenge to the Hindus. They could not defeat Buddhist teachings argumentatively so they placed Buddha as 10th incarnation of Lord Vishnu. Now, in the recent past *Onam* festival in Kerala is being converted as *Vaman Jayanti*^{xvii}. The importance given is to Vamana a Brahmin and not to the king Mahabali.

6.2. Crimes against Dalits correlate with the rise of BJP:

According to National Crime Records Bureau data, 47,064 cases of crimes against Dalit people were registered in 2014, up from 39,408 in 2013 and 33,655 in 2012, a steady increase that correlates with the rise of BJP in power.

"I can give you in written that undoubtedly RSS is the biggest enemy of India, we need to defeat the poisonous ideology of RSS on ideological level^{xviii}" said Justice **GB Kolse Patil**. He said, "Hindutva is nothing but deluding name of Brahmanism and the real enemies of India are Brahmanism and Capitalism^{xix}". At this point of time we need to be united irrespective of our differences of caste, religion, region and we need to mobilize all sections to fight against the communalism of RSS. Greater awareness has to be created among all the peace loving citizens belonging to all communities not to be a victim of the propaganda campaign by RSS.

When **Mani Shankar Aiyar addressed in the same meeting, he said**, “One can’t imagine India without Muslims and Muslims without India. It’s the message of equality which attracted Indians towards Islam and it conquered the hearts of Indian masses. Those who say that Islam spread by the might of sword should know that Muslims ruled India 666 years but in spite of that there were only 24% Muslim population during British rule^{xx}”. We need to know that history is being distorted to suit communal agenda a wrong image of Muslims is being painted by saffronization of history. The politics of hate will not take us anywhere it will only weaken India.

The hatred is not only against the Muslim community, it’s against Dalits, Adivasis, Christians and it’s against all who are against the ideology of Sangh Pariwar (Hindutva). The ideology of Hindutva which is being taught in every Shakha of RSS is the reason behind such atrocities in the country. The government should adopt the secular values of our country enshrined in the Indian Constitution and treat all citizens equal. The unity and concerted effort of all Muslims, minorities, Dalits, tribals and progressive groups is important to fight communalism and fascism.

6.3. Prime Minister is not a *Pradhan Sewak*:

Fundamentalism is dangerous for Democracy. At least Dalits have come out in the streets to resist, but it is a very small development. Even the Prime Minister is silent about the atrocities perpetuated on Dalts, tribals, women and minorities in our country. When he delivered his Independent day speech on the Red fort on 15th August 2016 in Delhi, he said, “You shoot me, not my Dalit brothers”. How can a Prime Minister talk like this? He must speak like a Prime Minister, not as ‘*Pradhan Sewak*’. He can be a ‘*Pradhan Sewak*’ for BJP and RSS, but not for the country. When atrocities on such weaker sections were happening, he should have said, “You cannot beat or kill anyone, otherwise law will take its course”. He should have asserted that the rule of law is supreme. As the Prime Minister of India his duty is to assure security to the weak and vulnerable from violence and killing.

Second Vatican Council states: “Today in many places we hear a call for greater security. But until exclusion and inequality in society and between peoples is reversed, it will be impossible to eliminate violence. The poor and the poorer peoples are accused of violence, yet without equal opportunities the different forms of aggression and conflict will find a fertile terrain for growth and eventually explode^{xxi}.” (Evangelii Gaudium No. 59)

6.4. Reservation is an endless battle

Caste based discrimination is a disease, caste based reservation is a medicine. As soon as the disease is cured, there will be no need for remedies. What was the need for constitutional reservations? Reservations are a measure to offset the flawed caste system. Indian caste system for centuries has led to an unequal society with highly educated and economically well to do class and very low or not educated and socially and economically ostracized class. When the founders of Indian constitution were faced with this problem they came with a solution which would try to fix this imbalance by giving a push to the society that was having problems. Constitutional reservations are means to provide a representation for socially backward in all socially relevant institutions like politics, education, employment, industry etc. Such underprivileged people of our country deserve Social and transitional justice^{xxii}. As far as there exist an unequal society, reservation is their dire need.

7. Caste and Catholic Church in India

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) teaches that 'God created mankind in his image.....Christ is the image of the invisible God..... the transformation into the image of Christ is accomplished through the sacraments, in the first place through baptism by which one dies to the old man through Christ (Gal 3:26-28) and puts on the new man (Gal 3:27; Rom 13:14). It is the fundamental idea of Christianity. It envisions a society which gives equal dignity and respect to men and women of all castes, all languages, all races, all geographical regions, rich and poor etc. In spirit Christianity does not accept caste and consider people unequal. It visualizes a human society comprising of freedom, fellowship and justice. It could be called as a Kingdom of God or *Vasudaiva kutumbakam* (means 'one human family'). But in practice it miserably failed. In fact, prevalence of caste system is an undeniable reality in both Catholic and Protestant Churches even today.

7.1. The practice of caste in Christianity

Though the existence of Christianity in India goes back to the 1st century by the arrival of St. Thomas (one of the twelve Apostles of Jesus Christ) to India to preach the Good news of Jesus Christ, it was Francis Xavier a Jesuit missionary arrived in Goa in 1542 preached the Good news and established numerous churches along the coastal villages in Goa, Tamil Nadu and Pondichery. Dalits, who were experiencing the iron grip of the caste system in the Hindu fold which legitimized the inhuman caste system on the basis of Hindu scriptures, embraced Christianity as an act of social protest or to escape from social discrimination. They envisioned a new dignified life in following Jesus, the savior of all. This paved the way for Dalit conversion. But unfortunately the non Dalits, the so called caste Hindus who were converted to Christianity brought along with them their caste prejudices and practices also. In 1605 Robert De Nobili came to India followed by Missionaries like John De Britto and Joseph Contantine Beschi and many other missionaries of catholic and protestant Churches. All of them, including the local clergy, except a few, followed a 'policy of accommodation' of the caste system in Christianity. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar wrote: "If there exist caste and other forms among Christian converts it is the result of this policy – the policy of making Christianity easy. In adopting this policy, the Missionaries never thought that someday, somebody would ask them 'What good is Christianity for a Hindu if it does not do away with his caste?' They misunderstood their mission and thought that making a person Christian was the same thing as making him a follower of Christ^{xxiii}."

Discrimination by the Government:

All the Backward class commissions, including Sri Misra Commission proved the fact that Christians of Scheduled Caste origin suffer the same socio-educational and economic disabilities on par with their counterparts in other religions due to traditional practice of untouchability and the change of religion does not change the social, educational and economic status.

The president was empowered by the Article 341 (1) to enlist the Scheduled Castes only for the purpose of statutory benefits but he brought religion as criteria to define Scheduled Caste. In contradiction to Article 341, he promulgated Constitution (Scheduled Caste) Order 1950 stating in para 3 "*Notwithstanding anything contained in para 2, no person who professes a religion different from Hinduism shall be deemed to be a member of scheduled Caste*". It discriminates Dalit Citizens of India on the basis of religion and denies fundamental Right of

freedom of Religion and Conscience to Dalit converts to Christianity and Islam. It is a gross violation of Articles 14, 15/4, 16/4, 25, 46, 330, 341 of the Indian Constitution and Art. 18 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights by UNO.

The Parliament has rectified this lacuna arising out of the para 3 of the order by amending the Constitution (Scheduled Caste) Order 1950 and included Sikh religion in 1956 and Buddhism in 1990. However, Christians of Scheduled Caste Origin were not included till today. This discrimination deprives the Christian Dalits to seek civil protection and safeguards provided for all Dalits under Protection of Civil Rights Act 1976, Untouchability Offences Act 1955 and SC/ST prevention of Atrocities Act 1989. This is a blatant violation and denial of Human Rights and constitutional rights of Dalit Christians.

7.2. Catholic Data reveal Discrimination in the Church – 2013 Statistics.

Caste system is deeply rooted in Indian society and ingrained in Indian psyche. Dalits who live either inside the Hindu fold or converted to Christianity all of them face caste discrimination in the country. Caste discrimination and hatred are found in the Christian Community. Dalits are victimized and deprived of their due participation in the administration of the Church. CBCI made repeated appeals for development of Dalit Community. However discrimination is practiced in the liturgical worship, graveyard, celebration of patron's feast, parish administration and vocations for priests and religious etc. Though Dalit Catholics form 65% of Indian Catholic population only 5% representations is found in clergy, religious and hierarchy of Indian Church. This is clear evidence of discrimination. Inter dining and intermarriages are still not possible between Dalits and Caste people in the Christian Community.

Although in the initial stage of religious formation among clergy caste identity is not visible, later once they are ordained or after pronouncing their religious vows especially when they hold position of power and greater responsibility the tentacle of caste identity is being slowly visible. Unfortunately the caste tag behind their names once again affirms that they belong to a dominant caste and they are superiors to other priests and religious. Though the religious and priestly formation suppose to transform a person from his/her caste prejudices, unfortunately in course of time they align with like minded groups and see the other as a potential threat because of his/her caste difference. In the process of selecting and promoting a person to a higher position in religious hierarchy, the Dalits are segregated and kept aside. Does it mean a Dalit is incapable of taking up leadership role and shoulder greater responsibility in the Church even after his/her long formation equally given to the other non Dalit Priests and Religious?

In the recent past, denial of ordination to a Deacon belongs to Dalit community in the Catholic Diocese of Sivagangai of T.N. still creates puzzle in the mind of every one! God chooses the weak and makes them strong is only a Gospel truth but not a practice of the Catholic Church in India that preaches. Prof. Kancha Ilaiah says, ""In their eagerness to follow ritualistic Catholicism, the Indian Church ignored the basic principle of equality that Jesus preached. The Gentiles and the Samaritans were the *shudras* and the untouchable Dalits of Israel during Jesus' time. His fight was to liberate these oppressed people. But unfortunately, the Catholic church of India never understood the radical side of Jesus. Whether it's Hinduism or Catholicism, the priests are always Brahmins^{xxiv}."

Many priests and religious in the Catholic Church irrespective of their Dalit or non-Dalit identity still hold the mentality of 'the one above the other'. It stems from the basic, many

centuries old, superiority attitude and subjugating mentality, passed on down the ages... They tend to think, 'I can only be a giver. If I decide, you shall receive, otherwise not attitude'. 'You can't claim it or take it without me giving it'. 'If you take it or claim it, it is a sin'. They are pseudo activists and their main aim is not '*giving*' but to become a '*champion of giving!*' In today's context it is true that a non Dalit speaks of Dalit liberation in the Church, he is considered as a Prophet but the same liberation approach is taken up by a Dalit Priest or Religious, he/she is labeled as a divisive force and secessionist. When the Church and its mission is more and more institutionalized and viewed as centres of power and money, initiatives taken to spread the mission of the Church among the Dalits are considered as a potential threat to the existing hierarchical Church.

7.3. Just look at this statistical report of CBCI.....

Total Indian Population 1200 Millions
 Total Christians 25 Millions but Total Dalit Christians 20 Millions (65%)
 Total Catholics 18 Millions but Total Dalit Catholics 12 Millions (65%)
 Catholic Dioceses 167 Catholic Bishops 180 but Dalit Bishops 12 (4%)
 Catholic Diocesan Priests 15420 but Dalit Catholic Priests 754 (5%)
 Religious Priests 7031 but Dalit Religious Priests 310 (4%)
 Religious sisters 65,000 but Dalit Religious sisters 3200 (5%)
 Cardinals 06 but Dalit Cardinals Nil

7.4. The future of Dalit Christians in the Church:

In North India and except Tribal and Adivasi Communities all the Catholics belong to Dalit Community. Tribals/Adivasi People are not affected by Caste system and untouchability. They continue to get all the reservation facilities even after conversion to Christianity. Tribal Catholics may be 2 Millions in the total Catholic population. They are given around 20 Bishops and one Cardinal (Cardinal Telespher Toppo of Ranchi). Very thin catholic population of 4, 20,000 of Syro-Malankara Church has the leadership of 8 Bishops and one Cardinal (Cardinal Moran Baselious Cleemis of Trivandram). The majority 65% Dalit Catholic Community is given only 9 Bishops. This faithful and sacrificing community is denied the right of having Arch Bishop and Cardinal. Therefore, there is an urgent need to take immediate action to eradicate discrimination and oppressions on the basis of Caste and gender Justice for the transformation of the oppressed people.

Pope John Paul II said, "Christians must reject divisions based on caste. Such caste prejudice denies the human dignity of entire groups of people." The Pope said "caste-based prejudice violates authentic human solidarity and is a threat to genuine spirituality^{xxv}." We all of us should know that "**Discrimination against anybody on the basis of caste is a sin against God and humanity.**^{xxvi}"

7.5. Dalit Rights are Human Rights: Caste issue tabled at UN Congress

The bishops of India welcomed a resolution placed before the U.S. Congress by Republican Congressman Trent Franks of Arizona that asked the lawmaking body to encourage an end to India's caste system. In his presentation he called on "the Indian government and the world community to look with compassion upon India's untouchables and reach out to one of the most oppressed peoples on earth^{xxvii}."

In his address to the members of Congress, Franks called the caste system an “abhorrent form of persecution and segregation that is particularly harsh on India’s Dalits — members of the “untouchable” caste — especially Dalit women. Franks argued, “This Congress must urge an end to the social discrimination and injustice faced by the nearly 250 million people known as Dalits in India. The plight of the ‘untouchables’ in India is truly one of the most critical human rights issues of our time^{xxviii}.”

He further reiterated, “Millions of these individuals are regarded as less than human and live in some of the most wretched conditions known to humanity. We are compelled by the unalienable truth that all men are created equal to contend for the rights of the poor and the oppressed, and it is to that end that I have and will continue to stress the urgency of the Dalits’ cause to Congress and to the world^{xxix}.”

8. Our Hope rests in the Constitution of India:

The Indian Constitution is one of the glorious constitutions in the World. On 26th January, 1950 the constitution of India came into force and declared India as a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic and republic. The word sovereign means a supreme and absolute power to conduct its affairs without anyone else’s consent or permission. The Indian Constitution guarantees six types of Fundamental Rights and they enumerated in part III of the constitution. They are – Right to Equality, Right to Freedom, Right against Exploitation, Right to freedom of Religion, Cultural and Educational Rights and the Right to Constitutional Remedies. It upholds the responsibility to secure to all its citizens: a) Justice, social, economic and political; b) Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; c) Equality of status and of opportunity; d) Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity and integrity of the nation. The paramount Fundamental Right in the constitution is “equality”. Article 14 affirms equality before the law and equal protection of the laws to all persons. Article 15 talks of the prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste sex or place of birth. This specifically covers access to shops, public restaurants, hotels and places of public entertainments as well as the use of wells, tanks, roads and places of public resort generally denied to Dalits. Article 16 protects equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters of public employment. Article 17 states Untouchability is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden.

In 2001 the World Conference against racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held at Durban, the Nobel Prize Laureate Archbishop Desmond Tutu said, “India was at the forefront of the struggle against apartheid and expressed the belief that the Indian people would want to end the scourge of caste discrimination. I still hope that this is so, and I strongly urge the Indian Government and my own government to endorse international efforts to end the practice of ‘untouchability’, which is a blot on humanity. Such support would be a boost to the struggle for Dalit rights, not only in India, but all over the world^{xxx}”.

Conclusion:

India is a nation which is economically resourceful, politically active, intellectually potential, culturally rich, religiously deep rooted and socially caste based. The *Varna theory* developed by the Aryan Literature still has its ill effects on the society. The people are getting educated and a thorough transformation is happening everywhere. Modern media is alert on the issues related to the discrimination. It is a curse that we still believe in caste hierarchy. It is a surprising fact that the people of India are not ready to abandon the caste system though

there is a widespread expansion of development in knowledge, education and social awareness. Even highly educated persons are not able to do away with their caste tag after their names. For them culture is somewhat different from what the nations of the World think of. Indian Brahminical system must think of the changes and transformative powers that have been brought about by different religions and modern social movements. A nation without equality, peace and harmony cannot have a healthy future. Our Nation's strength is its unity and oneness accommodating all its differences.

Pope Francis writes, "The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together: we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation^{xxxi}" (Laudato Si, 48).

It is important that we celebrate ourselves and our ancestors, who believed that we were all capable of achieving a strong nation with fuller humanity. We have to celebrate our sisters, our brothers, who are all trying to cross the chasm. We need to join hands with them. We have to celebrate our leadership within our movements, and work to find creative, more innovative ways to achieve the vision Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has set for us. And we must always, always watch out for the oppressor, and not let their worldviews dictate our decisions or influence our love for one another. But the reformation has begun and is gaining in impetus. We may well believe that India's final judgment on the caste system lies with the future rather than with the past.

"So long as you do not achieve social liberty, whatever freedom is provided by the law is of no avail to you^{xxxii}" – Dr. B.R. Ambedkar

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ⁱⁱ The Purusha Sukta of the Rig Veda Hymn 10.90 refers to the origin of the caste system.

ⁱⁱⁱ The English word *caste* derives from the Spanish and Portuguese *casta*, which the [Oxford English Dictionary](#) quotes [John Minsheu](#)'s Spanish dictionary (1599) to mean "race, lineage, or breed".

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^{xxii} Kofi Annan, a former Secretary General of the United Nations, defines transitional justice as “the full set of processes and mechanisms associated with a society’s attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuse, in order to secure accountability, serve justice and achieve reconciliation.”

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^{xxix} Ibid

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^{xxxi} **LAUDATOSI’** (CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME) Encyclical Letter of Pope FRANCIS, Rome on 24 May, 2015.

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**HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN SALMAN RUSHDIE'S
MIDNIGHT'S CHILDREN AND THE SATANIC VERSES**

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Abstract

Salman Rushdie, an iconoclast of Islamism may be more considered as a social scientist than as a mere chronicler of the existing time. He is a revolutionary writer of the time who has brought a radical transformation in the history of Islam fundamentalism. Salman Rushdie has immersed as one of the most powerful novelists of the post-colonial world whose position remains as an indelible mark in among the writers like Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth, Chaman Nahal and others. His most powerful novels like The Satanic Verses and Midnight's Children have brought him to the pendal of great gossip and discussion. The most controversial novel The Satanic Verses has brought him to the great school of criticism and life risk where he has added new twist of anti-Islamic spirit and multicultural consciousness. He has displayed a pervasive influence on several younger generations of Indian and British novelists in a greater magnitude of historical, cultural and autobiographical consciousness.

Key Words: Islamic Culture, Magic Realism, Cultural and Historical Perspectives.

The present article is asked to discuss the cultural and historical perspective of Rushdie with special reference to his to major fictions. It is said that history reveals and replete so far. It is how far true the present article is asked to debate and discuss specially. Rushdie's magic, realism is discussed so far in many fold formations to bring the objective of the version. Though he is given death threat for his rebellions work *Satanic Verses*, which is considered as anti-Islamic one, still he is a Leon class of culture and estheticism. He is fore runner of the front ranking writers those who write on the historical and cultural perspective.

The article looks at the historical consciousness that includes the function of history and its uses and abuses. The general concept of the history is discussed and its role in historical fictions relating to different historical novelists likes Sir Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, George Orwell, Joseph Conrad and others. Rushdie's concept of history in the form magic realism is discussed so far. Further it explicates the cultural consciousness in general and Rushdie's in particular. His discussion of Islamic culture with relation to others is to be analyzed in this context. His cultural consciousness in comparison to others is debated and discussed here. Rushdie's hybridization of post-colonial consciousness is primarily discussed here. History is interfused with fantasy with an artistic display. The struggle for Indian Independence may be the focal point of the novel. Here history and politics are factually twisted on the threshold of memory of the protagonist.

In the recent times, a great body of historical fiction has emerged on the literary scene. Many Indo-English novelists have turned to the past as much to trace the deepening mood of nationalism as to cherish the memories of the bygone days. A close study of the contemporary unabated interests of the readers in the novels that depict the past or that treat some events of national import that has had wide repercussions as a critic I have always attached a great deal of importance to the impact on a writer of the historical milieu in which he lives in which he lives and the historical periods of an earlier time with which the author wishes to associated himself by choice. Writers like Khushwant Singh, Manohar Malgonkar, Chaman Nahal, ShashiTharror and Salman Rushdie amply illustrate this point of view.

A distinction must be made here between the conscious use of history and its sub-conscious presentation. The setting of most novels is in the context of some historical framework unless the novelist willfully place his action in an imaginary locale hoping to highlight a special metaphysical or political point of view, for example William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty Four*. Sometimes, he creates the country, as does Joseph Conrad in *Nostramo*. It is my contention that whatever be the perfection of craftsmanship in this type of novel, such works are accepted by the public nothing more than utopias.

Modern deconstructionists would easily discuss them as exercise in self-deception. Utopias make fine reading their relevance to the immediate problem is more of an escapist nature suggesting remedies neither available nor practical. The historical novel represents no surface wave of escapism but a deep unconscious movement toward national homogeneity. It is in the historical novel only that the

actual day problems of life can be encountered, examined, exposed, challenged and rectified. Entertainment and instruction are by common consent the most valued virtues of historical fiction. The factual and informational values of history illuminate the subject and increasingly whet the reader's curiosity. In other words, for a true artist history is a hand-maiden which helps him to achieve several purposes. How deft he is in the art of amalgamating the two must be judged only by the furnished product and here in the novelist who makes use of history by choice obviously must be held at a superior level than the one who consciously assimilates it. A pertinent question that arises is the relevance of history in a work of art. As a matter of fact, historical sense and reality enter into the sphere of art imperceptibly; they are important factors in determining the ultimate value of a given piece of art. In a sense every novelist is a historic novelist.

This historical reality, in terms of time and space, forms an integral part of a work of art and is transmuted in the process of giving it a creative expression; in the process it achieves wider dimensions of universality and at times a state of timelessness. The historical novelist is none but a historian on whom a talent for imaginative fiction has been happily bestowed. A writer of historical fiction then is as much a historian as a novelist but history does impose limitations on him. His is not free to distort history; factual accuracy has to be strictly adhered to. "Herein lays the additional burden," writer Chaman Nahal, "that a historical novelist places on the artist. The novelist is obliged to do careful research into the period he has chosen for presentation and every detail of that period has to be accurate." Detail, not only about the layout of a geographical region, but also about the people living in that region, their mode of speech, their dress, their habits, their peculiar traits and countless other characteristics of that particular community.

Indeed every care must be taken to verify incidental details, as a sure guard against anachronism. Before it was published, *Gone with the Wind* was subjected, for a period of eight months, to a rigorous checking of facts; and a systematic verification was made of specific statements contained in the novel. Indeed it is an important reason for the immense popularity of this novel in which Margaret Mitchell makes a serious evocation of the American Civil War. Again it is hazardous to infiltrate too much history into the plot of a novel, or to have too many historical figures among the leading characters. History puts the author at a disadvantage since a great majority of characters who have an independent historical reality can hardly be made amenable to the author's designs or the exigencies of the plot. The interaction for historical and fictional characters and the interaction of the two kinds amongst themselves is the most challenging part of writing a historical novel.

The historical novel popularized by Walter Scott, enjoyed immense popularity in the nineteenth century. Dickens, inspired by the French Revolution successfully made use of history in *A Tale of Two Cities*. It is a magnificent novel with a panoramic background representing the dramatic life of a few individuals interwoven with the interest of a catastrophic public event. George Eliot who attempted a historical novel, entitled *Romola*, failed disastrously. The two world wars stimulated the imagination

of writers, giving birth to some significant fiction- Eric Maria Remarque's *All Quiet in the Western Front*, Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*, Herman Wouk's *The Cain Mutiny*. Indeed, in the twentieth century the historical novel has largely been the province of Continental novelists for whom themes of revolution or foreign occupation are much closer to the bone than studies of middle class manners and morals in a relatively stable society such as England. A case in point is J.G. Farrell's new novel *The Singapore Grip*, a trilogy about the decline of the British Empire, Great political movements, conflicts or revolutions are the warp of woof of a historical novelist and good writers are mediumistic to the deeper stirrings of the life for their time or to an event of the past.

Apart from *Gone with the Wind*, the historical novels of the twentieth century which may be termed classics are Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and Boris Pasternak's *Dr. Zhivago*. The first is related to Napoleon's invasion of Russia; the second describes the failure of the Revolution of 1917. Failure of modern Britain to find some great fictional theme could be attributed to history itself than on writers of the age. Especially after the First World War Novels written previously had confined to religious aestheticism now the focus shifted to contemporary socio-political concern.

No doubt in *The Midnight's Children* most important event of our age, as is evident from the writings of Indo-English novelist, was the partition of the subcontinent. The English in 1947 left the country with bag and baggage, after dividing it into two parts. The religious and political difference between Hindu and Muslims which climaxed with this event led to widespread disturbances causing destruction of human life on a scale unprecedented in the recent history of the subcontinent. There was let loose a communal fury which caused a great havoc and misery. In the massacres, which immediately preceded the partition and continued for several months afterwards, at least one million Hindus and Muslims lost their lives. There was a large scale migration of people from one country to the other. In the process thousands were massacred; women were raped, children flung on spears and property looted on a vast scale. All these panoramic pictures are seen in Bhisam Sahami's *Thams* and Attia Hossan's *the sunlight on the broken column*.

With the emergence of Gandhi on the scene, the political situation in India took a turn. From the 1920s the national struggle acquired the spectrum of a broad river which kept on expanding until the British were thrown out of India. The manner in which the country achieved its independence is debatable division of the country could perhaps have been avoided. All the same by the end of the 40's in a matter of three decades India had emerged as nation in its own right with its cultural heritage unscathed.

Salman Rushdie has established himself as one of the most significant Indian writers in England of 21st Century. He has earned a wide name and fame as a fiction and non-fiction writer in India and abroad. His works have earned considerable amount of critical acclaims in the Indian sub-continent, Europe, America and indeed much of the world. Most of his major fictional, non-fictional works, pieces of journalisms, talks, interviews and interfaces have been translated in dozen of

languages in the world. Especially his historical perspective in the form of fiction and meta-fiction are myth and allegories of the modern world.

Though he is supposed to be a revolutionary writer in the history of Islam but he is a true human being in search of humanity without any caste, creed, religion and races, estheticism, and emblem of human love and fraternity. I have assimilated his fictional, non-fictional and journalistic works in my article in various chapters so far. Especially, I have given much more focus to his cultural and historical perspective in the term of human love, sympathy and fellow feeling without any imaginary lines of culture and estheticism. His innovative idea on magic realism that have been discussed in a specific new moment of literature for times to come 'Exile' according to Edward Said's, "is the condition that characterizes the intellectual" (43)

Position as intellectual in today's world may be felt to bear out that observation. For multiple reasons, the author of *Joseph Anton* may be considered paradigmatic of the intellectual who belongs everywhere but above all nowhere-like Satan in the epigraph of *The Satanic Verses*, without any fixed place, or space allowed him to rest the sole of his foot upon. At the same time, his is, indubitably, the status of a public intellectual, as a commentator and analyst not only within his specialist field but also with regard to public events and issues in general. The public intellectual may be defined as a figure consecrated in a given area of knowledge or creation who writes in the press, appears on audio-visual media or, today, blogs or tweets on the internet on a variety of subjects of public interest and whose opinions are listened to, dissected and syndicated as an important contribution to debate. Rushdie is thus part of modern day tradition which has perhaps its most distinguished exemplar in George Orwell and has in recent times included such figures (whether exponents primarily of literature or of other disciplines) as Harold Bloom, Umberto Eco, Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel Garcia Marquez Christopher Hitchens, Eric Hobsbawm, Octavio Paz, Esward Said, Jose Saramago or Mario Vargas Liosa..

One such figure, Rushdie's firmed, associate and defender Edward Said has offered a working definition of the public intellectual. To invoke Said in discussing Rushdie is, besides, of particular pertinence. Said's and Rushdie's career both straddle East and West-for Said as a Jerusalem born Palestinian Christian resident in the US, for Rushdie as a British citizen of sub-continental Muslim origin, domiciled in the UK and later the US: neither can be said to 'belong' anywhere. In addition, it is important to stress Said's unremitting defense of Rushdie over the Satanic Verses issue. Neither Said's identification with the left nor his highly visible stand in Middle East politics as voice of the Palestinian cause prevented him from aligning with the libertarian, anti-censorship camp on the 'Rushdie affair'. Another figure associated with both, Christopher Hitchens, notes in his memoirs that Rushdie actually sent said a pre-publication draft of the Verses. Hitchens tells how one evening in late 1987 or early 1988, he happened to be visiting Said at his New York home when a courier arrived bearing a huge box, which contained the manuscript of a forthcoming novel by Salman Rushdie. The recipient may not have predicted the storm ahead, but the episode suggests a significant level of trust between the two, and anticipates the fact

that later, Said left no punches pulled in his repeated and eloquent defense of the Verses. Thus, in an interview of 1993, Said offered a trenchant vindication of Rushdie, declaring: 'in the Islamic world I have been vociferous in attacking the banning of the book.' Interviewed again in 1999, he stated unequivocally: 'I am an absolute believer in absolute freedom of expression', adding: 'to condemn him to death and to burn his book and to ban it-these are horrible, horrible things.'

The corpus of Rushdie's fiction may be considered the product of a critical and engaged intellectual writings principally in the novel mode. He critiques the betrayal of Nehruvian ideals in *Midnight's Children*, the decline of cosmopolitan Bombay in *The Moor's Last Sigh*, or the fundamentalist onslaught on Kashmiri syncretism in *Shalimar the Clown*. His fiction is also typically the outcome of careful research, an activity we may associate with the intellectual: *The Satanic Verses* is on one level a solid product of the British educational system, its Arabian chapters.

Originating in Rushdie's study of the birth of Islam as a special subject as part of his degree in history at Cambridge, while *The Enchantress of Florence* pushes its researches to the point of appending an academic style bibliography. At the same time, Rushdie's claim to the status of intellectual also rests on a significant body of non-fiction. This takes the form, firstly of large numbers of essays, reviews, interviews, speeches and occasional pieces, much of which material (up to 2002) has been collected in the two volumes *Imaginary Homelands* and *Step Across This Line* and secondly two full-length books-one a minor work, *The Nicaraguan politico-travelogue The Joseph Anton*. Thus, of Rushdie's sixteen published books to date, four are non-fiction. The range of subjects taken on by Rushdie in his non-fiction is breathtaking, and what emerges from the corpus with particular strength is a sense of the intellectual as commentator on culture. As critic of culture, Rushdie differs from Said, who notably in his writings on classical music, alone or with the conductor and pianist Daniel Barenboim, with whom he founded a major cross-cultural orchestra tends to stick to the high cultural side; Rushdie, by contrast, in fiction and non-fiction alike (Bollywood in *Midnight's Children* and *The Satanic Verses*; western rock music in *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, articles on the Rolling Stones or a Hollywood classic like *The Wizard of Oz*), offers a close engagement with popular culture and constant crossing and re-crossing of the high culture/ mass culture divide.

Secularism as embodied by Rushdie is today be no means always a popular intellectual stance: since *The Satanic Verses* was published, there has been a trend-beyond any doubt general, albeit not universal-in the Western liberal to left establishment that may (be it said in passing, in stark contrast to the earlier hegemony of Marxism, with its anti-religious slant and its belief in progress) be summed up in the terms 'respect for religion', 'cultural relativism' and 'political correctness'. This fraction is today arguably even hegemonic on the Western left. Rushdie for his part clearly rejects it, as is evident in his continued refusal to recant over the Verses. The only qualification here concerns the two early episodes, the 'apology' published in the press in February 1989 and the ephemeral conversion essay of 1990, 'why I Have Embraced Islam', in both of which he appeared to have

shifted towards the relativist camp. Both are disavowed in *Joseph Anton* as acts of backsliding under duress, and have not been repeated. Thus, Rushdie is today anathema to a certain kind of Western liberal.

Nonetheless his liberation, anti-theocratic and anti-relativist stance is spelt out in *Joseph Anton* and reiterated in multitudinous interviews around that book. To some, Rushdie with his defense in his memoir of 'Western' values such as free speech, rejection of the concept of 'Islam Phobia' which he sees as Orwellian Newspeak and refusal to conflate religion and race. A religion was not a race; it was an idea may appear as a traitor-a onetime ally of the post-colonial, multi-cultural and relativist left who has reneged on its values. This fraction of the left included, early on, those such as John Berger or Germaine Greer who refused to defend Rushdie over the Verses, and is today represented by those, such as Zoe Heller or Rushdie's arch-enemy Pankaj Mishra, who responded unsympathetically to *Joseph Anton* and, reading it individualistically, saw it more as subjective personal vindication than as manifestation of collective values.

For Rushdie himself, it is clear that if he has not changed, the left (or a major part of it) has. This is crystal clear in the passage in *Joseph Anton* where he attacks 'the cancer of cultural relativism', contrasted with the rich multiculturalism of the modern world, distinguishing the secular multiculturalism he approves from the neo-theocratic relativism, and respect for Islam he adheres. He may be claimed to have affirmed himself, as a free thinker beholden to none-and thus as a said an intellectual by refusing over the years to change his views on vital subjects or to convert to postmodern orthodoxy. In this characteristics the refusal to convert (to whatever) he resembles such peers as Bloom, who has stood firm in his defense of canonic literature, or Saramago and Hobsbawm, who both remained loyal Marxists to their dying day. One may also compare Hitchens, another libertarian refuse whose stand on freedom of speech and secularism, consistently echoed Rushdie's Hitchens relates in Hitch-22 how, when asked by the Washington Post on that fatal St. Valentine's Day in 1989 to state his position, he leapt to his friend's defense: Here was something that completely committed me. It was... everything I hated versus everything I loved... No more root and branch challenge to the values of the Enlightenment... or to the First Amendment... could be imagined. Rushdie was aware of this at the time and rapid Hitchens in kind in his obituary of 2012: Everything that I loved and valued... was ranged against everything he loved versus everything he hated trope, and felt... understood.

Nonetheless, there remains a problem in Rushdie's self-projection as free speech and secularist icon. His arguments in *Joseph Anton* and elsewhere, however eloquent, are typically couched in what are very much a 'Western' discourse evoking the Enlightenment (*Joseph Anton* 129) and the First Amendment (to the US Constitution) in terms very similar to those used by Hitchens. He has accordingly been castigated-by, for example, Priyamvada Gopal in her widely circulated Guardian piece on the occasion of Rushdie's controversial knighthood for addressing free speech issues with 'Western' rather than 'Eastern concepts'. This is not entirely fair:

in his post-fatwa lecture 'One Thousand Days in Balloon' (1991), he invokes his near namesake IbnRushd or Averroes, and his concept of individual interpretation within Islam (Imaginary Homelands, paperback edition (436). However, there is certainly a case for suggesting that were Rushdie to refer more often to non-Western, and notably Islamic, free thinkers-one may here invoke Iqbal, or Rumi and other Sufis, or the nineteenth century Nada movement in Egypt-he might succeed in getting more Eastern intellectual on his side, even at the cost of reduced accessibility for his Western constituency.

Salman Rushdie remains an intellectual committed to a firmly articulated belief system, which will not water down or alter his deeply held convictions. In view of the distancing from left wing orthodoxy that now requires, it may be asked whether he is still, today, a Said in intellectual in the sense of talking back to something called 'power'. Here, there is a case for arguing that it is not he who has changed, but the Islamic world and the Western liberal establishment-and that Islamism and cultural relativism have by now, in their respective environments, acquired sufficient influence to permit them to be considered as manifestations of power-a power to which Rushdie, as critical intellectual, talks back as he has talked back to other.

Forms of power in the past his recent performance has not been faultless: since *Joseph Anton*, he has been less eloquent politically and culturally than he might have been a Twitter feed is a poor substitute for a New York Times column and his role of keeper of the flame may be in course of passing to others- to the likes of Pakistan's Malala Yousafzai, today as iconic a symbol of educational rights as Rushdie has been of free speech. Nonetheless, Rushdie's present relative silence may be temporary or strategic. His intellectual stance to date is arguably best defined as that of a libertarian in the line of George Orwell, who refuses all rigid orthodoxies and schemas. The price of libertarianism may indeed be exile. In the end, if as Said affirms exile is the condition of the intellectual then for Salman Rushdie as an embattled critical intellectual in the postmodern world as one who stakes his being on dissent and pays no tribute to fashion-it may be, ineluctably and irredeemably the case that there is no longer any such place as home.No doubt, Rushdie's perception on historical and cultural consciousness reflected in his two major fictions is supposed to be both traditional and modern in the Dickentrian and Mantelic (Hillary Mantel, Broker Prize winner for Wool and Hall) vision so far

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CROSS BORDER E-COMMERCE IN INDIA: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Abstract

E-commerce or electronic commerce deals with buying and selling of goods and services or the transmitting of funds or data over an electronic platform commonly known as the internet. The emergence of e-commerce is likely to place an enormous pressure on the auxiliary logistics functions. Negligible or zero delivery prices, doorstep delivery and convenient reverse logistics have become the most important elements of differentiation for ecommerce firms. While the current logistics challenges relating to manufacturing and distribution of consumer products and organised retail are well-known, the demands of ecommerce raise the associated complexities to a different level. From a relative obscurity to a potential game changer in a matter of just few years, ecommerce has not only captured a larger share of mind space but also has been seizing the market share rapidly. Is this growth rate sustainable? This paper discusses several key challenges the ecommerce players need to address and the factors that could enable the ecommerce industry to grow to its full potential in the coming years.

Key Words: e-commerce, business to business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), consumer-to-consumer (C2C) and business-to-government (B2G).

Introduction

E-commerce or electronic commerce deals with buying and selling of goods and services or the transmitting of funds or data over an electronic platform commonly known as the internet. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) defines e-commerce as the sale or purchase of goods or services, conducted over computer networks by methods specifically intended for the purpose of receiving or placing of orders. The goods and services are ordered by these methods, but the payment and the ultimate delivery of the goods and services do not have to be conducted online. An e-commerce transaction can be between companies,

enterprises, households, individuals, governments and other public or private organisations. To be included in ecommerce are orders made over the web, extranet or electronic data interchange. The type of ecommerce is defined by the method of placing the order. To be excluded from the ecommerce deals are the orders made through telephone calls, facsimile or e-mail.

There are various types of e-commerce viz., business to business (B2B), business-to-consumer (B2C), consumer-to-consumer (C2C) and business-to-government (B2G). B2B accounts for the bulk of e-commerce value. It can involve online versions of traditional transactions related to goods that are subsequently sold to consumers through the retail outlets. It can also involve the provision of goods and services to support other businesses. B2C on the other hand involves sales by 'pure play' ecommerce enterprises to consumers and by traditional bricks-and-mortar retail or manufacturing enterprises that add an online sales channel. There is a wide range of channels to reach the consumers including social networks, crowd sourcing platforms, dedicated e-commerce websites and mobile applications. The products sold can be physical goods and digital products and services. C2C ecommerce can be seen as a modern version of the classified advertising section in a newspaper or a magazine. It covers online marketplace platforms (e.g. Flipkart, Snapdeal, Myntra, Homeshop18, eBay India, Pepperfry, Big basket, Alibaba and Amazon India) and sales within online communities, consumer blogs and chat rooms. B2G transactions are similar to B2B, except that the buyer in this case is a government entity advocating e-auctions and e-procurement. Further distinctions can be made by the type of product, target market and device used in placing the orders. Ecommerce may involve physical goods and services purchased online and delivered in person as well as intangible products that can be delivered digitally.

Evolution of Ecommerce in India

e-commerce processes are normally conducted through emails, fax, online catalogues, shopping carts, electronic data interchanges (EDI), file transfer protocol, web services and e-newsletters. e-travel is one of the most popular forms of e-commerce followed by e-tail which essentially means selling of retail goods on the internet conducted by the B2C category. According to Ecommerce Europe, the United States, United Kingdom and China together account for about 57 percent of the world's total B2C ecommerce sales in 2013, with China alone having sales of USD 328.4 billion. As against this, India had sales of only USD 10.7 billion, 3.3% of that of China in 2013 and with a fifth position in the Asia-Pacific region. This is despite the fact that India enjoys high demographic dividends just like the People's Republic of China. India's internet penetration with total households at 46 million against China's 207 million is one of the reasons behind India's poor B2C sales growth.

According to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI)¹, the ecommerce market in India is expected to achieve the estimated target of Rs 211,005 crores by the end of December 2016. The ecommerce market in India grew at 30% between 2011 and 2015 and was valued at over Rs 125,732 crores by the end of December

2015. The growth was principally led by the online travel industry which alone accounted for 63 percent of the overall share. Online travel, which includes domestic air ticket and railway booking, is expected to grow at 40 percent to reach Rs 122,815 crores by the end of 2016. The hotel booking business grew at 165 percent year over year to reach Rs 5,200 crores in Dec. 2015, while the spending on online railway ticket booking grew at around 34 percent to Rs 21,708 crores in 2015. E-tailing continued to remain the leading and prominent category among non-travel online spending. The report of IAMAI says that the 57 percent growth in e-tailing was driven by mobile phone and other accessories. Computers, consumer electronics, apparel and accessories accounted for bulk of retail ecommerce spend in India, making up 49 percent of overall spend in the e-tail segment. The report further found that online shoppers mostly belong to the top eight and small metros in India. Two thirds of these shoppers fall in the age group 16 to 34 years and are predominantly male. Apparel and footwear sale almost doubled as compared to the previous year to Rs 7142 crores in Dec. 2015. This segment is expected to gain further momentum and reach Rs 72639 crores by the end of 2016. Other online services like booking movie tickets, online commuting, online grocery and food delivery accounted for about Rs 3823 crores.

Ecommerce Logistic Models

The emergence of e-commerce is likely to place an enormous pressure on the auxiliary logistics functions. The proposition of e-commerce to the customer is in offering an almost unlimited variety of choices spread over a whole geographical area. Companies cannot compete solely based on sheer volumes in today's ever-evolving, information symmetric and globalised world of e-commerce. Instead, the domain of competition has shifted to delivering to ever-shortening delivery timeliness, both consistently and predictably. Negligible or zero delivery prices, doorstep delivery and convenient reverse logistics have become the most important elements of differentiation for ecommerce firms. While the current logistics challenges relating to manufacturing and distribution of consumer products and organised retail are well-known, the demands of ecommerce raise the associated complexities to a different level. E-commerce retailers are aware of these challenges and are conscious of the need to invest in long term fixed assets and day-to-day working capital. The essence of e-retailing is in its ability to go beyond physical boundaries and reach customers in a manner different from the traditional brick-and-mortar stores to their very doorstep. However, the essence of e-retailing model is technology and logistical solutions that facilitates the customer acquisition and the final 'reach' process. E-commerce further brings to the table the whims and fancies in customer orders accompanied with difficult scenarios such as free delivery, order rescheduling, cancellation, returns and cash-on-delivery.

From a distribution perspective, the evolution of ecommerce logistics, has passed through several phases and can be distinctly grouped as follows:

1. In the 1970s, most retail stores were replenished by direct deliveries from suppliers or wholesalers
2. In the 1980s, retailers started to centralize their store deliveries through new distribution centres which were under their control
3. In the 1990s, global sourcing (for non-food products) was launched, with many retailers developing import centres to receive and process mostly containerized imports
4. From 2000, e-commerce began to rapidly expand with pure-play (internet) retailers leading the way in establishing e-fulfilment distribution networks

In developed economies, the growth of online retail has been stronger in sectors such as fashion, electrical and ICT goods, as opposed to food. Where purchased items are typically distributed via a post parcel or courier linkages or freight network, e-commerce logistics have led to an upsurge of new demand for four distinct types of logistics functions:

1. Mega e-fulfilment centres where the merchandise is stocked and picked at item level. These facilities are either operated by the retailer or a logistics service provider and of sizes ranging from five lac sq. ft. to ten lac sq. ft. in size or sometimes even larger. They often operate 24/7.
2. Parcel hubs/sort centres which sort orders by postal code so that they can be delivered to the relevant parcel delivery centre for final delivery to the customer's home or designated collection point.
3. Parcel delivery centres which handle the last leg delivery to the customer.
4. Seamlessly integrated technology where shopping carts connect via Application programming interface(API) or web xml to a transportation management system so shoppers can obtain the exact price quote of shipping of large items as these technology products for logistics, such as a Track Management System (TMS) should accompany the shopping cart for better management:
 1. Ability to organize and track shipment no matter what mode
 2. Online order status and documentation
 3. Online dispatch documentation and invoice, such as a bill of lading and freight invoice
 4. Auto reminder for payments
 5. Seamless interface with existing SCM or ERP system
 6. Online alerts for critical information via text or mobile and
 7. Information systems reports on past data analysis, delivery history, etc.

These types of e-commerce logistics systems, based on the above considerations, ensure the following benefits to shippers, customers, and third party logistics service providers leading to improved communication, transparency in the supply chain, improved customer satisfaction, cost reduction and on-time delivery.

The Amazon effect

Today, Amazon is one of the largest companies in America, with operations across the world and a stock valuation far superior than most of the Fortune 500 companies. The concept of Amazon initially was to do business exclusively online, offering customers the convenience of shopping from home and giving the seller little overhead costs. However with the birth of ecommerce, everything has changed: the proliferation and spread of Internet into our daily life; the look and feel of the online space; the speed of internet connections; even who is getting on board online and how they're getting there! In the early days of e commerce, convenience and low prices were the driving forces for ecommerce users. But today, with ecommerce retailers catering to every kind of product, service, and shopping experience, the challenge has shifted. Initially supply chains handled old-school, brick and mortar retail, where products arrived in warehouses in bulk quantities and were stacked around in pallets, selected by the case and shipped out to store in bulk.

Now, ecommerce poses the unique challenge of inventory arriving in bulk and requires much care from there ie., receiving bulk orders, then inventorying them and picking those SKUs as individual products. Therefore, ecommerce retailers have to find a way to standardize and synchronize business processes to have real-time access and insight into inventory movement. Often, with dozens of suppliers, multiple warehouses, and an extensive number of sales channels, the chances of a misplaced order are much higher. However, order fulfilment technologies have helped integrate the front-end and back-end of online retail. The back-end process is now a collaborative effort thanks to automated software and real-time fulfilment data. The alignment of important touch-points in the supply chain has reduced inefficiencies and had helped identify redundant processes.

In the early days of e-commerce, it was about the convenience of ordering a product from home. No driving to the mall and no standing in line, just waiting for the package to be delivered to ones doorstep. Shippers used snail mail and phone calls to communicate with customers and order delivery times were in the weeks. Free shipping quickly became a tool that brought in competitors' customers, since there weren't many carrier options, no additional costs (such as VAT or sales tax) existed, and order delivery times were slow. But now with change of State laws, ecommerce merchants collect sales tax, fuel charges are much higher, and the ever-popular free shipping is the farthest thing from free to retailers. Other than giants like Amazon, not many retailers in India have the resources to operate multiple distribution centres in strategic locations and instead are turning to third party logistics service providers to reach their customers. The evolution of multiple shipping options has provided the

customers more control over the delivery process than ever before. Ultimately, it is all about being able to deliver an order within a time frame and at a price that customers desire.

Top Performers by Retail Ecommerce Revenue

According to the estimates as prepared by eMarketer³, the current annual e-market sales in the United States is around USD 210 billion and is expected to grow by 10 to 12 percent a year. The top 25 e-retailers have combined sales of about USD 159 billion with the top three slots going to Amazon (USD 79.3 billion), Wal-Mart (USD 13.5 billion) and Apple (USD 12 billion). Of the top 25 companies on the list, 18 are more or less traditional brick-and-mortar retailers who have pushed their online efforts over the past five years. These include companies such as Macy's, Nordstrom, Target Corp, Gap Inc. and Neiman Marcus. Amazon's pure e-commerce revenue represents 74.1 percent of total sales while the number-two Wal-Mart has e-commerce revenue of a mere 2.8 percent of its total sales - which indicates that the world's largest retailer has plenty of room to grow online. Indeed, analysts and industry consultants across the globe have been urging retailers to improve the leveraging capability of their physical stores by looking at them as warehouses from where goods can be shipped around globally. According to Morgan Stanley, top three online retail platforms dominated the Indian ecommerce market in 2015 with a combined market share of 83%. Flipkart, including Myntra, maintained its No. 1 position with a 45% market share, followed by Snapdeal at 26% and Amazon India at 12%. Paytm had a 7% share. At \$13.8 billion, the GMV of the top three ecommerce companies exceeded that of the top 10 offline retailers at \$12.6 billion last year.

Factors that Fuel the Growth of Ecommerce Industry

From a relative obscurity to a potential game changer in a matter of just few years, ecommerce has not only captured a larger share of mind space but also has been seizing the market share rapidly. Flipkart, one of the largest online retailers in India, grew five times in volume of products sold between 2013 and 2014. Snapdeal, another large player, is reported to have grown six times in the same period. Is this growth rate sustainable? Here are five factors that will help ecommerce grow in the coming years.

1. **Localization of Internet Content:** It has been reported by Google that the web content search in Hindi language has grown a whopping 155 per cent in the last year, which is significantly higher than the growth of content search made in English language. Hindi content searched through mobile Internet grew at even higher rate of 300 per cent in the same period. Growth in traffic in other languages too had been impressive. Sensing an opportunity, Snapdeal launched its multilingual interface in January 2014 in Hindi and Tamil languages and has seen a tremendous response from customers towards this launch. Online travel firm Make My Trip launched its Hindi app in November

2014 and plans to add four more languages in Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. With incremental growth in mobile subscriber coming mostly from people who are comfortable with languages other than English, online retailers see this emergent segment as a new growth driver. KPMG says that localization of content is a great innovation that will be helpful in future.

2. **Growth in cities beyond metros:** About 20 per cent of India's population lives in cities beyond metros. There are several indicators that suggest this large group of city dwellers have significant purchasing power. Honda, for instance, sells 60 percent of its Amaze car in tier-II and tier-III cities. These cities account for 55 percent of Honda's City models. Consumer demand is rising rapidly even in smaller towns and cities. Talking about the potential of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector, a 2012 Nielsen report indicates that the metros will continue to remain a staple for marketers. However, increasing a rural footprint will be critical for volumes in the long run and hence there is a growth opportunity that is vastly under-rated by many marketers today, which could emerge as a key growth engine for the next 10 years. Middle India, a region made up of approximately 400 towns each with a population of 1-10 lakh, are home to 100 million Indians and these cities would be the metros of tomorrow. The Nielsen report clearly shows that non-metro cities offer a huge growth potential for many companies. The contribution of these smaller cities in the coming years is set to become even bigger.
3. **Growth of mobile commerce:** Online retailers' growing reach in non-metro cities is being driven by the rise in usage of mobile internet in the country. According to Internet and Mobile Association of India, the number of mobile internet users in the country stood at 173 million in December 2014. It is set to grow manifold by 2020. A Confederation of Indian Industry report estimates that in the next six years, the number of people accessing the internet through mobile would reach 600 million. Given the increased mobile penetration and smart phone adoption in these areas, mobile phone would certainly be one of the major factors driving this trend.
4. **Growing usage of debit cards for cashless transaction:** There has been a net addition of nearly 140 million debit cards in the country in the past two years. Further, the usage of debit cards at point of sale (POS) terminals has seen a growth of 86 per cent in the same period. It indicates the willingness to use debit cards for purposes other than withdrawing money at ATMs has increased. With many online retailers insisting on the use of cards for high value transactions, will allow e-tailers to reach out to many areas and many more customers in the coming years. Currently, cash on delivery constitutes nearly 70 per cent of all transactions for online retailers. But online retailers say the usage of cards for online transactions is steadily rising.

5. **Growing investment in logistics and warehouses:** Online retailers say that out of the total one lac pin codes in the country, they have extended their reach to about 15,000 pin codes. There is also news in the market of online retailers trying to tie up with India Post and petrol pump stations to reach out to more customers. The government's move to introduce feeder airline service connecting smaller cities would widen the reach of online retailers in future. With estimated investment of nearly USD 2 billion in logistics and warehouses by 2020, the reach of online retailers to deliver their products in remote locations is bound to increase manifold times.

Challenges in E-commerce

While the growth in this sector excites entrepreneurs and financial investors across the spectrum, some serious challenges are beginning to weigh down on the sector. Ecommerce players in India need to address several key challenges of their business as listed below:

1. **Product and market strategy:** ecommerce companies have to address several issues pertaining to rapidly evolving customer segments and product portfolios; access information on the market intelligence pertaining to growth, size and share; manage multiple customer engagement platforms; focus on expansion into new areas, brands and products and simultaneously tackle a hypercompetitive pricing environment. Ecommerce in India has many first time buyers. This means that they have not yet made up their mind about what to expect from ecommerce websites. As a result, the first time buyers sometimes fall prey to hard sell. But by the time the product is delivered, they regret their decision and try to return the goods. Though consumer remorse is a global problem, it is more prevalent in a country like India, where much of the growth comes from new buyers. Returns are expensive for ecommerce players, as reverse logistics presents unique challenges. This becomes all the more complex in cross-border ecommerce. Challenges around reverse logistics management and third party logistics interactions could also act as barriers to growth.
2. **Cash on delivery is the preferred payment mode:** Low credit card penetration and low trust in online transactions has led to cash on delivery being the preferred payment option in India. Unlike electronic payments, manual cash collection is laborious, risky and expensive.
3. **Payments and transactions:** eCommerce companies may face issues around security and privacy breach and controlling fictitious transactions. Further, RBI restrictions for prepaid instruments or eWallets act as impediments. From a transactions perspective,

Cross-border tax and regulatory issues and backend service tax and withholding tax can have serious implications on ecommerce operations. As if the preference for cash on delivery itself is not bad enough, it is reported that Indian payment gateways have an unusually high failure rate by global standards. Ecommerce companies using Indian payment gateways are losing out on business, as several customers do not reattempt payment after a transaction fails.

4. **Low Internet penetration:** Internet penetration in India is still a small fraction of what one would find in several western countries. On top of that, the quality of connectivity is poor in several regions across India. With advancing technologies, both these problems are fast disappearing. The day is not far when connectivity issues would not feature in a list of challenges to ecommerce in India. Companies will need to check if the physical infrastructure gets affected by the internet speed. Also, the lack of an integrated end-to-end logistics platform and innovation-focused fulfilment option could cause delivery issues.
5. **High growth of usage of Feature phones:** Though the total number of mobile phone users in India is very high, a significant majority of Indians still use feature phones, not smart-phones in their daily use. So for all practical purposes this particular segment of consumer is unable to make ecommerce purchases on the move. Though we are still a couple of years away from the scales tipping in favour of smart-phones, the rapid downward spiral in the price of entry-level smart-phones is an encouraging sign. The low cost of new smart-phones in India in the price band of Rs 3000-Rs4500/- would spur further growth in smart-phone ownership.
6. **Postal addresses need to be standardized:** If we place an online order in India, we are likely to get a call from the logistics company asking for the exact location of delivery and any landmarks for the address. It has to be understood that address alone is not enough. This is because there is little standardization in the way postal addresses are written in India. Also, last mile issues add to ecommerce logistics problems.
7. **Organisation scaling:** e-commerce companies will have to make sure organisation design keeps pace with the rapidly evolving business strategy, along with good e governance, strong leadership and management qualities. From a growth perspective, identifying acquisition opportunities, fund raising and going to the secondary market in India becomes necessary. From a technology perspective, it is important to transform IT as an innovation hub and address the lack of synergy between business, technology and operations functions of the enterprise.

8. Logistics is a major problem in several Indian towns: The logistics challenge in India is not just about the lack of standardization in postal addresses. Given the large size of the country, there are thousands of towns that are not easily accessible. Metropolitan cities and other major urban centres have a better and robust logistics infrastructure. But since the real charm of the Indian market lies in its large unbanked population, absence of seamless access to a significant proportion of prospective customers is a real challenge. The problem with logistics is further compounded by the fact that cash on delivery is the preferred payment option in India. International logistics providers, private Indian companies, and the government-owned postal services are however making a determined effort to solve the logistics problem.
9. Serious overfunding of competitors is driving up the cost of customer acquisition: The vibrancy in the Indian startup ecosystem over the past couple of years has channeled a lot of investment into the ecommerce sector. The long-term prospects for ecommerce companies are so exciting that some investors are willing to spend illogically high amounts of money to acquire substantial market share. However, the recent years have shown that this trend has reversed as investors may not get the anticipated returns in ecommerce business.
10. Risk, fraud and cyber security: From a risk perspective, eCommerce companies could face issues around brand risk, trademark and patent risk, insider threats and website uptime. Issues around employee-vendor nexus, bribery and corruption make Indian companies vulnerable to challenges. Cyber security also raises some concerns around website exploitation by external entities.
11. Compliance framework: eCommerce companies have to comply with several laws, many of which are still evolving. Potential issues on compliance about cyber laws, inefficient anti-corruption framework, legal exposure in agreements or arrangements, indirect and direct tax compliance framework and FEMA contraventions and regularisation could pose problems.

Conclusion

The emergence of new technologies, especially smart-phones in India has sparked a social change that's difficult to quantify. While Smart phones, internet, and social media penetration and growth can be quantified, describing the changes in social values and lifestyles that have accompanied those trends is far more challenging. However, the quality, methodology and transparency differ, inhibiting cross-country benchmarking, particularly in the case of studies by market research firms. Of particular concern is the use of demand side surveys as they tend to overstate the perception of domestic retail e-commerce revenues if cross-border sales are not adjusted for. Further, web-based consumer surveys may not be nationally representative and consumers generally have a poor recall over specific types of questions such as countries purchased from (indeed there is a relatively high

proportion of users who do not know the origin of web sites they are shopping from) and the amounts spent on purchases. As a result, cross-border data suffer from the same issues as regular e-commerce data where the concepts, definitions and sources vary widely between and within countries. New technologies such as virtual walls and virtual mirrors will further help improve the retail customer experience, thereby encouraging greater consumption.

Virtual mirrors let shoppers 'try on' clothes and accessories virtually before making buying decisions. Virtual walls help customers scan barcodes for items on an electronic wall using their mobile phones and place orders with retailers. TESCO in South Korea was an early adopter of this technology. In India, HomeShop18 has launched India's first virtual-shopping wall. Scan N Shop at New Delhi's international airport uses a similar technological interface. A key outcome of the technology revolution in India has been connectivity, which has fuelled unprecedented access to information. And more importantly B2B e-commerce is likely to be much more significant for international trade in both goods and services.

Given multinational company strategies and market forces it is not clear that cross-border e-commerce will grow at rates forecast by market studies. The strategy of many multinationals is to set up online shops overseas. Sales from these shops would therefore not be considered as overseas and thus not cross-border. Further, domestic online shops are likely to intensify steps to regain market share from overseas shops. Also, as noted, foreign retailers are launching their own overseas web sites. If domestic retailers and cross-border ecommerce in India grows, many large international players and MNCs would make a significant investment in setting up shops in India. Millions of people who had little means to join the national discourse can now gain new insights into the world around them. Farmer's know crop prices. Consumers understand global standards of product and service quality. Rural Indians can recognise the differences between the opportunities that are available to them and those that are available to those living in urban India. The upshot of this connectivity revolution has been the empowerment of Indians.

While increases in the use of traditional options for gaining knowledge, such as education, may be linear, the proliferation of knowledge through the use of new digital technologies appears exponential. The eCommerce industry in India may currently be behind its counterparts in a number of developed countries and even some emerging markets. However, with India's GDP growth pegged at 6.4% by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, it is expected to grow rapidly. Moreover, the Indian eCommerce industry has access to funds from within the country and international investors. Overall, the eCommerce sector is maturing and a number of serious players are entering the market. What differentiates the Indian e-Commerce market from that of a country like China is that while market concentration in China is largely on account of Alibaba-owned Taobao and Tmall⁴ (with these players holding a higher percentage of market share than the top players in most of the other major markets), in India the market share is divided amongst

several ecommerce companies, each coming up with its own business model. As a result, customers have a wide range of products and services to choose from.

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NATURE & THE THIRD GENDER; ASSIGNING TRANSGENDERNESS TO NATURE

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Abstract

*Me ? I had no dreams. No Longings. Dreams only set you up for disappointment.
Plus you had to have a life to have dreams of a better life.*

- Julie Anne Peters, (Luna)

Yes. The third gender exists in Nature also. Charles Darwin's Theory of Natural Selection says that it is nature, which has the sole authority to choose or select certain species to survive and certain species to extinct. All the creatures or creations in this world are assigned either the Male Gender or the Female Gender by Nature. We could make it out that the combination of the first (M) and the second (F) gender might have resulted in the evolution of the third gender which is known as the Transgender. Thus it is not an error to assign the third gender or Transgenderness to nature. Since nature has taken the source for the Male and Female genders from itself, thus it must have assigned the third gender to the Transgender People, by taking it from itself. Thus we could derive that nature is the source for the third gender. This Paper makes an attempt to assign transgenderness to nature, inclusive of all its components in a literary context.

Key Words: Third Gender, Transgenderness, Assigning Gender & Nature etc.

"Break the walls, Burn the Books, Go into Nature and Let Nature be your Teacher"

- William Wordsworth

As per the words of the high priest of nature, Nature is an entity, which must be considered in high esteem than the books and such things. Everything is provided to human beings by nature, thus gender identity is also endowed upon us by the so-called nature. If nature has assigned the third gender to some people, then it must have taken it from itself. Thus we could assign the third gender (Transgender) to nature as well as to its components. From Nature we could derive or deduce that the third gender is just an improper or imbalanced mixture of the other two genders. The Combination of the characteristic features of both the male and female genders resulted in the evolution of the third gender by the process of natural selection.

Many People would associate Maleness to the Sun and a very few would assign the other, but why not the sun may be a transgender? Because In Indian context, sometimes the sun is termed as Aditi, the keeper of the light and she gave birth to the universe and the heavenly bodies, at the same time it is also termed as Surya Dev, the God of Light, Fertility and Production and one of the nine grahas that decide one's destiny. Sun is Medusa of Greek, Ainei of Ireland, Pattini of Srilanka and also Kamba of Africa, Yuyi of China, Apollo of Rome etc. Thus sometimes he is male and sometimes he is female, which leads us to the point that he might be a transgender.

Moon is Britomartis of the Celts, Chandi of India, Luna & Diana of Rome, and Juno & Hera of Greek and at the same time he is Chandra of India, Chandra Dev, one of the nine grahas, Soma of Africa etc. Normally the poets would associate feminine qualities such as beauty, purity, fairness to the moon. By these attributes of the Moon, we may arrive to a conclusion that Moon might be a transgender. Trees can be classified into Male trees, Female trees and trees that contain both the qualities and parts of both, and this might be taken into account on the Part of the transgender trees. Most of the trees contain both the male and female parts fused in it there by leading us to the fact that transgender trees too exist. For example Banana, Coconut etc.

Nature is predominantly identified as the elements of Nature. Especially the Five primary elements constitute to the entity called Nature. They are Water, Land, Air, Fire and Sky. These elements of nature have their own qualities and characteristic features, which can be easily associated in terms of the gender. In order to assign gender, one must assimilate abstract qualities in relation with its gender to these elements.

Water, the First element of Nature with its components such as Brooks, Streams, Lakes, Ponds, Canals, Channels, Rivers, Seas and Oceans is known for its Forgiveness, Passiveness, Calmness, Motherhood, Peace, Humidity, Adaptability, Colour lessness, Shapelessness, Adjustability, Compatibility, Purity, Purifying and Cleansing Power etc. All these qualities are always attributed to the Feminine Gender. Then Water's qualities also include encroachment, wavy, Constant Progress, Force, Pressure, Massiveness, Destructive capability which are all typical attires of Masculinity. Thus by the combination of these two water can be considered as an object of transgenderness.

Land also has the feminine qualities such as Patience, Endurance, Forbearance, Fertility, Productivity, Savings as well as the masculine qualities such as Concealment, Inactivity, Reservoir, Forcefulness, and Extended Lifespan etc. Thereby it can also be termed as a transgender. The Sky which is the last element of Nature has some typical qualities which can't be seen among or with the other elements of Nature such as Limitlessness, Boundary lessness, Inconstant, Inconsistency, Transparency, Convertibility, Transformability etc which could be categorized with both the genders and so it is more obvious that it possess the characteristic features that are normally juxtaposed with the third gender people.

Fire, the Main element of Nature will mostly segregated with the men, because it

Contains the salient features such as Completeness in Destruction, Inclusiveness and to be precise it consists of womanly characters such as Holiness, Purification, Homage, Hostage, Indiscrimination, Irracial, Impartial etc. It is also associated with the cosmic vibrations because it acts as an medium to receive and transmit vibrations in the yagnas, yaahas etc, which are mostly the medium of offering the celestial possession to the heavenly bodies and receiving their blessings in return and this happens through the Agni, god of fire. Thus he could be placed under the category of transgender.

Among the marginalised in any society, the transgender are relegated to fringes as they were miniscule in numbers but highly visible to the majority. Hence the atrocities committed on them know no bounds. Traditionally in the Indian society, they were simultaneously revered and ridiculed. While they were revered during specific occasions, they were ridiculed by the rest of the time. Deprivations on the economic, emotional, education, social and familial fronts have driven them to cocoon and form a society by themselves. But even that society is so tightly knit and closed that the world outside could not get a glimpse of the innards of the community. The writings from the community is emerging in order to conscientize the public at large.

The contemporary sufferings of the transgender such as identity crisis, marginalization, alienation, depravement, abandonment, suppression, sexual harassment, verbal abuse etc are caused by the human beings, who oughtn't have the right or status and position to call themselves as 'Homo Sapiens' – Human Beings at all. The same is the case with the nature. The contemporary sufferings of Nature such as Deforestation, Soil Erosion, Landslides, Sea Water intrusion, seepage of ground water, contamination of natural resources, over-exploitation of fossil fuels, chemicals and fertilizer dumping, E-waste, radioactive clearance, degeneration of the Ozone layer, Excessive use of Luxuries, Population explosion, industrialisation etc are caused by the same irresponsible inhumane human beings. Thus nature and transgender are similar in getting corrupted and same in getting deprived of beneficiaries by the humans.

Nature is indefinite and it can't be defined at all, same is the case with the transgender. Nature is omniscient, omnipresent and omnipotent. The third gender is also humans and they are also capable of doing all things which are done by the humankind. Their nature is on account of the biological malfunction of the chromosomes and for that they can't be blamed totally. Same is the case with the discrepancies in nature, such as some species are selected by nature and a few are denied by the same. They are understandable but not definable and needn't to do so also.

Nature takes the role of the god sometimes, mostly in countries like India and it may have originated from the Beginning of a Religion in which Nature was worshipped as god and henceforth it was termed as 'Sylvanism'. Because the Neanderthal man has started worshipping all things which threatened him, like thunder, lightning etc. Whatever things that he is afraid of, he worshipped them in order to get rid of the fear, this might have evolved the practice of worshipping animals, birds and reptiles etc. Likewise the Transgender also takes up the role of god sometimes, and it is certain that all these kind of nuances will take place in countries like India. Because India is known for it's divergent, multi-faceted, variety-rich cultural and traditional religious practices.

This has made the so called Modernised, Civilised Englishmen to quote, "India is a land of magicians and snake charmers" Lord Krishna is mostly acquainted with the worship of transgender, so is the case with an incarnation of Lord Shiva with Parvati on his better half there by giving rise to the 'Arthanari' (Half Male & Half Female). Recently this has caused an issue with the rights of an author to portray something as he feels i.e. Perumal Murugan's 'Maathorubaagan'(Lord having his Devi on his half) which is plotted around some particular ritualistic practices that are followed to happen during the yearly festival of Arthanaarishwar Temple at Thiruchengode.

If we ought to take a religious stand in this case means, we are offended because certain religions don't approve the existence of the transgender at all. For Instance, Christianity believes that God has created only Adam and Eve, that is only male and female and so there are no possibilities for the creation of the third gender. Thus their point of view may be considered like this, the third gender people are result of the sin done by their same-sex parents. Because Christianity staunchly opposes same-sex relationships such as Gay and Lesbian, thus the third gender people are born to the Gay or Lesbian Parents as a means of Punishment and thereby they can repent their sin of having sexual relationship with the same sex.

But at the same time, this is not the case of all the religions, certain religions have myths that serves as the source for the origin and existence of the third gender. The Myth of Aravaan, who obliged to serve the Pandavas, by sacrificing himself as the holy offering that was given to the god/angel of victory to please her, thereby to get her blessings in the battle field. Here comes the crisis, when lord Krishna asked about his last desire, that he said he wants to get married before dying. Knowing that he will be dying soon, no girl came to marry him and the time for the sacrifice was also

getting near, so in order to fulfill the last wish of him, Krishna turned himself into a woman and married him and his last desire was fulfilled, so he died peacefully, offering his life as sacrifice for the sake of the pandavas' victory. But the next day, when Krishna tried to get back to his original position, the reinstatement was not complete because of the events happened the previous night. Finally he parted with the particle of aravaan and there lies the origin of the aravaanis i.e. the third gender. Similarly, there are various myths and stories that one could trace about the origin of the third gender.

Transgenders in ancient texts stand as proof for the existence, in Mahabharata, Arjuna, one of the mighty pandava warrior princes, turned to transgender, Brihannala, the dancing eunuch, using an old curse given by Oorvasi, the divine dancer of the Indra sabha, for one long year and this helped him to complete his year in exile during their forest life. Shikandi who was Amba in her previous birth, vowed to kill Bheesma and died, was made a man with the help of a yaksha, who helps her by acquiring her womanness and given his maleness to her in return. This is sufficient that transgender people can also assist in wars. When People followed Lord Rama to the forest, he said, "all men and women, please go back to your houses in the country". Since there wasn't any mention about the transgender, they stayed on the edge of the Ayodhya, near the boundaries of the forest, for fourteen long years till he returned.

Thus we can assign the third gender, i.e. transgenderness to nature, because both of them have similar salient features and characteristic commons. Nature, inclusive of all its components, could be categorised under the third. Both the transgenders and the Nature now stands in need of our attention, to get set right their objectives, motives etc. We, humans, having humanities inside us must be humane to them showing our humaneness to them, because they are also human beings.

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