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Website: www.rsaraj.org

**Registered Office :** Department of Sociology, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

**Secretariat :** Dr. Sushil Kumar Tyagi, Govt. P.G. College, Ratangarh(33022) Churu

E-mail: rajsociosktyagi@yahoo.co.in

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# Rajasthan Journal of Sociology

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राजस्थान जर्नल ऑफ सोशियोलॉजी

राजस्थान समाजशास्त्रीय परिषद् की  
यू.जी.सी.-केयर अनुमत एवं सहकर्मी समीक्षित द्विभाषीय पत्रिका

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## English Article

- Caught in a Maze: Predicaments of West Pakistan Refugees as Non-Permanent Residents in Jammu and Kashmir** 1  
*Abha Chauhan*
- Historical Feudal Society of Rajasthan and Current Feudal Shadows** 15  
*Naresh Kumar Bhargava*
- Structural Constraints of Non-Violent Agrarian Mobilization in Bihar: A Historical Trajectory** 20  
*B.N. Prasad*
- Culture vs. Commodification: A Case of Groundwater Governance in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Rajasthan** 28  
*Ankita Menon*
- Drug Addiction among the Youth and Its Consequences in the Society: A Qualitative Case Study** 39  
*Pranjal Sarma, Trishnamoni Gogoi*
- An Era of Homosexuality** 51  
*Paresh Dwivedi*
- Dimensions of Women Empowerment in India** 59  
*Prem Singh Rawlot*
- Online Education: Boon and Challenges During Pandemic** 67  
*Renu Jangid, L.D. Soni*
- Role of Educational Institutions in Building Gender Sensitive Society: A Study of Co-Educational Secondary Schools in the Ajmer District of Rajasthan** 75  
*Mitesh Juneja*
- Social Media: An Addiction in Disguise** 85  
*Maneesha Vishwakarma*
- Presence of Women on Online Platforms - Social Media: A Sociological Analysis** 98  
*Binu Singh*
- Social Impact of Covid-19 in Udaipur District- An Epidemiological Study** 106  
*Purnima Singh, Sandhya Pathania*

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<b>Interview</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>Prof. Shyam Lal Jedia : Odyssey of A Noble Mind</b>	
<i>Anuja Jain</i>	

### हिन्दी लेख

<b>वन अधिकार अधिनियम : कार्यान्वयन एवं सामाजिक प्रभावों का राजस्थान के संदर्भ में अध्ययन</b>	<b>120</b>
<i>लालाराम जाट</i>	
<b>वर्तमान समय में युवाओं पर सोशल मीडिया का प्रभाव:- एक समाजशास्त्रीय अध्ययन</b>	<b>130</b>
<i>मीनाक्षी मीना</i>	
<b>बदलता सामाजिक परिदृश्य और मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा</b>	<b>138</b>
<i>श्रुति टण्डन</i>	
<b>लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप: वैवाहिक संस्था का एक परिवर्तित आधुनिक स्वरूप</b>	<b>145</b>
<i>मंजु नावरिया</i>	
<b>वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में नाता प्रथा : गुर्जर समाज के सन्दर्भ में</b>	<b>155</b>
<i>सीता गुर्जर</i>	
<b>भारत में महिलाएं तथा शिक्षा : दशा एवं दिशा</b>	<b>164</b>
<i>राजेन्द्र सिंह खींची</i>	

### Book Reviews

<b>Stebbins, Robert : The Serious Leisure Perspective: A Synthesis</b>	<b>172</b>
<i>Madhu Nagla</i>	
<b>Saurav Ghosh: The Santals of Bankura</b>	<b>174</b>
<i>Naresh Kumar Bhargawa</i>	
<b>Meenakshi Yadav: Motivation@ Women Bureaucrats</b>	<b>175</b>
<i>Anjana Yadav</i>	
<b>N.K. Bhargava, Ashutosh Vyas, B.N. Prasad and Sampat Kale (Eds): Agrarian Structure and Social Transformation</b>	<b>177</b>
<i>Shailja Nagendra Sole</i>	
<b>Meenu Tanwar: Health Status of Women- A Sociological Viewpoint</b>	<b>180</b>
<i>Subodh Kumar</i>	
<b>श्रद्धा तिवारी : जनजातीय समाज प्रमुख प्रशासनिक योजनाएं</b>	<b>182</b>
<i>आशुतोष व्यास</i>	
<b>बबीता महावर: बाल अपराध: अवधारणा एवं विश्लेषण</b>	<b>183</b>
<i>ललित कुमावत</i>	
<b>श्याम एस. कुमावत: प्रकार्यवादी विचारक</b>	<b>185</b>
<i>मनोज राजगुरु</i>	

- 
- शरण, एम.आर.: लास्ट अमंग इक्वल्स: पॉवर, कास्ट एण्ड पोलिटिक्स इन बिहार्स विलेजेज 187  
श्रुति टण्डन
- महावीर कुमार जैन : जनजाति महिलाएँ : सामाजिक प्रस्थिति एवं स्वास्थ्य 189  
राजू सिंह
- अशोक कुमार (अनुवादक): ज्यां द्रेज तथा अमर्त्य सेन : भारत और उसके विरोधाभास 192  
जगराम गुर्जर

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# Caught in a Maze: Predicaments of West Pakistan Refugees as Non-Permanent Residents in Jammu and Kashmir

Abha Chauhan

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**Abstract:** A large number of people, the Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan and Muslims from India were forced to migrate to the newly created independent nations, India and Pakistan respectively in 1947 as the result of partition. It saw large-scale violence, killing, and disappearance of people who ran to the closest place wherever they found shelter. Those who came to the territory of the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) from Pakistan, were known as West Pakistan Refugees (WPRs) or simply 'refugees', the tag that remained attached to them till recently. Under the peculiar circumstances in which J&K state acceded to India, it became a part of the country with special status under Article 370 with its subjects having specific rights of permanent residents under Article 35-A of the Indian Constitution. A separate Constitution of J&K that came into force on 26th January 1957 affirmed the rights of the permanent residents. But the West Pakistan Refugees, like other Indian citizens, were denied these rights till Article 370 became inoperative in August 2019 through the Indian Parliament. This paper is an attempt to understand the predicaments of the West Pakistan Refugees in social, economic, legal, and political fields, and their struggle for basic rights. Based on personal communications, interviews, observation, and group discussions, the paper seeks to bring out the impact of being non-residents of J&K on WPRs, and the dilemma they face about their identity as Indian citizens living in a time and space that had bestowed them a 'refugee' status for decades.

**Keywords:** Refugees, Article 370, West Pakistan, Permanent Resident, State-Subject

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The exigencies of time and the situation of Independence and partition of India into two nations - India and Pakistan in 1947, led to the displacement of a large number of people from what was known as West Pakistan then, to the Indian Territory. Many refugees went to Punjab and other parts of India, and some of them came to the neighboring princely state of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). The suddenness of events and unpreparedness of people, the violent targeting of specific communities, the nearness of a place with a similar culture, and the presence of relatives provided reasons for people to come to Jammu, Kathua, and Samba districts of J&K from adjacent Sialkot district in Pakistan. Another important reason was that the state was ruled by the Hindu Ruler which could have encouraged the refugees from West Pakistan to opt for the destination, Jammu after suffering at the hands of the local Muslims.

Maharaja Hari Singh, the Ruler of Kashmir signed an Instrument of Accession on 27th October 1947 and the state acceded to the Union of India. This accession is, however, contested by Pakistan and many wars have been fought between the two countries on the issue. The territorial dispute over Kashmir between India and Pakistan continues and the borders between them are not settled as international boundaries. Cross-border firings, shelling, and skirmishes are regular features till date. Within India, Article 370 became applicable to the state of J&K as the Constitution of India came into force in 1950 giving it a special status and autonomy in most matters. The state of J&K formulated its Constitution (1957) and gave fundamental rights to its' state-subjects, or 'Permanent Residents'. These rights were denied to all those who did not belong to the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Owing to the place of their origin, the refugees who came to Jammu and Kashmir began to be called West Pakistan Refugees (s). The title of WPRs was similar to those who came from Pakistan to India which subsequently withered away as the 'refugees' got settled in different states and regions with full rights of Indian citizens. But for those who came to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) during the partition from the Pakistan Punjab region, it took a long time to become citizens of India and even a much-prolonged duration to get full rights of permanent residents of the J&K state.

It was soon understood by the West Pakistan Refugees who came to J&K that they are in the wrong state. Though they became citizens of India, they could not be permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir. Since 1947, they have been caught in the maze of being Indian citizens, but non-Permanent Residents of J&K state. They had virtually no advantages, like their counterparts in other states of India. They continued to struggle for their rights of ownership, property, jobs, education, loans, etc. through their associations and organizations. The hopes and expectations given to them by the then dispensation were soon belied. Since then, started the unabated struggle for more than a lakh people who remained 'nowhere' and called themselves, Azad desh ke gulam log (the slave people of an independent nation) (Personal Communication). When they realized that the state of J&K is not the right place for them and they will not get any rights here, they decided to move to neighbouring Punjab. But, as many people informed us (Group-discussion), they were stopped by Sheikh Abdullah, the then Prime Minister of J&K who assured them that their rights would be granted. But they regret this decision as nothing changed thereafter<sup>1</sup>.

West Pakistan Refugees have been devoid and eluded of the status of what in J&K has been called all through these years till quite recently the 'Permanent Resident Status'. The permanent residents possess Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC) or 'State-Subject' in local parlance issued by the Government of J&K. The rest of the people, the outsiders from anywhere else in India are the non-permanent residents and do not have rights to the acquisition of property, permanent settlement in the state, recruitment to the state services, rights to state's scholarship, to contest or vote in the assembly and panchayat elections, among others. For a long time, the women permanent residents of the state could not marry those from outside the state of J&K without losing these rights (Chauhan, 2017).

As per the official records, the population of 47,215 consisting of 5,764 families migrated to the Jammu region from the Sialkot district in Pakistan, most of them belonging to Scheduled castes and Backward classes. Their number multiplied to more than 1.5 lakh some years later and now it is estimated that there are over 2.5 lakh West Pakistan Refugees living in the border districts of Jammu, Samba, and Kathua of the J&K state and demand the right to vote, citizenship rights, right to contest assembly polls, rehabilitation package, right to apply in government jobs and to purchase property in the state of J&K, among others (Bhat et. al., 2019). It is also estimated that the WPRs residing in the villages from Kathua to Pallanwala (Akhnoor) on the Jammu border for the last 65 years comprise 19,960 families with a population of around 2,50,000 to 3,00,000 (Ibid.). According to a more recent report for 2021, there are 21,169 families of WPRs in J&K<sup>2</sup>

The paper focuses on the constitutional and legal barriers faced by the West Pakistan

<sup>1</sup>Marvi Slathia. Life of West Pakistan Refugees at Jammu Borders. See: [www.mcrg.ac.in](http://www.mcrg.ac.in) ›MODULE\_D\_Marvi\_Slathia.

<sup>2</sup>[thewire.in](http://thewire.in) ›rights ›west-pakistan-refugees-jammu



Refugees given the status of J&K under 370 and 35A, and the various problems they encountered all these years caught in a maze of being a citizen of India and the non-permanent residents of Jammu and Kashmir.

### **Conceptual Clarification**

Legally and technically, the West Pakistan Refugees (WPRs) are not 'Refugees'. The term is used for them in this paper because it is the very word used by them to define and identify them. 'Refugees' is a popular connotation and other people in the region also use the same to refer to the displaced people from West Pakistan. The same term is used in various writings and reports on them. Thus, it is for the sake of convenience and clarity that 'refugees' is used for the WPRs. It must also be mentioned that they do not like the word 'Pakistan' to be associated with them as they feel that now they have nothing to do with Pakistan and are citizens of India (Personal communication). The place from where they came in 1947 is also no longer 'West Pakistan' (as there is no East Pakistan, but an independent country, Bangladesh since 1971), but only Pakistan. It is their specific condition and the disputed and unresolved issue of the Kashmir conflict that keeps the reference 'West Pakistan Refugee' alive.

The people, who came to the Indian side of the border during the partition, especially to East Punjab and other parts of the country, were considered refugees and were soon rehabilitated in terms of compensation for what they lost in Pakistan. With grit and determination, they picked up the threads of their lives and started afresh leaving the holocaust of partition behind. Soon they became part of the Indian society and polity, some of them occupying the most distinguished positions in the country. Manmohan Singh and I. K. Gujral, originally from Pakistan's Punjab Province, went on to become the Prime Ministers of India. The West Pakistan Refugees though deprived of permanent resident status in J&K, became 'citizens' of India. They were not people from another country or foreign nationals to be designated as 'refugees'.

India is not a signatory to the 'United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees' (CRSR), 1951 or of the 1967 Protocol. The CRSR defines who is a refugee, and sets out the rights of individuals who are granted asylum and the responsibilities of nations that grant asylum. The 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol define 'refugee' as a person who as a result of events and 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it' (Article 1 of the Convention and amended by the 1967 Protocol).

However, where States are not parties to the 1951 Convention, the network of human rights instruments comprising the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' (UDHR), 1948, the 'International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights' (ICCPR), 1966, and the 'International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' (ICESCR), 1966 can be invoked to guarantee the basic rights of refugees. These rights give ample freedom and choice on all civil, political, economic, social, and cultural matters to individuals. In this sense, the refugees shall have the protection of the human rights instruments like any citizen (Nargotra, 2012).

India has acceded to the two Conventions of 1966, ICCPR and ICESCR, but since they have not been enacted into Indian law, they do not have the force of law and are not enforceable under the Covenants. However, the courts in India may take them into account in appropriate cases while interpreting the statute law. In India, it is the Constitution alone that has the right to deal with the subject of citizenship, naturalization, and aliens. India has not passed any refugee-specific legislation which regulates the entry and status of refugees. It has handled the influx of refugees at the political and administrative levels treating the refugees under the law applicable to the aliens. The government has an absolute power under the Foreigners Act 1946 to expel or deport foreigners as per the Constitution of India, a power upheld by the Supreme Court of India as well. Though refugees form a special category of aliens under general international law and the principle of non-refoulement can be given due regard, it cannot be restricted by the principles of customary international law. However, now all human rights jurisprudence are developed under Article 21 of the Constitution and the rights of the refugees can be enforced through it (Ibid.).

West Pakistan Refugees (WPRs) are citizens of India and have all the rights as Indian citizens. Besides the WPRs, there are other 'refugees' also who were forced to migrate from within the state of J&K like the Pakistan Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (POJK) refugees in 1947-48. POJK area, though under the control of Pakistan now, is regarded by India as its part (as it was within the princely state of J&K that acceded to the Indian dominion), and hence the people displaced from there to the J&K side are not 'refugees' or 'immigrants', but are called 'migrants' or 'internally displaced persons' (IDPs). Similarly, the Kashmiri Pandits who were forced to migrate from Kashmir due to militancy in the region in 1990 are classified as IDPs. There are also border migrants who have settled in the interior areas due to continuous shelling and firing from the border. Most of these are predominantly Hindus and some are Sikhs. WPRs are also mostly Hindus and Sikhs, but are not considered internally displaced persons owing to their displacement from West Punjab in Pakistan, their original home, and not from the region of the erstwhile Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir. The Jammu region, well known as a place of temples and shrines, has virtually become an arena of migrants and refugees. There are nearly 17 lakhs of them, out of which 2.5 to 3 lakhs are West Pakistan Refugees (Kumar, 2014).

### **Partition and its Aftermath**

On the partition of India, Jammu and Kashmir, like other princely states, had three choices as per the Cabinet Mission Plan of May 1946 - to remain independent, to accede to Pakistan, or to accede to India. But it did not accede to either dominion by 15 August 1947. Pakistan claimed J&K due to its Muslim majority population and India was keen to show that it maintains its secular credentials. The Ruler was a Hindu, and the majority population was Muslim (77 percent), and the rest (23 percent) were mainly Hindus, Sikhs, and Buddhists (Bose 2003:31-32). A 'Standstill Agreement' was made by Maharaja Hari Singh with Pakistan on 12 August 1947 to ensure the continuity of services of trade, travel, and communication as was with British India, an agreement which Pakistan did not honour by blocking supplies from Sialkot and Rawalpindi. India did not sign a standstill agreement which created doubts in the minds of Pakistan about India's intention on Kashmir (Bose, 2003, Schofield, 2010).

Though the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir acceded to the Indian Union on 26 October 1947, the two countries, India and Pakistan virtually remained at war till December

1947 invading and occupying territories in Kashmir. The matter was finally taken to the United Nations (UN) by the Indian Premier Jawaharlal Nehru and the 'United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan' (UNCIP) was formed on the basis of the Security Council resolution passed on 20 January 1948. Pakistan was asked to withdraw its troops and the tribal raiders and India to reduce its troops to the minimum. These decisions were not complied with and the UNCIP took a step to end the hostilities by which the ceasefire was imposed on 1 January 1949, signed by both India and Pakistan (Schofield, 2004).

The agreement between India and Pakistan signed in Karachi on 29 July 1949 with the intervention of the United Nations (UN), led to the demarcation of the ceasefire line to be maintained by the two countries. The ceasefire line was later termed 'Line of Control' (LOC) as a result of the Shimla Agreement signed on 3 July 1972 between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan following the war of 1971 and the liberation of East Pakistan as a new nation, Bangladesh. The LOC is the military control line between India and Pakistan administered parts of the erstwhile princely state of J&K. It is a de facto border of 740 km and not a legally defined international border as the control over the territory of J&K is contested and disputed.<sup>3</sup>

The erstwhile princely state of J&K was thus divided into two parts, India administered J&K comprising Jammu, Ladakh, a portion of Poonch and a portion of Kashmir province; and Pakistan held J&K with Gilgit Agency, Baltistan, a narrow portion of Kashmir Province, Poonch, and Mirpur of Jammu. India possesses 101,338 sq km, Pakistan 85,846 sq km, and the People's Republic of China controls the remaining 37,555 sq km of the state territory.<sup>4</sup> As per the census of 2011, the population of J&K is 12.55 million and the area is 101,387 square kilometers (sq. km) having 22 districts. The Muslims form the majority population of 68.3 percent, Hindus are 28.4 percent, and other religions like Sikhism (1.9%), Buddhism (0.9%), and Christianity (0.3%) are in smaller numbers.<sup>5</sup>

With the passing of the Resolution in the Indian Parliament in August 2019, Article 370 became inoperative and Article 35A was repealed. With these initiatives, the Constitution of J&K, and the special rights granted to the Permanent Residents of the J&K became redundant. The Union Parliament also passed legislation reorganising the state into two Union Territories (UTs), one being Jammu and Kashmir, and the other Ladakh (The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Bill, 2019). After becoming the Union Territory (2019), J&K now comprises 20 districts and has an area of 42,241 sq. km area<sup>6</sup>.

## Constitutional Barriers

As a result of the incidents that took place in the former princely state of Jammu and Kashmir soon after the independence of India (1947) and its partition into two nations – India and Pakistan, many people were killed, wounded, captured, or displaced from either side of the border, mainly Muslims from Indian part, and Hindus and Sikhs from Pakistan regions. Nearly 1 million people were estimated to be dead and 20 million displaced between the two countries in one of the bloodiest and most tragic incidents in the history of the Indian sub-continent (Bose, 2004).

<sup>3</sup>[simple.wikipedia.org › wiki › Line\\_of\\_Control](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Line_of_Control).

<sup>4</sup><https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kashmir>.

<sup>5</sup>[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jammu\\_and\\_Kashmir\\_\(union\\_territory\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jammu_and_Kashmir_(union_territory)).

<sup>6</sup>The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Bill, 2019. No. 34 of 2019. Published by Authority. Ministry of Law and Justice. The Gazette of India. New Delhi, Friday, August 9, 2019. See: <https://egazette.nic.in/WriteReadData/2019/PDF>.

The Indian states directly governed by native princes were independent states, subject to the paramount of the Crown. The residents of British India were British subjects (e.g. Punjab), but the subjects of the 565 princely states (like J&K), were not British subjects but citizens of their states known as state-subjects. The Independence Act, of 1947 conferred dominion status on India and Pakistan, the British paramountcy lapsed and the princely states became independent. They acceded to either of the dominions by signing an Instrument of Accession and the subjects of these states retained the citizenship of the state. The states which acceded to the dominion of India merged with the Indian Union by the end of 1949 when the Constitution of India was framed. It was agreed by the states that there would be single citizenship for the whole of India and their inhabitants became the citizens of India (Anand, 2004). The state of J&K did not agree to merge with the Indian Union and reserved its right to frame its own Constitution. Accordingly, the citizenship laws of India were not accepted by the state and the status of its inhabitants or state-subjects continued to be determined by the Maharaja's Notifications of 1927 and 1932<sup>7</sup>.

Special provisions were made for the state of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution of India. Under this, except for matters of defense, foreign affairs, and communication as specified in the instrument of accession, the Indian Parliament could make or amend laws for the state only with the concurrence of the state government. The President of India, by virtue of the powers conferred by Article 370, in concurrence with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir, issued an order, the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1950, on 26 January 1950 which enumerated the provisions of the Constitution of India to be applicable to the state of J&K in addition to Article 370 and Article 1. Part II of the Constitution of India dealing with citizenship was not made applicable to the state of J&K. The Union Parliament, therefore, had no power to make laws for the state on citizenship and the old laws dealing with citizenship prevailed in J&K (Nargotra, 2012).

The Constituent Assembly of J&K<sup>8</sup> ratified the state's accession to India and resolved the matter of its affiliation. Regarding the matter of the citizenship of the state, it was resolved after much debate between the Government of India and the state that since there has to be only one citizenship for the whole of India, the state-subjects could have special rights. Thus, it was agreed between the two governments that the permanent residents of the state will have common Indian citizenship, but special rights, not as 'state-subjects' but substituted by the term 'Permanent Residents'. The President of India, in consultation with the state Government, issued the Constitution (Application to Jammu and Kashmir) Order, 1954, on 14 May by which Part II of the Constitution of India dealing with citizenship was made applicable to the state. The residents of J&K were to be regarded as citizens of India from the date of commencement of the Constitution (Ibid.).

To ensure the power of the state legislature to make special provisions for permanent residents, Article 35 - A was inserted by the order of 1954. According to Article 35A "not with standing anything contained in this Constitution of India, no existing law in force in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, and no law hereafter enacted by the Legislature of the State (a) defining the classes of persons who are, or shall be, permanent residents of the State of

<sup>7</sup>In the Legal Document issued by the Maharaja dated 31st January 1927, the state subjects of Class I, II, III and IV were defined along with additional notes. The Notification dated 27th June 1932 was related to the status of the State Subjects in foreign territories. See: [https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/jandk/documents/actsandordinances/State\\_Subject\\_Rules.htm](https://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/india/states/jandk/documents/actsandordinances/State_Subject_Rules.htm).

<sup>8</sup>Formed in 1951 to formulate the Constitution of J&K, and dissolved on 26th January 1957 after the Constitution of J&K came into force.

Jammu and Kashmir; (b) conferring on such permanent residents any special rights and privileges or imposing upon other persons any restrictions as respects:- (i) employment under the State Government; (ii) acquisition of immovable property in the State; (iii) settlement in the State; or (iv) right to scholarships and such other forms of aid as the State Government may provide, shall be void on the ground that it is inconsistent with or takes away or abridges any rights conferred on the other citizens of India by any provision of this Part." (Constitution of India - Appendix 1)<sup>9</sup>.

These were the special provisions provided to the Permanent Residents of J&K and remained beyond challenge by any party on the pretext of denying them justice and as inconsistent with the Fundamental Rights guaranteed by Part III of the Constitution of India because of the protection under Article 35A. This Article protects the rights and interests of its permanent residents to the exclusion of the other citizens of India, living in or outside the state of J&K, and justifies such exclusions. As a result of the insertion of Article 35 A in the Constitution of India, the West Pakistan Refugees who are citizens of India but do not fall within the purview of the definition of Permanent Residents were denied their Fundamental Rights guaranteed by the Constitution of India to all its citizens.

In the year 1954 itself, the legislature of the state of J&K made provisions regarding permanent residents by inserting Sections 5A to 5F in the Constitution Act, of 1939. These remained in force till the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir came into force on 26 January 1957. Part III (Sections 6-10) of the Constitution of J&K deals with permanent residents. Section 6 of the Constitution of J&K defines the Permanent Residents of the State as follows<sup>10</sup> (The Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir, 1956):

- (1) Every person who is, or is deemed to be a citizen of India under the provisions of the Constitution of India shall be a permanent resident of the State, if on the fourteenth day of May 1954 –
  - (a) he was a State subject of Class I or Class II; or
  - (b) having lawfully acquired immovable property in the State, he has been ordinarily resident in the State for not less than ten years before that date;
- (2) Any person who before the fourteenth day of May 1954 was a State subject of Class I or of Class II and who had migrated after the first day of March 1947 to the territory now included in Pakistan, returns to the State under a permit for resettlement in the State or permanent return issued by or under the authority of any law made by the State Legislature shall on such return be a permanent resident of the State.

(3) In this section, the expression 'State subject of Class I or of Class II' shall have the same meaning as in State Notification No. 1-L/ 84 dated 20 April 1927, read with State Notification No. 13/L dated 27 June 1932.

These two Notifications issued by Maharaja Hari Singh in 1927 and 1932 sanctioned the term 'state- subject' and defined its meaning as well as all those who are included in Class I, II, III, and IV of the state-subjects. In this way the provisions of the two Notifications were incorporated in Section 6, Constitution of Jammu & Kashmir, and the laws of Indian citizenship were extended to the state whereby every resident of J&K became an Indian citizen, but at the same time, the state legislature was empowered by the J&K Constitution to

<sup>9</sup>See: [www.commonlii.org/in/legis](http://www.commonlii.org/in/legis).

<sup>10</sup>The Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir 1956. See: [www.jkdat.nic.ac](http://www.jkdat.nic.ac)

define permanent residents of the state and confer special rights and privileges on them. It was ensured that no Bill defining or altering the definition of permanent residents and regulating or modifying such rights and privileges on them can be passed without the approval of a majority of not less than two-thirds of the total membership of each House (Anand, 2004).

### Condition of West Pakistan Refugees

The West Pakistan Refugees were not covered under any Class of the state-subject or category of the Permanent Resident of the state as per the provisions of the Constitution of J&K. Thus, they did not possess a right to the state scholarship, right to higher technical education, right to acquire immovable property, granting of state lands for agricultural and house building purposes, recruitment to state services, right to start an industry, right to purchase transport vehicle, right to vote and contest in local bodies and state assembly elections.

**Land:** When the West Pakistan Refugees (WPRs) came to J&K state in 1947 they acquired land as per their livelihood which was either the state government land or the Evacuee Property (EV), left by the Muslims who went to Pakistan side. The West Pakistan Refugees, like those displaced persons from the POJK area, were not given concessions on EV, and neither could they become Occupancy Tenants nor the owners of the land. A little protection was provided to them under Section 17 (2) of the Agrarian Act 1976 by which their possession was not to be disturbed.

The Wadhwa Committee<sup>11</sup> Constituted by the Government of J&K in 2007 to look into the problems of POJK and West Pakistan Refugees, identified that no land was allotted to the WPRs but they were asked to occupy land wherever it was found vacant. They were allowed to retain the land (up to 12 acres of khushki and 8 acres of aabi land) subject to certain conditions (Nargotra, 2012). This land was allotted to them by issuing girdawari in their favour, but not malkiyat or the ownership right. As a result, they could neither sell nor buy the land, nor could they get any compensation in case there was any damage to the land or crops. In all, over 46,466 kanal (5808.25 acre) of land was occupied by these WPR families who migrated from Sialkot. Much of this land was however lost to the refugees who came in 1965 and 1971 soon after the wars. The families were left with barely 3 acres of land per family and very few families of WPRs now possess the land (Jasrotia et. al., 2019). As informed by Labha Ram Gandhi, the President of 'The West Pakistan Refugee Action Committee' (WPRAC) in an interview, the land under the possession of the West Pakistan Refugees is decreasing, and only around 15-20 percent of the families have land, while most of them work on other's land.

**House Allotment:** The West Pakistan Refugees started living in the houses built on the Evacuee Property (EP) of those who left for Pakistan in 1947. The administration of EP is done by the custodian authorities under the J&K State Evacuees (Administrative of Property) Act, Samvat 2006 (1948-49). Under Section 9 of the Act, the evacuee property is maintained by the custodian authorities, and Section 9-A prohibits the occupiers of EP from erecting or constructing any building thereon without the permission of custodian authorities. The Wadhwa Committee was also of the view that WPRs living on the custodian lands are prohibited by the Government of J&K from repairing their houses or making new constructions. In such cases, their houses could be dismantled, imposed a penalty, and given

<sup>11</sup>Executive Summary Wadhwa Committee Report- PRS India. See: [prsindia.org/files/bills\\_acts](https://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts).

no compensation. The Committee, therefore, recommended that the EP Department should allow the WPRs to construct or repair their houses as per the rules of the government (Singh, 2017).

Section 10-A empowers the custodian authorities to revise the rent for EP. The refugees cannot repair or reconstruct their houses but have to pay rent. It is also seen that the houses constructed on EP could be taken away by the custodian authorities at any time without giving adequate compensation in case of implementation of government projects. The works like building parking spaces, widening of roads, construction of Malls, etc., are going on in different parts of Jammu city and the WPRs are at a loss. There is no policy for rehabilitation. Some of them got the illegal PRC made and bought land or house. A considerable number of them, however, live in small or one-room tenements in dilapidated conditions (Nargotra, 2012).

**Employment:** The WPRs cannot be employed in state services and are debarred from doing any state government job, though they could take jobs in Central government services initially. As the result, most of them work as daily wage labourers. Earlier, they could serve in the armed forces. Many of them have retired and taken a pension. However, due to the Kashmir conflict and the rise in militancy in the state since the late 1980s, recruitment in the Central forces was ordered to be done through the state government (Bhat et. al., 2019). The state government required that the applying must produce the state-subject which the WPRs, not being the Permanent Residents (PR) could not produce, and hence were deprived of getting the Central government jobs as well. A study conducted in Jammu, Samba, and Kathua districts revealed that of the total respondents (200), 20.5 percent were in the Central Government service, and the rest were either self-employed, did private service, or were unskilled labourers (Jasrotia et. al., 2019).

The WPRs have been asking for domicile certificates, till they are given the PRC. The Wadhwa Committee also recommended that the Deputy Commissioners be directed to issue the domicile certificates in their favour after fulfilling the formalities. According to the Notification issued by the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievance and Pensions, Government of India, 'The Resident of J&K State (Relaxation of Upper Age Limit for Recruitment of Central Civil Services and Posts) Rules, 1997', under Rule 4, District Magistrates are competent to issue domicile certificate to any resident of the state to the effect that such person is domiciled in the state of J&K. The date was constantly extended up to December 2013 in favour of West Pakistani refugees. The state government implemented the notification and the process of issuance of Domicile Certificates started (Nargotra, 2012).

The Scheduled Castes (SC) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) categories form more than 80 percent of the population of WPRs and their castes include Nai (Barber), Dooms, Shupri Wattal, Teeli, Loharas, Gharati, and others. But they do not get any advantage of reservation in education and employment under Articles 15 and 16 of the Indian Constitution as they are not issued the Reserve Category Certificates. This has also prevented them from many special schemes and packages launched for the benefit of the reserved category groups by the Government of India<sup>12</sup>.

In a study carried out in the villages of Jammu and Kathua districts, it was found that out of 90 WPR respondents 50 percent worked in agriculture, 4.5 percent had their own business, 10 percent worked in private sectors, 38.8 percent worked as labour, and 21.2 percent of the respondents were unemployed and no one worked in the government sector. They were

<sup>12</sup> See: [www.mcrg.ac.in](http://www.mcrg.ac.in) ›MODULE\_D\_Marvi\_Slathia.

highly dissatisfied with their jobs and half of them had barely rupees 1000-2000 monthly income (Chaudhary et. al., 2020). Another study near the Suchetgarh border in the R.S. Pura sector, district Jammu, notes that the WPRs were engaged in agriculture, unorganized sector, and factories as casual labourers, hawkers, masons, barbers, and carpenters. As observed, their houses were very close to the international border and the nearby areas were mined, barbed wires, watch towers, and searchlights were installed and bunkers and ditches were dug. A wall of about 12-14 feet high of barbed wire equipped with an electric wire running through it is constructed<sup>13</sup>. In a study conducted in the border villages of the Bishnah constituency of the Jammu district, similar kinds of problems at the international border were encountered. Most youth here were found to be illiterate and earned their livelihood by doing labour in the agricultural fields (Kumar, 2014).

**Education:** The level of literacy of the WPRs is quite low. When they came from Pakistan, the first-generation people were mostly illiterate, some having studied up to the middle level, the second-generation refugees are matric or under-matric, and while in the third generation also very few of them have studied beyond matric. There are many reasons for this as narrated by the respondents during a Group-discussion. Many hold Article 370 responsible for their plight (Singh, 2017).

It is very difficult for the children of WPRs to study beyond class X in colleges and Universities, as the Government institutions demand PRC which they do not possess. They also do not get scholarships or are entitled to reservations in government educational institutions (Jasrotia et. al., 2019). The state government acting on the representations made by the WPRs in 2007 through its officials directed the heads of the educational institutions falling within their jurisdiction, not to insist on the PRC at the time of granting admission or scholarship to the children. The state government recognized that J&K is a welfare state and provides for free education to all, and the same cannot be denied to the WPRs. Poverty is an important reason for them to not send their children to school as most of them are quite poor, and would expect the children to start earning as soon as possible. The special provisions were made by the Government of India to provide technical education to children and are implemented by the state government through the Govt. Engineering, Govt. Polytechnics (Girls), and the Industrial Training Institute (Boys). Many of them, however, find it difficult to afford even these, given their poor economic status (Nargotra, 2012). A study carried out in the villages of Jammu and Kathua districts showed that more than 95 percent of the respondents had difficulty getting admission to higher educational institutions in the state (Chaudhary et. al., 2020).

**Political Participation & Others:** The West Pakistan Refugees have the right to vote and contest Parliament elections being citizens of India. But they cannot vote or contest in state assembly elections, and the rural and urban bodies of local governance. The constitutional 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments were not extended to the state and people, particularly women and marginalized sections were denied representation. There is no political reservation in the state under Articles 330, 332, 243-D, and 243-T in the House of the People, Legislative Assemblies of the states, panchayats, and municipalities

Provisions have been incorporated by the state government in the various state laws to this effect. Some of these are as follows: Section 12 (b) of the J&K representation of the People Act, 1957, provides that a person shall be disqualified for registration in an electoral

<sup>13</sup>See: [www.mcrg.ac.in](http://www.mcrg.ac.in) ›MODULE\_D\_Marvi\_Slathia.



roll if he is not a permanent resident of the state; Section 6 (1) (a) of the J&K Panchayati Raj Act, 1989 disqualifies a person for being chosen as or for being a member of a panchayat if he is not a permanent resident of the state; Section 4 of the J&K Land Alienation Act, Svt. 1995 (1938 A.D.), Section 20-A of the J&K Big Landed Estates Abolition Act, Svt. 2007 (1950 A.D.), Section 4 of the J&K Land Grants Act, 1960, Section 95 of the J&K Co-operative Societies Act, 1960, and J&K Agrarian Reforms Act, 1976, prohibits the transfer of land in favour of a person who is not a permanent resident of the state; and Rule 17 (a) of the Jammu and Kashmir Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956, provides that no person shall be eligible for appointment to any service by direct recruitment unless he is a Hereditary State Subject. (Nargotra, 2012).

Regarding the displaced persons, the 'J&K Displaced Persons (Permanent Settlement) Act', 1971, empowers the state government to transfer property under Section 3, and to acquire evacuee land for permanent settlement of displaced persons by paying the custodian authorities the compensation determined under Sections 4 and 5. For this Act, 'displaced person' means any person who is a permanent resident of the state displaced after 1 March 1947 from any area of the state occupied by Pakistan on account of India and Pakistan or on account of civil disturbances or fear of such disturbances in such area. The 'J&K Lands (Vesting of Ownership to the Occupants) Act', 2001, more commonly known as the Roshini Act, was enacted to provide for the vesting of ownership rights to occupants of state land for purposes of generating funds to finance power projects in the state, under 8 (1) (a) that provides for the vesting of all rights, title and interest in any state land in an occupant who is a permanent resident of the state (Ibid.).

### **Problems Encountered: Organizational and Governmental Efforts**

The West Pakistan Refugees are fighting for their rights since 1947 with limited success. An organization of these refugees known as the 'West Pakistan Refugee Action Committee' (WPRAC) has been working to protect their interests, solve problems, and identify their strengths. Its head office is in Vijaypur, Samba tehsil and district. All West Pakistan Refugees are members of this organization and Mr. Labha Ram Gandhi is the President of the WPRAC. They frequently organize demonstrations, protests, and dharnas for their demands. They have also led the delegation to Delhi a few times and apprised the Central government of their problems, and also met the Group of Interlocutors on J&K and discussed their issues with them. No efforts are made to count their number or enumerate them by the Government, so on their own they have identified their families and population and began issuing identity cards to the members of the organization. The number of their families rose from 5,764 (1947) to 18,428 (2012) as shown in the records maintained by the WPRAC. This number reached 19960 families subsequently with their population now seeming to be crossing 2.5 lakh (Chaudhary et. al., 2020).

The struggle of the WPRs became more pronounced when the state government while denying them their rights decided to initiate a Bill for re-settling those state-subjects who migrated to POJK after the partition of the country in 1947. The Resettlement Bill was introduced in the state legislature in 1980 which made the provision for the return of all persons 'who were Class I and Class II state-subjects before May 14, 1954, and had migrated to the territory now included in Pakistan after March 1, 1947, or for widows, wives or descendants of such state subjects to the state. As the Bill was not approved by the Governor and the President of India began seeking the opinion of the Supreme Court of India, the Bill was passed again as an Act on 4 October 1982 in its original form. The Act has stayed as a

result of the writ filed by the J&K National Panthers Party challenging the constitutionality of the Act. The writ petition remained pending consideration (Nargotra, 2012).

On the other hand, the West Pakistan Refugees also filed a writ petition in 1982, initially challenging the Resettlement Act, but later claiming the same rights as those who voluntarily migrated to Pakistan in 1947. This writ petition was disposed of by the Supreme Court in 1987 on the ground that it was up to the state legislature of J&K to amend its legislation to include the West Pakistan Refugees. The Supreme Court expressed its inability to intervene in the matter and said that since the WPRs constitute 7-8 percent of the population of the state, they are entitled to protection by the state of J&K as well as by the Union of India.

The Government of India has been making attempts time and again to resolve the problems of the West Pakistan Refugees. In 1994, following the observations made by the Supreme Court of India (1987), the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, and Department of J&K Affairs asked the Government of J&K to consider the case of the WPRs and grant them the status of permanent residents. In 2000, again the same concerned Ministry put the matter before the Parliament to consider whether the West Pakistan Refugees can be granted the status of permanent residents of J&K. The Home Minister, in 2001 requested the state Government to grant them the said status, and if not that then to conduct a survey of such families, and give them identity cards so that they can avail advantages of the state's provisions. The Ministry of Home Affairs again in the year 2005 asked the state government to grant permanent resident status to West Pakistan Refugees at the earliest by legislating under Section 8 of the J&K Constitution since they have been living in J&K since 1947. However, all these efforts did not bear any fruit and no such decisions were taken (Ibid).

In May 2006, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, the Chief Minister of J&K convened the meeting and constituted the Committee under the chairmanship of the Financial Commissioner (Revenue) G.D. Wadhwa to look into the demands and problems of the displaced persons of 1947, 1965, and 1971 from Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (POJK) and West Pakistan Refugees<sup>14</sup>. The Committee was given the task of identifying such families, know their problems, analyse the efforts taken by the Government for addressing their problems, and suggest measures to solve their issues. The Wadhwa Committee submitted its reports with recommendations to the Chief Minister on 30 December 2007.

The Wadhwa Committee dealt with the demands of the refugees and suggested recommendations. The main demand of the West Pakistan Refugees was the grant of Permanent Resident status and to extend all the related provisions to them. In this matter, the Committee was of the view that this demand is a political one and requires amendment of the J&K Constitution, the decision that the state government can always take<sup>15</sup>.

The All Party Meeting of political parties was held on 12 May 2007 under the Chairmanship of the then Chief Minister of the state Mr. Azad regarding the issues of West Pakistan Refugees. The opinion of these parties was divided. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), National Panthers Party, and Jammu Mukti Morcha supported the grant of permanent resident status to them. They also supported their proper rehabilitation with a special package to bring them at par with other inhabitants of the state. Congress also supported the grant of permanent status to them with the condition that it is to be agreed upon by all political parties representing different regions. The People's Democratic Party (PDP), the National Conference (NC), and the CPI (M) did not support the decision, though all the parties supported for provision of basic civic facilities and other

<sup>14</sup>The Wadhwa Committee was constituted vide Government Order No. Rev/Rehab/151 dated 9 May 2007.

<sup>15</sup> See: [prsindia.org/files/bills\\_acts](http://prsindia.org/files/bills_acts).

social and development-related amenities. In the year 2007 itself, another Committee was constituted to resolve the issues of all types of refugees, including the West Pakistan Refugees that submitted the recommendations on 11 June 2007. These included the issue of the domicile certificate to WPRs. Under the Chairmanship of the then Minister of Revenue, Relief, and Rehabilitation in a meeting in 2009, the facilitation of the issuance of domicile certificates to the WPRs was assured. All these efforts thus boiled down to the demand for a domicile certificate in place of a Permanent Resident Certificate (Nargotra, 2012).

## Conclusion

The state of Jammu and Kashmir had a special status under Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, and Article 35A defined 'Permanent Residents' (PR) of the state and protected their rights and privileges. These were denied to those who were not the PR or the state-subjects in matters of state government jobs, higher education, scholarships, right to property, loans, and political rights to stand and contest in bodies of state and local governance. The 'West Pakistan Refugees' were the worst sufferers since 1947 fighting a long-drawn battle for their rights without much success as they stood in the category of non-Permanent Residents.

However, if the state government had desired, it could have included the WPRs as Permanent Residents by amending the state's Constitution much before the repeal of Article 370. This would have facilitated their entry into all official documents instead of exclusion in various policies and Acts of the J&K state (Chaudhary et. al. 2020: 36). The various demands of the WPRs as expressed by them during their meetings and demonstrations (Personal Communication) included the following (Kumar, 2014, Bhat et.al., 2019):

- Implementation of the Wadhwa Committee report which calls for providing different provisions to the WPRs and facilitating their demand for state-subject or domicile status.
- Ownership right over evacuee land or the state land allotted to WPRs for cultivation and use.
- Claim over houses in which they are living and the right to renovate and repair them.
- Relief at par with Kashmiri Pandit migrants.
- Reservation in professional colleges and scholarships for their children.
- Constitution of West Pakistan Refugees 'Development Board' with all financial powers and liberal aid for their betterment.
- No restrictions on taking government jobs, loans, and other similar facilities.
- Reservation for the youth category in all higher and technical educational institutions and state/central administrative services.
- Improvement in civic amenities in the camps where West Pakistan Refugees are putting up.

Since Article 370 became inoperative and ineffective in August 2019 through the Resolution passed by the Indian Parliament (The Constitution [Application to Jammu & Kashmir] Act 2019), the West Pakistan Refugees (like other Indian citizens) became entitled to all the rights and provisions granted to the permanent residents. The Constitution of India was fully extended to J&K. Like everyone else, they are required to get the domicile certificate made and avail of all benefits from which they have been deprived for a long time<sup>16</sup>. Many of them have already got it made, and the rest are in the process of doing so. The Government of India agreed to provide one-time financial assistance of Rs. 5.5 lakh per family to be given to 5,764 families of West Pakistan Refugees settled in J&K state. The

scheme came into effect in June 2018 and is being implemented by the J&K government. In a study conducted on the views of the WPRs (200 respondents) in the districts of Jammu, Kathua, and Samba in various fields, it was asked to them whether they received compensation of 5.5 lakh per family, and only 8 percent said 'yes'. Procedural difficulties and their non-registration, among others, were found to be the biggest hurdles in the payment of compensation which is a slow process (Jasrotia et. al. 2019: 15). Till July 2021, only 459 files from WPRs were received, out of which 174 files (3.18%) could be cleared. Many people, even those who retired from the armed forces reported their grievances<sup>17</sup>.

With the repeal of Articles 370 and 35A, the problems of West Pakistan Refugees have not been fully resolved, yet they see a ray of hope coming out of the maze that they were caught in for more than seventy years.

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<sup>16</sup> Mudasar Ahmad, 'J&K: Revocation of Special Status Brings Cheer to West Pakistan Refugees'. The Wire, 19 Dec. 2019. See: [thewire.in › rights › west-pakistan-refugees-jammu](http://thewire.in/rights/west-pakistan-refugees-jammu)

<sup>17</sup> Mohit Khandari, 'Plight of West Pak refugees in J&K', The Pioneer. Wednesday, 04 August 2021, Jammu. See: [www.dailypioneer.com › 2021 › india](http://www.dailypioneer.com › 2021 › india).

# Historical Feudal Society of Rajasthan and Current Feudal Shadows

Naresh Kumar Bhargava

**Abstract:** Rajasthan is marked by the historic-cultural-socio existence of the feudal system. The system included monarchies, the agrarian structure of its kind, inequalities, domination of few, and a peculiar social controlling system. This article is a narrative account of feudalism. It deals with the various sociological aspects that existed, and the emergence of a peculiar Rajasthan dominated by structural features, norms, and values as existed in the feudal system. It also deals with certain transformations which took place and the feudal shadows on certain current scenes as it exists today.

**Keywords:** Feudalism, Religion, Caste, Shadow, Jagir, Agrarian Structures, Transformations

Any region socially specifies the social characteristics, which is in process. It is not just a geographical area run by certain divisive boundaries and a shape emerging out of it. Thus, two types of regions may be identified here. One is based on geographical boundaries and the other is identified by its culture, language, social structure, and communities composed and identifiable by its existence. Such regions are identified by a single composed base but also by a combination of cultural considerations. Such a form of a region is not a community but a combination of communities. Identification also includes specific caste groups, lifestyle variations, cultural backgrounds, hills, deserts, etc. It also gives an idea of a historical region. Wars, aggressions, etc. are some more conceptual explanations needed to understand a region.

Historically the term region has a record of war and descriptions of the ruling class and represents a certain kind of social economic and political order. Feudalism was one such order. Marx (1957) while writing on historical materialism classified it as capitalistic or feudalistic. In Rajasthan, feudal monarchies had a long history in which authority was delegated to Kins, served people, and religious frameworks were built on this pattern.

Weber conceived it as a large-scale control covering a large aspect of society. The system influenced many aspects of human life and is usually controlled by one person or delegated authority (Bendix, 1960). Democracy is maintained and governed by the people in contrast with authoritarian autocracies, and autocratic dictatorial patterns of power and rule. Often such regions are marked by one-person rule and historically were marked with bravery, and valor and were undertaken as a cluster of such places. Indian history is full of such feudal autocratic pockets of power. Several of these rulers proved to be outstanding figures like Ashok, Chandragupta Maurya, Shivaji, and Rana Pratap. During the British period, their rule was termed feudal, but there existed a few other narratives as well.

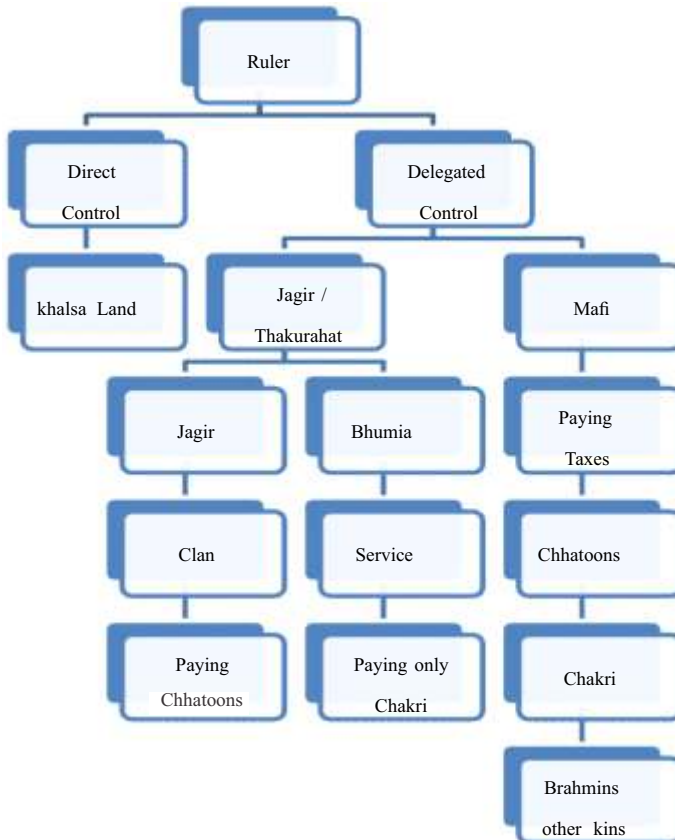
Sociologically the region denotes a specific socio-cultural pattern of control, a definite set of norms, and values and ethics. Behavioral patterns are marked by the stratificational patterns available and the shaping of such patterns is often set by the ruling set of populations. This is possible by the population who creates a feudal society or democratic society. One may arrange that region so characterized as separate from other spaces. Adaptability to geographical and social features and ecology has been key to success.

The social ecology generated in a region is important to understand the social picture available. This paper concentrates on a specific social ecology, also marked with a certain

historical tinge. As explained conceptually and as we propose to discuss a specific socio-political societal phenomenon, we propose to further discuss some more about the phenomena of the region. Social regions may be examined, especially in Rajasthan within the framework of sociological ecology with a focus on the relationship between know beings of certain social qualities and the social organization (Bertrand, 1967).

Although by using the term region we do not intend to present a conceptual explanation of the term but try to give the idea based on the unit which is of its own kind. Many authors have discussed but some scholars have termed the regions. We consider it quite self-evident, the region has been defined as special and distinct by the space that surrounded it. Lodrick also talked about denoted regions specifying feudalism having some specifications to understand a system that was peculiar to this region. Rajasthan is thus a region that consisted of princely states, ruled by princely clans, located in hills and deserts, socially and culturally rooted in feudalism, and politically called a native state. The states were also identified with Raja and rajwadas. The regions were identified and are still identified with desert, culture, dress, folklore, and little traditions (Lodrick, 1994). However, with the integration of native states into the integrated state of Rajasthan, the picture is changed. There are constitutional bodies, legal structures, and people's representatives operating in society. It is different from the earlier feudal structure as shown below:

Feudal structure of Rajputana State



India being of an agricultural background is related to a gradient structure. The picture represents the general agrarian structure as existed, was owned, and distributed in a particular way. The concentration of means of production in a few hands generated the feudal system as well as the social patterns related to it. Age-old customs dominated the legal and decision-making process. Customary decision-making processes differed from state to state and even in different parts of the state. For certain decision-making processes, caste panchayat existed. Such customary laws were not interfered with by the authorities. Castes were first stratified- the ruling caste acted in a ruling way.

In Rajasthan, several efforts have been made to understand the socio-historic reality of the feudal system and social structure. A debate raged over it especially while dealing with society in medieval history (Sharma 2001). There are few observations on the feudal structure of society appropriate to Rajasthan.

However, there were changes in the existing feudalistic pattern. With the land, the socio-economic setup started changing. Thus, the de-feudalization process started and set itself. The emergence of a feudalistic society was marked by two class patterns

1. As it existed, the class of landlords and,
2. The class of peasantry and the system emerging was predominantly an agrarian socio-economic structure.

It was also marked by a decline in trade, urbanism, and basic metal currency. In feudal society, blood relations and kinship proved to be very strong and important in the system. Instead of a pure solo economic system but having ancient human relations new patterns started emerging. The Rajput feudalism that existed in Rajasthan was termed so in architecture, folk music, songs, fairs, and festivals (Ghurye, 1974). Symbols have been preserved and used for several purposes, including folk acceptance of such formations. The aspect of feudal society differed from west to south Rajasthan. The feudalism so formed and maintained started declining due to British interference, tribal and peasant movements, and changes emerging among rulers due to the education they were provided.

However, the part of Rajasthan was a historical reality - called a parochial state dominated by a feudal ruler-subject relationship (Sisson, 1992). However Feudalism was related to a certain kind of authority structure, the behaviors at the age to is a sense of pride for an act of people who accepted the pattern, domination today is a sense of a certain type of pride and its expression and reverential acceptance by the inhabitants.

With the dawn of the era of democracy, old vestiges of feudal society faded away and got preserved only in folklore and historical compositions. A new system of social-economic relations inevitably emerged, indicating a more participatory role for the common masses in a far more liberal society. Looking at behavioral patterns and social bindings few aspects may better be noted, which we may call a feudal shadow. The term signifies certain kinds of behavior, accepted norms, and values that remained with feudal aspects. The term is not exactly a feudal social structural phenomenon but just reasonable to earlier existence. A few examples may corroborate the idea.

Not much has changed as far as the social-relational context is concerned. The study on *ex- Jagirdars* (Sharma, 1968) referred to dominative tendencies and customary rights and roles exercised by them and accepted by a democratic society. Further, such a relationship may be observed in the election process of any level from Panchayat to Vidhan Sabha.

Another study by Doshi (1997) reveals about feudal relations existed between tribals and feudal authorities. Tribal areas in South Rajasthan were marked by socialist movements and challenges to feudal authorities. The movements of this type of protest were rarely seen during the feudal age. These carried a challenge to feudal ways.

The strong caste system in Rajasthan has many subdivisions, caste being an important aspect of the feudal structure. Four major caste groups according to Veer Vinod (Shyamal Das, 1949) were Rajputs, Brahmins, Mahajans, and Kayasthas. Others were subordinate to these caste groups. The 'shadow' still treats them as maliks (masters) and are largely the owners of means of production, business processes, and bureaucracy. Earlier also they were engaged in such tasks and were called a part of the feudal structure. Behaviorally, castes enjoying prestige showed a lot of brash swagger and arrogance. This still prevails and lesser castes are expected to be obedient and quiet. The caste relationships between higher caste and lower caste are based on the idea of subordination. New and constitutional changes gave few advantages to lower castes but feudal instincts act as obstructive forces and force society to maintain the status quo.

The 'Shadow' factor is quite visible during the election where upper castes and Royal families love to demonstrate their prowess cleverly. Often lower castes are expected to cower down and withdraw or remain subdued. Victory for the upper caste and royal family is taken for granted, We can say that history here plays a vital role.

Religion has been an important factor under feudalism. Each ruler had adopted a god or goddess, which was the main protector and in whose name Kings used to rule. The traditions of such Gods have not gone. As the Gods were established by a feudal lord, the region had pride and customs, and rituals. Of course, they used the sanctions on Brahmins, donating land for festivals and temples. Such processes still exist besides taxes and laws existing for others. Emotionally the people have been more akin to religious practices, which were supported by feudal. It is a continuing practice.

The parties which are based on religion are more supportive of feudal explanations of religion. They propagate conservative values and motivate the masses to follow outworn practices and thinking.

Democracy is an amalgamation of many such factors. One may observe during elections, not only parties but caste combinations are an active force for political power. Democratic protest often is based on religious issues. It runs contrary to the concept of secularism in the constitution. The elections are often held on issues of religious nature. The state is often protective by observing religious practices as practiced during feudal days. A movement for revivalistic politics is seen.

Little traditions are observed based on pre-established patterns. Once again conforming to rules set by feudal authorities in earlier days, committed to folk life often such practices have become the subject of tourism and folk art. In view of these folk presentations, the early traditions should be maintained. It carries the Shadows of the feudal system of a bygone era.

Even living at home and outside the home has a concept of living. Luxury is the demand of the day. Traces of feudalistic architecture and lifestyle can be seen in an upsurge of elaborate haveli-like designs and décor both in private and public buildings. It confesses a stamp of exclusive status to a class. Tourism in Rajasthan is hugely profiting by taking visitors back into the vanished period of medieval glory. A lot of romantic aura has come to be associated with it in different aspects of life.



The above discussion is not an exhaustive analytical presentation of the new socio-cultural patterns emerging in Rajasthan where the days of raja and rajwada ended with the country's adoption of a democratic form of rule. All I wish to do is to suggest that the shadows of feudalistic society along with its cultural and social values still play a significant role in the post-independence period of rapid democratization, the secularization of life, and a liberal market-driven economy. Rajasthan happens to epitomize all the gallantry and glory of a feudal past. Tourists and visitors come here to see a past still co-existing with progressive modernity, and marvel at how the two opposite cultural formations have managed to live side by side. Right at the bottom of grass-root human existence, one can see common people adhering to ideas and practices which can at best be called frozen in time. Moving upwards we find bourgeois classes and middle-class life taking pride in royalty it is the very essence and centre of life. They belong to a modern era but continue to follow the shadowy feudalistic lifestyle. A significant factor of this hallucinatory existence is the immense mental power it exerts both in their family life and their relation with the 'commoners' or the common people. Whether we agree or not, people still find themselves regarding the erstwhile ruling elite as their 'mai-baap' and 'annadaata', and royal personages regard them as their subjects.

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**Prof. Naresh Kumar Bhargava**, Retd, Prof. MLS University, Udaipur  
nareshbhargava@gmail.com

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# Structural Constraints of Non-Violent Agrarian Mobilization in Bihar: A Historical Trajectory

B.N. Prasad

**Abstract** : Social stratification has been an integral part of the social system. The larger the gap between layers of the social system, the system is more open to exploitations and crises. A renowned social scientist G. Lenski in his survey of social development noted how agrarian societies were the most unequal societies; consequently negating the successful growth of democracy, let alone the autochthonous development of such a system of political rule in those regions. Traditionally, Indian agrarian societies have been the most unjust societies. But the establishment of the democratic regime in India has changed the contours of the agrarian system. Traditional agrarian social formation has undergone a change due to the democratic value system, the rising level of literacy, modernization, the disintegration of the feudal mode of production, and the emergence of capitalist mode of production, etc. However; traditionally marginalised castes/classes find themselves alienated from democratic institutions. For emancipation and egalitarian social order, they followed path of agrarian movements- both within and beyond institutional framework; and challenged the very basis of feudal domination. On the other side, traditionally influential castes/classes are finding it increasingly difficult to maintain their dominations, because democratic institutions have their own mode of functioning and logic of articulation. These two contradictory trends take democratic institutions to the level of serious crises. This paper traces the historical trajectory of agrarian mobilization within the institutional framework, structural constraints, and beyond in Bihar.

**Keywords** : Social system, Agrarian social formation, Non-Violence, Peasant, Democracy

After independence, the Indian state became more uniform and cohesive, both politically and administratively. In order to realise the twin objectives of 'decolonization' and 'development', the government implemented multi-pronged measures to transform agrarian society. The introduction of adult franchises and *panchayati raj* transformed the political life of the people. Whereas land reform measures, community development programmes, legislative measures to eliminate the feudal mode of production, and encouragement to the capitalist mode of production, all were directed to change the economic structure of rural India (Desai, 1986). These measures transformed the socio-economic profile and agrarian class relations in Indian villages.

The *zamindari* abolition and related government policies created two contradictory trends in the Indian agrarian structure. As per the government rules, tenants could secure ownership of land by paying compensation to concerned landlords, which was often beyond the capacity of poor tenants. As a result, the majority of poor tenants denied ownership, lost tenurial security and became a non-owning proletariat. On the flip side, rich tenants not only acquired the bulk of ownership, due to better economic status but also accepted capitalist postulates as the axis of agrarian development and modernization (Desai, 1961). Thus, government measures created an expanding class of capitalist land owners. On the other side; started the process of proletarianisation of poor tenants and sub-tenants, thereby converting them into a new kind of bonded labour rooted in capitalist mode of production (Desai, 1986). This in turn, sharply changed class relations in the primary sector and played a decisive role in shaping the social profile of agrarian India.

However; with an increasing number of the agrarian proletariat and deepening hardship, they became more and more desperate. Under the impact of new politico-economic factors, lower strata are becoming aware of their problems. This led to sharpening conflicts among and between newly emerging proprietary classes and proletarianised masses. This resulted in many types of agrarian struggles; which can be broadly divided into two distinct categories. Movements launched by newly emerged proprietary classes, together with prosperous middle peasants and streamlined landlords. The main aim is to secure more assistance and facilities from the government and derive maximum benefits from developmental measures. The second category of movements was launched by the agrarian poor, in which the agrarian proletariat acquired a central place (Desai, 1986). These movements are directed against proprietary classes and various forms of exploitation. These are qualitatively different from movements of the first category. The struggles of rural poor not only question the efficacy and morality of modern socio-economic framework but also expose the inability of developmental measures to mitigate their vulnerable conditions (Desai, 1986). These struggles seek change beyond the institutional framework.

This paper intends to explore the relationship between a democratic polity, strategy for socio-economic development, and agrarian mobilization within the institutional framework for equitable social order with its structural limitations in rural Bihar. Gandhiji and his associates were aware of structural inequality in rural India, and its possible effects on the system. According to Gandhi, 'India lives in villages and without all-round development of the countryside, the country cannot develop in its totality.' The world is passing through a critical phase of structural violence, and there are intense debates on alternative paths of social development. It is time to reflect upon the philosophy of 'Satyagraha' to build up a non-violent social order with its structural limitations.

Ideally speaking, violence is an act that disturbs the equilibrium of peaceful co-existence of the universe, and when the survival of the fittest becomes an intrinsic course. This framework provides non-violence a widest possible canvas of philosophical flight. It is an ideal type, and the existence of any society in the perfect absence of violence is a theoretical proposition. However; in the course of history, people learned the principle of co-existence, invented social norms and values, and a degree of violence-structured or sporadic; to the acceptable level of social sensitivity, adaptation, and sanctions with a minimum degree of deviation. Therefore, acceptance of the level of violence in any form marks the level of sensitivity and consciousness that society has acquired in the process of its transformation and development, and thus level of peaceful co-existence denotes the level of progress (Bury, 1955). In the process of its development, a human being created social structure and institutions, to regulate its behaviour for co-existence. When the system discriminates, deprives, and exploits in terms of unequal access to resources, opportunities, and life chances, against decent living conditions, it is violence inherent in the structure (Galtung, 2000). Violence ingrained in structures varies with the degree of exploitation of people practiced through structured institutions and systems across time and space.

### **Gandhi and his practice**

Gandhi was not merely a charismatic leader of the masses, but also a scientific ideologue for societal change and reconstruction. His 'Non-violent Approach' falls in the realm of science related to social change and progress (Gandhi, 1967 & 1909), which is impregnated

with social equity, i.e., 'Sarvodaya and Antodaya.' He derived the idea of non-violence from oral tradition and Buddha; which later became the Gandhian path of social progress. During his struggle in South Africa, Gandhi established *Ashrams*, which have been the main forms of action and practice to train cadres for social reconstruction. His idea of Ashram as an instrument for social reconstruction and development was influenced by Ruskin's *Unto This Last* (*Ibid*: 1927), and "Order of Trappist Monks", as a living example of a micro-community living. This type of community life was carried out on the basis of voluntary poverty, self-renunciation, and constructive work (Thomson, 1993). Gandhi tried to translate this order of Trappist monks into practice for preparing grounds for social reconstruction. The Phoenix Settlement, which was started in 1904, provided Gandhi an opportunity to launch a protest and civil disobedience movement against racial discrimination in South Africa. *Indian Opinion*, a weekly journal, was considered to be one of the effective measures to educate the concerned masses (Gandhi, 1928). The Phoenix Settlement, which was considered as a religious institution, progressed till 1911. The advent of passive resistance widened its horizon and made religion an actor to "link between different religions and realize their essential unity" (*Ibid*, 1955). Gandhi's protest and civil disobedience movement, which was also known as non-violent passive resistance (later termed as Satyagraha), got wider meaning and coverage here. The Tolstoy Farm, which was established on 30 May 1910, proved to be another experiment for the collective consolidation of social forces against the injustice of racial discrimination and for the reconstruction of society.

In order to continue with his practices of community life and social reconstruction, Gandhi started translating his previous experiences through various forms of practices and activities in India as well. He came to India in 1915 with his experience of non-violent struggle and Satyagraha in South Africa, which remained the focal point of his movement-political, social, and religious; hereafter. His first involvement with the mass movement in India was the famous 'Champaran Farmers Movement', against injustice. This laid the foundation of the anti-British struggle, which was subsequently known as the Gandhian movement. In Champaran, he courageously defied the order of British government and became a hero for thousand of people who witnessed this defiance.

Gandhi established his first Ashram at Kocharab, and later shifted to Sabarmati, Ahmadabad. Along with this he launched satyagraha, initiated constructive programmes, and adhered to eleven vows- five of Buddha's teachings together with six others: truth, non-violence, chastity, non-possession, non-stealing, bread labour, non-palatable, fearlessness, equal treatment and respect to all religions, swadeshi, and untouchability; for the transformation of self and society simultaneously. The main activities in the beginning were: worship, sanitary service, sacrificial spinning, agriculture, dairy, tannery, national education, khadi, technical school, etc. Thus because of his experiences in South Africa, he broadened the scope of Ashram. But, basically, this was an Ashram with a middle-class ethos with dignity of labour along with religious and moral overtones. This process has twin objectives-cadre building for the national freedom movement and reconstruction of the society. Gandhian way proved to be a pathfinder not only for India but also for many colonised and developing nations of the world. Although India achieved its freedom from British rule, the task of social reconstruction was and is still an unfinished agenda. Gandhi started many practices to attain non-violent social order as the goal of his swaraj, which was

poor man's swaraj, and later carried out by organisations and activists of Gandhian folds. After Gandhi, Vinoba carried out his unfinished task and undertook major issues of society. Similar practices are being carried out across Indian states by veteran Gandhian, e.g., Manmohan Choudhary, Siddhraj Dhadha, Thakurdas Bang, Acharya Rammurti, Nirmala Deshpande, and many others towards the reconstruction of villages for *Gram Swaraj*.

### **Post-Gandhian Social Mobilisation**

In the post-Gandhian period, Vinoba Bhave emerged as the most important leader of the non-violence philosophy for social reconstruction. As the natural leader of the *Sarvodaya Movement*, he established *Akhil Bhartiya Sarva Seva Sangh* (ABSSS) in 1948. Viewing inequality as the most serious problem, he started a campaign of a land gift from Pochampalli in Telangana of Andhra Pradesh for redistribution of land among the poor on 18 April 1951. This campaign received wider attention and developed into *Bhoodan* and *Gramdan* movements. All constructive organisations- *Charkha Sangh*, *Talimi Sangh*, *Khadi*, *Gramodyog Sangh*, *Harijan Sevak Sangh*, etc; were integrated to work for the *Bhoodan* movement. The basic idea behind this merger was to integrate constructive work programmes with the movement, and the programmes should come through movement, which may sustain for a longer time to rebuild society.

*Bhoodan* movement found its origin in the Telangana movement, where poor peasants launched a powerful struggle against landlords on the land question. Vinoba was very much aware of the inequality in land distribution and the inherent contradiction therein. He took the initiative to resolve this contradiction through a gift campaign, i.e., *Bhoodan*. Caught in the coil of armed struggle, landlords were restless to solve this problem at the cost of a few hectares of land. Vinoba succeeded in the persuasion of the poor peasants to agree with landlords to compromise on the issue of land gift. This event provided a clue to Vinoba to resolve the land question through a gift campaign. He then launched a land gift campaign in other parts of the country, the response to which was very encouraging. Gandhian took it as a starting point for a non-violent revolution to solve the most complicated land issue of India. They did not see any possibility of initiating any other process of non-violent movement than *Bhoodan*. This movement was well-received by the people of India. In the conference of ABSSS at Sevapuri, U.P., the movement was declared as the movement of ABSSS, and all the activists of the ABSSS were involved in the movement (Rahi, 1977). All other activities were sidelined and ultimately were allowed to die their natural death. The second phase of *Bhoodan* was started as *Gramdan* (gift of the village) at Mangroth in U.P. on 24 April 1952, to dissolve ownership of land in the village assembly, "Gramdan was the foundation over which the superstructures of khadi and Shanti Sena had to be erected, thus completing the building of village swaraj" (Choudhary, 1970). Gradually this campaign reached the block, district, and state (Bihar) level. The objective of the movement was to establish a Sarvodaya order of direct and participatory democracy, which alone can ensure freedom, equality, and justice to all the members of the community (Deo, n. d: 1). *Toofan Gramdan* (village gift storm) was started to achieve a wider coverage of *Gramdan*. When the radical posture of *Bhoodan-Gramdan* reached its stagnation because negotiation and persuasion became almost difficult (*Ibid*: 3), Vinoba launched *Sulabh Gramdan* (simplified gift) campaign after the Raipur Conference of the ABSSS in 1963 to attract donors to part with 1/20<sup>th</sup> land for *Bhoodan*. These campaigns reached their climax in 1969 at the Rajgir Conference of the ABSSS in Bihar. At this conference, Vinoba stopped his direct guidance and involvement in

this campaign and asked the workers to continue their work on their own. *Bhoodan-Gramdan* had broadly three phases: i) *Prapti* (a receipt of gift), ii) *Pushti* (follow-up for verification), and iii) *Nirman* (course of reconstruction) (*Ibid*: 6). Most of the Gandhian organisations were actively engaged in constructive works of Gramdan area for village development (Choudhary, *op. cit*: 29).

*Bhoodan* achieved its historic targets, which could not be found elsewhere in the world (Chandra, 1997). Initially, it sounded like a panacea for most of the stalwarts of the peace movement to resolve the issues of inequality in the distribution of land. It was achieved to the extent the land was received (the quality of the land was in question). But the task of distribution of land was given to the government; which caused the alienation of *Sarvodaya* workers and the poor peasants. Beneficiaries were identified by the government agencies, but any inconsistency emerging out of the distribution process went to discredit the *Sarvodaya* workers. Moreover, the vision of the *Pushti* and *Nirman* was yet to be developed adequately among the workers. Therefore, sustaining the *Bhoodan-Gramdan* movement became difficult even in the lifetime of Vinoba, and he took retreat from Saharsa (Bihar). Later this movement was reduced to insignificance and now it is not even acknowledged as a measure of land reforms (Gangrade, 1997). Furthermore, the noble idea of integrating all constructive programmes for *Bhoodan* and extract programmes from the movement could not be realised. As a result, the effectiveness of the organisation was lost because of discontinuity. Vinoba himself raised many issues related to the assessment of the outcome (Bhave, 2000).

However, Kisan Sabha was vibrant peasant organisation under Gandhian fold, which brought agrarian question to the forefront. The non-violent agrarian mobilisation was started by the Kisan Sabha in the colonial rule and it continued in the post-colonial period.

### **The Interface of the Kisan Sabha and other Political Parties**

In the colonial India, the dominant form of agrarian struggle was launched by the *Kisan Sabha*. The organisation came into existence in 1927 at Bihta in the west Patna district of Bihar, acquired all-Bihar status in 1929 (B.P.K.S.), and all-India body by 1936 (A.I.K.S.). Swami Sahajanand Saraswati emerged as an undisputed leader of the *Sabha*. The permanent settlement and its consequences created fertile ground, and the tenants provided explosive manpower which was channelised by the *Kisan Sabha*. The ideological basis of the permanent settlement was highly capitalist of the *laissez-faire* sort (Guha, 1983). This created contradiction when it came in contact with primitive agrarian social structure. This gave rise to numerous agrarian movements in Bihar in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. But these movements were largely unorganised and sporadic (Das, 1983). It was in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that such resistance articulated itself in the form of organised and sustained movement under the modern leadership of *Kisan Sabha*. Gandhi launched the first non-cooperation movement in 1921, after two successful experiments with the peasant question—Champaran Satyagraha (Prasad, 1949) and Khera (Hardiman, 1977), Gujarat. Although Gandhi withdrew non-cooperation movement after *Chauri Chaura* incident in Uttar Pradesh, the movement exposed the revolutionary potential of the Indian peasantry. This attracted the peasant leader Swami Sahajanand.

The Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha (B.P.K.S.) from its inception was deeply involved in the mass movement. Its very foundation in 1929 was marked by the dropping of the proposed

tenancy amendment, which proved to be a tremendous morale-booster for tenants. From the very beginning, Sahajanand and his associates not only tried to raise the consciousness of the tenants (Das, *op. cit.*: 44) but also urged them to resist *zamindari* oppression and fight for their rights. As a result, there were many demonstrations, rallies, *satyagraha*, and other struggles. Some of the famous struggles of the BPKS, during this period, were the agitation it launched against the Tenancy Bill in 1933, the joint peasant-worker action it undertook against Dalmia Sugar Factory at Bihta in 1938-39, Bakasht movement in Barahiya *tal*, Majiawana and Amwari during 1936-38 (Sankrityayana, 1950). The movement was directed mainly against *zamindari* oppression. The most legendary peasant struggle under the BPKS was the 'Bakasht Movement' and 'Dalmia Sugar Mill Movement' at Bihta (Das, *op. cit.*: 131-36). If the former gave evidence of the class action by different sections of the Bihar peasantry, then the latter struggle was the symbol of worker-peasant unity, which opened the eyes of Sahajanand and his associates to the need for worker-peasant unity (Saraswati, 1952). It gave an ideological direction to the hitherto spontaneous and sporadic character of peasant movements.

However, the *Kisan Sabha* has passed through different stages in the course of its struggle from a spontaneous, sporadic and unorganized peasant movement to well organised and ideologically oriented movement. During its initial stage, its approach was sort of "class collaborationist" (Saraswati, 1952). Soon this thinking got changed, when the *Kisan Sabha* came into confrontation with the landlords. It was realised by Sahajanand that the agrarian problem could not be solved without solving the problems of the agricultural labourers. He asserted that due to depeasantisation it was difficult to draw a line between the poor peasants and the agricultural labourers. Thus, it was proper to regard agricultural labourers as *Kisan* too so that both might struggle together. But confusion persisted among its leaders. Even leaders like Rahul Sankrityayana argued, "even if agricultural labourers remain labourers, their wage will only go up if the income of the Kisan increases...., I feel that it will be a serious mistake on their part if they enter into a quarrel with the Kisans just now" (Sankrityayana, 1937). Later it was realised by Sahajanand that the *Kisan Sabha* was being used by the middle and big cultivators for their own selfish ends (Saraswati, 1944). However, the *Kisan Sabha*, by and large, did not take note of the contradiction that existed between *Kisans* (shudra peasants) and *Mazdurs* (dalit field servants). The movement was essentially centred around Kisan's anti-*zamindari* struggle. Demand was 'land to the tenants' rather than 'land to the tillers.' This limitation was not properly recognised by the *Kisan Sabha* leaders. They assumed that 'anti-*zamindari*' was equivalent to 'land to the tiller.' There were 'tillers', i.e., *Mazdurs*, who were not tenants. They did not stand to benefit from the abolition of *zamindari* (Rasul, 1974). There was neither any significant struggle to give land to *all* the tillers, nor a struggle to abolish the system which maintained a class of agricultural labourers in permanent existence.

However, due to its narrow end and partial demand, the *Kisan Sabha* sank into stagnation after *zamindari* abolition. AIKS sessions were marked by 'poor attendance' and the Sabha became 'tame or inert in a number of states after 1966' (Ibid: 212-19).

### **Role Played by Other Political Parties**

Although many parties were formed to guard the interest of the rural poor-- beginning from *Kisan Sabha*, to the *Khet Mazdur* Union led by the CPI, the Bihar Provincial *Khet Mazdur Sabha* by Jagjiwan Ram, the *Khet Mazdur Panchayat* by the Socialists, All India

*Khetihar Mazdur Sangha* by the Congress, *Sarvodaya* movement, etc., yet they all failed to redress the basic economic hardships of the agrarian poor. However, Vinoba Bhave's *Bhoodan* was to be the *Sarvodaya* answer to the Communist challenge on the land problem and was meant to achieve what legislative actions could not do. Although *Bhoodan-Gramdan* movement generated social awareness about the agrarian issue in India, in terms of its announced aims the movement was an abortive experiment (Oommen, 1972). Even the Indian Communists rarely accorded sufficient weight to the poor peasants and landless labourers in their organizational strategy and revolutionary mobilization. A.K. Gopalan, veteran peasant leader of CPM emphasized: "We have to make the landless labourers the hub of our activities. Reluctance to take up their specific demands, *fearing that this will drive the rich and middle peasants away from us, will have to be given up...*" (Gopalan, 1968). The CPI also stressed a somewhat similar unity strategy (CPI, 1967). Thus, all political parties—Congress, Socialist, Communists—shared a common predilection, *i.e.*, making the widest possible social constituency. This may be the logical corollary of involvement in electoral politics, where political expediency is the primary motive rather than the ideological commitment (Oommen, 1985).

Indian Constitution, in principle, is committed to the doctrine of socio-economic and political *Justice* for every Indian citizen. It is the basic duty of the Indian state to preserve and assure the *Equality* of opportunity and dignity of every individual, and furthers 'participatory development.' Promotion and protection of these basic rights, especially for the downtrodden section of society, assures political and social stability and peace in the country. The impartial functioning of the state in these matters is an acid test of its being a just state. Unless the above constitutional promises are practically ensured by the Indian state, Gandhiji's dream project—'Sarvodaya and Antyodaya' society cannot be established. Both Gandhiji and Vinoba Bhave have been visionaries, who tried to place the complex problems of Indian peasantry and its relations with the capitalistic-bourgeoisie class interests within their simplistic idealism. Essentially, feudalistic land-owners have always shown a singular tenacity and obduracy in refusing to make adjustments in the larger interests of poor farmers. The type of non-violent movements spearheaded by Gandhian leadership tried to forge some kind of benign and genial accommodation between the two. When the Government agencies stepped in the movement became diluted and finally ineffective because of the corrupt bourgeois ways of their working. The left-wing leaders like A.K. Gopalan and Z.A. Ahmad quite early realized that such benign peaceful movements would not bring about any justice to the poor farmers and farming labourers. They wanted to destroy the vestiges of feudal exploitation and fully empower peasantry. But they also failed in their mission as they were divided into many politically motivated bodies for whom their political and ideological commitment figured as the first priority. Hence the problem is still far from resolved. However, events of world history suggest that people have changed the course of history, and through their struggles have created a people-centered social system and people-oriented developmental model.

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**Prof. B. N. Prasad**, Prof. & Head, Sociology & Social Anthropology, A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Studies, Patna  
 prasad06bn@yahoo.co.in

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# Culture vs. Commodification: A Case of Groundwater Governance in 21st Century Rajasthan

Ankita Menon

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**Abstract** : This paper is a conscious effort to explore the contours of groundwater governance through an ethnographic study of Kaladera village in Rajasthan. The ways in which water has been perceived by people throughout centuries across the world have had a deep effect on the formation of human-water relationships, on surrounding cultures and traditions, and the management and governance of water. As we move away from traditions towards a modern world where profits form the basis of any interaction with nature, a lot of changes have occurred in how water is perceived. The people of Kaladera, who are going through a water crisis, are still trying to preserve and protect their understanding, culture, and governance around water in myriad ways. It is interesting to see how people, amid a water crisis, resist the forces of the market, address the challenges erupting from an industrial area situated in the heart of the village, and save their water from commodification through the everydayness of their routine lives. India, being the largest user of groundwater in the world, faces water scarcity in many parts. Rajasthan, being a desert state, and in the absence of river streams, has much to lose with the loss of groundwater. This forces us to rethink the structure and agency of water governance and explore human-water relationships and cultures that aim for its sustainability and are working towards saving water from being commodified.

**Keywords** : Culture, Commodification, Groundwater Governance, Sustainability, Kaladera

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Groundwater is one of the three major sources of available water to human beings, the others being rainwater, rivers, and the sea. With time, as societies have expanded, the relationship between humans and water has transformed considerably. The 'availability' has turned into 'scarcity'; the 'gift' has become a 'resource', and the 'use' has taken the shape of 'exploitation' in many ways. The use of groundwater as a "resource" is the defining feature of modernization in Independent India. Water has met and continues to meet many of the needs of the population and the state in recent decades. Concomitantly, as the resource dwindles, the understanding of the relationship of a state with water in the modern age becomes essential. In all sectors that are integral to economic growth, water forms a crucial point of departure towards the notions of progress and development. It links people and communities in all ways of everyday life, and their well-being depends upon the availability, accessibility, and affordability of water. Given such a situation, the governance and management of water resources, especially groundwater, which serves as the only major source present to serve the needs in many geographies like Rajasthan itself, becomes all the more important.

Unlike the past, the modern state works on the principles of capitalism and tries to put a commodified lens on everything out there, thereby making profits the ultimate goal of any transaction. Naturally so, water has not been able to escape the trajectory laid down by capitalism and its facilitating structures. We have commodified our water resources. Bottled water in the form of Kinley, Bisleri, and Aquafina bottles are living examples of the purest form of commodification of a basic need such as drinking water. Such examples amid water scarcity are indicative of the possibility of a future where water would be solely delivered on the basis of one's purchasing power, further giving rise to many class inequalities. And it is not a surprise that such inequalities exist today and many children and people die every day

because of water-centric issues globally. In such times, it is imperative to look beyond the lens of capitalism and identify the many social relationships that contradict the notions of commodification, and even today, see water as a "gift" to be revered and underline the importance of many values, ethics, and cultural forms, both material and immaterial, waiting to be accepted and adopted in mainstream models of governance.

Such human-water relationships from the past across civilizations have been well-documented and heralded as sustainable water governance models that were capable of taking care of the needs of their populations. Although the new vision of governments, which hails "integrated resource management" as the key to addressing water scarcity, is gaining momentum, it would not be possible to materialize the vision into reality till there is an attunement of a human being with water, which is not just need-based. Modernity, with its exceptional advances in science and technology, lacks something integral to the governance of water in the past and some present communities and cultures. The reverence for water in particular, and attunement with nature in general, that formed the foundation of the past relationship with water, are missing in these times, affecting the use and abuse of water as a result. Modern subjects are well-versed in water extraction mechanisms, monetary values associated with it, supply and demand forces at work, and the income derived from it, but they are blind to the many cultural, ethical, and religious undertones that made water such an important part of past societies.

This paper attempts to move away from the larger governance structure and bring the reader to visualise the human relationships that exist concerning water in the village of Kaladera in Rajasthan, as well as understand the culture and perspective of the locals regarding water and its management. It is an outcome of my seven-year-long association with the village as a researcher, which includes one year of ethnographic research that began in the year 2019 and was halted with the coming of COVID in March 2020.

### **Village Kaladera and Groundwater use**

Unlike the usual picture that one imagines of a typical village, Kaladera is far from that in many ways. With a population of more than 13,151 (Census, 2011), there are more laborers in Kaladera than farmers because of the presence of a huge industrial area comprising around 250 industrial units. The bean-shaped Kaladera is a gram *panchayat* situated 10 km away from the sub-district headquarters in Chomu and 42 km away from the district headquarters in Jaipur. According to Census 2011, the total geographical area of the village is 1828 hectares. The Indian Village Directory (An online platform where the statistics and profiling of all the villages in India are present under the census, 2011) informs us that there are around 2,122 houses in the village. The village has a semi-arid climate. The temperatures range from 45 degrees centigrade in the summer and fall to around two degrees in the winter.

Groundwater is the major source of irrigation, for domestic purposes and industry in the village. While the *panchayat* has tried to provide tap connections to the households, the village is far from achieving the *har ghar se jal* status. The groundwater supplies fluctuate, wherein at some locations, the groundwater is available at 250 feet, while at others, it is available at 700–800 feet, with these levels increasingly dropping year after year. Overexploitation of the aquifer has led to salinity in the water and soils and a sinking water table. The groundwater table sinks at a one-meter rate a year and this is the condition of many of the talukas of Rajasthan, which now fall under the over-exploitation category.

The hydro-geographical past of Kaladera does not share the same history of water scarcity as is the case with other water-scarce regions of Rajasthan. As narrated by the locals, groundwater was available at a depth of 5–10 feet in the middle of the twentieth century and was home to many *reylies* (Reylies are believed to be the underground rivers that flow in the village and other parts of Rajasthan). Surprisingly, it was declared an over-exploited region by the end of the same century. The situation of scarcity and the circumstances arising from it are relatively new. The Central Ground Water Board "officially designated the Kaladera watershed as "overexploited" - that is, the withdrawal rate exceeds the natural recharge rate-- in 1998".

The new technologies that were marketized and handed over to the farmers to increase agricultural production have been responsible for the rigorous extraction of groundwater by the farming community of Rajasthan. The farmers who are currently nearing 60-70 years of age told me how they were very skeptical of using the electric motor as a device to extract water from the ground. They hesitated to use the motor to fetch water as the concept was alien and strange to them. Many of them define that feeling as utterly disturbing as it felt like disturbing the natural ways of *being with nature*. They were forced to accept the modern ways of extracting water, which contradicted their ways. Many of the farmers, who were growing vegetables and crops only to satisfy their needs and the needs of their fellow villagers by either exchanging their produce for other services, were now growing crops to *sell* with a market value attached to it. The *Jajmani* system was the usual way that reflected social relationships in the past, and profit was not the underlying base of such relationships. The coming of technology, therefore, brought about a sudden change in the ways in which water was conceived; crops were produced, and the produce was marketized. This exactly coincides with the time period in India when Liberalization, Globalization, and Privatization (LPG) reforms were introduced. The states have started focusing on extracting their resources to create economic growth. The farmers were incentivized to grow by providing them with subsidies. The farmers in Kaladera went through the same process. For a brief period of time, the extraction of groundwater did not interfere with the community's way of extracting water for domestic purposes. The *handpumps* and wells that were established in the village were used by the village members (the non-farming community that includes everyone except farmers) for domestic purposes. Before the 1990s, nobody had a piped water connection. There were 10–12 *handpumps* and wells that sufficed for the daily water needs of people. Although caste played a crucial role in those times and wells were differentiated on the basis of the locale of caste groupings and their respective *dhanias*, the issues of non-availability, inaccessibility, and un-affordability had not arisen yet. Nobody in the village ever remained devoid of water.

### **The Depletion and the Resistance Thereof**

The reserves of groundwater that took thousands of years to develop, which were the result of conservation efforts by the ancestors and natural recharge, began to deplete. Despite the declaration by CGWB in 1998, a Coca-Cola plant was given a 99-year lease in 2000 to operate within an industrial area that was set up in the year 1992. Coca-Cola, which is a soft-drink company and is a highly water-intensive industry in its very nature, is also known to produce Kinley bottled water. The company, within a few years of its inception, has been in the news for bringing unhappiness to the villagers for its groundwater withdrawal. The farmers give accounts of how, within two years of its arrival, the effects of groundwater

depletion were alarmingly felt in Kaladera and all the adjoining villages. The situation completely boggled the ordinary farmer as the sudden depletion was beyond their understanding. This became a common point of concern and discussion among the farmers since they were the first ones in the slot to be affected by groundwater depletion.

After doing some research by talking to the workers who worked inside the plant, it was found out that the plant was sucking groundwater twenty-four hours a day with sophisticated technologies and infrastructure that were not to be seen or heard of in their common understanding. The issue was raised with the Sarpanch of the panchayat, but lack of surety led to mixed responses, as the company was also responsible for bringing jobs to the village. As the groundwater levels declined further, farmers and cultivators found it difficult to do farming and were forced to dig their wells even deeper. Many farmers with small land holdings lost their lands because of an inability to pay for digging deeper wells, and many had to sell their belongings and savings only to make water available for sowing their crops.

The story was not just limited to the increasing scarcity of water for farming and the decline in agricultural productivity. In his book *Risk Society*, Beck argues that risks get accumulated and distributed in a class pattern, with those who have the ability to purchase safety from them being better off than those who do not have purchasing power. Hence, risk distribution follows a class pattern and always leaves the marginalized to bear the brunt of the larger set of risks (Beck, 1992). In the village, the farming class, particularly the marginalized and small farmers, were the first hit by the risks that groundwater depletion brought. The second slot hit by the depletion was the common people of Kaladera, who saw their hand pumps and wells turning dry. In this slot, the worst hit ones were the so-called "lower castes" who were involved in menial work. The inequalities springing from the caste structure did exist and were visible concerning water accessibility. In a few months, this becomes a community concern, and many people begin to wonder what benefits the company provided to the villagers and the environment. Meanwhile, many other water-intensive industries were also given the green signal to enter the industrial area. This brought a lot of anguish, and the villagers were agitated to the extent that they decided to come together and protest. Harvey calls such kinds of ownership of natural resources "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey, 2003).

According to this concept, privatization and, thereby, the commodification of publicly or community-owned resources has been the most exploitative feature of neoliberalism wherein profits generated get accumulated in the hands of a few and leave the larger masses devoid of what rightfully belongs to them (Das, 2017). The industrial area that was set up by Rajasthan invited global multinationals to set up their plants. Coca-Cola was one of them. It has been found that for many years, Coca-Cola paid only 14 paise per thousand liters of groundwater extraction to the state (Singh and Singh, 2012). One must realize the stark difference between the two rates, that is, 14 paise for a thousand liters of groundwater that the company paid to the state and Rs. 20 for one liter of Kinley bottled water that the consumer pays to the company. All these issues surrounding water commodification were felt and realized by the locals of the village, and major concerns erupted within and around the village.

In retaliation to Coca-Cola and resistance to the privatization of water, Kaladera Sangharsh Samiti was formed in the year 2003, which was headed by Rameshwar Kudi, a retired assistant director from the department of agriculture of Jhunjhunu district. The pertinent questions that were raised were regarding the ownership of natural resources.

Slogans like "*jal, jangal, zameen par adhikaar kiska?*" (Which in English translates to "who owns the water, forests, and land?") were raised and the villagers openly invited the company officials to come and debate with them. Even after the escalation of protests, which saw many renowned activists come from across India, their demands were not heard, let alone fulfilled. Despite protests day after day and year after year, Coca-Cola shut its operations in February 2016, citing that the raw material, that is water, was turning non-viable as the reason (Thomas, 2009). The groundwater table has been thoroughly depleted and, shockingly so, many water-intensive industries, including Pernod Ricard, Rajasthan Liquors, and Bhagwati Papermills, are still operating in the industrial area. Small farmers have lost their agricultural lands to make a hand-to-mouth living. The children of those farmers are working as labourers in the industrial areas. As of 2020, borewells that were dug by the panchayat went as deep as 800 feet to fetch potable water.

### **The Many Aspects of Culture around Water**

Culture is a reflection of the relationship between a community's entire way of life and all of its individuals, as well as their daily activities and experiences (Giddens, 2005). From daily habits that include all common practices in life, culture shows how relevant everydayness is for people (McGuigan, 1992, Tomlinson, 1999). Tomlinson (1999) argues that culture reflects the satisfaction of basic needs since most actions are generally carried out on the basis of the values attached to them.

There are many ways of living that define and continue to define the attunement of villagers with water. From religious undertones to the values and beliefs they share, the people of Kaladera do not feel themselves as being outside of nature. Rather, they feel at one with nature. The reason why even the well-off villagers have not concretized the flooring of their common areas known as *aangan* or *verandah*. The flooring is not done for the rain to percolate into the soil. The idea of a concrete floor is thus not appreciated, not because it is modern but because it does not let rainwater percolate into the soil. There are many aspects of culture around water that I will discuss below, which form the everydayness of the lives lived and living in the village.

### **Water as Commons**

Ever since they can trace the history of their settlement, water has been treated as a common resource by the villagers. A common, for the purpose of definition, being a shared resource, for instance, land or water, is managed by a community and cannot be monopolized. It is not treated as private or public but common, for it has shared rules that spring from the community for its use. The theory of the tragedy of the commons that was propounded by Hardin (1968), from which originated the idea of private ownership of all the commons, pushes the common resources away from the commons and, as Harvey would say, provides "an irrefutable argument for the superior efficiency of private property rights concerning resource uses" and "an irrefutable justification of privatization" (Harvey, 2011). Elinor Ostrom, who received the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2009, gathered various experiences from the ground and argued that the existence of the commons does not always result in the tragedy of the commons. It was a response to Hardin's concept of the tragedy of the commons. Ever since Ostrom's work, there has been "a great revival in the interest in "commons" from scientific perspectives and a large array of other disciplines, including climate change, cities, digital commons, water, scientific production, seeds, and cultural heritage, among many others" (Subirats, 2012).

Before the coming of advanced technology, water was taken out either manually or with the help of cattle. No one had private wells. One well sufficed the needs of dozens of households, and there were times when four or five wells were enough to cater to the domestic needs of the whole village. These wells were not the private property of any single person, but rather they were common to all the people, as discussed before. The wells were also constructed on the common property of the village. Wells, hence, signifies the judicious use of water, a sustainable model of water management and governance. The idea and understanding of water as common helped in using water judiciously in times of water scarcity and reducing any kind of waste.

Many economists in the modern era have used the scarcity principle to provide the foundation for, promote, and implement theories such as the tragedy of the commons and market environmentalism and, in the name of such theories, justify privatisation and enhance capitalism for the capture and protection of natural resources and the environment.

### **Installing a Borewell: Rituals**

In Kaladera, one learns how worshipping water is an integral part of the lives of people. Water, according to the locals in the village, was never a resource that needed to be mined from the earth; rather, it was the form of God that was maintaining life on earth, and thus it had to be managed with care and devotion. The village has a rich past of social, cultural, religious, and spiritual significance because of its water practices.

Whenever a farmer installs a tube well, it is coupled with many rituals before and after the installation. Ninety-five-year-old Radhe Shyam Saloliya, popularly known as Guruji in the village, is believed to have supernatural powers that make him sense the presence of groundwater. He asks the one who wishes to have a bore dug to bring a coconut piece. He shakes it and puts it closer to his ear. He then tells the farmer to bring a bucket full of water as he roams around the farmer's land. After spending some time in the field and attunement to the ground, he locates a spot and asks the farmer to get a bore dug there. Interestingly, he never asks for a penny. It is the goodwill of the farmer to pay regard to Guru Ji in any form. Guru Ji is the only one in the village who could foretell the presence of groundwater. Everyone admires his other qualities of healing people with herbs and natural ingredients. Graduate in Sanskrit, a brahmin by caste, and a teacher in a government school by profession, Guruji has acquired a social status in the farming community for discovering groundwater underneath. Everyone believes in Guruji, and his unique gift or supernatural powers are given to him by God. A farmer narrates:

I had to install a bore, and I knew whom I needed to contact. I called up Guru Ji and asked him if I could visit him and bring him to my fields. He agreed on a particular day, and I took him to my fields. I couldn't believe my eyes. The water came rushing from the ground, that too, from the place he had pointed. I gave him 500 rupees as a token of respect, and he accepted it with a smile. People give him 150 rupees, 250 rupees, or more, but he never asks anything or complains if it is less. Everyone sees a messiah in him. It is rare for the water to not come from the location Guruji points at. For as much as I know, I have seen him visit the fields of around 400-500 farmers in his whole life. He has grown old and fragile now, but we have never seen him refuse anyone who comes to his door seeking help.

Other rituals include praying at the place just where the borewell has been installed and using the water as a *charnamrit*. After the installation, the news is shared with close relatives

and friends, and sweets are distributed to them. On the contrary, the bores installed by the *panchayat* for public distribution and piped delivery are done through the waterworks department or public health engineering department (PHED) with the help of the central groundwater board and senior and junior engineers. A team comes to assess and map the location from which the installation begins. The chance of error is always there as the hydrogeology of water is such that one can never map with accuracy and, after attaining some depth, the installers are faced with a no-water situation.

### **Matka, a Common Feature of Every Household**

In a village where earthen pots occupy a central place in their culture, it becomes imperative to understand their role, especially as the community faces a growing water crisis. This research finds that even while traditional ways of fetching water have modernized, paving the way for tapped water supplies and new material forms of water storage (plastic bottles, cans, and refrigerators) in a typical household, the presence of earthen pots is still an essential feature of every home. The reasons for such a choice are manifold. With respect to taste, many believe that the taste of water kept in an earthen pot satiates one's thirst in a way that no refrigerator or bottled water can. This is a significant reason why households that have refrigerators still keep *matkas* and choose to drink from them instead. When it comes to purity, it is believed that the *maati* (soil or clay used to make the earthen pot) naturally filters the water kept in the earthen pot. As the name suggests, *matka* means '*maati ka*', that is, made of earth or earthen soil, which filters the excessive dissolved salts and solvents, and even fluoride from the water, making it safe for consumption (Menon, 2021: 221). While an increasing number of well-off households are installing reverse osmosis (RO) purifying machines, many continue to depend on *matkas* as nature's purifier.

Some communities still live in and around the outskirts of the village in *jhuggis* (kuccha houses) with no access to piped water delivery. For instance, the *Banjara* and the *Rana* communities have no access to any hand pumps as they have all run dry. They find it hard to establish access to drinking water. The women and children cover a considerable distance every day to fetch water from a source. In such cases, *matkas* are an affordable and sustainable alternative to water storage for most.

### **The relevance of 'pyau'**

The strong human-to-human relationship in the village gets articulated through water, especially with the presence and prevalence of *pyau*. Historically, *pyau* has existed in many parts of India with different names. In Kaladera, *pyau* forms a significant part of the community's culture. *Pyau* is an earthen pot is put up on the streets to store drinking water for public consumption. While *matka* is kept inside one's home for private consumption of drinking water, *pyau* is kept outside one's house, on a busy road, or on a highway for the public. It is a true representation of the community's collective welfare ethics. It is a unique culture that is seen in a desert land that has relatively fewer water reserves than the rest of the states. The resistance to commodifying water is seen through how people think about water. Whether it has religious undertones or ethical values, *pyau* emerges as a strong feature of resistance to the commodification of water, especially drinking water. A local narrates:

This is our way of keeping water away from profits. Availing water to someone is believed to be a virtuous deed. There is a special place in heaven for people who give water to



the thirsty. In many of the religious texts, it is mentioned that no one should be devoid of a basic need.

Another perspective was given by an elderly person from the village who informed, Those who have more wealth than others must utilize it for the poor. An act of charity goes a long way in our (Hindu) religion. If a person donates water, he will have longevity and remain free from thirst throughout his life.

### **Resistance to Industrial Areas**

The state's idea of development through industrialization targeted many of the grazing and pastoral lands in various rural areas of the nation and Kaladera was no exception. Donated land for the use of public was transferred on lease for 99 years and renamed as Industrial land. 89 years old baba ji narrates,

“People had a mixed response to this, as we did not yet know what was going to happen on our land. This land was a gift from Saheriya ji to us. And now it is no more ours, but many of us were hoping that something good would come for us. The hope was short-lived as we started to see many of our trees being cut down and the construction began. We (the elder ones) had started to doubt the intentions, but our younger sons had a different perspective on it. They were happy to see the infrastructure and were looking forward to working in those industries. A few years later, the whole map of the Gauchar Bhoomi changed. The wilderness, the nadi (river), the vegetation, it was all gone and all you saw were giant buildings and chimneys of smoke. The nights that used to be peaceful were now beginning to be full of the sounds of speedy trucks running on the roads.”

While the proximity of the *Gauchar Bhoomi* was a boon for the villagers, the industrial area proved to be a bane. The grazing lands were used by the villagers not just for their cattle but on so many occasions. An industrial zone with more than 250 factories just across the road raises a plethora of pertinent questions about the health and survival of the village and its ecology. The air pollution that chokes the lives of the people, the water-intensive industries that suck the common water, and the waste that has taken the form of a foul-smelling toxic river that kills the flora and fauna of many surrounding villages are a few of the many issues faced by the villagers. The depleting groundwater table and the looming water scarcity have also put the culture and the traditions surrounding water in a fix. There are water tankers that provide water to many households that do not have access to tap water. The business of water tankers has been on the rise in the last three years. Those who have private borewells have started selling water to satisfy the daily needs of the villagers through this business. Although no one in the village uses bottled water, the day would not be far when the villagers would be forced to buy the Kinley bottled water that Coca-Cola produces, or for that matter, the bottled water that other bottling companies produce. This comes in light of the other significant water problem the villagers face, that is, the problem of contaminated water.

After testing around 30 samples in the village as part of my Ph.D. thesis, more than half of the samples showed the presence of fluoride beyond the permissible limit. Many parts of Rajasthan are affected by the fluoride contamination of groundwater. There is another problem with high total dissolved solvents (TDS). This also brings us to understand that it is not just enough to make water available to the people, but how important it is to make "safe" water available. Many of the people in Kaladera are drinking unsafe water because of the

absence of safe water. The coping mechanism for them to ensure that water becomes potable is to put the water in the *matka* before they drink it. It is believed that *matka* absorbs the excessive TDS and fluoride and makes the water sweet and fit for drinking. The same water from *matka* is also used for cooking. Some well-off people have put Reverse Osmosis (R.O) machines in their kitchens. Because of getting diagnosed with fluorosis, many had to install R.O. machines in their kitchens. There were also instances where the R.O machines malfunctioned because of an intolerably high amount of TDS in the water. In all these varying situations, the presence of *matka* and the absence of bottled water in almost every household provides us with an understanding of the culture, tradition, and lifestyle of the people. Despite having refrigerators, drinking water is consumed only from *matkas*.

The relationship that the people of Kaladera share with water is visible in both material and immaterial forms. The culture of drinking from an earthen pot and refusing to use bottled water; of keeping *pyau* and satisfying the thirst of unknown people without attaching any price to it; of treating water as a gift and paying reverence to the resource as soon as it springs out of the borewell; are all indicative of a lifestyle that does not appreciate or accept the forces of capitalism and, therefore, the commodification of water. The culture of treating water as a gift/commons/public good brought forth sustainability in the ways life was lived in the village before the coming of technology and industry. The village landscape was changed as soon as modernity hit the world of traditions. The economics of water changed, and to cater to the needs of agriculture and industry, the culture was sacrificed.

### **Addressing Lacunae in Groundwater Governance**

India is the largest user of groundwater in the world (World Bank, 2012). The construction of millions of private wells and the use of groundwater for many industrial activities that would have otherwise been carried out with recycled or grey water has led to a phenomenal growth in groundwater exploitation in the last five decades. For the sake of economic growth, many rigorous steps were taken by the state and Indian government to annex common lands, groundwater resources, and, in general, nature. Groundwater is the major source of drinking water for millions of people, accounting for 85% of drinking water supplies (World Bank, 2012). Groundwater serves as a critical buffer against the variability of monsoon rains. In India, 29% of groundwater blocks are semi-critical, critical, or overexploited, and the situation gets worse day after day. Aquifers are also seen to be getting depleted in the most populated and economically productive areas, and Rajasthan Industrial Investment Corporation (RIICO) is one of the major economic areas from where economic growth springs. It is, however, worth mentioning that the growth is at the expense of the groundwater reserves, which once exhausted will bring everything to a dead end. Rainwater harvesting has not been adopted even though villagers have requested the *panchayat* to make them aware of the schemes there is no medium through which awareness regarding rainwater harvesting is shed. It is only through individual steps, like storing rainwater from the roof in a concrete tank, that people try to save as much water as possible.

Farmers are aware that growing water-intensive crops is also contributing to groundwater depletion, but in the absence of any alternative that will ensure a basic income, they are skeptical of any change. Also, they fail and refuse to compare industrial use of water to that of agriculture, as agriculture, they believe, is not a business for profit but an intimate connection with the earth to provide food to living beings. For them, the agriculture activities

together with the age-old wisdom might have survived and been sustained if the accumulation of natural resources, both land, and water, would not taken place in the village.

The benefits of such accumulation by dispossessing the communities of their resources might seem to have a decent effect on our economy for the short term, but given the situation we are facing today, it would not be wrong to say that we have damaged the environment beyond repair. By exploiting the last reserve, there are no facilities provided to the farmers where they can do rainwater harvesting. I accompanied some of the people who wanted to know about the schemes for rainwater harvesting, but the *panchayat* representatives had little interest in educating the people about the schemes that existed. The companies, under their corporate social responsibility, are also fooling the people and the governments as no rainwater structure was found to be functional or operating during all the years of field research.

## Way Forward

The process of commodification automatically initiates a further development, namely the transformation of commodities into culture (Pröschel, 2012). This poses the greatest threat to existing cultures as the value of water as a commodity grows throughout the world. The culture of using bottled water, for instance, has taken on a giant form. Throughout the world, one million bottles are consumed per minute, as per the data of 2018 (Jern, 2018). This gives a very clear picture of how the lifestyles of populations are changing and the nature of water is being transformed from a public good to that a commodity. Consumers are creating a new culture of paying thousands of times more than the price of a basic need. While many theories may argue if it's a lifestyle choice or a lack of any other alternative access to the need, the important thing is to understand and reflect on how commodification works.

Although the villagers have tried to keep their culture alive in the ways in which they interact with water in their everyday lives, capitalism and the coming of the industry have managed to interfere with the water commons and the culture around it. The idea of generating a profit out of water has been instilled. Amid water scarcity, many of the locals have started a business of delivering water through water tankers to those areas devoid of a public supply of tap water. The lack of common wells has aided in the commoditization of water. It would not be too difficult to say what the future holds for the groundwater and the people of Kaladera village, but given the situation, the acts of resistance continue to give a tough fight to the forces of commodification.

On a larger front, where the world is believed to be facing climate change and environmental degradation, including desertification in various regions, it is the need of the hour to sensitize our modern minds with the rich understanding of the vital and sustainable relationships we have maintained with water throughout the ages.

### Notes:

1. The Jajmani system is a system of social relationships among different castes in rural India, typically in villages, where economic goods that are produced within a caste are exchanged with the goods produced by another caste without using money as the medium of exchange.

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**Ankita Menon**, Research Scholar, Centre for the Study of Social Systems (CSSS), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi  
[menon.ankita@gmail.com](mailto:menon.ankita@gmail.com)

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# Drug Addiction among The Youth and Its Consequences in The Society: A Qualitative Case Study

Pranjal Sarma, Trishnamoni Gogoi

**Abstract** : Drug addiction is a worldwide phenomenon and is evident in almost every nation of the globe. The magnitude of the problem among the youth is increasing. The problem of drug addiction leads to physical as well as psychological harm. It is a major health problem. This qualitative case study aims to locate and find out the major factors resulting into an increasing level of drug addiction among the youth. It is also an attempt to examine the various problems caused due to drug abuse and the consequences associated with it. For this purpose 20 male young respondents were purposively selected who are under treatment in a private rehabilitation centre, run by an NGO. The resultant changes in the behavior and attitude of the respondents affect their normal functioning in the family, workplace and the community. Drug abuse is also seen as one of the most stigmatized behaviors worldwide which resist people from getting treatment. Therefore, the study suggests implementing more preventive measures and legal actions to control the problem of drug addiction.

**Keywords:** Drug Addiction, Substance Abuse, Youth

Drug addiction is a complex social problem. There is the easy availability of drugs in modern society and about 250 million people around the globe misused drugs only in the year 2015 (World drug report, 2017). It has been estimated that 28 million years of healthy life have been lost due to premature deaths caused by drug abuse and drug use disorders. The fact revealed by the Office of the United Nations, in 2017 is that 30 million people suffered from disability because of drug abuse. It is a growing global problem. "Drug addiction is a condition of an overpowering desire or compulsion to continue taking a drug and to obtain it by any means, through which one has become habituated for repeated consumption. It is a tendency to increase the dose. It is a kind of physical dependence whereby the body requires continued administration of the drug to function. It is perceived as an aberrant behavior, where an individual has social maladjustment" (Ahuja, 2013). Seeking and consuming drugs becomes compulsive. It is an uncontrollable drug-craving behavior. This behavior is the result of the long use of drugs that affects brain functioning. "Addiction varies in individuals. Some are more vulnerable than others depending on the genetic make-up, age of exposure to drugs, other environmental influences, and the interplay of all these factors" (Jain, 2012). Drug addiction is also viewed as a harmful condition in society.

A drug is a substance that alters the body's functioning as well as behavior. It is a chemical substance associated with distinct physical and/or psychological effects. A drug is a habit-forming substance that affects the brain and the nervous function of an individual. Thus, it refers to any chemical substance which affects bodily function, mood, perception or consciousness which has the potential for misuse, and which may be harmful to the individual or the society (Jullian, 1977).

The problem of drug abuse or addiction has emerged as an international problem. Drug trafficking has also become the fastest growing business around the globe. The problem of 'drug abuse' is the use of illicit drugs or the misuse of a legitimate drug resulting in different physical and psychological harm. It includes smoking ganja or hashish, taking heroin or cocaine, or LSD, injecting morphine, drinking alcohol, and so on. (Ahuja; 2013)

Drug addiction among youth is a disease. It is a major health problem for the youth. The magnitude of the problem is increasing, which deteriorates the physical as well as the mental wellbeing of young people. The younger generation of almost every country is being somehow affected by this abuse. It is one of the most widespread and burning social problems creating a grave in the social periphery. Evans-Whipp et al. (2004) in a study on A review of school drug policies and their impact on youth substance use found that youth substance use and the resulting damage are recognized as significant global public health issues in society today.

Globally, according to the World Drugs Report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in 2021, around 275 million people used drugs worldwide in 2020 and over 36 million people suffered from drug use disorders. The latest global claims that 5.5 percent of the population between 15 and 64 years has used drugs at least once in the past year. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2018 survey confirmed that the extent of drug use among youngsters remains higher than that of older people. According to the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment's recently released report on the "National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India", 2019, about 3.1 crore individuals are cannabis (a drug made from dried leaves and flowers of the hemp plant) consumer, 1.18 crore are current users of sedatives (non-medical use) and about 8.5 lakhs people are injecting drugs ([www.nisd.gov.in](http://www.nisd.gov.in)). According to the data from the National Crime Records Bureau, over 2,300 people died due to overdose from 2017-19 in India (Economic Times, 2021). In Assam, a state in North East India, drug addiction among youth has increased immensely in recent years. Earlier, the drugs used to get transported via state but now it is getting sold within Assam by a huge network of traffickers. As per the report provided by the police departments, 455 cases of illicit drug trade were registered in 2018, 826 in 2019, and 980 in 2020 (Times of India, June 2021).

### **Theories on Drug Addiction**

Several theories have been considered to understand the phenomenon of addiction. The most explained theories of drug addiction are summarized below in three areas. The first is the neurobiological effects of drugs that explain drug dependence in biological terms, the second theory is psychological which concentrates on behavior and individual differences and the third is socio-cultural that explains the cultural and environmental factors that make people drug dependent.

**Neuro-scientific Theory-** This theory explains the effect of the drug on the brain. According to this theory, different drugs have different primary actions on the brain. The dopamine reward system and the endogenous opioid system are the two major pathways that have been implicated as common to most drugs (Koob & Le Moal, 1997). The dopaminergic pathway is associated with the incentive, preparatory aspects of reward, which are experienced as thrill, urgency, or craving. In contrast, the opioid system is associated with the satiation and consummatory aspects of reward, such as rest, blissfulness, and sedation (Chiara & North, 1992)

**Psychological Theory-** According to this theory, various psychological approaches explain the process of drug dependence and addiction such as behavioral models, cognitive theories, personality theories, and the model of rational choice. The psychological theory of addiction concentrates on differentiating the personality between drug users and non-drug

users. The theory explains that users have certain personality traits like low self-esteem and low self-confidence, and a need for excitement and encouragement that predispose them to drug use. Drug users have personality defects that make them vulnerable to drug use. This theory views drug addiction as an indication of a problem behavior pattern that is likely to cause individual difficulties in terms of functioning in society.

**Socio-Cultural Theory-** This theory focuses on various social and environmental factors that are strongly related to drug abuse. The socio-cultural theory draws attention to the importance of certain aspects of the social environment like social structure, social system, and social bonds to the family and school, social interaction, and culture. A range of factors like peer environment, families, and the socio-cultural background of a person affects the likelihood that develops a drug addiction problem. Regarding social interaction, sociologists emphasize that peer influences greatly influence one's likelihood of using, tobacco and a host of other drugs (Hanson et al., 2012). Families also have a strong effect on the possibility of a person developing a drug abuse problem in several ways like the modeling of drug abuse by family members, permissive attitude by parents towards the drug use by their children, and poor bond within the families (Hawkins, Catalano, & Miller, 1992). The theory also stresses that society's "drug culture" matters for drug use because it favors many substances such as alcohol, tobacco, nicotine, and certain illegal drugs, and consuming such substances is very common and cultural.

The problem of drug addiction disrupts an individual's life in so many ways. In this regard, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the factors that lead to the prevalence of drug addiction among youth and the problems and consequences they face during their addictive behavior. The research has been conducted with two objectives:

1. To identify the risk factors associated with drug addiction among youth
2. To study the problems and consequences of drug addiction faced by the youth

### **Operational Definitions**

- **Drug addiction:** According to the National Institute of Drug Abuse, 2014, "Drug addiction is a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences". It is a common neurobiological disease that adversely affects a person's brain and behavior and leads to an inability to control the use of the legal or illegal drugs.
- **Substance abuse:** According to the World Health Organization, 2011, "Substance abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances like alcohol and other illicit drugs".
- **Youth:** The United Nations defines youth as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. It is the period of transition from dependence on childhood to adulthood independence.

### **Methodology**

In this study, qualitative research approach is used to collect exploratory data. The exploratory design enables the researcher to ask probing questions during the interview to gain new insights and extensive data from the respondents.

**Sample:** Purposive sampling method is adopted to select the respondents. A total of 20

respondents are chosen for the study. The inclusion criteria were the males, age group between 16-30, diagnosed with drug abuse disorder, admitted to a rehabilitation centre for treatment (Table:1). A private rehabilitation centre, named, Pratyavartan Rehabilitation Centre, as an NGO, involves in the rehabilitation of substance abusers or addicts, is conveniently chosen. It was founded in the year 2016 by Sri Narayan Upadhaya along with six other members. It is situated in Milan Nagar, Lane O, Dibrugarh, under Dibrugarh District, Assam, 786003. This centre provides a wide range of rehabilitation services to addicts.

Data collection and analysis: Both primary and secondary method of data collection is adopted by the researcher. The primary data is collected through in-depth, semi-structured individual interviews and by observation method between July and October 2021. The researcher has adopted narrative analysis to analyze the data. Narrative analysis is a genre of analytic frames whereby researchers interpret stories that are told within the context of research (Mike Allen, 2017). Narratives are derived from different methods out of which the researcher has adopted the in-depth case study method to collect the data from the respondents. A case study is a research approach that is used to generate an in-depth, multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue in its real-life context (Crowe, et.al., 2011). On the other hand, various articles, books, newspapers, and journals are taken as a source of secondary methods of data collection.

**Table-1**

### Socio-Economic Profile of the Respondents

Sl.no	Respondents	Age	Educational qualifications	Drugs used	Under treatment	Caste/ Tribe	Religion	Family Type	Number of earners	Dependent or Earning status
1.	A	25	High School	Heroin	3 months	General	Hindu	Nuclear	2	Earning
2.	B	22	Higher Secondary	Brown sugar, Heroin	3 months	OBC	Hindu	Nuclear	1	Dependent
3.	C	21	Graduate	Heroin, Weed	6 months	ST	Christian	Nuclear	2	Dependent
4.	D	28	Higher Secondary	Heroin, brown sugar, opioid	3 months	ST	Christian	Nuclear	2	Earning
5.	E	17	High School	Brown sugar, heroin, weed	4 months	OBC	Hindu	Nuclear	1	Dependent
6.	F	20	Higher Secondary	Heroin, brown sugar, weed	1 month	ST	Hindu	Nuclear	1	Dependent
7.	G	22	Higher Secondary	Brown sugar, heroin	5 months	General	Hindu	Nuclear	2	Dependent
8.	H	23	Graduate	Heroin, brown sugar, weed	3 months	OBC	Hindu	Joint	3	Earning
9.	I	19	Higher Secondary	Heroin, weed	2 months	ST	Hindu	Nuclear	2	Earning
10.	J	25	Higher Secondary	Heroin, weed	5 months	OBC	Hindu	Nuclear	2	Dependent
11.	K	26	Graduate	LSD, heroin, brown sugar	6 months	ST	Hindu	Nuclear	1	Dependent
12.	L	19	High school	Heroin, weed	3 months	SC	Hindu	Nuclear	2	Dependent
13.	M	21	Higher Secondary	Heroin, weed	2 months	General	Islam	Nuclear	2	Dependent
14.	N	20	Higher Secondary	Opioid, heroin	3 months	OBC	Hindu	Joint	3	Dependent
15.	O	24	Graduate	Opioid, LSD, heroin	2 months	OBC	Hindu	Nuclear	2	Earning
16.	P	23	Higher Secondary	Heroin	3 months	SC	Hindu	Joint	3	Dependent
17.	Q	25	Higher Secondary	Brown sugar, heroin	4 months	General	Islam	Nuclear	2	Earning
18.	R	22	Higher Secondary	Brown sugar, heroin, weed	3 months	OBC	Hindu	Nuclear	1	Dependent
19.	S	21	Higher Secondary	Heroin, opioid	2 months	OBC	Hindu	Nuclear	1	Dependent
20.	T	19	Higher Secondary	Heroin, brown sugar, weed	1 month	ST	Christian	Nuclear	2	Dependent

\*OBC- Other Backward Class, SC- Scheduled Caste, ST- Scheduled Tribe



Risk factors: Many risk factors play a significant role in the initiation and maintenance of drug abuse among the youth. The initial consumption of drugs is basically for excitement and pleasurable purposes; gradually it turns into craving and dependency. Addiction is directly proportional to risk factors and vice versa, that is, the more risk factors an individual has, the greater will be the chances of becoming an addict (Lone, 2013). The common risk factors that are identified during the research with the responses from the respondents (drug users) are:

Parental relation: Family is the basic social institution in society. In the context of drug abuse, family plays a great role in the individual's starting to substance abuse (Taylan, 2018). The concept 'Dysfunction', introduced by the American Sociologist, R.K. Merton, in his book, *Social Theory and Social Structure*, 1968, can be seen in terms of family functioning. 'Functions' contribute to the free-flow of the system whereas 'dysfunctions' are those consequences that lead to instability and adverse change. A family always serves to be functional in society, but sometimes it may get 'dysfunctional'. It may disrupt the individuals in the family.

In this study, the parent-child relationship was found as a factor in drug abuse. During the research, most of the drug users claim that they have poor relationship with their parents. Less interaction and coordination create a gap between parent-child, which is also a reason for substance abuse. The child cannot express or share his/her mind out, due to which he/she takes the substance as a source to gain confidence. Here, the respondent E narrates:

“My parents are so busy that I hardly got a chance to talk. I feel so alone being at home. I cannot share or express my ideas with them. I like to spend most of the time with my friends because, in their company, I can talk and laugh freely and share everything unhesitatingly. I started taking weed (a substance made from the leaves of the hemp plant) and other substances with my friends. I feel more confident and strong when I used such substance.”

The over strict nature and authoritarian manners of parents towards their children may sometimes make them low self-esteemed and unconfident. Some of the respondents express that their strict parents used to punish them for every unwanted behavior they perform. Over suspicious nature of parents, blocks the child's confidence level. On the other hand, less monitoring of the child's activities may sometimes make the child involved in harmful activities. Some respondents mentioned that they were the only male child in their families, with one or two sisters. During the research, it is observed by the researcher that due to the more lenient behavior of the parents towards their male child in comparison to the female one, most of the male children are stubborn and aggressive resulting in the easy fulfillment of their demands. The male superiority and priority in the family made the children involved in substances. Respondent D expressed that:

“Parents should have a friendly relationship with their child. Over strict behavior as well as providing excessive freedom to the child, is one of the causes behind the increasing possibility of substance abuse or their involvement in other anti-social activities”

There is evidence of substance use in the families of 3(15.0%) of the drug users. The respondents reported that they had learned the use of substances from the family.

“I had seen my father smoking cigarettes and taking alcohol regularly since my childhood. It is something very normal in my family. I never thought using substances can be a bad habit and considered it to be something to be very masculine and strong.”(Respondent B).

Thus, parental influence plays a leading role in determining the social life of an individual.

**Peer influence:** Friends' influence can be considered a key factor in drug addiction. Individuals mostly cannot resist the insistence of their peers. Out of 20 drug user respondents, everyone has reported that they started using substances in the company of their friends. Substances were initially taken for fun and to experiment, but later turns into a habit as physical dependency occurs. 14(70.0%) of the total drug users expressed that to maintain friendship they are compelled to use such substances.

“I started taking substances when I was in class 9. During one school function, some of my friends were taking substances (weed, brown sugar), and one of them asked me to try once so that I could also contribute the money for buying it. I consumed it for fun, but I never thought that it could turn into an addiction”. (Respondent T)

**Easy accessibility and availability:** Almost all the respondents stated that substances were easily accessible. Their main source of getting substances is their friend circle. The market of illicit drugs is so wide presently, that it is very easily accessible. Some of the respondents have also admitted that they too are involved in drug peddling.

“It is not so difficult to get the product as the drug peddlers are easily available. You just need to know the channel. Most of my friends are involved in the peddling of drugs. In case, I do not have the substance (heroin), I opt for drinking alcohol excessively” (Respondent K).

**Social and cultural norms:** Prabhjot Kour in her article “The Use of Substances at an Early Age: A Qualitative Study among Young Men Living with Substance Use Disorders in Punjab, India”, has mentioned, “Societal norms affect every respondent. Changing social and cultural trends make certain habits as a social behavior”. The respondents tend to believe that substance consumption would enhance their personality in an influential way.

“I have seen many people using substances and they are very strong and confident. I followed them and found that taking substance (heroin) is very trendy and modern. I always desired to be updated and to get followed by others.” (Respondent N).

Thus, all the 20 drug users during the research, have expressed their views on the factors of addiction, how it started, and was introduced to them. These factors depict the socio-cultural theory of drug addiction.

### **Problems and consequences**

Respondents highlighted the problems and consequences they suffered due to drug addiction. The drug addicts of our research have informed that many physical changes occurred due to which they faced some health-related problems like, loss of appetite, body pain, weight loss, running nose, red eyes, dry mouth, lack of energy, decreased coordination, lack of reasoning capacity and frequent urge to use drugs. One of the drug users narrated:

“After the third trial of the substance (heroin), I cannot stop using it. My whole body pains. It feels like someone is beating so hard. My brain stops functioning. The only thing I can think about is the substance. Cravings are so high that I can reach anywhere to access it (heroin), although it is highly risky” (Respondent L).

Similarly, another drug user added that

“In the beginning, I used to take substance once a day, but gradually my body started craving more to feel 'high', and I increased the dose to 3 times a day. My day starts with substance use and proceeds with a further intake of multiple doses” (Respondent H).

Respondent A, pointed out the withdrawal symptoms (withdrawal is what happens after a drug-dependent person abruptly stops taking the drug) such as watery eyes, running nose, vomiting, muscle aches, and cramps, dehydration, insomnia (lack of sleep), hallucination, etc. to be the motivating factor and expressed that

“Every time I take the substance, I decide not to use it again, but later on when its effect is no more on the body, withdrawal symptoms arise and I cannot see and think anything except the substance.”

**Behavioral changes:** Drug addiction results in a wide range of dysfunctional behavior. All the respondents have informed that their behavior changes when they were in addiction. Barry Stimmel, in his book, “Alcoholism, Drug Addiction and the Road to Recovery Life on the Edge”, highlighted some behavioral changes like trouble paying attention, lack of decision-making capacity, work or study habit changes, levels of efficiency falls and there is lack of concern about physical appearance or dress. The person with addiction expresses anger when questioned on his activities, becomes violent, needs money frequently, sells assets for money, and most importantly his companionship changes”. Regarding behavioral changes, respondent S has narrated:

“While using the substance, I disconnected myself from others. I liked to remain in isolation so that, my family or anybody else could not know about my addictive behavior. I locked myself for hours in the room”

Some other respondents have expressed that to buy the substance they need money, which is not given by their families. They sell their personal assets like mobile phones, laptops, cameras, bikes, etc. Besides this, theft and robbery are some of the activities committed by them for money. One of them has narrated,

“I wanted around two thousand rupees per day to buy the substance. Earlier it was not so difficult, but later when my parents came to know about my addiction they stopped giving me money for daily expenses. I was left with no option. So, I sold my mobile phone, bike, and my laptop. I stole money from my mother's purse and also her jewelry” (Respondent F).

**The respondent M sadly narrates:**

“I feel so guilty now. I used to beat my mother for money. Whenever she refused to give money or questioned me, I beat her. It happened several times. Even, one day, in aggression, I held her neck so tight that she could not breathe for few seconds”.

Violent behavior is almost common among all the respondents. They also expressed their mood-swing nature, chaotic life (disorganized), emotional imbalance, and lack of interest in studies or other productive activities. Some of the respondents have also expressed a risk-taking attitude while dealing with peddlers. On the other hand, some other respondents informed that they feel so 'high' and 'relaxed' that they feel like being in an 'imaginary world' and seem to lose connectivity with reality.

**Changing societal attitudes**

Respondents with drug abuse, apart from behavioral and bodily changes, faced many complexities and challenges in society. All the respondents have expressed their experiences regarding the change in the attitude of the people in society towards them. Drug consumers behave differently from the accepted behavior and are considered individuals of social deviance. “Deviant behavior is the behavior that violates institutionalized expectations”

(Cohen, 1959). Talcott Parsons, in his work “*The Social System*”, 1951, defines “deviance as a departure from normative standards that have been set up by the common culture; it is a motivated action by one who has had full opportunity to learn the requisite orientation and who deviates from the expectations of conformity”. During the investigation, the drug addicts revealed that they were treated as 'Deviant'. On this, the respondent G narrates:

“I clearly remember how I have been treated by my neighbors when they came to know about my addiction. I felt so isolated in social gatherings. They discriminated me as a criminal instead of giving me mental support to get recovered”.

R.K Merton's theory of deviance also explains various aspects of behavior related to drug use and addiction (Adrian, 2003). The respondent J added:

“My relatives used to treat me like a criminal; they did not bother to have any conversation with me, and behaved as if I had no existence among them. They even encouraged my mother to leave me in my own condition. Support system matters a lot to recover but such indifferent behavior could not help me to quit using drugs”.

During the research, it has also been observed that most of the drug users have tried to give up substances, but due to the negative societal attitude towards them, they got more involved in addiction. Society considering them as outsiders may encourage further deviant nature in them. This process works because of the stigma associated with certain activities in society. Erving Goffman in his book, “*Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*,” in 1963, defined stigma as an “attribute that is deeply discrediting”. According to Goffman, “stigma is a general aspect of social life which complicates everyday social interactions and interprets it as a means of spoiling identity”. Stigmatization can be defined as an “overall stereotypical and prejudicial process” (Corrigan & Wassel, 2008, p.43). “Stigmatization includes reductive labeling, status loss, and discrimination against an individual” (Link & Phelan, 2001). The majority of the drug users, that is, 16(80.0%) have narrated the experience of feeling stigmatized within society. During the interview, drug user I sadly narrated:

“My very close friends, who are non-drug users, left my company. Their parents do not allow them to talk or have any kind of relationship with me. I feel bad and it hurts sometimes when I realized that I have lost connection with many people and no one prefers to interact with me”.

### **One drug user, O narrates his experience:**

“My reason to recommence using drugs is the indifferent behavior of my family, relatives, and my neighbor. They believe that once a drug user will always be a drug user; and maintain distance as if I am having a communicable disease. It disturbed me mentally and emotionally. I felt suffocated, became unmanageable, and relapsed (return to the prior condition)”.

### **Another respondent, C narrates,**

“Just because I am an addict, it does not make me a bad boy. There are also some good qualities in me. I need mental support and a favorable attitude from society to recover”.

It is also believed that a longer duration of addiction, failed to stop addiction; and the display of such long-term addictive behavior increases stigma because they might indicate a more severe addiction, irreversibility of the addiction, or lack of ability to achieve a favorable outcome (Corrigan, 2000; Corrigan et al., 2003; Schomerus et al., 2011).

The drug users of our research informed that they had a fear of discrimination, particularly by their families, so they are afraid of seeking any kind of treatment. For instance, K narrated that,

“My family stressed a lot about what society will say and who will be our friends and thus wanted me to quit the substance without seeking any treatment”

Stigma is a key issue and a possible barrier in the treatment and prevention of drug addiction (Sattler, et.al., 2017). Fear of stigma is one among a myriad of factors attributed to the reluctance to seek services for substance use issues (Tuliao & Holyoak, 1992).

On the other hand, during the investigation, the drug users' families' stress and struggle have also come into focus. Families suffered the most, as 17(85.0%) of the drug abuse respondents have narrated. On this, Q sadly expressed,

“Being so high, I cannot realize the reality; my mother cried a lot, my father went into depression worrying about my addictive behavior, as I have twice relapsed”.

The narratives have shown that addiction is a harmful behavior; it affects not only their personal life but also their public life. Since stigma is associated with substance abuse behavior, many people are afraid of discussing it more openly.

## **Discussions on the Process of Addiction**

The interpretative understanding and narrative analysis of the present study has explored the factors that led to the initiation of substance abuse among the youth and how it affects their personal as well as their social life. This qualitative study has explored that the respondents' engagement in substance use was influenced by a complex array of factors related to parental relations, peer pressure, easy availability of substances, and the changing social and cultural norms. Study respondents were tempted to use drugs as a means to escape from reality, pursue extreme pleasure, and experience a sense of confidence.

In this study, parental relation is the key factor in substance use among the respondents. The unhealthy relationship between parent and child is one of the factors for their inclination towards substance abuse, which is highlighted by the majority of the respondents. The style of parenting, lack of communication, lack of monitoring, lack of control and guidance, and over-strict nature can contribute to a child's addictive behavior. It was also observed that respondents with a family background of substance abuse can also be more inclined to substance use. Parental substance use puts the child at more risk of using substances (Liddle, 2006). Literature evidence illustrates that strengthening family ties, communication, support, and understanding can be viewed as key protective and preventive factors (Alhyas, et.al., 2015).

Another factor, influencing substance abuse is the peer influence. Literature has also shown that drug users seek the approval of their peers and considered it as a symbol of group unity (Li C. et.al., 2002, UN Publications, 1992). The respondents of the study reported that peer influence is the reason for the beginning of substance use. In addition, respondents have also mentioned that it was easy to get substances because of their friend circle. Furthermore, the respondents have also reported that to maintain a relationship with friends they take substances. Peer pressure can have both positive and negative effects on an individual. It is highly important to supervise the friendship dynamic influence among individuals.

Easy accessibility and availability of substances are also considered to be the risk factor for substance abuse in the study. Respondents have addressed that the market availability of the drug is so wide that it can be easily approached. The substances are available to the

respondents all the time and friends are the main channel for obtaining them. Proper implementation of law and strict administrative procedures can be an essential preventive tool to reduce the availability of substances.

Another risk factor that has been identified is the changing social and cultural norms. In the study, it was found that, out of 20 drug abuse respondents, 12(60.0%) considered the act of substance consumption to be more masculine and updated. It is highly important to notice that substance use is considered to be a trend among individuals and they feel superior; more confident and on-trend to use the substance. From the data collected, 7(35.0%) respondents of drug addiction mentioned that some rock songs and videos depict a culture that supports substances and it also encourages them to use the substance. Thus, it is the role of society to stop certain habits as a social behavior that influences substances.

The problems and consequences of drug addiction studied during the research show that all of the 20 drug abuse respondents faced different physical problems such as loss of appetite, body pain, weight loss, running nose, red eyes, dry mouth, lack of energy, decreased coordination, lack of reasoning, urge to use the drug more frequently associated with their addictive behavior. They feel intoxicated after using substances and their mental state gets deteriorated by drugs. It affects a person's decision-making ability and thus the capability to stop using drugs.

Multiple evidences emerge on the dysfunctional behavior of drug addicts. "Violence and other psychological problems are common consequences of drug abuse" (Singh & Gupta, 2017). The narratives provided by the respondents show their behavioral changes in them. Addiction can also cause a person's behavior to change in a way that supports the continued use of drugs. Some of the common behavioral changes that have been observed are- becoming more secretive, chaotic life, experiencing financial trouble due to substance abuse, lying to family and friends, getting along with new friends, mood swings, emotional imbalance, and lack of interest in activities that once brought joy. Moreover, it is also noted that respondents with substances become violent more easily and aggressively. Some of the drug users, that is, 15(75.0%) have also mentioned their involvement in some anti-social activities like fights, stealing, robbery, damaging public property, and threatening people. On the other hand, some other drug users, that is, 10(50.0%) have also expressed that "being in an imaginary world" they lose the connectivity with reality which is also a factor behind certain behaviors.

Drug addicts suffer enormously negative life consequences as a result of their compulsive and uncontrolled drug use. They not only suffer from physical and mental problems but also struggle in society due to its unacceptable attitude toward them. In this research, the respondents have mentioned how their addictive behavior is considered to be 'deviant' in nature by society. The experience and interpretation of the respondents have revealed the association of 'stigma' with substance abuse. Drug addiction is the most stigmatized condition in society in comparison to other mental illnesses (Sattler, Escande & Racine, 2017). Stigmatization attitudes toward people with drug addiction have detrimental effects on the lives of these people. From the narrations by the respondents, the researcher explored how the respondents are discriminated against and isolated for their engagement in illicit drugs. Therefore, the respondents have reported that stigma associations with the diseases caused due to substance use stand as a barrier to seeking treatment. Fear and shame linked with substance abuse also make the families hide such behavior of their child and try to control his addictive behavior at home secretly without seeking help or treatment from any professional. There is a significant social stigma associated with substance abuse disorder, which results in many people who use drugs not seeking the help they need (Room, R, 2005).

In addition, stigma is not only a barrier to seeking treatment but also can prevent stigmatized people from disclosing their drug use to healthcare providers, thereby endangering their health (Ross MW, 2007). Furthermore, respondents have also narrated that society's uncongenial attitude and distancing them as outsiders affect their mental health leading them to use more substances.

## Conclusion

Drug addiction is one of the biggest social problems in the nation today, especially among the youth. It is a chronic disease and a complex phenomenon. It has led to a detrimental impact on society. The growing problem of addiction is responsible for millions of deaths. Multiple approaches have provided the factors that are responsible for drug addiction. In the research, it has been found that social and environmental factor is more responsible for drug addiction among the youth which represents the socio-cultural theory of drug addiction. Like any other life-threatening disease, drug addiction requires intensive treatment. To recover an addict effective treatment must be provided to them incorporating components like therapy, medications, counseling, and social support. Addiction to drugs is a kind of destroying hopes, dreams, and lives but with treatment and comprehensive care programmes, drug addicts can get relief from their dependency. Drug addicts can be prevented from relapsing or recommencing if they are motivated to learn new things and to create a new life through a recovery process involving personal growth. The research findings suggest prevention programmes such as providing normative education on the prevalence of drug addiction and spreading awareness about its effects and consequences in a person's life as well as in society. Above all, the study also suggests the need for both governmental and non-governmental agencies and others to provide support, coordinate and collaborate in controlling drug addiction.

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**Dr. Pranjal Sarma**, Professor, Department of Sociology, Dibrugarh University  
sarmapranjal25@gmail.com

**Trishnamoni Gogoi**, Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Dibrugarh University  
trishna688@gmail.com

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## An Era of Homosexuality

Paresh Dwivedi

**Abstract:** In India, homosexuality is considered an Unnatural sexual offense under Section 377 of the Indian Penal code, 1860. Same-sex orientation and behaviour have been abandoned in India since the 1970s by modern medicine and psychiatry but the truth is that Homosexuals do not have any objective psychological dysfunction or impairments and the reason is too complex therefore we can clearly state that homosexuality is not a disorder. Traditionally, we have been living under strict moral codes and concepts of normalcy. This has brought some deviations like homosexuality under taboo. The mindset of Indian people about homosexuality is still unchanged. Young people understand the feelings of LGBT people but the old generation continues to stick to old norms. Most of the time homosexuals and their behaviour are termed as abnormal. In the changed conditions old rigidities are giving way to the new consciousness. Instead of outright rejection, a willingness to understand the matter is seen. Indian population consists of LGBT people and among them, only transgender people have hormonal problems, not others. The general awareness of the issues is demanding that government should pass legislation for the marriage of LGBT people and the government has to take remedial actions for them otherwise those people will suffer a lot of exploitation by society.

**Keywords:** Homosexuality, Heterosexual, LGBTQ, Transgenders, Social Conflict, Human Rights, Judiciary.

People often use the terms 'sex' and 'gender' interchangeably, but this is incorrect. Sex and gender are different, and it is crucial to understand their main differences. 'Sex' refers to the physical differences between people who are male or female. A person is assigned their sex by birth based on physiological characteristics, including their genitalia and chromosome composition. This assigned sex is called a person's 'natal sex.' Gender, on the other hand, involves how a person identifies oneself. Unlike natal sex, gender is not made up of binary forms. Instead, gender is a broad spectrum. A person may identify at any point within this spectrum or outside of it entirely. People may identify with genders that are different from their natal sex or with none at all. These identities may include transgender. There are many other ways in which a person may define their gender. Gender also exists as social constructs like 'roles' or 'norms.' These are defined as the socially constructed roles, behaviours, and attributes that a society considers appropriate for men and women.

Meanwhile, the term 'Homosexuality' means 'an attraction between people who are of the same sex.' It came from the Greek word 'homos' which means 'the same.' In the year 1869, the term 'Homosexuality' was invented by Kertbeny in Germany but did not get any recognition. Later he achieved prominence and was easily translatable into many languages, including by Hirschfeld (1914) in his book 'Die Homosexualität,' one of the top authorities in the field. A distinct group within the gay culture came out who called themselves LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer). These terms are used to describe a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Homosexuality is not a new or unusual phenomenon in the world. People, however, who previously wanted to avoid talking about this practice in public, are now coming out of their shells and shedding away the taboos which have been imposed on them by society. In India people often used to think that it is a western culture where same-sex or the term

'Homosexuality' is quite popular and being practiced. But after studying the ancient Indian texts it was found that homosexuality has been prevalent in Indian society in the past too. It is a complex issue in India, especially with its different types of castes and communities, rigid moral codes, role assignments, and strict hierarchies. The description of sodomy Kama Sutra, the court customs of Babar, references to women loving women in the Mahabharata and Ramayana, and description of Tantric initiation rites which evoked the idea of universal bisexuality in human personality to be found symbolized extensively. Homosexuality has meant different things to different people at different points of time (Redazione 2018).

In this article, an attempt has been taken to analyse the challenges and sufferings faced by homosexual people in their day-to-day life.

### **Aims and objectives**

Homosexual people are a part of society, But the mentality of the common people the society is not liberal concerning homosexuality. It is considered a blot on the individual's character. Indian society is not an exception. On the one hand, some people think them to be excluded from normal association with others and there are people and organizations that not only support them socially and legally but also organize them to demand their rights. The purpose of this article is to describe this phenomenon with all important dimensions such as

- the challenges faced by the homosexual community.
- The legal battle of LGBTQ and campaign against Sec 377.
- Society's perception of homosexuality.
- Their expectations from society.
- Nature of violence faced by them.

### **Review of literature**

In Indian ancient history, the term homosexuality has been widely used and people of that era were aware of it. The Rig Veda, (1500 BC) talks about the pre-patriarchal period where there was a system of thought, which was triadic, anti-binary, and focused on female sexuality. There is another ancient Hindu/Sanskrit text that refers to homosexuality. The Sushruta Samhita, a highly respected Hindu medical text dating back to at least 600 BC, mentions two different types of homosexual men (Kumbhika – men who take the passive role in anal sex; and Asekya – men who devour the semen of other men) as well as transgender (Sandra – men with the qualities, behavior, and speech of women). The Kamasutra specifically served with all inclinations. The book is instructive and not prescriptive. It says that one should act according to local customs and one's instinctive desires. It specifies three types of genders: *pums prakriti* (man), *stri prakriti* (woman), and *tritiya prakriti* (third sex) (Tiwari, 2010).

It is a natural tendency that persons of one gender are sexually or emotionally attracted towards persons with the opposite gender i.e., males are attracted to females and vice versa. Sometimes and in some situations this sexual or emotional attraction is not towards the opposite sex, rather it is towards the same-sex personalities. This same-sex orientation is known as Homosexuality and persons related to such orientation are called homosexuals. It has various types like lesbians (female to female), Gays (male to male), Bisexual (attraction for both genders), Transgender, and Queer (it often means a large community to denote

sexual identity within a particular community), mainly it is called “LGBTQ” in initialism. Whereas, heterosexuality means romantically attracted to the opposite sex.

The reasons behind such types of sexual behaviour or choice are not clear but many researches have been done and different experts have found different results or theories. Many scientists have concluded that one is born with a particular kind of sexual orientation, it can be in their genes. Thus, it is a natural situation. But no conclusive proof is there that homosexual behaviour is simply a biological thing. Maybe, a factor of genetics can be the reason behind it but one's sexual choice might also be there.

### **The expectation of Society from Homosexuals**

Till now our society is not used to, the fact of homosexuality but many peoples are accepting the changes and taking it in a positive way as well as few parents are there who are accepting their children and their sexual orientation. Due to Homophobia, it has been seen that mainly after coming out people are getting either homeless for being homosexual or running away from an abusive situation. Often it can be experienced that after coming out to their friends and families, homosexual peoples face intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and the threat of violence due to their sexual disorientation whether it is in their home or their workplace. Some of the factors that may strengthen homophobia on a larger scale of a dominant group.

Living in a homophobic environment forces many homosexual people to conceal their sexuality, for fear of the negative reactions and consequences of coming out. There is no single definition for the term homophobia, as it covers extended levels of viewpoints and attitudes. Homophobia is generally defined as a fear of gay people, it can also refer to as a stain arising from social ideologies about homosexuality. Negative feelings or attitudes towards non-heterosexual behaviour, identity, relationships, and community, can lead to homophobic behaviour and this is the root of the discrimination experienced by many homosexual people. Homophobia comes along in various forms, for example, homophobic jokes, physical attacks, discrimination in the workplace, and negative media representation. For people who have been brought up to believe that homosexuality is wrong, the realization that they might be gay can cause feelings of shame and self-loathing, leading to low self-esteem. Often people especially teenagers in schools and youngsters in colleges pass on lewd comments which leads them into depression, anxieties and sometimes they engage in suicidal acts (United Nations General Assembly 2017).

Repressing homosexuality involves avoiding an important part of a person's identity, and can have a serious impact on their life. A recent study found that one of the major factors that result in the stigmatization of homosexual people is a parental reaction towards homosexuality. The study goes on to conclude that most homosexual people are acceptable to family only if they agree to behave like heterosexuals. Prince Manvendra Singh Gohil, whose story of coming out has been well-documented in the media over the past several years, now heads several initiatives to help homosexual people, including the Lakshya Trust that works for HIV/Aids prevention in the LGBT community.

### **Expectation Of Homosexuals from Society**

“Love need not take an explicitly sexual form, but it is nearly always expressed in the language of poetic excess and metaphoric power.... it is generally believed that love can be either and only, familial or sexual, and that passionate love is singularly borne from the

difference. But there is a special love that can only emerge through sameness: a love not necessarily sexual, but a passionate love none less.” (Ruth, 2000)

The boundaries of family, home, and school, acceptance of their sexuality, and freedom to openly express their gender choices remain a constant struggle for homosexual people. For the members of the homosexual community in India, the fight for civic, social, and political equality is far from over, irrespective of a constitutional status as equal citizens. While the laws have changed, violence and discrimination against them are still exercised at the hands of the state machinery is evidence of the oppressive low status it grants to homosexuality. While technology is so advanced and people's mindsets are changing still there is a boundary between our society and homosexuals. Social media reflect and affect the opinions of society but at the same time, it helps individuals who may feel vulnerable, alone, or isolated to have a sense of community. This allows social media to remain insulated for many homosexual people around the world who face discrimination and harassment in their daily lives. Social media diminishes the isolation of homosexual people, being a tool for people on their journeys and struggles to start reaching and accessing allies and like-minded people.

Many homosexual people hesitate to openly share their lives because of fear of rejection and serious negative reactions. Lack of communication and understanding of their gender identity leads to fighting and family disruptions, which can result in domestic violence or the exit of the home. They more likely end up on the footpaths because of family conflict or if they are financially stable then they can afford to live alone. All these factors undermine their self-worth and increase the risk of HIV and the use of health-deteriorating substances such as drugs, alcohol, etc. They also become a victim of many heinous crimes and many of them indulge in committing crimes. They wanted acceptance from their family to lead a normal life as heterosexual people do in society.

### **Issues and Challenges faced by Homosexuals**

“More than 70 nations still criminalize same-sex relationships and the death penalty may be applied in certain African and Asian countries,” said Viti Muntarhorn, the UN independent expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on Sexual-orientation and gender identity (Protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity (United Nations General Assembly, 2017).

**Labeling:** This theory often seemed that society views members of LGBTQ as sick and sinful, they are stigmatized by unfortunate circumstances. They often have to face verbal attacks or damage to their personal property or are physically assaulted. For example, on a particular episode of a talk show, filmmaker Rituparno Ghosh held a long conversation with a person who had repeatedly mocked him about his mannerisms. Through the conversation, he made the person understand that though he could take all the mockery, there were other people with similar identities who could be deeply affected by such behaviour. That episode made a lasting impression in everyone's mind.

**Experience of social abuse:** Apart from personal abuse ranging from insults and derogatory remarks to actual physical and sexual abuse which may extend to murder or forcing them to commit suicide. For example, many teenagers and young adults are facing molestation or rape in the name of ragging.

**Discrimination:** Whether it's a school, college, university, or workplace, discriminating against them has always been seen. In terms of promotions or encouraging them or uplifting their spirit cannot be seen in their seniors or colleagues. In Josh's talks, Dimple Chaudhary revealed how she was ignored by her colleagues in her office and how she has been criticised by them as well as her seniors (International Journal of Law Management and Humanities, 2020).

**Allocation of residence:** Everybody has a right to live in society except homosexuals. Either they won't get any roommate to share the rent with them or they will be sexually harassed by their roommates. If a homosexual couple seeks a residency to live together then they won't find any rental apartments to live in as the owners refuse to rent them in because of their homophobic nature.

**Unequal treatment in health facilities:** On the health front, often it is deemed that the health care people neglect them and do not treat them equally like they do to others. They were treated like sinful people if they disclose their identities to them.

Many petitions were filed before the honourable Supreme court to declare Section 377 of the Indian penal code Unconstitutional. One of the famous cases of this LGBT issue is the Naz foundation case. On 2nd July 2009, the high court of Delhi ruled that the provision in Section 377 of the Indian penal code that criminalizes private consensual sex between same-sex adults violates the country's constitution and International Human Rights Conventions. Consensual sex amongst adults is legal, which includes even gay sex. Delhi high court further states that it is against the constitutional values and notion of human dignity. Most unanimous medical and psychiatric opinion establishes that Homosexuality is not a disease or disorder (Meaha, 2019).

After the decriminalization of homosexuality, LGBT individuals finally became free from criminalization under the law and free from the threat of arrest and the ruling gave confidence and dignity to LGBT people in the eyes of law. They were no longer criminals and could proudly look at themselves in the mirror. But it ended when the supreme court ruled over the judgment of the Delhi high court in 2013 pronouncing that Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code is not unconstitutional when we look into the history of the provision. One of the contentions by the petitioner was LGBT rights are against Indian culture but when we read about same-sex love in India from literature and history we can easily see that ancient people in India had no problem with same-sex love. Temple sculptures at Khajuraho and Konark are good examples that clearly explain the kind of liberal attitude Indian society cultivated in the past.

**Human Rights:** People and their discrimination on the ground of sex in society results in violation of their rights including fundamental rights and human rights. These rights apply to all persons but the state has failed to create special legislation which protects the rights of the LGBT minority community and provides real justice to them. They are also human beings and such treatment should be provided by the state to these people. In many instances, homosexual individuals are not legally protected from abusive and discriminatory actions (Naik, 2017).

The violation of the human rights of LGBT people has been deep-rooted in the state of India. Even legal machinery has not been exempt from it as evidenced in the Naz foundation case. There are various arguments put forth on the basics of cultural and moral norms in the arguments and judgment dealt with but the main question —what about the right of sexual

minorities and their life is an unanswered question and uncovered area. (Revathy, 2018).

The Preamble to the Constitution of India mandates Justice - social, economic, and political, and equality of status. The Constitution provides every person an equal status before the law and equal protection of laws within the territory of India. The word “any person” here means every individual, without any discrimination based on any of the categories which includes, caste, creed, religion, sex, etc. A transgender in India is included within the words “any person” and is given equal status to that of every cis-gender in India. The transgender community cannot be discriminated against on the ground of non-application of any of the laws within the nation because of their differences and dividing them based on any arbitrary class.

### **Suggestions and Recommendations**

- Since homosexual people are part of society, their presence and their participation in society cannot be neglected. They also have the right to live with respect and dignity and to be in the mainstream. Therefore, some effective steps must be taken regarding homosexual people. Jawale and Kalpana(2016) have suggested some such steps which may help to bring them into the mainstream:
- Respect and support the homosexual community.
- Acceptance in family, educational institutions, and workplace.
- Treat them like a normal human beings rather than making them feel uncomfortable.
- Stop discrimination against them.
- Provide them with a proper health care facility.

### **Conclusion**

India has finally managed to cast off one of the most prejudicial pieces of Victorian-era legislation. But same-sex marriage is still not legalized. It is the marriage that bestows rights and responsibilities on two people such as adoption, inheritance, tax planning life insurance policies, and other such rights. The last century witnessed major changes in the conception of homosexuality. Since 1974, homosexuality ceased to be considered an abnormal behaviour and was removed from the classification of mental disorder. Since then, homosexuality has been de-criminalized in different countries. Various states across the globe enacted anti-discriminatory or equal opportunity laws and policies to protect the rights of homosexuals.

Marriage is a basic right for every citizen in a country like India, where so much importance is attached to it, but homosexual people are still deprived of it. What would be the point of decriminalizing homosexuality in a country like India where LGBTQ people are still unable to get married to the partner of their choice? The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha on 5th August 2019 after so many efforts still it serves no good to the homosexual community and has several lacunae. Homosexual people are more likely to experience intolerance, discrimination, harassment, and the threat of violence than those who enjoy social recognition as heterosexuals. This is due to homophobia (the fear or hatred of homosexuality). Some of the factors that may reinforce homophobia on a larger scale are the moral, religious, and political beliefs of a dominant group. In some countries, homosexuality is illegal and punishable by fines, imprisonment, life imprisonment, and even the death penalty (Parasar, 2008).

People with homosexual orientation face many hurdles including conflicts in acknowledging their feelings, the meaning of disclosure, and the problems faced in coming out. They remain confined in the social ghettos society has created for them. Many organizations are devoted to their liberation so that they can have some support after the rejection from their families, friends, and societies. LGBTQ organizers and groups are increasingly forging connections between the movement for homosexual rights and the movement for economic and racial justice, noting that people have multiple, layered identities and are members of more than one community at the same time, simultaneously experiencing oppression and privilege. Without the help of the public as well as of the government these people will suffer a lot of exploitation by society (Rao and Jacob 2018). No shortcut solution can address the problems facing many LGBT people across the world.

There are many NGOs that have come forward to help homosexual community people anywhere by supporting them in their crises or any kind of bad situations they are facing in. Nazaria is one such queer feminist support group. It tries to help people in a bid to transform their lives., The Bi-collective work for bisexuals in and around Delhi. Their main aim is to create a safe place for their community people where they can express themselves freely. Naz Foundation is working for the cause related to HIV/AIDS for homosexual communities, The Humsafar Trust says, “your identity is a reason for Pride, not a reason to hide.” Apart from this they also run support groups like UMANG for LBT persons, YAARIYAN for young LGBTQ people and SANJEEVANI for persons living with HIV), Sappho for Equality (their main aim is to help the sexually marginalized women and female-to-male trans persons in getting their rights and equal status in the society), Sangama (they work for sexual minorities rights and rights of a sex worker, etc), Good as you (it organizes many activities and provides legal and moral support to the members of homosexual communities that includes counseling sessions too), etc.

There is a need to strengthen the transgender bill and make some amendments favourable to the homosexual community. It is a need of the hour to legalise same-sex marriage and relieve Indian history from this dark spot. Homosexuality will remain a stigma as long as people are willing to shove it under the carpet of oblivion. The Government should make efforts to educate the public and raise public awareness about sexual minorities. The three organs of the State and the society must ensure that the morality and values emanating from the Constitution prevail and guide us towards a better tomorrow with dignity, sexual autonomy, and individuality for the LGBT community in India.

Lastly, has anybody thought about what homosexual people want from their loved ones, from society, or from each one of us? The answer is No, we have never thought about it because some are busy ignoring them, some are busy bullying them and few of them show their sympathies to them, which is generally not needed. The crux of the matter is that they need the freedom of living their life, normally, on their terms. They wanted the same lifestyle as the heterosexuals enjoy in our society. Building self-esteem by being honest about oneself. Developing closure, and more genuine relationships with their friends and families. Alleviating the stress of hiding one's identity. A world without any discrimination and where people do not stare at them when they go hand in hand with their partner of the same gender. The time will come when they don't have to justify themselves as being a homosexual.

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**Dr. Paresh Dwivedi**, Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Bhupal Nobels' University, Udaipur (Rajasthan)  
[pareshdwivedi@yahoo.com](mailto:pareshdwivedi@yahoo.com)

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## Dimensions of Women Empowerment in India

Prem Singh Rawlot

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**Abstract:** Women empowerment is one of the effective tools for development. Across the world. Women empowerment means giving authority to a woman. It enables them to make independent decisions for their personal growth as the position of women in Indian society is still lagging behind due to gender inequality. They are still not treated properly. Though they occupy about half of the population of the country. Women's empowerment as a concept was introduced at the UN's Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985, which defined it as a redistribution of social and economic powers and control of resources in favour of women. Women's empowerment is dependent on numerous different variables that include geographical setting (urban/rural), age factor, and social and educational status. However, women face differentiation in most sectors like education, financial opportunities, health and medical facilities, and political participation, which indicates that there are substantial gaps between strategy advancements and real exercise at the community level.

**Keywords:** Women Empowerment, Feminism, Patriarchal Society, Discrimination, Judicial Rights, Indian Penal Code, Special Laws, Human Rights, Achievements.

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The term women empowerment is all about authority, or the power conferred on women where they can enjoy their rights like men. The term refers to the liberation of women from socio-economical dependency. Women comprise around 48% of the country's population, and many of them stay economically dependent on others. In the age of feminism (the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes), a small number of women in India are free to employ their free will and are permitted to live their lives the way they want. There is a significant section of the women in this country who required optimistic support. In most rural areas and semi-urban cities, women are still not having fundamental education and are not permitted to continue higher education despite getting the required facilities.

The mindset of the people in India in ancient times was to marry their girls at very young age. However, this state of affairs was weird as well as different for them, because as daughters they had right to choose their husbands but on the other, they had to perform the practice of Sati. The British era brought many changes and improvements in these factors as, in the West, women were treated equally to men. In 1848, Savitribai Phule became the first woman educator in India. This gave women the courage that they could get out of their various forms of boundaries. In the time of freedom struggle, women's empowerment was the most important agenda for various social reformers and freedom fighters. Social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and even Mahatma Gandhi promoted women's education, and supported the abolition of sati, banning child marriages, etc. This national uprising led to various reforms like the Abolition of the Sati Act of 1829, the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act, of 1856, The Child Restraint Act, of 1929, 'The Womens Right to Property Act, of 1937, etc. In society, the position of women started getting better after independence. The Hindu Marriage Act, of 1955, The Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, of 1961, and The Dowry Prohibition Act, of 1961, etc. were reforms that

were implemented to save women from all forms of social injustice, (Pagare, 2017). known for carrying multiple roles effortlessly daily, and they are considered the backbone of society. Living in male-dominating societies, women play many roles, such as caring mothers, loving daughters, and capable colleagues. The best part is that they excelled perfectly in every role. Meanwhile, they've also been a neglected segment of society in different parts of the world. In turn, it has resulted in women surviving the brunt of unevenness, financial trustworthiness, oppression, and distinct social evils.

### **Importance of Women Empowerment**

Nowadays, everyone is pointing to the empowerment of women. It's right to say that over time, it has become a necessity. Women should possess faith, liberty, and self-worth to seek their needs and demands. Discrimination based on gender is useless and is having zero worth by looking at the growth of women in the last few decades. In the workplace, women are paid less and at home, they are treated as a cook and slaves in families, and their real potential fails to get highlighted. Women empowerment in India is required to overcome situations of such types and encourage women to be independent in society. They should have proportional rights to contribute to society, economics, education, and politics. They should be supported and encouraged to gain higher education and receive similar treatment as men are receiving.

In this article, an attempt has been made to analyse the challenges and issues regarding women empowerment, laws made by the government, and initiatives which are needed to empower women. A detailed discussion of these various aspects is given below:

### **Factors Promoting Women Empowerment**

Women empowerment is not a spontaneous process. Society has to accept its need and has to nourish factors that can promote women empowerment in the society. Some of the factors are as follows:

**Education:** It is the most dynamic factor of development and an important tool for realizing empowerment and human resource development. It gives more opportunities which in turn enhances the economic empowerment of women. It helps them to acquire knowledge, skills, and self-confidence which are necessary to participate fully in the development process. Apart from basic education they also need to focus on skills-based functional education that will provide them with more challenging jobs which will make them financially independent and prevent them from getting dominated by others. Recommendation concerning education was adopted by UNESCO at a conference in Paris in Dec, 1962. It underlined the importance of technical and vocational education of girls and women for economic and social development.

Education will provide more information regarding women's legal and personal rights and make them strong to fight for their rights which in turn will lead to protect their constitutional rights. The Beijing Platform for Action, 1995 says, "Literacy of women is an important key to improve health, nutrition, and education in the family and to empower women to participate in decision making in society. It is an essential tool for achieving the goals of equality development and peace. So, women education should be given top priority in National Agenda, Mass illiteracy campaigns should be organised on a large scale."

**Elimination of Gender Discrimination:** In all spheres of society, women must be respected and rightful status must be given to them in society to achieve their destiny. They should be given more opportunities to take an active part in decision-making at all levels to achieve goals of empowerment.

Steps for implementation of the Women Development Programmes and various Acts: Action-based training programmes in vocational and entrepreneurship development programmes should be organised to make women self-employed so that they can get financial independence and look after their families. There are still many families who do not prefer if a female member starts working. Government should take an initial step to reach out to those families and convince them so that they send their female family members to get trained and be independent along with the other male members of their family.

**Action for Organisation of Awareness Programmes:** National and State level commissions for women, NGOs (Non Governmental Organisations) Task force for women and child Development DWACRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas), ICDS Programme are working for campaigning and spreading awareness about women's rights, legal rights, human rights, population education, environmental education, education about saving schemes, rehabilitation programmes with all sincerity and honesty.

**Change in the Attitude of Women:** These different organizations are also working to make women realized that if they want to get an opportunity then they have to fight to get it and to restore their dignified position in society. Thus, women have to be conscious of their position. Efforts to take initiative and grasp opportunities are the basic qualities which help to change their mindset and status. The urge for empowerment should come from within. Women must empower themselves by changing their attitude, towards themselves. (Shuani, 2020).

### **Advantages of Women Empowerment**

- Empowerment of women is one of the major social issues of every society in general and in democratic societies in particular, that believe in gender equality and equity. It paves the way for a balanced development of the social system. Some of the advantages of women's empowerment are as follows:
- Increases the confidence of women and decreases their dependency on others concerning financial necessities as well as decision-making ability.
- Increase their ability to contribute to the comfort of society.
- They will be able to get a respectable position in society.
- Their contribution will help in the growth of the country's GDP.
- It helps to remove gender inequality and injustice.
- Provides Women with a secure working environment.
- Protect them against mistreatment and harassment.
- It will help the women to create their uniqueness.
- Women's contribution to the growth.
- In developing societies, women are provided with equal balance.

According to an article by S. Waheeb (2018), it was clear that whether it is in a rural area or urban, working or non-working, household environment or in a workplace, women had to face challenges in every sector and every field. The problems faced by working Women are as follows:

- Working women suffer from indirect barriers to advancement in professional life.
- Additionally, some jobs in the care industry are reserved only for women, often referred to as pink-collar issues.
- Apart from this issue, there are other issues at the workplace, such as – the realization of women's abilities which are often considered secondary or inferior;
- Sexual harassment at the workplace, be it either by the boss or by male colleagues;
- Discrimination in respect of salary, promotion, appreciation of women for their work or giving them credit, etc. Working women also face the problem of a double burden of maintaining the balance between profession and home;
- Challenges created in their work due to advancements in technologies – Due to technological progress in agriculture, women's labour is becoming unnecessary, and it is reducing their work opportunities.
- Their participation in deciding how and where to spend their salary is either negligible or completely absent.
- Other problems include problems of safety, travel, and facilities at work (infant, toilet).

### **Legal Rights for Women**

Women's empowerment can only be brought about when they are made aware of their rights. Most teenage girls believe themselves as lesser than boys and, thus, surrender before the patriarchal structure of society. Young girls should be taught that they are no less than boys and can achieve anything if they are determined to work on it. Education is a key prospect of this movement. Following this, the Government of India has passed the Right to Education Act by which every child below the age of 14 is entitled to free and compulsory education.

The Indian legal system has been confronted with gaps between policy and practice. Despite existing legislation to protect girls and women, the enforcement of these laws and the judiciary system is weak. The gap widened within the corrupt system. It took seven years to hang the culprits implicated in the notorious “Nirbhaya” gang rape case. Women empowerment is less visible in rural areas than in urban areas. This should be a big concern as the rural population is around 70 percent despite increasing urbanisation and the growth of cities. Women in urban areas have greater access to education, employment, healthcare services, and decision-making power as well as in financial aspects.

India's prevailing issues of gender inequality should be seen in a wider context. In rural areas, gender inequality is still significant. Women continue to be engaged in household tasks, without giving their opinions on economic decisions. Low levels of literacy, poor nutrition and lack of access to health care, and social welfare parameters are lower than in neighbouring country of Bangladesh. These factors could be attributed to societal norms, meta-narratives, and gender stereotypes that are deeply embedded in Indian culture. Women Empowerment in India should be seen through the lens of religious, cultural, and socio-economic particularities where new provisions in the legal sphere may not always be enforced and discrimination could continue within the family and societal structures. The patriarchal and patrilineal customs, with some exceptions, have obstructed female mobility, retrieving basic healthcare and seeking education, and caused forced marriages. Gender-

based violence in the form of domestic, sexual, and physical violence is particularly rampant when the victims lack agency and power.

In India, special laws have been introduced for women to give them justice. Indian penal court has taken some initiatives to work against the crimes against women. These laws have been introduced for women's safety and freedom. The laws have been classified into two categories, which are:

**The Indian Penal Code:** Under the Indian Penal Code 1860, the following crimes against women are identified: Rape (Section 376), Sexual harassment (Section 509), Torture (Section 498A), Dowry, dowry deaths (Section 302, Section 304B), Molestation (Section 354).

**Special laws:** Many legal provisions in India, ensure the protection and safety of women and their rights. Some of them are:

- **The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976:** This Act was established to ensure that men and women both, get equal pay and wages for the work done and that there is no discrimination on grounds of gender, in matters of employment.
- **The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961:** The Dowry Prohibition Act, of 1961 was established, to stop the practice of paying or accepting dowry as a consideration for marriage.
- **The Special Marriage Act, 1954:** The Special Marriage Act came into force in 1954. This Act was established to provide a special form of marriage, irrespective of the faith or religion they follow.
- **The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971:** This Act was enacted to prohibit the practice of illegal abortions. This Act mentions the provisions by which a pregnancy can be terminated or aborted.
- **The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013:** This Act was enacted to ensure that women are protected in their place of work. In the case of Vishaka v State of Rajasthan (1997), the Court laid down certain principles known as 'The Vishaka Guidelines. These principles were later converted into The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013.(Mudibidri, 2021)

The Human Development Report 2015, published by the UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) recorded that women across the world undertake most of the unpaid housework and caregiving work in their homes and communities. Due to household work and taking care of their family, women most often have less time for other activities such as paid work and education. In a sample of 62 countries, it is interesting to note that on an average, 4.5 hours a day were devoted by men to social life and leisure while for women, the number of hours was reduced to 3.9 in India (Article on Gender roles and status of women in indian society, 2017).

Besides the shortage of time faced by women to pursue their careers after handling their household work, they often face neglect from their families and are subject to the requirement of a marriage market rather than a job market.

The Women's Reservation Bill gives 33 percent reservation for women seats in Indian politics. This is an attempt to increase female political participation members. The bill was

first introduced on 12 September 1996 by the Deve Gowda government. Successive governments tried to push for the bill but it took 14 years to get it passed in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House of Parliament). The bill has yet to be passed in the Lok Sabha (Lower House of Parliament) and all state legislative assemblies. The introduction of the bill was a historic attempt to alter gender demographics in Indian politics. It was argued and supported as well to increase women's effective and meaningful participation in the political system. It can accelerate a process that usually takes generations by incorporating women's voices in governance. In contrast, skeptics think that the bill would only benefit women belonging to the high class. While a 33 percent female reservation is a bold step, the Trinamool Congress, one of the ardent supporters of the bill, took a step forward by reserving 40 percent of seats for women to contest in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

The government has also created the space for international agencies to work with local NGOs, state governments, and private corporations. For instance, the World Bank is working closely with the federal government to improve the quality of public health services in the state, including maternal and child healthcare. Another initiative is taken by the United Nations (UN) India Business Forum which has partnered with the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) to set up the UN-India NITI Aayog Investor Consortium for Women Entrepreneurs to strengthen female entrepreneurship and an ecosystem for investments.

### **World policies on women empowerment**

An agreement against women discrimination was adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly and came into force in 1993. It is termed as an international bill of rights for women and their empowerment which set out few conditions for discrimination against women. These measures include:

- To follow the equality between men and women, abolish all discriminatory frameworks enacted in the country, and implement laws that prohibit discrimination against women.
- To set up courts, tribunals, and other organizations which make sure that women get adequate protection against any form of discrimination.
- To end all acts of discrimination going on against women.

Women empowerment principles helps people to understand how to empower women in every sphere of life. The principles are as follows:(WEP, 2010)

- Incorporate high-level leadership to help maintain gender equality,
- To treat all women and men equally, and not discriminate.
- To maintain equality in giving employment to both men and women, promote education, and provide professional training for the development of women.
- To ensure the health and well-being of women.
- To promote equality by implementing various initiatives.
- To prepare a report on the progress of achieving gender equality.

### **Some Notable Achievements of Women:**

Women in India are emerging in all sectors, including business, politics, sports, medicine, scientific inventions, and agriculture. History was made when two female scientists from the Indian Space Research Organisation led the country's second lunar mission Chandrayaan-2 from its formation to its achievements in 2019. Women have proved under their leadership after a huge space mission challenge that rocket science is not only a

profession for men but it is also ideally proven by a woman too. Another milestone was reached when in 2020, the Supreme Court upended the government's position on women serving as army commanders. Women were first inducted into the armed forces in 1992 and have served in multiple positions, including doctors, fighter pilots, nurses, engineers, etc. While the issue of women serving in a challenging role continues to be an argumentative issue worldwide, these were the set of examples where Indian women have overcome the glass ceiling in the armed forces.

The governments have launched new schemes, policies, and programmes to empower both urban and rural women. The BJP government has launched flagship schemes to promote gender equality, including Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (Save the Daughter, Educate the Daughter) scheme was launched in January 2015 to address the issue of a gender-skewed ratio and generate greater welfare for the girl child, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (a scheme to provide gas connections to women from below the poverty line households) and Mahila-E-Haat project, an online marketing campaign, was launched in 2016. It uses technology to support female entrepreneurs, self-help groups, and non-government organisations (NGOs). Each scheme has its unique objective, ranging from the welfare of the girl child and community engagement to supporting aspiring female entrepreneurs, (Muniraju and Attri, ). **Other schemes are - UJJAWALA: A Comprehensive Scheme for Prevention of trafficking and Rescue, Rehabilitation and Re-integration of Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation, One Stop Centre Scheme, Women Helpline Scheme, Working Women Hostel, SWADHAR Greh (A Scheme for Women in Difficult Circumstances), Mahila police Volunteers, Mahila Shakti Kendras (MSK), NIRBHAYA**

### **Some suggestions:**

After much progress and development, India ranks 132th out of the total 191 countries in the Human Development Index 2022. Further, in the Global Gender Gap Report published in 2022, India's rank was 135th out of 146 countries. Gender inequality and discrimination still exist in different parts of the country and remain goes unnoticed. The following are a few suggestions that can be adopted to help women prosper more than they already have

- The laws and schemes which are implemented for women empowerment, do not reach the majority of women. Most women are not aware of these laws. Hence, awareness of these laws is very important.
- A safe environment should be created, where women can come together and talk about their issues and help each other.
- The majority of women in India are illiterate. Hence, the government is trying its best to promote education in many places including remote areas by giving away free mid-day meals and promoting new policies regarding it. Parents should also understand that all children including a girl child need basic education.
- The majority of Indian women are going through health-related issues with no proper medical facilities being provided to them. It can be mostly seen in rural areas where women and children are dying due to negligence of inexperienced hospital staff, lack of doctors, or absence of modern equipment in hospitals. It will be very helpful if the government and NGOs take the initiative to provide proper medical facilities to remote rural areas.

## Conclusion

I would like to conclude my article with this quote:- “Yatra Naryastu Pujyante Ramante Tatra Devta,” according to Manusmriti, “where women are respected, God resides there. In all the houses where women are insulted, God does not reside even after doing all kinds of worship.”

Women are recognised as the spine of each society. Among the educated women in India, mostly from the middle-class background are coming out of their traditional boundaries. But they have to go a long way to achieve real equality. Empowerment and equality are complex issues, especially in India. Indian society with its multiple cultural systems is struggling to break the shackles of conservative systems of thought of a bygone era. As repeatedly insisted by prominent social reformers, no society can become healthy without the full and unhampered participation of women. To pave the way for these women should be granted all those benefits of social progress which men enjoy. Unfortunately, the fight is to be waged on many fronts: religious, social, economic, political, and so on. Deep-rooted prejudices take a long time to root out. Even though women wish to move ahead, not enough support is given to them. Male-centric organizations and power pockets, from remote rural areas to modernized urban centres, exercise coercion in depriving them of equal rights. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar has said, “as experience proves, rights are protected not by law but by the social and moral conscience of society. If social conscience is such that it is prepared to recognize the rights that the law chooses to enact, rights will be safe and secure. But if fundamental rights are opposed by the community, no law, no Parliament, no judiciary can guarantee them in the real sense of the word...”

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**Dr. Prem Singh Rawlot**, Associate Professor, Department of Public Administration, Bhupal Nobles University, Udaipur  
rawlotpremsingh@gmail.com

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## Online Education: Boon And Challenges During Pandemic

Renu Jangid, L.D. Soni

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**Abstract:** COVID - 19 pandemic has disrupted the conventional mode of teaching and that had a far-reaching impact on students and teachers alike. With the abrupt shift from a traditional and more confrontational chalk-on-board teaching style to fully digitalised lectures and assignments, the new era of online teaching has been a boon but it is undeniable that it has also had a discriminative disadvantaged impact on many of the students and teachers. However, the concept of online teaching and learning process is not new, it has a long history of its origin both in India and abroad. This paper entails the challenges and advantages of the new online teaching introduced during the pandemic in government colleges of Rajasthan based on the sample collected.

**Keywords:** COVID-19 Pandemic, Online Teaching, Student, Teacher, Whatsapp, Challenges, Boon.

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Because of the current COVID-19 crisis, to check the spread of the novel coronavirus, worldwide governments had to go for the complete closure of educational institutions. With the uncertainties involved in the total eradication of the virus in absence of the complete inoculation of the population and development of mass immunity, schooling may likely continue to be disrupted. Due to the long-lasting negative consequences, that school closures would have on skill accumulation, and students' right to education, many education systems moved rapidly online on an unprecedented scale and this rapid transformation from classroom teaching to online learning is the new normal in education.

Educational institutions all over the world are now looking forward to online learning platforms. Online learning through social media has undoubtedly enhanced communication, timely information, and socializing amidst times of social distancing. Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Zoom, and many other platforms have proved to be a boon during the COVID-19 pandemic. The teacher and the taught are no longer physically present in a classroom, rather normal classrooms metamorphosed into flipped classrooms. However, this transformation is a great challenge for the teachers as well as the students.

Nevertheless, online learning is not a new concept, it for first time emerged in year 1982, when the Western Behavioural Science Institute in La Jolla, California opened its School of Management and Strategic Studies. The School employed computer conferencing to deliver a distance education program to business executives. (Roy, 1983).

Connected Education offered the first very online master's degree in media studies, through The New School in New York City in 1985 also via computer conferencing. (Withrow, Frank 1997, Ray Percival, 1995 and Gail S. Thomas, 1988). In 1989, the University of Phoenix started offering educational programs through the internet. In 1993, with the debut of the first Internet web browser, created by the University of Illinois, online learning began to flourish. In 1998, more online programs were founded by New York University Online, Western Governors University, the California Virtual University, and Trident University International. (Miller, Gary; Benke, Meg; Chaloux, Bruce; Ragan,

Lawrence C.; Schroeder, Raymond; Smutz, Wayne; Swan, Karen (2004).

Even in India too, long back All India Radio and Doordarshan had been telecasting recorded educational programmes for higher as well as school education. UGC, IGNOU, and NCERT were using the broadcasting facilities provided by All India Radio and Doordarshan for imparting education but in recorded form, which was one-way communication. In 1994, ISROU provided the teleconferencing facility at IGNOU headquarters in New Delhi for the first time in which two ways audio communication was provided (Mazumdar, 2020). It boosted online courses like management studies, computer science, and especially training for teachers. Teleconferencing got recognition as an official education channel under the Gyandarshan platform in the year 2000. In 2005, the EDUSAT satellite designed by the former president of India late Dr. APJ Abul Kalam made by ISRO in collaboration with MHRD and IGNOU was launched. Virtual classrooms became inevitable during the pandemic COVID19 (Mazumdar, 2020). However, social media became one of the most important modes of online teaching and learning in India during the pandemic rather than the virtual classroom.

This research paper focuses on some of the advantages and challenges faced by the students and the teaching fraternity. The findings are based on the samples collected from major Govt. colleges of Rajasthan located at divisional headquarters viz., Jodhpur, Jaipur, Ajmer, and Udaipur. The total number of samples is 40, 20 teachers and 20 students. The data were collected through indirect method i.e. telephonic discussion from randomly selected 05 teachers and 05 students from each college. The study reveals that social media platforms Youtube or WhatsApp are more commonly used for academic communication because students and teachers are not well versed with online meeting platforms such as Google Classroom and Zoom and no training was imparted in this regard. Online teaching and learning proved to be both boon and challenges for teachers as well as students during the pandemic.

## Findings

Although there were some difficulties for the teachers and the students yet e- learning proved to be a blessing in the era of the pandemic. It was both a challenge and a boon for both the teacher as well as students. For starters, both the teachers and the students found this transition from conventional classroom to virtual teaching a challenging task as some teachers responded that they struggled a lot in getting a hang of the technology. As many as 90.0% of teachers and 85.0% of students reported difficulties with online teaching due to the reasons like unfamiliarity with the use of the gadgets or lack of resources. Similarly, Aristovnik et al. (2020) in their paper "Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Life of Higher Education Students: A Global Perspective" have observed that the lack of computer skills and the perception of a relatively higher workload prevented students from perceiving a higher performance while adapting to the 'new normal. Unfamiliarity was mainly due to the unavailability of resources, which were found at both institutions as well as at personal levels. For the faculties, either they do not have with them and had not been used in teaching in colleges, or, those who have in their institutions generally used them for smart classes

during conferences and seminars, not in day-to-day teaching. More than a half of the students were unfamiliar as they were unable to afford and those had never used them as a mode of online studies but rather as a mode of social interaction. Many of them had never contemplated such a situation so have had not adequate technical know-how of the recent developments in information technology facilities.

Secondly, Although familiarity with gadgets was found among teachers at almost all the colleges they did not use them as a mode of teaching before the Covid pandemic, gadgets were used only for attending conferences and seminars. They faced problems in using gadgets as a mode of teaching. Moreover, they found it less interesting also in delivering the lecture, as they were unable to interact, give clues, and use gestures as they could in their normal classroom. "The usefulness of online teaching always depends on live interaction rather than silent participation" (V Mazumdar, 2020). Even the students did not find it interesting as more than a half of the students indicated the network problem which further created the audio issues and the lack of face-to-face direct connectivity between the student and teacher which made the lecture boring and a one-way session.

According to a recent survey conducted by Education Today (March 2021), 85.0 % of teachers face difficulty in online teaching. Teachers were having difficulty in imparting proper instructions through the digital media since they could not write, draw or explain as they could do in conventional classroom teaching while students found it difficult to learn from the digital lectures.

As rightly written by Dev Roy, Founder of Digital Aristotle in the article '5 Problems Faced by Online Classes', "possibly the most significant challenges associated with online learning are monotony and boredom induced by increased exposure to the screen as well as the modus operandi of sitting at one restricted spot for prolonged hours".

Third, Out of the four colleges, two lacked smart-class technology. The reasons for not having smart class technology in two colleges might be their recent openings It indicates the unavailability of resources. Accessibility to resources is also a big challenge for both teachers as well as students. Teachers are not trained in the digital classroom approach in the colleges, where the required facilities lacked. Even in those colleges where smart classroom facilities prevailed, more than 50.0% of the teachers were not using them as they were not trained. As far as students are concerned, more than 50.0% of them were not having internet-enabled cell phones, smartphones, or computers to attend the e-classes and those who had the required gadgets faced problems due to either poor network connectivity or lack of knowledge of the e-learning platforms in their rural hometowns. As many of them reported that they were in their native villages during the lockdown.

Fourth, Assessment is an integral part of the teaching-learning process for both the students as well as the teacher. More than 50.0% of the teachers as well as students found difficulties in assessment. For teachers assessment of students is necessary as it gives feedback on their teaching and for students to know how much they have learned. Online assessment through a multiple choice answer mechanism is a big challenge, as it does not check subjective knowledge. However, one-fourth students of in the study sample indicated

that the MCQ mechanism is a good mode of assessment as it helps them to take competitive exams, which are conducted in the same patterns, but for students of humanities, it is inappropriate, as it does not test their knowledge. The accountability of both the teacher and the taught is questionable.

**Fifth,** One of the biggest challenges of online teaching is the lack of motivation for both the teachers and the students. From the collected data, it is revealed that three-fourths of the students often skipped the classes as they responded that once they find it difficult to understand the content they start skipping the classes, and hence continuity is broken. Besides, virtually it is difficult for the teachers also to get feedback from the students or to keep a check on the students, asking them about the topic they did not understand due to the absence of face-to-face classroom situations. It was indicated in a survey that 77.0% of 800 college students prefer in-person learning in class better than online methods ([www.generationlab.org/post/manage-your-blob-from-your-live-site](http://www.generationlab.org/post/manage-your-blob-from-your-live-site)). Teachers highlighted that majority of their lectures were recorded that too from their smartphones as they do not have proper recording rooms with electronic devices to record lectures. In two colleges where well-equipped e-classroom were available, only 10.0% of teachers knew how to operate them. Lectures with poor audio and video quality also made them boring hence, students did not find them interesting. Teachers were also less motivated as more than a half of them find that their uploaded video and audio lectures on YouTube or WhatsApp groups were viewed by only 20.0% of the students though almost all the students are a member of the class WhatsApp group. Even the assignments given were not completed and submitted by the students in time, which further demotivates the teacher towards online teaching. Such a problem was also indicated in the article “What are the Biggest Challenges Facing Online Education Today?” by Nilesh Gutte in Higher Ed&K-12 Solution (December 2021) that students complain of lacking motivation due to absence of interpersonal touch between the students and the teacher in the online classes.

**Sixth,** Numerous cybercrime cases filed by parents and children, especially over the last two years, clearly show that the use of laptops, mobile and various other gadgets in online learning had created countless distractions, often coming at the cost of focusing during the class study and the life of children. In June 2020, Microsoft Security Intelligence reported that the education industry accounted for 61 percent of the 7.7 million malware encounters experienced by enterprises in the previous 30 days – more than any other sector. Apart from malware, educational institutions were also at increased risk of data breaches and violations of student privacy. It was this spring that “Zoombombing” became part of the general lexicon after pranksters and malafide-intentioned individuals began taking advantage of Zoom's security weaknesses to break into private meetings. Among the culprits were schools, with several reported incidents of online classrooms being interrupted by users making lewd comments or streaming pornography ([securelist.com/digital-education-the-cyber risks-of-the-online-classroom](http://securelist.com/digital-education-the-cyber risks-of-the-online-classroom)).

Students are not always accompanied by their parents as collected data indicate. Not even a single student is watched by his/her parents at the time of online classes, even as they

go in either separate rooms or lonely places so they do not get disturbed. The majority of the students have indicated that many porn video links get popped up while viewing the recorded video lectures online on Youtube, however, all have responded that either they close or block the popped-up videos but undoubtedly such interruptions distract the students. However, from the data collected none of the teachers have indicated such distractions probably because they record videos and then get them uploaded.

**Seventh**, the Alienation of students from society is a major point. In online learning when the students are engaged in laptops and phones for more than five to six hours a day, they get alienated firstly from their families and then from society. John Mark rightly marked in an improvisation blog post for online education “it can be just about the most alienating experience imaginable”(dailyimprovisation.blogspot.com/2012 alienation-and-online-learning.html). Alienation of students from their work, alienation from the study itself, alienation of students from him/herself as a social agent, and alienation of the student from other students are other visible results. Hence, such a type of alienation would disorganize the personality of an individual and society with it.

Undoubtedly, online learning has numerous disadvantages but we cannot ignore the advantages of online learning, particularly in midst of a pandemic for which the world and India at large were not ready.

Nonetheless, such novelty proved to be the only source through which students and teachers could be connected when the world has gone into solitary existence, and proved a boon during the lockdown in India and worldwide. Digital was the only platform through which students as well as teachers carried their teaching/learning programme. The majority of the students and teachers responded that it was like a ray of hope that even in such adverse conditions when every day they were counting the number of Covid patients in their cities and country, the teaching/learning could be materialized. It further helped in reducing their stress and fear as it diverted their mind to their studies as indicated by one-fourth of the students.

### **Advantages of Online Teaching and Learning**

The **first** and foremost advantage of online teaching and learning as indicated by the majority of the students, as well as teachers, is that online teaching and learning keep them safe from exposure to infections as mostly they have had to be indoors surfing the internet. They also highlighted that being at home gave them chance to eat fresh and healthy food which further enhanced their immunity during the Covid pandemic. A similar finding was observed in the article, “Top Advantages of Virtual Classroom during Lockdown Time”( <https://fedena.com/blog/2020/09>)

Secondly, as indicated by the study sample that online classes kept them regular and disciplined during lockdown through the help of a digital attendance marking system. It was also very convenient for the teachers to keep the attendance as more than a half of the teachers responded that it was easy to show students their attendance and could also float their names in the digital groups as also mentioned in the article “Top Advantage of Online Coaching”( [fedena.com/blog/2020](https://fedena.com/blog/2020))

Third, more than a half of the students indicated that they got the opportunity to learn new technology. Virtual classrooms such as Google Meet, BigBlueButton, Zoom, etc. as indicated by more than a half of the students, gave them the opportunity to explore and learn new digital tools as before Covid they had hardly heard about Zoom, Google-class room, etc. The study sample also revealed that they have also learned to create PowerPoint for assignments, however, the number of such respondents was very small. The learning of new technology was a good and beneficial experience indicated by a majority of the teachers.

Fourth, a majority of the respondents indicated that through online learning, it was very convenient for them to learn at any time and place. Observation made in the article "Learn From The Convenience Of Place And Time" confirms this response (fedena.com/blog /2020) Students accepted that they used to get recorded video lectures on their WhatsApp group, and it was very convenient for them to save and consult it later anytime and anywhere as per convenience. The study also highlighted that as many of them were in their native villages during a lockdown, online learning was a boon for them. The majority of the teachers felt that in online learning students got plenty of time to digest the information learned, practice it, and do their own studies, which would enhance their understanding of the subject. They can learn at their own pace, instead of constantly struggling to keep pace with their peers.

Fifth, a very beneficial and important advantage of online learning indicated by the majority of students is that online learning makes them more communicable with the teachers. Before Covid, they could approach their teachers only during college hours. In case of emergency only, they were allowed to call or WhatsApp them. But now they can message them at any time and even the frequency of calls to satisfy their queries has increased. However, this liberty has increased the working hours of teachers, as complained by many of them, because students call them at any time to clear their doubts.

Sixth, more than a half of the students, mostly females, responded that through online learning they could get the notes and lectures of the skipped classes now. These respondents admitted that in face-to-face, or offline classroom situations if in case they missed the class it would be difficult for them to get the notes and to get a classmate's help. But now through archived lectures, they can study well. It proved to be a boon as mentioned by the students whose families had Covid patients and were too busy taking care of them. Not only the students but the majority of the teachers also responded that recorded lectures are of great use in revision classes.

Seventh, the Financial aspect of this phenomenon was considered as a most important benefit by one-fourth of the students who felt that through online learning they can study without going to college whereas they have to spend fifty to sixty rupees daily on transportation to go to attend offline classes which is a financial burden on them. No financial aid or incentive is given by Government agencies for transportation. However, this benefit was not highlighted by any of the teachers.

Online education has many benefits such as portability, ease of access, reduced need for physical infrastructure, lower costs, and greater flexibility. But that isn't to say that it doesn't

come with its demerits. In a recent survey, 60.0% of the students who have recently shifted to an online learning system thought the experience was boring and struggled to motivate themselves to pay attention in class.

Online teaching also proved to be a boon during the pandemic. What is central to the new scenario is that online classes are effective for those who do have proper access to and knowledge of the right technology. As results of the study show a ray of hope that if social media is used properly it can promote a new area of social learning, social presence, and an alternative platform to promote online learning. Around 15.0% of the respondents were affirmative about the usage of virtual classes. Learning online can be more effective in many ways. Some researches show that on average, students retain 25-60% more material when learning online compared to only 8-10% in a classroom. The facility of learning at their ease, going back and re-reading or skipping saves a lot of time for the students due to which as compared to the traditional classroom setting e-learning requires 40-60% less time. Moreover, students get the opportunity to explore any world-class excellent educational site, which is not easy to impart by the traditional chalk and blackboard method of teaching.

## Conclusion

Like every education system, online education does also have its pros and cons. The rising trend of online education has raised many concerns among education experts including those at UNESCO and UNICEF. The potential dangers of excessive exposure of young people and children to the internet is a major concern where all sorts of stuff are easily available at easy swipes of the screens. Further, a sense of alienation is developing in the deprived sections of society, as they are not able to keep pace with their academics due to the non-availability of smartphones mobiles, laptops, computers, etc., or monetary resources regarding connectivity and the internet. These are the challenges that hinder the process of online learning.

Studies reveal a mixed response to the growth of the online classroom in education. Though online teaching gained pace in COVID times, face-to-face interaction is perceived as the best form of communication by many as compared to virtual teaching. We still have a long way to go before digital learning is seen as mainstream education because students living in urban areas have the facilities to opt for digital education. However, students in rural areas do not have the required infrastructure nor are financially strong to avail the resources required for digital education.

To better harness, the potential of online learning government will have to facilitate the population with better access to telecommunication services as well as empower the deprived section of society, particularly in the rural area where they neither have proper internet nor the capacity to afford the gadgets required to access the e-learning platforms through the internet.

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**Dr. Renu Jangid**, Associate Professor, Deptt. of Sociology, Govt. Girls College, Magra Punjla, Jodhpur  
[renujangid@yahoo.com](mailto:renujangid@yahoo.com)

**Dr. L.D. Soni**, Associate Professor, Deptt. of Sociology, Govt. College Khetri, Jhunjhunu,  
[sonild77@gmail.com](mailto:sonild77@gmail.com)

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# Role of Educational Institutions in Building Gender Sensitive Society: A Study of Co-educational Secondary Schools in the Ajmer District of Rajasthan

Mitesh Juneja

**Abstract:** The present study is an attempt to know the status of gender sensitivity in schools highlighting the perception of the head of the institution and practices and efforts for creating a gender-responsive environment in secondary schools. As per the need and objectives of the study, the interview schedule was found appropriate and used as a tool for collecting data from five selected blocks of Ajmer district, Rajasthan, using the purposive sampling method. The data were collected systematically from 30 principals of 30 government co-educational secondary schools. The study was based on a socio-educational perspective highlighting to find out the reflection of the head of the institution about gender concerns in educational institutions. The findings indicate that the perception of the stakeholder is the major impediment to building gender sensitivity in society in general and in schools in particular. The study concludes that without changes in the mindset or perception of stakeholders, gender sensitivity in educational institutions cannot be achieved. The conclusion highlights that practices and efforts of educational institutions are also gender sensitive but the perception influences the activities, practices, and efforts related to building gender responsive society. Thus, the findings reflect the gap between the theory and practice concerning gender sensitivity.

**Keywords:** Gender Sensitivity, Educational institutions, Secondary Schools, Stakeholders.

Gender is not a women's issue; it is a people's issue. "Femininity" does not exist in isolation from "Masculinity". The construction and power of one determine the construction and power of the other. Gender relations are neither "natural" nor given, they are constructed to make unequal relations seem "natural", and can be naturalized only under the duress of socialization. Thus, there is undue pressure on boys and girls to live up to the established "norms" of masculinity and femininity. While girls endure unwarranted social control, discrimination and domination, boys too suffer from the stereotyping that exists in a patriarchal culture. Discouraged from being emotional, gentle, or fearful they are thrust into the role of breadwinners, protectors, and warriors. Thus, unequal gender relations stunt the freedom of all individuals to develop their human capacities to their fullest. Therefore, it is in the interest of both men and women to liberate human beings from existing relations of gender (Gender Issues in Education, NCF, 2005). This reflection highlights that outlook plays a vital role in building gender sensitivity in society.

Gender sensitivity is a multidimensional, comprehensive, and worldwide concern. There isn't a single country in the world where men and women enjoy completely equal opportunity... that is why we must change attitudes and policies. The aim must be to give every human being greater freedom to make choices about their own lives.

Although, various developments have been made for establishing a gender-responsive society all over the world especially, multiple programmes and schemes have been launched highlighting education, health, jobs, security, politics, etc. at the global as well as national level for eradicating gender inequality. However, with special reference to education, significant policies and schemes have been initiated focusing on building gender equality

and establishing a responsive society. International agencies like UNESCO, World Bank, WHO, UNICEF, and various organizations and institutions are constantly working to address the issue of gender sensitivity in education through their recommendations, suggestions, publications, and training manuals followed by organizing conferences, workshops, and other activities at the international level.

Gender sensitivity has been a major concern in India concerning enhancing the aim and objective of achieving universal elementary education and education for all without discrimination of gender. Focusing on the relationship between gender and education, various educational policy documents such as Secondary Education Commission 1952-53, Education Commission 1964-66, NPE 1968, 1986, NCF 2005, NCFTE 2009, and New Education Policy 2020 have been framed to build a gender-sensitive education system in India. In addition, the five-year plans have also emphasised on the equal education system and have highlighted the challenges and action plans for bridging the gap between the school and society. These steps show epoch-making efforts for addressing gender concerns but still, there is a need to identify the ways which will help in creating gender sensitivity in society and achieve the goal of inclusive education.

Gender is a very challenging issue in society and specifically in education, and therefore as a social institution; the role of education is seen significant in addressing and finding out solutions to gender inequality and related issues. When it comes to education, gender plays a multidimensional role. For instance, the enrolment and dropout rate of boys and girls, content, pictures, and language of textbooks, teaching and learning process, perception and participation of stakeholders, hidden curriculum related to the gender issue, classroom organization, practices, management and assessment of the students, etc. are issues that need our attention while addressing education and gender concerns.

As a formal institution of socialization and a component of society, school is an important agent of social change. Society and situations are changing and girls are moving out for doing jobs and getting an education but mentality of the society is not changing accordingly. The crimes against women are increasing continuously. School, society, and gender issues are closely connected so it is important to analyse the roles and responsibilities of the school in promoting a gender-sensitive society. Perception is also considered an important dimension. Especially the perception of the head of an institution plays a vital role in creating gender sensitivity in society in general and in every institution in particular. This paper is based on identifying the perception of school principals towards gender sensitivity in society and in school as well.

### **Concept of Gender and Gender Sensitivity:**

In the present time, most of the societies claim that they have modernized and consider themselves to be educated. Therefore, they argue that they don't differentiate between men and women and treat them as equal, but on the other hand, the reality at the ground level is different in this context. It is important to know the causes of gender disparities and to identify the issues which are at the root of this social stigma.

To look at gender through the social science framework, it is required to discuss the person who has attributed some social traits to gender. Ann Oakley was the first social scientist who differentiated between sex and gender comprehensively. Oakley clarified that sex refers to the biological differences between males and females, whereas gender is

concerned with culture. It refers to the social classification, parallel and socially unequal division into masculine and feminine. (Oakley,1972) Gender is connected with society therefore; it is affected by the sex-based work distribution in institutions and organizations. (Oxford Dictionary of Sociology, 2004)

Another eminent name that contributes to gender is Simone de Beauvoir. She says that “one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman”. (Beauvoir, 1973) She differentiates sex from gender and advocates that gender is a characteristic of identity gradually acquired. She said that all genders, by definition, are unnatural. (Judith, Butler, 2019)

The concept of gender is very wide. Gender, in common sense, is understood as psychological, social, and cultural differences between males and females, it is mostly about masculinity and femininity, and it is not directly about biological sex (Giddens, 2009)

Gender sensitivity and equality refer to equal opportunity and outcomes for both men and women. This involves the eradication of inequalities, and discrimination about access to resources, opportunities, and services, and the promotion of equal rights. Giving respect and the opportunity to each other to live with dignity are the major concerns of gender sensitivity.

The term 'gender-sensitive' is often used by the UN to address the basic needs and issues of women but nowadays the term is also used by other international and national agencies or institutions to foster awareness of gender and its related issues. It is known as an effort to making equality.

Gender sensitivity is concerned with changing the mindset and which should reflect in our day-to-day practices. Thus, gender sensitivity emphasises not only theory but also changes in practices of life (UNICEF,2017). The concept of a gender-sensitive society cannot be understood without exploring the history of society and its specific conditions. Understanding the life of a woman or man involves understanding the history of the society in which they live (Mills, 1959). The idea explains that without observing and building an understanding of the actual condition, the gender concept and its conditions cannot be explained comprehensively. It is the part of exploring the concept of gender and the process of fostering gender sensitivity too.

In other words, gender sensitization is like a milestone towards enhancing gender equity, equal opportunity, and women empowerment and hence, essential for creating a democratic society and ensuring sustainable development as enshrined in our constitution. It requires not only intellectual understanding and effort but also open-mindedness to change one's view. Gender sensitization can be defined as proper understanding between the sexes, leading to mutual respect for one another and a feeling of empathy for the opposite sex.

### **Need for Gender Sensitivity:**

Time and situations are changing continuously and these changes also focus on the need for gender sensitivity in society. Socio-Cultural inequalities are considered a major hurdle in building gender sensitivity. The areas concerned with household functions and traditional expectations reflect that our society accepts gender stereotypes and the individuals who follow the norms and standards to maintain the process of gender socialization. Female foeticide and infanticide have also described the process of disparities. Gender discrimination is concerned with individual identity. Society and its norms and values formulate preconceptions in an individual's mind and through the process, a human being

learns how the differences can be maintained (Bhasin, 2007). Various data concerning sex ratio, gender gap index, and crime rate explain the way through which inequality is promoted. The snapshots of Crime in India 2019 report highlight that a total of 4, 05,861 cases of crime against women were registered during 2019 showing an increase of 7.3% over 2018 (Crime in India, 2019). In addition, the studies concerning women's health, economic disparities, and the role of communication and media highlight the need for gender sensitivity in the hour. The policies could be explained by the provisions maintaining equality in society, but the practices are not favored by the path that highlights the need of building equality and equity. The data concerning providing education viz sex ratio, literacy rate of India and Rajasthan, and dropout rate also present the real picture of gender sensitivity. The data below show the current status of literacy rates in India and Rajasthan.

**Table-1**  
**Status of Literacy in India**

Census Year	Persons	Males	Females	Male-Female gap in literacy rate
1951	18.33	27.16	8.86	18.30
1961	28.3	40.4	15.35	25.05
1971	34.45	45.96	21.97	23.98
1981	43.57	56.38	29.76	26.62
1991	52.21	64.13	39.29	24.84
2001	64.83	75.26	53.67	21.59
2011	74.04	82.14	65.46	16.68

Source: Census of India, 2011

literacy trend in Rajasthan. The data show that the gap in the overall literacy rate is reducing continuously but in the perspective of reducing the gap steps should be taken to maintain equality. Thus, the need for gender sensitivity could be highlighted underlying the area where the inequality is reflected.

### **Role of Education and School in building Gender Sensitivity:**

Education is the process of fostering holistic development by developing human abilities and behaviours. Education is the fusion of both formal and informal methods; it means an individual gets knowledge, understanding, application, skills, ethics, and values from education. School, society, and gender issues are closely connected so it is important to analyse the roles and responsibilities of the school in promoting a gender-sensitive society. A school is regarded as a microcosm of social realities. The major responsibility of the school is to fill the gaps between theory and practice. Multiple roles of education have been identified for promoting gender sensitivity (Yeasmin, 2015)

The data reflects the gap that exists between male and female literacy in India. It shows that this gap has reduced in the Census 2011 in comparison to the Census 2001 but still it highlights the need for gender sensitivity through creating an environment of equal opportunity.

The above table reflects the

**Table-2**  
**Status of Literacy in Rajasthan**

Census Year	Persons	Males	Females	Male-Female gap in literacy rate
1951	8.50	13.88	2.66	11.22
1961	18.12	28.08	7.01	21.07
1971	22.57	33.87	10.06	23.81
1981	30.11	44.77	14.00	30.77
1991	38.55	54.99	20.44	34.55
2001	60.41	75.70	43.85	31.85
2011	66.10	79.20	52.10	27.10

Source: Some facts about Rajasthan 2014, DESDP, GoR.

In addition, school is an important agent of social change as a formal institution of socialization and a part of society. Through the process of socialization, the mindset of both boys and girls is prepared. Schools can promote gender sensitivity and organize activities to enhance gender equality. Socialization takes place through social agents such as family, peer groups, school, etc (Bierstadt, 1956). Thus, the role of education, educational institutions, and stakeholders is significant in building a gender-sensitive society.

Keeping this in view, a study has been planned to explore the perception, practices, and efforts of schools concerning gender sensitivity.

### **Research Questions:**

The following research questions emerged as thrust areas-

1. What is the perception of Principals towards gender sensitivity in schools?
2. What are the practices and efforts of schools for promoting gender sensitivity?

### **Statement of the Problem:**

The research problem was finalised as– " Role of Educational Institutions in Building Gender Sensitive Society: A Study of Co-educational Secondary Schools in Rajasthan".

### **Objectives of the Study:**

The following objectives were set forth for the present study-

1. To study the perception of principals towards gender sensitivity.
2. To find out the reflections of principals about practices and efforts of schools for promoting gender sensitivity.

### **Sample Design:**

The researcher used the following sampling procedures to collect data from the field-

S. No.	Sample Unit	Technique used	Sample selected (N)
1	District	Purposive Sampling	1
2	Blocks	Stratified Random Sampling	5
3	Schools	Purposive Sampling	30
4	Principals	Purposive Sampling	30

### **Delimitations:**

The study was delimited to only government co-educational secondary schools of selected blocks of Ajmer district. This study was also delimited to identify perceptions, practices, and efforts concerned with gender and its related sensitivity.

### **Research Method:**

To fulfill the requirement of the present research, a survey method was used and data were analysed accordingly.

### **Research Tools:**

Keeping in view the nature and objectives of the study, the interview schedule was prepared to collect data from the sample. For exploring the perception, practices, and efforts, the tool was prepared which consist of 20 items focusing on: separate school for girls and boys; the role of the head of the institution in co-education and girls' school; constitution and gender sensitivity; gender budgeting; causes of gender inequality in society; challenges of

school in building gender sensitivity; organizing gender sensitization activities in schools; behaviour of boys and girls with each other about gender sensitivity; perception of teachers for gender equality; procedure of the participation and assigning responsibility to students; the need for gender sensitization training; subject selection of the students and gender sensitivity; enrolment, retention and dropout conditions and gender sensitivity; facility of guidance and counseling in school, infrastructural facility, and suggestion for maintaining gender sensitivity in the society.

### **Data analysis and interpretation:**

As the discussion was significant concerning building a gender-sensitive society, the role of educational institutions should be highlighted comprehensively. If educational institutions will play a quality role, the issues concerning gender could be eradicated. In this reference, the role of educational institutions and stakeholders must be discussed widely. Education institutions and their curriculum are reproducing the dominant patriarchal culture. Although women are visible in curriculum text, their roles are confined to being appendages of men. The gap between theory and practice concerning gender sensitivity continuously exists in society. (Lumadi, Mutend, et al. 2010). The School plays a significant role in building gender sensitivity; thus, it is essential to highlight the role of the school and its practices and effort to maintain gender sensitization. School also emphasizes on gender differences, especially in the gendering of subjects, a lack of role models, and in addition, the way that classroom interaction operated to favour boys (Delamont, 1990). Hence, gender is a multidimensional concept that affects all aspects of society. Goffman (1979) explains how gender is built as an unequal relationship and made to seem natural because of the way we present our gender. In addition, gender is understood as 'the culturally established correlates of sex' (Goffman, 1979: 1).

Thus, the study was specifically focused on identifying the role and responsibility of the head of the institutions in bridging gender gaps. The data were collected from the principals of co-educational secondary schools. Keeping the topic and objectives of the study in mind, those schools were selected that were upgraded at least five years ago and where the same principal was working for at least five years. This section reflects the data analysis and interpretation of the perception, practices, and efforts of school principals concerning gender sensitivity.

### **Perception about Gender Sensitivity:**

- Some of the principals (33.33%) favoured separate schools for girls. A few principals advised that separate schools should be set up for elementary classes and after that, there should be co-educational schools. They argued that in the present changing context, it is essential to maintain separate schools. They mentioned that age-related physical and mental changes are the reasons for separate schools, whereas most of the principals (66.67%) favoured that for the mental development of both girls and boys, no separate school is required.
- Most of the principals (80.33%) accepted that both males and females can become the head of the institution. The male principals highlighted that females should be appointed in girls schools on a priority basis because most of the time girls feel hesitant to discuss their problems with male administrators. Female principals

accepted that there is no difference in working conditions of either co-educational or girls' schools.

- In addition, some female principals said that often faculty members do not accept a female as the head of the institution. They said that either male or female staff; create issues when a female has the leadership of the school in hand. The observation also reflects the responses given by the female principals which highlight gender disparity in leadership.
- Some principals (23.33%) said that male principals work with open-mindedness in terms of being ready to learn new things, especially in the case of technological advancement. In addition, they said that female principals are not familiar with the technology so the school faces multiple problems, specifically related to IT-based tasks.
- The majority of principals (93.33%) responded that the role of the constitution is significant for establishing equality in society. They said that constitution is always favoured to build an environment of equality. they didn't respond about the number or article but just pointed out the role of the constitution in building equality through giving responses to the item.
- Both male and female principals (43.33%) accepted that the work assigned to the students is based on their sex. They said that girls are more capable to organize activities easily.
- The majority of the principals (86.67%) reported that teachers do not discriminate between students based on their sex. They stressed and responded that in teachers' view all students are equal and they make an effort equally for both boys and girls to encourage participation and achievement.
- Most of the principals (90.00%) viewed that school is not responsible for unequal behaviour or inequality between boys and girls. They stressed that society should find out about the gap and act accordingly. In giving a response, they raised the question that how schools, principals, and teachers can eradicate the issues concerning society.
- Some principals (30.33%) said that the government is already providing various facilities to girls, so there is no need to give any kind of special or additional facilities to them. The principals accepted that providing preference to girls has created differences between boys and girls. They said that government should encourage both boys and girls in terms of providing facilities and advantages.

### **Practices and efforts of schools towards gender sensitivity.**

The Following are the concerns of the head of the institutions focusing on practices and efforts of schools about gender sensitivity:

- Most of the principals (92.33%) maintained separate seating arrangements for boys and girls in the classroom, at assembly, and during any other event. They said that it is an essential part of managing a school and its system.
- Principals said that for increasing gender sensitivity, the government organizes various training programmes and workshops. Furthermore, NGOs also play a significant role in arranging training programmes for girls concerning gender sensitivity.

- Most of the principals (83.33%) said there is no difference between the behaviour of the boys and girls towards each other.
- Principals accepted that girls participate in activities easily.
- Most of the principals (76.67%) said that no special sessions are organized in the school for guidance and counseling to both boys and girls for creating awareness about gender and its related issues.
- They said that the teachers personally guide the students and it is not easy to conduct special sessions and programmes for guidance and counseling as the school has multiple responsibilities.
- Most of the principals (86.67%) said that no infrastructure issues exist in the school. School provides equal facilities to both boys and girls.
- Bal Sabha, Saturday events, assemblies, and participation in cultural events are organized in the school for allowing both boys and girls.
- Most of the principals (83.33%) said that school gives the opportunity and responsibility to both boys and girls to become monitors. The concept of the head boy and the head girl is also followed by the school.
- Almost all principals said that school doesn't bind students to choose their subject.
- Almost all the principals said that efforts are being made in the direction of reducing the number of students dropping out. Principals reported that the government has initiated a voucher scheme providing remuneration for transportation.
- Most of the Principals (86.67%) said that schools provide the facility of Garima Peti to the girls to inform school management about her problem privately. In addition, schools organize SMC/ HDMC in which they discuss these problems and issues with the representatives.
- The majority of the principals (86.67%) said that no committees were framed in school for managing gender issues, although, Gargi Manch, Meena Manch, and the student cabinet are formed in school for fostering gender sensitivity.
- The majority of the principals (70.00%) responded that most of the time the off-campus tasks are assigned to the boys only.

### **Findings:**

Following are the findings which highlight the conditions of gender sensitivity in schools:

- The perception of the respondents reflects separate schools for girls.
- The respondents accepted the significance of the constitution for establishing equality in society but also agreed that it is not easy to provide all the facilities equally.
- In this changing context, the assignment of work given to students is based on sex.
- Leadership qualities form the major basis for managing schools; hence, it is not affected by the gender of the students. On the other hand, some respondents also disagreed with providing special facilities to girls or women. Providing preferences to girls is responsible for creating differences between boys and girls in school and society.



- The practices and efforts also reflect high gender sensitivity. Some of the areas are concerned with practices and efforts, the data reflects less gender sensitivity and affects to the overall practices and efforts. Specifically, the separate seating arrangement is maintained in the classroom, assembly, and while organizing any event or activity in school.
- For increasing gender sensitivity, the school organizes various training programmes and workshops proposed by the government. The teachers also take part in such training programmes and workshops, and after that, organize a workshop for students for building gender sensitivity. Furthermore, NGOs organize training programmes for girls concerning gender sensitivity. Participation of girls is high so no separate efforts are needed to encourage girls, but as compared to girls, boys have less willingness to participate in or organize the same.
- The practices reflect that no special arrangements are there for guidance and counseling in school. No infrastructure issues are faced by schools and accordingly as they provide equal facilities to both. Other efforts like Bal Sabha, Saturday events, assemblies, cultural events, Meena Munch and Garima Munch help foster gender sensitivity.
- The responsibility of classroom leadership is given to both boys and girls. One interesting remark was found that the school gives responsibility to one boy to control the boys and one girl to control the girls. In addition, responsibility is given to boys to manage discipline and to girls to manage the quality of the class by motivating all to get good marks.
- School gives opportunity to students to choose the subject of their own choice. Efforts are made for encouraging students to rejoin school after a dropout. The majority of schools do not have a committee for managing gender issues.
- In addition, schools have made efforts for maintaining equality in all respect of practices and efforts which is a positive sign toward building gender sensitivity. But out-of-campus tasks, decoration and cleanliness tasks, and focus on the security of both boys and girls, are the areas that affect the overall practices in fostering gender sensitivity.

## Discussion

The perception of the public about the head of the institutions highlights the mindset of the society. It presents the gap between policy, practices, and prospects. In this reference, the role of educational institutions and stakeholders seems vital. The findings reflect that sensitivity related to gender will not be possible without changing the perception of an individual. For further studies, we may add a section on the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

## Suggestions

Following are the suggestions that highlight the efforts which can help bridge the gap between theory and practice:

- The study finds that perception is the major cause to create discrimination. So, a positive perception of the head of the institution is significant in building gender sensitivity.

- The study proves that gender sensitivity and education are two sides of a coin, so enhancing sensitivity can change the educational scenario.
- The study highlights that the head of the institution also favours some areas where gender inequality is increased, so the role of the head of the institution is significant about maintain a gender-sensitive environment in school.
- The study finds that the actual meaning of gender sensitivity is not acknowledged as it is required. Differentiating between boys and girls, men and women, or making women stronger than men are not concerned with the actual meaning of gender sensitivity. So, it is essential to understand the actual meaning of gender sensitivity.

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**Dr. Mitesh Juneja**, Assistant Professor, Dept of Sociology, Shri Ratanlal Kanwarlal Patni Girls College, Kishangarh, Dist Ajmer  
smiteshJuneja@gmail.com

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## Social Media: An Addiction in Disguise

Maneesha Vishwakarma

**Abstract:** Addiction of any kind is never good for individuals and society. Addiction to alcohol, smoking, and drugs has always been a matter of concern for society. Lately, a new form of addiction is being developed posing challenges for society, social scientists, and psychologists, namely, addiction to the internet and technology. The latest communication technology social media, web 2.0 is showing the same pattern of addiction symptoms because it is being used without thinking and understanding. The objective of this article is to analyse the excessive use of modern communication technologies, social media, and increasing dependency on social networking sites for various reasons, leading to addictive behaviour as compared to drinking and smoking. Through this article negative impact of social media on mind, body, and social and personal well-being is seen in how this compelling technology is trapping us in never-ending activities of swiping, and scrolling, leaving us lost at the end. The article also compares the effect of the use of substances and the use of social media on the reward center of the brain with the help of theories. The article is written based on secondary data and reports available on websites, blogs, and other sources. Suggestions for checking the dependency on technology, the importance of controlled use of social media platforms to prevent long-term negative effects, and ways to be the master of technology have also been reviewed.

**Keywords:** Social Media, Addiction, Social Relation, Social Well-being, The Psychological Impact

A very common Sanskrit sloka “ati sarvatra varjayet” literally means an excess of everything is bad and must be avoided, this is true for almost every subject and object we have and use in our life. But at times we give in to cravings and temptations for immediate momentary pleasure and good feelings by ignoring the long-term side effects. One such phenomenon of a postmodern high technology-driven society is social media. Social media is the most advanced means of personal and public communication of the time. Everyone on the planet is connected through this rapid process of communication just with the tap of a finger. It is a revolutionary change in the field of Information and communication. No change comes without cost. Social media is costing us our health, time, and personal and social well-being. This modern social media platform has become very popular due to the easy accessibility and affordability of mobile and the internet. Technological advancement is a sign of development and progress but not the only sign of progress in society. Effective and wise use of technology brings real progress, if people use technology just for the sake of use because it is out there, then this situation cannot be beneficial for society and to the people in the long run. It should cohere with the cultural and social values of society.

Everything works optimally and is beneficial when used within the limits. In that condition, we control things as per our needs and convenience. For example, antibiotics and medicine are to cure and relieve ailments developed in the body. After a certain threshold limits these antibiotics and medicine stop working because the body and the mind get accustomed and habitual to the medicine. For further relief higher dose is needed to feel better, then only the body starts getting relief. To a certain highest limit body sends the signal for the substance if you do not catch that and break dependence you are caught into the vicious loop where you give in to the urge of your mind and body. Because now the substance

takes charge of the mind and hence the body and starts controlling it. The whole system becomes dependent on that particular substance. The mind and body develop a compulsive cycle for that thing, as happens while using a drug.

This is a common experience today that social media bring us satisfaction and pleasure when it comes to connecting with friends and family members whom we love. It is also a useful way of sharing information on current hot topics. All these interactions only form a small part of the time spent online. Even more time is spent in the passive absorption of strangers' opinions, photographs, and videos, all likely to have been forgotten after a few hours. Social media is a place of fabricated desires; it makes someone want things that might be out of reach. Influencers on, social media show how life could be so adorable after affording their products. People showcase their strong relationships at home and outside, in photos at dinner, at destination tours, and hanging out together. Viewing these updates inevitably makes someone feel bad and dislike what already have despite not desiring those things on a personal level. We are probably less likely to make a physical effort if we feel that virtual effort is more than enough.

### **Types of Technology Addiction**

The American Society of Addiction Medicine has acknowledged that addictions are not limited to drugs and alcohol but can also be behavioral. Using digital devices for longer durations than intended or finding oneself using digital devices with increased frequency over time is a kind of addiction. The symptoms of all addictions are loss of control, changes in mood, tolerance, withdrawal, and continuation of use despite adverse consequences. Some of the most common forms of technology addiction are as below (Chris Iliades, 2016).

#### **Gaming Addiction**

Gaming has become a more popular internet activity than before because available not only on consoles and computers but also right on phones. Today's most popular games include Minecraft, PUBG, Fortnite, Apex Legends, World of Warcraft, Clash of Clans, League of Legends, Battlegrounds, Roblox, and others. The part of gaming that makes it so addictive is built-in rewards, hidden features, and side quests for leveling up. Every time the gamer completes a level kills an opponent or unlocks a new level or player he receives a boost of dopamine, resulting in gaming-induced pleasure. Some games are never-ending. Socially interactive games such as e-Sports have also become increasingly popular. Such games may be more so engaging than one-player games but lead to a false sense of social interaction. Gaming can also be compounded with gambling in hidden ways and lead to a dual addiction to both gaming and gambling (Chris Iliades, 2016).

#### **Gambling Addiction**

When gambling is engaged virtually, it is called internet gambling and is recognized as a disorder by the American Psychiatric Association as a diagnosable mental health disorder. Online gambling includes online casino games, online poker, online sports betting, e-Sports gambling, day trading, and cryptocurrency trading. Gambling addiction has the highest rate of suicide of all various forms of addiction (Chris Iliades, 2016).

#### **Shopping Addiction**

A new type of addiction is online shopping addiction, a behavioral addiction that involves impulsive and compulsive buying of goods and services online. It is also known as

compulsive buying disorder in psychology. Online shopping addictions serve as a temporary way to induce pleasure and feel good emotions and as a way of avoiding negative emotions, boredom, and loneliness. Online shopping is not only about purchasing anything online but is also about the excitement of browsing for hours before the purchase (Chris Iliades, 2016).

### **Pornography Addiction**

The Internet has provided easy access to porn sites and private groups to involve in obsessive and compulsive watching of porn movies and videos. Online sexual addiction often results in an individual's sex life becoming less satisfying and becoming less interested in real sexual engagement. Emotional dependency on digital sexual activity deteriorates real-life relationships. Excessive porn usage often results in feelings of shame, guilt, loneliness, sadness and frustration, and hypersexual disorder (Chris Iliades, 2016).

### **Work Related Addiction**

Workaholic individuals who are addicted to their work already, to get praise and appreciation for their hard work become dependent on their work, online work conditions aggravate the problems of relationships with family, physical and mental health, connection with friends, and general well-being can suffer (Chris Iliades, 2016).

### **Social Media Addiction**

Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, and others are highly addictive. When user posts and uploads, and receives responses as a 'like,' 'follow' or 'comment' the user's brain releases feel-good neurotransmitters, ultimately resulting in wanting a longer period of engagement. Social media, like social gaming, social messaging apps, and WhatsApp can invoke a false sense of social engagement leaving individuals feeling isolated and alone. Endless scrolling of social media feeds, constantly refreshing feeds, or binge-watching TikTok or reels on Instagram or YouTube videos also serve as a way to escape loneliness, fight off boredom and fill various psychological voids. Doom-scrolling and a fear of missing out (FOMO) also play a major part in social media addiction. It is also important to note that social addictions that involve vanity such as posting selfies, using filters, and a hyper-focus on the physical appearance of self or others can transcend into other disorders such as body dysmorphia, disorder or plastic surgery addiction and other ways of altering physical appearance (Chris Iliades, 2016).

Technology addiction can be defined as a behavior related to frequent and obsessive use of technology increasingly practiced despite knowing the negative consequences of technology to the user. This kind of over-dependence on technology can significantly impact personal and social life. Certainly, we need technology to survive in a modern social world, but overreliance on technology and its use to the level of addiction in most areas of life could be devastating socially and personally. Technological dependency can lead people to consequences that span from mild annoyance when away from technology to feelings of isolation, depression, and anxiety. Technology is so addictive because it fulfills our natural human need for stimulation, interaction, and changes in the environment with great efficiency. When someone experiences stress, romance, or a poor grade on an exam, technology can become a quick and easy way to fill the void, and thus become addictive. Television, video games, computer, smartphones, tablets, play stations, the internet, and social media platform are available as easy access points and promote dependence on

technology and negative results. Technology impacts reward points and the pleasure system of the brain in ways similar to substances like drugs and alcohol (Jena, 2019).

Checking, scrolling, and streaming through social media have become increasingly popular activities over the last decade. Although for the majority of people use of social media is not a problem, there is a small percentage of users that become addicted to social networking sites and engage in excessive or compulsive use. Psychologists estimate that as many as 5 to 10% of Americans meet the criteria for social media addiction today. Social media addiction is a behavioral addiction that is characterized as being overly concerned about social media, driven by an uncontrollable urge to log on to or use social media, and devoting so much time and effort to social media that it affects other important aspects of life. Addictive social media use will look much like any other substance use disorder and may include mood modification (i.e., engagement in social media leads to a favorable change in emotional states), salience (i.e., behavioral, cognitive, and emotional preoccupation with social media), tolerance (i.e., the ever-increasing use of social media over time), withdrawal symptoms (i.e., experiencing unpleasant physical and emotional symptoms when social media use is restricted or stopped), conflict (i.e., interpersonal problems ensue because of social media usage), and relapse (i.e., addicted individuals quickly revert back to their excessive social media usage after an abstinence period) (Jena, 2019).

The phenomena of social media addiction can be largely attributed to the dopamine-inducing social environments that social networking sites provide. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram produce the same neural circuitry that is caused by gambling and recreational drugs to keep consumers using their products as much as possible. Studies have shown that the constant stream of re-tweets, likes, and shares from these sites causes the brain's reward area to trigger the same kind of chemical reaction seen with drugs like Cocaine. Neuroscientists have compared social media interaction to a syringe of dopamine being injected straight into the system (Jena, 2019).

### **Sociological Implications of Technology**

Technological Somnambulism: Technological somnambulism is a concept used by Langdon Winner (1983) in his essay "Technology as Forms of Life". Winner states that we are in a state of sleepwalking while using technology, this sleepwalking is caused by several factors such as; one, viewing technology as tools; something that can be put down and picked up again and again; two, separation of the maker and the user of technology with little thought on the effects using and developing that technology, with this view we can easily separate ourselves from technology and fail to look at the long term implication of using that object, three, how technology is creating a new world in which we live. These worlds are created by the restructuring of the common and everyday things around us. "If the experience of modern society shows us anything, however, it is that technologies are not merely aids to human activity but also powerful forces acting to reshape that activity and its meaning. When a sophisticated new technique or instrument is adopted in medical practice, it transforms not only what doctors do, but also the ways people think about health, sickness, and medical care. Widespread alteration of this kind in techniques of communication, transportation, manufacturing, agriculture, and the like are largely what distinguishes our times from early periods of human history. The kinds of things we are apt to see as 'mere' technological entities become much more interesting and problematic, If we began to observe how broadly they are involved in conditions of social and moral life" (Winner, 2004).

In his essay Winner raised the question “ why has a culture so firmly based upon countless sophisticated instruments, techniques, and systems remained steadfast in its reluctance to examine its foundation? In the twentieth century, it is taken for granted that the only reliable source for improving the human condition stems from new machines, techniques, and chemicals. Even the recurring environmental and social ills that have accompanied technological advancement have rarely dented this faith” (Winner,2004) There is a glaring question still to be answered and looked at as to what is the positive link between technical development and human well-being. Technical development whether in agriculture, medicine, industry, communication, and transport is the domain of technicians, engineers, and inventors and it is the human being who uses them. If we try to understand the philosophy behind the development of social media applications and their use for the greater purpose of social and human well-being, we have to pause and ponder upon the positive purpose served by social media applications in, sharing and knowing about friends, family, relative and work. We all know that technology certainly affects society and can also restructure our physical and social world, and so how we live, Winner argues that this understanding of technologies as "forms of life" needs to inform our evaluation and choices regarding technological innovation and adoption. We should not use and adopt technology without thinking about and understanding its prospective consequences for the long haul.

**Cultural lag:** Many sociological theories put forth by scholars earlier to understand social and cultural change are found very relevant in the times of fast pacing scientific and technological development in post-modern societies. The theory of cultural lag is propounded by W.F. Ogburn in his book *Social Change* (1922). By differentiating material and non-material culture he stressed that material culture changes more rapidly than non-material culture. Because there is a tendency in culture to resist change, the intensity of resistance is more for non-material aspects; values, beliefs, norms, and laws than that for material aspects; science, and technology. So changes in technology and material culture are more rapid than changes in non-material culture. In this process of change non-material culture always lags behind material culture which is known as “cultural lag”. Technological development creates new conditions of life for society to adjust and adapt. In the article 'How Technology Changes Society' (Ogburn, 1947), W.F. Ogburn explains “technology changes by changing our environment to which we, in turn, adapt. This change is usually in the material environment, and the adjustment we make to the changes often modifies customs and traditions.” Technological developments affect almost all aspects of social life and culture.

There are several other modern sociological and media theories relevant to understand the intricate connection between technology and society, social media and individual. The theory of the public sphere is the theory of dissemination of ideas or things among the public through a different medium, as social media is the most effective platform to spread any idea quickly to large masses that is part of a democratic system. Now all media are converging into social media serving the purpose of individual and society, the freedom of expression. According to the theory of selectivity modern technology provides many options to choose from. On social media platform, one can choose, create edit and delete content according to likes and need. The use of social media provides a feeling of happiness in connecting and communicating with people near and far. The sense of belongingness is fundamental since human existence is at the core of the theory of pleasure (Freud, 1920).

## **Social Media Addiction: A Theoretical Perspective**

If you give up looking at your phone's Sounds, animations, and content notifications, on every activity of members of your contact list, there is an urge to check your phone every time it pings and all-time engaged with such devices, then it is a matter of concern for individual family and society. The trio, mobile, internet, and social media have intensified the engagement of people, especially youth manifold. Social media is the most common and widely used technology of communication that makes us live in a virtual world of fantasy. Everybody everywhere is found so completely engrossed in scrolling, texting, tweeting, posting, and updating on social media that scholars have shown concern for personal and social well-being and healthy relationship. Many social and psychological organizations at the international level are engaging themselves in studying the dark side of the relationship between technology and human interaction and its effect on individuals and society. Social media use is taking the form of addiction as there was once used to be the case with watching television. The addiction to social media is far more dangerous than that of TV is well established by earlier theories of mass communication.

### **The Hypodermic Needle Theory**

This theory, also known as the magic bullet perspective, describes how huge audiences might react to mass communication. It is called a hypodermic theory because the media (needle) injects the message into the audience's head, altering their behavior and psyche in response to the message, which is accepted without suspicion. The audience is docile and incapable of resisting the media message (Denis 1987).

### **The Magic Bullet Theory**

The magic bullet theory assumes the media message will be directly ingrained in the audience. The theory is based on the visual assumption that the content of the media is comparable to a bullet shot from the "media gun" into the head of the audience. The originator presumes that the message will be directly injected into the audience's brain. The theory supposes that the mass media has a direct, immediate, and significant impact on its listeners and that it should be encouraged. The hypodermic needle theory similarly uses the same concept as the magic bullet theory's "shooting" metaphor. It implies that the media directly injects its messages into a passive audience without any intermediary. To put it simply, it states that communication intended for a certain person is directly received and completely accepted by the recipient (Denis 1987).

### **Theory of Pleasure and Pain**

To understand and fix the motivational force behind human action Sigmund Freud's pleasure-pain principle seems most practical. The pleasure principle states that human beings seek immediate gratification of their desires to generate the feeling of pleasure in our 'system.' The pain principle infers from this concept and states: Whilst seeking pleasure, we also seek to avoid pain (Freud, 1920). Simply put it is human tendency to achieve immediate satisfaction of drives and an immediate relief from pain.

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter released in the reward center of the brain, which performs the function of transmitting messages and signals from one point to another. Oxytocin is commonly called the love hormone useful in bonding within a relationship. Serotonin is a mood stabilizer. Endorphin functions as a happiness booster and pain reliever



in the human body. Dopamine is related to motivation and reward function. When the mind recognizes the onset of such activity that will give pleasure, in the anticipation of the activity dopamine level increases individual feels happy and excited. Social media serves for the immediate response of likes, posts, comments, tweets, and images as a stimulus with every hit, when done repeatedly this creates a chronic dopamine-deficient state in mind, compelling users to spend more time on these sites to get more hits. Consistent and heavy use eventually results in addictive behavior (Simon, 2018).

### **Mind Reacts Equally to Real and Virtual**

The addition of social media can be compared to a serious addiction to cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, and gambling. Very bizarre but true as per studies that a dose of cocaine and scrolling on social media platforms are equally dangerous. Because it is the mind and the body which get addicted to both conditions and reflect the same effects. Using the drug body follows a dopamine (a neurotransmitter) release pattern to experience pleasure from the act. The phenomenon of social media addiction can be largely attributed to the dopamine-inducing social environments that social networking sites provide. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram produce the same neural circuitry that is caused by gambling and recreational drugs to keep consumers using their products as much as possible. Studies have shown that the constant stream of re-tweets, likes, and shares from these sites causes the brain's reward area to trigger the same kind of chemical reaction seen with drugs like Cocaine. Neuroscientists have compared social media interaction to a syringe of dopamine being injected straight into the system. Due to the effect that it has on the brain, social media is addictive both physically and psychologically. According to a new study by Harvard University, self-disclosure on social networking sites lights up the same part of the brain that also ignites when taking an addictive substance. The reward area in the brain and its chemical messenger pathways affect decisions and sensations. When someone experiences something rewarding or uses an addictive substance, neurons in the principal dopamine-producing areas in the brain are activated and dopamine levels rise. Therefore, the brain receives a "reward" and associates the drug or activity with positive reinforcement. This is observable in social media usage, when an individual gets a notification such as a like or mention, the brain receives a rush of dopamine and sends it along reward pathways, causing the individual to feel pleasure. Social media provides an endless amount of immediate rewards in the form of attention from others for relatively minimal effort. The brain rewires itself through this positive reinforcement, making people desire likes, re-tweets, and emoticon reactions. Another perpetuating factor of social media addiction is the fact that the reward centers of the brain are most active when people are talking about themselves. In the non-virtual world, it's estimated that people talk about themselves around 30 to 40% of the time. However, social media is all about showing off one's life and accomplishments, so people talk about themselves a staggering 80% of the time. When a person posts a picture they may receive positive social feedback, which stimulates the brain to release dopamine, rewarding that behavior and perpetuating the social media habit. Social media use becomes problematic when someone views social networking sites as an important coping mechanism to relieve stress, loneliness, or depression. Social media use provides these individuals with continuous rewards that they're not receiving in real life, so they end up engaging in the activity more and more. This continuous use eventually leads to multiple interpersonal problems, such as ignoring real-life relationships, work or school

responsibilities, and physical health, which may then exacerbate an individual's undesirable moods. This then causes people to engage in social networking behavior even more as a way of relieving dysphoric mood states. When social network users repeat the cyclical pattern of relieving undesirable moods with social media use the level of psychological dependency on social media increases (Jena, 2019).

The brain functions in the same pattern with reward, achievement, and with substance. When used for the first time very small dose of the substance gives a kick to the body but, slowly the body gets accustomed to that particular dose and demands more quantity to get that same level of feeling and pleasure. Every time the desire has met the level of feeling heightened increases accordingly, very soon the person starts consuming heavy doses and becomes addicted to the Substance, and the feeling of pleasure reduces as the number of doses increases (Meshi, et al 2019).

Social media addiction occurs also in a similar way. When you open an account on social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram, etc.) for the first time and login, on seeing notifications on the screen, your mind expects a sort of reward. The brain releases dopamine when you see like or thumbs up in your post and photo and any comment on your photo gives you happiness. For the first time only one like can make you feel on cloud nine. The process of getting a reward for a photo and post on social media is very instantaneous, the brain notes a message to do the same activity to get happy again and you indulge in the same activity increasing your time spent on social media to let the state of happiness continue. After some time this excitement starts decreasing only this many likes, only this number of comments, only a few messages, and friend requests are not enough, you want more and more, and you cannot help but log out of that session and start sinking in the virtual world of social media. social media addiction is a behavioral addiction, in which an individual is overly concerned about social media, driven by an uncontrolled urge to log on to and use social media devoting so much time and effort to social media that it impairs other important life areas. Checking and scrolling through social media has become a very popular activity lately (Meshi, et al 2019).

### **Reasons for Social Media Addiction**

In using substances, drugs, gambling, smoking, tobacco, and alcohol, people get easily addicted to but not to other things, there are two factors behind getting addicted to any of these, one is the ease of access and the other is the speedy and instantaneous reward. If we consider the overuse of social media as a behavioural addiction, its sociological relevance is better understood as follows;

**Easy to Access:** To use social media one just need to pick up the phone unlock it and only by tapping the icon on the screen it is all done, it is all there ready to use. (like switching on the button) on the other hand, you get instant responses in form of likes and comments on social networking sites, watching a video on Instagram and Youtube getting entertained, and making you laugh these are different rewards received from engaging in social media.

**Satisfy Basic Human Instinct to Connect:** The human being is gregarious animals mutually interdependent in their needs. Social media as technology fulfills this natural human need for stimulation, interaction, and creating groups and communities with great efficiency. In present times it is a quick and easily available way to fill basic needs. So it is easy too, to become addicted to these social media apps. All human beings are social beings

and the feeling of belonging is natural to us we connect and interact on social media. We need validation or approval of our thoughts and behavior, likes, following, and emojis are a sign of people's approval of what we share, and the more like the more we tend to act and repeat the behaviour.

**Fear of Missing Out:** Another reason for social media addiction is social anxiety triggered by online media use is the fear of missing out (FOMO), the extreme fear of not being included or missing a social event. Users may see pictures of parties to which they were not invited or glimpses of fun outings that they were unable to attend because of work or school obligations, and experience anxiety that no one misses them as a result of fear that they will be forgotten since they're not there. FOMO can take a toll on self-esteem and lead to compulsive checking of social media platforms to ensure that an individual isn't missing out on anything. A study conducted by Harvard University found that social media has a significantly detrimental effect on the emotional well-being of chronic users and their lives, negatively impacting them. FOMO is a kind of phenomenon identified as a strong driver of social networking sites' engagement with every ping checking the latest updates by friends and people (Sebastian, 2021).

**Ego Satisfaction:** The social media platform is one more reason for excessive social media use, people get the recognition of their ego desires by disclosing personal information and pictures to get hearts and strokes. The ego interacts with the social network as an extension of ways in which the individual ego negotiates the world in any case. People can go to any limit to serve the ego and more friends, comments on a post, like posts or status updates, number of mentions, re-tweets, and inclusion onto lists.

**Social Comparison:** Sydney University of Technology's researcher found about 50 negative effects of using social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. According to a study, social media is harmful not only to physical and mental health but also to the job and educational performance. Social media can foster unrealistic expectations of health, beauty, and life on seeing perfect images online called social comparison. We may end up feeling that physical fitness and healthy eating are unattainable and only for a few. What seems effortless in media is not so and creates frustration of not doing things correctly. Overuse of social networking sites is much more problematic in children and young adults because their brains and social skills are still developing. Research has shown that adolescents who habitually use social media from a young age have severely stunted social interaction skills. Even though users are interacting with each other on these platforms, many of these types of interactions don't necessarily translate well to the real world. Studies have found that these individuals have worsened social anxiety in groups, higher rates of depression, negative body image, and lower levels of empathy and compassion toward others. The constant barrage of perfectly filtered photos that appear on social network sites can also cause low self-esteem and disordered eating in young adults. Though many teens know that their peers share only their best pictures and moments on social media, it's very difficult to avoid making comparisons. The ongoing exposure to unrealistic beauty standards through social networking sites can affect how teenagers perceive their bodies. One study from the University of Pittsburgh found a correlation between time spent scrolling through social media apps and negative body image feedback. Those who had spent more time on social media had 2.2 times the risk of reporting eating and body image concerns when compared to their peers who spent less time on social media. Everything from physical

appearance to life circumstances to perceived successes is scrutinized and processed by users. The need to gain likes on social media can cause teens to not only alter their appearance but also to make choices they would otherwise not make, including accepting risky social media challenges and engaging in negative behaviors. The competition for attention and likes can even lead to online bullying, name-calling, rumor-spreading, and harassment among adolescents has always happened, but social media presents young users with more opportunities to do so than ever before. Teenage girls and boys are at particular risk for cyberbullying through the use of social media. In addition to the implemented techniques of face-to-face bullying, the spreading and posting of non-consensual explicit pictures is a form of cyberbullying that has gained popularity in recent years. One-quarter of teens say they have been sent explicit images they didn't ask for, while 7% say someone has shared explicit images of them without their consent. This type of abuse, along with other forms of cyberbullying, has led to increased suicide rates among young

New research from Michigan State University conducted by Dar Meshi and others, findings published in the "*Journal of Behaviour Addiction*" found a connection between social media use and impaired risky decision making which is commonly absent in substance addiction. Meshi and his co-authors took 71 participants for a survey and measured their psychological dependence on Facebook, similar to addiction. The researchers had the participants do the Iowa Gambling Task, a common exercise used by psychologists to measure decision-making. Meshi and his colleagues found that by the end of the gambling task the worse people performed by choosing from bad decks, the more excessing their social media use. The better they did in the task, the less their social media use. People who abuse substances have similar outcomes on the Iowa gambling Task (Meshi et al, 2019).

### **Negative Effects of Social Media Addiction on Individuals and Society**

Conventionally humans have an inherent instinct of exploring new things, and places, meeting new people, cultivate hobbies, and attaining new knowledge, these activities require time and patience. The ease of access and speedy reward obtained from social media on phone is far easier than the previous ones. Social media addiction is very harmful to the future life of everyone. Social media use is just a waste of time apparently that it is not good for time investment as we feel lost after putting down phones and stop scrawling. We all are familiar that social media platforms work on a set algorithm, it shows similar results to our searches which creates an increase in radicalization. If you like the rightist opinion the algorithm filters the same results for you if you like the leftist view it filters only leftist views to show you on screen. The use of social media increases the feeling of insecurity and depression because pictures and images taken through filters look awesome and bring more likes, while teenagers and youth feel anxious about looking at these pictures, especially when, they get less number of hits they go into depression.

There is an undeniable link between social media use and mental health. Research has shown that there is negative mental health and low self-esteem in users of social media. While social media platforms have their benefits, using them too frequently can make people feel increasingly unhappy and isolated. These negative emotional reactions are not only produced due to the social pressure of sharing things with others but also the comparison of material things and lifestyles that these sites promote. On Instagram and Facebook, users see curated content: advertisements and posts that are specifically designed to appeal to users

based on their interests. Users may see others posting about their great jobs, excellent partners, or beautiful homes and feel happy or inspired as a result. Others, however, may see these pictures and feel jealous, depressed, or even suicidal since their own life is not as "perfect" as those that they see on Facebook or Instagram.

Recent studies have found that frequent social network users believe that other users are happier and more successful than they are, especially when they do not know them very well in real life. Social media facilitates an environment in which people are comparing their realistic offline selves to the flawless, filtered, and edited online versions of others, which can be detrimental to mental well-being and perception of self. Excessive social media use can not only cause unhappiness and general dissatisfaction with life in users but also increase the risk of developing a mental attitude toward others can lead to feelings of self-consciousness or a need for perfectionism and order, which often manifests as social anxiety disorder, health issues such as anxiety, depression and constantly comparing oneself with others.

According to news published in *Washington Post*, the mother of an 11-year-old sues Instagram, Snapchat, and Meta companies. She has filed a lawsuit against the social media grants, that her daughter killed herself in July 2021 after developing an "extreme addiction" to the platforms, due to a lack of adequate safeguards. Recent disclosures have revealed that Social Media platforms use complex algorithms and psychological manipulation to maximize screen time allowing damaging posts and hurtful communication to be fed to vulnerable kids and teens. Effects of this include a 146 percent increase in suicide for the 12 - 16 age group from 2007-2018, which have been attributed to increased social media and screen time by experts. Social media Victims law center (SMVLC) works to hold social media companies legally accountable for the harm they inflict on vulnerable users and seeks to get social media companies to elevate consumer safety to the forefront of their economic analysis and design safer platforms that protect users from foreseeable harm. A more recent Harvard study suggests that Facebook use including liking others' posts, creating one's posts, and clicking on links, are negatively associated with overall well-being. One possible explanation is that individuals believe that their own life compares negatively to what they see presented by others mostly likely because people tend to display the most positive aspects of their life on social media. There is nothing more depressing than reading a friend's posts about how great their kids are, posting pictures of the family at the beach, in the park, or on vacation, and then thinking about your own life where the kids are not well-behaved and a handful. Scientists believe that the feeling of wanting to do something on social media triggers Dopamine in the brain and causes us to seek, desire, and search for pleasurable activities that enhance our well-being. Dependency on social media, gaming, entertainment, sharing photos, and streaming videos have become a new unhealthy normal. Kids, teens, and adolescents are highly vulnerable to the effects of social media. Social networking sites; Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat provide new dangerous opportunities for exposure to involve drugs and alcohol experimentation. Overuse of social media can pose a serious risk by giving a false sense of relational security as being connected with unseen individuals across the world. Social media moves with speed making everything looking for available within the blink of an eye. This encourages an unhealthy expectation for instant gratification of desires. Even a slow internet connection or "unplugging" can make people irritated and anxious. Sleep disorders are common with people overusing social media overnight resulting in low academic, athletic, and social performance. Because of a sedentary lifestyle

and binge eating weight gain, cardiovascular disease, and vision impairment may result. Personal social skills may deteriorate. Even if healthy people are challenged by life transitions in playing different roles, it becomes even more difficult for those wholly absorbed in technology. Social media-addicted people become increasingly unable to distinguish between the lived and the virtual realities that produce instant stimulation, pleasure, and reward. As such, the extreme use of social media can disrupt normal patterns of mood and socialization in users. Studies have shown that brain scans of young people with internet addiction disorder (IAD) are similar to those of people with substance addictions to alcohol, cocaine, and smoking. (Arshad et al, 2018).

### **Digital Detox**

A digital detox is a time during which someone significantly reduces the time spent using electronic devices such as smartphones, computers, or social media, which should be adopted as a new norm and wise way of precaution. Observing one hour a day, no screen hour, and one day in a week as no social media day may help in controlling overuse. This can include simple steps, such as turning off sound notifications and only checking social media sites once an hour. Other changes can include social media fast, having periods in the day where there is self-imposed non-screen time, such as during meal times, or leaving the phone in a separate room at night so as not to disturb sleep. This allows for a restored focus on social interaction in the physical world and reduces dependency on networking sites. 'Detoxing' from digital devices is often seen as a way to focus on real-life social interactions without distractions that phone and digital devices and social media create. Before too late it is wise to take charge of the situation before it poses, serious challenges to our social and personal life. Social media serves to connect people virtually but when it starts taking away the time of real-world relationships and connection then it is time to ponder its implications. Digital detox or social media detox is considered the most effective way to focus on real-life social interactions completely, by refraining from social media sites, Apps, and digital devices occasionally. The stress and various psycho-social problems that stem from constant connectivity in virtual spaces can be avoided by digital detox. Doing digital detox is a way of setting limits and reducing the time spend on social media. By predefining the absence of digital devices and social media connections, one can live fulfilled and happy personal and social life. Digital detox is a useful strategy to master the use of social media and digital devices and make them work for them rather than being the slave of the technology. By forgoing digital devices, at least temporarily, people can let go of the addiction that stems from constant connectivity and immersion in the digital world (Cherry, 2020).

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

Although the use of social media is undeniable to recognize who is genuinely addicted and at risk of developing an addiction to social media is necessary. This can be determined by observing social media activities as if spending a lot of time thinking about social media or planning to use social media; feeling urges to use social media more and more; using social media to forget about personal problems; often trying to reduce the use of social media without success; becoming restless or troubled if unable to use social media; using social media so much that it has harmed their job or studies and behavior; If more than 3 observations found present, it is an indication of the presence of social media addiction, seeking immediate intervention to stop the addiction being severe. Prevention of technology,

internet, and social media addiction is very important for a healthy society. It is the responsibility of the family, society, and other social organizations to check technology use among people especially kids, teens, and adolescents. This must not be used as an escape from real-world challenges, emotions, socialization, or identity. Adults can help children and teens have healthy relationships with technology when they provide plenty of healthy highs, some of them offline. Nurturing pro-social identity development in the real world by being proactive, creative, and excited about something they are good at and want to do, they will naturally gravitate toward it. To go with technology is the need of the hour to survive in the modern social world, but severe overreliance or addiction can be devastating socially and personally. As social animals, we need human contact for emotional and social well-being. Social media must not be used to fill the void at the expense of real-world interpersonal interactions rather a healthy balance must be achieved between social media usage and offline activities.

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## Presence of Women on Online Platforms - Social Media: A Sociological Analysis

Binu Singh

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**Abstract:** The world of communication is ever-changing due to the developments in the field of science and technology which have given various means of communication. To fulfill the need for communication in modern times, social media is emerging to be one of the important communication mediums. Social media is a means of interaction to share and exchange views with virtual communities. After 'tech savvy' it is 'social media savvy' that has become a synonym with today's generation in India. About 2/3rd of Indians spend time on different social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, youtube, etc. According to Statista.com, as per the data of the year 2020, 60.0 % of the total Facebook users are men, and 40.0% of users are women, which illustrates the barriers women faced in India to access technology and information. From the data, it can be seen that this communication media has channelized the social system in which men predominate in their role of sharing views on morality, authority, special privileges, and political leadership. Social media in India has become a weapon of patriarchy, where an attempt is made to control, intimidate and eventually silence women. Shaming and harming women is an age-old practice, except that real-time information sharing through technology makes the outreach greater and the damage is huge. There are instances where celebrities were targeted for wearing a dress that was inappropriate according to them. Mithali Raj, the previous Captain of the Indian Women's cricket team posted a picture wearing a spaghetti top brought a lot of trolling for not being "sanskaari". Such trolling is a perfect example to show the gender stereotype where a woman is not given the freedom to wear what she wants. The main objective of this paper is to develop an in-depth understanding of the growing significance of social media among the youth in highlighting various issues and problems. Also, to understand the various instances in which social media has targeted women with injustices and atrocities.

**Keywords:** Internet, Social Media, Women, Display Pics and Status, Trolling.

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The world is rapidly changing due to advancements in the realm of science and technology. These days it is hard to escape from the presence of technology. The use of satellites, the Internet, telephones computer networking, and television known as information and communication technologies have revolutionized the way the world communicates in today's time. The first one was public broadcast media such as television, radio, and newspapers. Technology is evolving at a very fast rate, and what most people did not even think possible a few years ago, is now a reality. One of the miracles of today's communication is the Internet. The word Internet is defined as a series of inter-networked computers communicating with each other in a common language. Internet appeared for the first time in history in 1972 when the networking protocol TCP/IP was invented, allowing the widely dispersed computer networks to be inter-netted together. Early communication technologies, like the labour-intensive postal service, illustrate the basic nature of point-to-point communication. People could initiate communication by composing the message and turning it over to the postal service, which, acted as an intermediary and delivered the message to whom so ever it was addressed. There was a technical development that conveniently captures the sense in which the social reach of switched formats became defined in terms of networks they bound together. The Internet broke the barrier. It became the tool to send information to known or unknown destinations. It can be considered as one-



to-one communication media like WhatsApp or many-to-many like facebook. One of the tools for getting connected to friends and family is social media. It should not be seen primarily as the platform upon which people post, but rather the content that is posted on these platforms. Social media is a rising trend in the world today. Communication skills are exemplified by the use of social media networking (Gudia, A.S, 2018). Social media is a place where people interact, create and share information and ideas with friends. They share these ideas not only with friends but also with virtual friends. (Basuroy , 2022) This platform is very helpful in keeping people stay connected with each other whether they are far away and also helps them to be updated. Social media cannot be seen primarily as a platform where they post, but rather as the content that is posted on these platforms. These contents vary from region to region and person to person. Most of the college girls are using Facebook, Twitter, Orkut, and Instagram which give scope for disseminating information all over the world. The techno-savvy girls know how to avail the of technological advancement to enhance their knowledge. The usability of social media by these women has increased because of ease of availability and user-friendly platform. They are easy to learn as they use the plug-and-play interface for better connectivity. (Singh ,2019)

## **Review of Literature**

Gender socialization and differential conditioning have created different narratives and standards that classify men as boorish, masculine, and outspoken. Women, on the other hand, are expected to be more docile and submissive. Therefore, the idea of women being assertive and voicing their opinions is immediately seen as a threat and attacked online. It is also observed that most threats against women are for being outspoken (Chapman, 2014).

Online violence against women is essentially an extension of offline violence directed at women owing to their gender- it targets their sexuality and reduces them to sexual objects and reinforces gender stereotypes. Online violence leads to women being silenced or self-censoring their opinions because of fear of backlash. Therefore, such violence and abuse act as barriers to women being able to exercise their rights to equality and freedom of expression (Salim M., 2018).

A study conducted by the Internet Democracy Project shows that online abuse of women is increasing because more people are coming online. Threats are being used to silence women. The study found that some of the hateful trolling they faced included being called “whore” to 'terrorist”, getting their defaced pictures posted online, and receiving threats (Kurup, S. 2013).

Female users have a great impact on self-identification and self-construction of gender (Blower,et.al.2005) The online environment plays an important role in the creation of the image of self and the construction of their idea of femininity. Self-construction of the image has a major influence on the online environment.(Ghosh, 2022)

The Internet is offering enough potential for “good”. This interactive platform allows for the rapid creation of networks and contacts, online communication, and engagement in ways that benefit society. One of the notable examples is that of digital political activism, a phenomenon most visibly illustrated by the Arab Spring and the role of social media and online communications played in it, particularly for women. The potential for “good” on the Internet can be powerfully demonstrated through the role of social media platforms. However,

recent trends in online abuse and social media misuse suggest that these ideals have been overshadowed by the realities of online interaction (Barker Kim and Baghdady, 2017).

Increasingly, safe online participation is being threatened through manifestations of online violence, especially online violence against women, such behaviours reflect the normalization of inequality offline and online outbursts are reflections of offline patriarchal tendencies. This directly undermines the ideals of the internet, which instead of acting as a foundation for challenging everyday normalization of abuse and inequality, is being used as a tool for reinforcing inequality and silencing women online. This has become particularly evident through the phenomenon of the offline prevalence of women stereotypes.

In an increasingly digital global society where gender stereotypes are once more powerful signals and political rallying cries, it is becoming more difficult to battle everyday misogyny, especially when the Internet gives such attitudes and behaviour a voice, too frequently accepted without challenge. If the internet is at its strongest when there is an open, respectful exchange of ideas and debate, social media often acts as an echo chamber for those with anti-feminist agendas and opinions. One example concerning freedom of expression is how the echo chamber effect often breeds and encourages ideas that are acceptable only to those who “shout the loudest.” This means that other opinions, including dissenting ones, are shut down and pushed out of the online space (Barker Kim and Baghdady, 2017). This is partially attributable to various ascendant right-wing political factions, but also those already in a position of political power.

### **Method of Study**

Participants consisted of 200 girl students from a renowned college in Vadodara. A convenient snowball method was used for data collection by a survey questionnaire developed on the google form. Among the participants, 90.0% were between the ages of 18-23. Of the college students sampled, 61.0% were urban while 39.0% were of rural background. A random selection of WhatsApp groups was done to collect the sample. A soft copy of written questions was created to collect the data. Questions in the survey included the following areas: demographics, the extent of usage of social media, and any situation which they felt are due to their gender. The questionnaire was sent to the respondents through Whatsapp messenger and expected a reply through the same media. The questions on the instrument were designed to satisfy the research questions as outlined in the introduction of this study. Therefore, the emailed questionnaire was considered to have content validity.

## Discussion and Analysis

The research indicated that college students love to send and receive messages from their family and friends. The situation is like they live and breathe through these virtual communication mediums. It can be inferred from the fact that all the respondents interacted through a questionnaire sent through WhatsApp. Cultural norms and values make us who we are, what we feel connected to, and how we behave. “The day starts with Social media and ends with social media”, said one of the respondents. This is not for one respondent but for most of them ( 86.0 %). True to Indian culture we love to greet our elders, friends, and family, so the new way of doing the same is through social media (87.0%). They are sending good morning and good night messages on a daily routine and during festivals, they find it the best way to show their feelings and gesture of wishes through social media (95.0%). Their Display Picture is again the best way of showing their daily happenings in life (92.0 %). The messaging is not limited to friends but to family and neighbourhood too. Social media is now part of their life. They spend a lot of time on social media. Almost seven out of every ten respondents (71.0%) spend almost three hours per day on WhatsApp whereas one-fourth of them spend three to six hours per day. The remaining respondents admitted that they spend even more than that on social media, especially on WhatsApp.

When asked how many times they log on to social media, these young college students informed that they check or log on very frequently, even twenty to forty times a day. They explained that generally, they hold their mobile in hand so that they can immediately see the messages received or can forward them to others. Digital transformation has provided new avenues for the economic empowerment of women and can contribute to greater gender equality. Indian women are now well-equipped with smartphones and this leads to their better presence on various social media platforms. Their increased presence on social media can help bridge the divide by giving women the possibility to express their viewpoints and enhance their knowledge through the best use of social media.

When it comes to sharing content, they love to chat in person, and in groups, love to send videos of various issues like hilarious, and social issues, and enjoy sharing cultural vibes and festivity and the latest happenings in society (Table-1 ). So, it can be said that social media messenger is helping to retain our family bond and making the bond more affectionate.

**Table-1**  
**Content sharing and social media**

Content shared Through social media	Percentage
Chatting (individual and group)	79.0
Sharing image files GM, GN, and Festivals	85.0
Sharing content on cultural diversity	79 .0
Sharing content on the latest happenings	89.0
Changing Display pic as per festivals and latest happening in life	80.0
Keep the location mode on	67.0

not open to all or the public. The media which gives freedom to everybody is not safe for women to be online.

Social media is all about meeting new friends. Facebook account is seen by a large

But there is always a growing concern about their data, being that data information or pictures, are taken away without their knowledge, or sometimes they receive comments on their pictures and videos which restrict them and create a feeling that they may be trolled. Thus they always love to keep their account private and

number of friends. Here online friends include a person who appears among the contact on Facebook. As is clear from Table:2, about 55.0% of students said that they make anonymous friends belonging to various platforms. Ease of communication through text, video chats through phone or computer is making social media the part and parcel of their life. Not only that, without knowing the background or just to have global friends they want to make friends with people whom they haven't met. The ease of finding friends online is also making them more prevalent on social media. They are excited to know more about these folks. Not only that they feel that through online global friends, but they can also learn about their culture, life, and language(69.0%). Interestingly, when asked whether their parents know about these anonymous friends, only 22.0% of respondents were affirmative. Most of them admitted that they don't know about them( 78.0 %).

**Table-2**  
**Making Anonymous Friends Online**

Making friends online	Percentage of respondents (Yes)
Do you make friends online whom you do not know offline	55.0
Probable reasons for making friends online -To know about their culture, language, and life	69.0
Parents knowing about these online friends	22.0
You make online friends to hide your true self	40.0

From the above data, it can be inferred that going online without knowing its threat is leading them to various difficult situations. Girls hide their true selves to safeguard their self since online users sometimes write comments which may harm their psychological well-being. But this can be taken as an example of an alternate personality. The online platform

is allowing them to make friends and hide about inner selves. This is mostly with personae who are egophobic. And when it comes to India, more restrictions on girls about the behavioural pattern allows them to explore more on the internet hiding the activities they are doing online from their family and friends.

Various questions were asked about their growing concern about social media, and it was found that they are facing a lot of difficulties to be online and being part of social media.

According to a report from the United Nations, almost 35% of women face some or other kind of violence. But surprisingly, to know that 60 percent of women face cyberbullying or trolling on social media all over the world. Because of strict laws and ostensible social control, men normally are put in check and

**Table-3**  
**Threats of Being Present on Social Media**

Content shared Through social media	Percentage
Chatting (individual and group)	79.0
Sharing image files GM, GN, and Festivals	85.0
Sharing content on cultural diversity	79 .0
Sharing content on the latest happenings	89.0
Changing Display pic as per festivals and latest happening in life	80.0
Keep the location mode on	67.0

show controlled behaviour, but as soon as they come on social media, where the control is not much stricter, they start trolling women which is a kind of violence. This violence may not be physical but it affects the mental health of women in a very extreme manner. So all over the world, women feel unsafe in the same way on social media as they feel while going on unknown and strange roads or markets or in malls. From table 3, it can be seen that women

come online but with fear. It is because the Internet is a mirror of the mindset of people in general. Discrimination continues even in democratic countries like India and is reflected in online space. Feeling unsafe on social media and carrying the fear of being trolled is a part of systematized patriarchy. Society norms and attitudes play a major role in such incidents. Whenever women choose these media to express themselves, they have a greater risk of being trolled (60.0 % of respondents feel the same).

According to Planet International report, 60.0 percent of women face cyber trolling out of which 20.0 percent have to close their accounts under pressure. The survey was done on 14000 women in 22 countries being 15 to 25 years of age.

The pattern of women being trolled on various social media platforms is:

**Table-4**

**Women Being Trolled Over the World**

Social media platform	Percentage of women being trolled
Facebook	38.0
Instagram	23.0
Whatsapp	14.0
Snap chat	10.0
Twitter	9.0
Tiktok	6.0

*Source: Planet International*

On the Internet men are taken as more outspoken and masculine and women. On the other hand woman are expected to be more submissive and modest. When on Internet, they try to put their opinion and speak for themselves or speak against the thought process of society, a woman is often attacked online and receives a threat of life.

Recently a survey was done by Vistasavings.com around Delhi and nearby areas to know the pattern of women trolling; it was found that cyber violence has increased up to 26.0 percent. When it comes to punishments to be given against the crime, it was found that out of 40.0 percent of cases registered; only 25.0 percent get punished while the rest of them go free which is again a growing concern and alarming situation for women.

According to Viasetsavings.com, which also takes care of online surveys, about 74.0 percent of women have to block people for some other reason as they find comments indecent or unsafe, or very disturbing. When it comes to Instagram women are more vulnerable to trolling than men. The motive of social networking websites is always to make people come closer, but it has given a weapon to men to exploit women. Because of this, 59.0 percent of women want to keep their accounts private whereas only 44.0 percent of men keep their accounts private. The inequality which we created in our real world can be seen to govern the virtual world as well. Trolling is a universal phenomenon across social media. But the way women are trolled is very different from the way they actually are. Trolling often leads to rape and death threats. The case study below shows the incident where a girl tried to voice her viewpoint.

The Feature of the Internet with anonymity gives freedom to trolls to speak without fear of content and action being traced back to them. There is no check through which it can be ensured whether the person's age is real, or gender is true. Everything including gender, age, caste, class, nationality, location, region, etc can be fake. This is the biggest threat. The incidence of twenty-year-old Gurmehar Kaur has been in the spotlight after raising her voice

In a democratic country, with an increase in the spread of usage of the Internet all over the globe, it has become a place where individuals can voice their opinion. But this voice of opinion is often conditioned by gender socialization and differential conditioning. Even

against violence on campuses in the wake of clashes in Ramjas College last week. Kaur has been advocating peace—from endorsing stronger Indo-Pak ties to free speech among youth.

### **Who is Gurmehar Kaur?**

Gurmehar Kaur was born to Rajvinder Kaur and Captain Mandeep Singh in Jalandhar. She lost her father at the age of two after a Rashtriya Rifles camp came under militant attack in Jammu and Kashmir in 1999. He was one of the seven personnel killed in the attack. Kaur resides in Delhi, where she is studying English Literature at Lady Sri Ram College for Women, Delhi University. She is also the ambassador for Postcards for Peace, a charitable organization that helps eliminate any form of discrimination. Gurmehar Kaur launched a #ProfileForPeace campaign last April, advocating peace between India and Pakistan. “If there was no war between us, my father would still be here,” she had said. In her viral video, Gurmehar asked both governments to “stop pretending” and “solve the problem” (anonymous, 2017).

Many social media users deemed Gurmehar anti-national because she wanted a peaceful relationship with Pakistan, a country that instigated the Kargil war during which she lost her father, according to the claims made by Gurmehar in the said video. However, Captain Mandeep Singh was killed 10 days after the war. Virender Sehwag, in an attempt to take a jibe at Gurmehar Kaur, tweeted a photo of himself holding a Photoshopped placard that read, "I didn't score two triple centuries, my bat did". He captioned the photo "bat me hai dum" along with a #BharatJaisiJagahNahi (Agnihotri, S. 2017).

Indian woman wrestlers Babita Phogat and Geeta Phogat joined Virender Sehwag and Randeep Hooda in criticizing Gurmehar. "Gurmehar Kaur's view that her father was killed by war and not Pakistan was wrong for me. It's against our nation and martyrs," said Babita Phogat. Her elder sister Geeta Phogat too supported Babita's views and said, "If you speak against nation, people will not like it. Irrespective of gender, the person won't be spared." Comments by users on her post were immense. People were supporting her and people were taking a stand against her ideas. During this process, she received rape and death threats on her post. The situation went so intensely bitter that she had to leave Delhi, deactivate her account, and be confined for almost two years in her home without being online. This case raises the question, “Is it safe for women being online?”

### **Conclusion**

Today's women are very active on social media. They are using this device to communicate naturally across the world. They are very expressive and love to enjoy the power of communication media. But, at the same time trolling shows a typical regressive mindset of our society. So does this mean that women should not be online? First of all, it is very important to make all understand the real usage of powerful tools i.e Internet in their hands. Though gender disparity is prevalent in our society, the right kind of education about the Internet before they start using this tool is important. Not only that, equal participation of women and men in electronic media in decision-making, policy-making, education, and awareness programmes should be a regular feature. It is not that only men should be told to write wisely on Internet, but also women. Going offline is never a solution to trolling. To be on the Internet is their right. Social media is a place where they are trolled, but at the same time, it is a medium that can bring voice to their words. One of the most talked about movement was #metoomovement: trigger point. Such movements give voice to common women. Not only this, all platforms have a reporting link where a complaint can be made.

Every state has a cyber cell Department where they can report. The complaint can be registered on the National cyber crime portal online: [www.cybercrime.gov.in](http://www.cybercrime.gov.in). An email can be sent to the Women and child welfare department. Email: [Complaint-mwcd@gov.onNational Women Commission](mailto:Complaint-mwcd@gov.onNationalWomenCommission) takes initiative on complaints registered and takes an action. Again the complaint can be sent to the website: <http://ncwapps.nic.in> or an email to [complaintcell-ncw@nic.in](mailto:complaintcell-ncw@nic.in). Complaints can be registered at a nearby police station and registered an F.I.R. Also there is a helpline number: 91-11-26944880. Claiming equality on the Internet is a challenge. But regulatory initiatives and legal reforms have led to meaningful change or robust protection of online rights. The notion of an inclusive space, welcoming to all, is under constant threat. But it is time to that rethink that giving space to women in this online world, or else the avenues and areas which it opens for them in various fields like education, leisure, and work will not to benefit to her.

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# Social Impact of Covid-19 in Udaipur District- An Epidemiological Study

Purnima Singh, Sandhya Pathania

**Abstract:** Covid-19 was declared a global pandemic in early 2020 and since then it has affected the lives of all human beings on this planet. The normal life of people in India and other countries got disturbed socially, economically, politically, and in all other aspects. Udaipur also faced such a critical phase. Udaipur, one of the most attractive tourist destinations of India situated in southern Rajasthan, suffered severe setbacks. Covid has an adverse effect on the economy and society as a whole. The spread of Covid-19 during the first, second, and third waves showed varied impacts on the social life of the residents of Udaipur. The paper is based on secondary data and discusses the social impact of Covid-19 during the three waves in the Udaipur district. This is basically an Epidemiological Study.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, Udaipur, Lockdown, Social Impact, Epidemiological Study

After the appearance of the first case of Covid at the end of the year 2019 in the Wuhan province of China, the disease spread rapidly across the entire world in a few months, despite the preventive measures taken by international agencies and various governments. The covid-19 disease was declared a pandemic in March 2020, there has been global death and destruction due to the infection from SARS-CoV. "Covid -19 has spread worldwide including USA, India, Brazil, Russian Federation, France, The United Kingdom, Italy, Spain, Argentina, Colombia, Germany, Mexico, Poland, Iran, Turkey, and many more countries" (WHO, 2020). The pandemic shifted the focus of the whole world from economic development to the safety of human lives. The virus has caused unprecedented destruction of human lives and loss to business and economy.

Covid -19 affected everyone's life and its impact was seen on society as a whole. Therefore, it is important to study its effect epidemiologically. First, we should know the meaning of epidemiology.

"The branch of medicine dealing with the incidence, distribution, and possible control of disease and other related factors relating to health is called epidemiology" (Oxford Dictionary, 2022). Thus, this also becomes an important area of interest in the Sociology of Health. In this epidemiological study, the social impact, as well as the incidence, distribution, and possible control of this disease in the Udaipur district, has been discussed.

The first case in India was recorded in March 2020 when an Italian tourist who was visiting the country tested positive. After that, there has been a steep rise in cases and the first peak of the pandemic was reached in December, the low level of transmission was made possible by the timely measures of lockdown and physical distancing by the government. "However, the lifting of the lockdown gradually from all the states and relaxation of the curfew measures along with the large interstate movement of people caused a sudden surge in cases in April and May 2021, this resulted in the second wave of infection which was more grievous than the first wave and caused a greater number of cases than the first wave ensuring an additional burden on the overstrained health resources of the country. The third wave was comparatively less severe and was witnessed in early 2022" (Sharma et al. 2020). "The total number of cases in the world by Mid-June 2022 crossed 540 million with a total of 6.3 million deaths. India stands second in the world with regards to the number of cases, the



country has recorded 4.32 crore positive cases till mid-June 2022 and 5.24 lakh deaths due to the virus” (Cascella et al. 2022).

The strategy required in the first wave of the pandemic was different from the second wave as the factors like the previous experience with the disease, immunization status and the number of cases all required a shift in the planning to tackle the second wave. Nothing much was required during the third wave as the preparedness level including the level of vaccination was much higher while the virus effect was mild. The present article is a comparative study to assess the management of the Covid-19 pandemic and its impact on society during the first, second, and third waves in the Udaipur district of Rajasthan.

**Study Area:** Udaipur district is one of the 33 districts of Rajasthan State. “It is located in southern Rajasthan and shares a border with Gujarat state. Its neighboring districts Sirohi and Dungarpur also share a border with Gujarat while Pratapgarh and Chittorgarh districts share a border with Madhya Pradesh” (Agarwal et al. 1979). A large number of migrants go for employment in Gujarat and Maharashtra, while laborers from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, and Madhya Pradesh come for employment in the Udaipur district. Udaipur being a tourist destination invites a lot of domestic and foreign tourists. The majority of domestic tourists are from Gujarat.

**Materials and Methods:** This is basically an Epidemiological Study. It is a retrospective observational study based on the secondary data of Covid received from the district administration, district medical and health department, and data available in the public domain. After taking the permission of state authorities the data on Covid of Udaipur district was collected from the registry. The data were temporally divided into the first, second, and third waves. The first wave was considered from March 2020 to December 2020 and the Second Wave of the infection was considered from the period of January 2021 to July 2021. The third wave was witnessed in Jan-Feb 2022. All the disease peaks were included in the respective wave of the disease.

**Temporal and Spatial Spread of Covid-19:** “According to the 2011 census, the total population of Udaipur district was 30.68 lakhs contributing 4.48% of the total population of Rajasthan State” (District Census Handbook (2011)). A total of 74, 318 Covid positive cases were recorded from the district which is nearly 6% of the total number of cases in the state of Rajasthan (1286423), out of all the cases 775 died due to the infection while 98.9% the patients recovered completely. The recovery rate from Covid 19 of the district has been marginally higher than in the State but is equal to the Death Rate due to Covid at the National level. Amongst the total samples received, the sample positivity of the district was 9.7% which was more than both the national and state average positivity rate of 7 and 7.6% respectively.

The total number of cases was 74, 318 up to 31.05.2022 out of them 73, 530 were cured. The total number of deaths was 775 and recovery rate was 98.93% and the death rate due to Covid 19 in Udaipur District was 1.04%. This is the official figure for death but the actual number was much higher. As more than 2134 covid deaths have been accepted by the district administration in the distribution of Covid ex-gratia relief. This gives a death rate of 2.87%.

The number of positive cases showed an initially slow rise at the beginning of 2020 due to strict national lockdown measures by the government, however, due to lifting of the travel restriction and widespread defiance of rules by the public led to an increase in the number of

cases in the first quarter of the Year 2021 which culminated into a second wave of infection peaking in the month of April and May. The peak of the second wave was more prominent as compared to the first wave and the number of cases increased to nearly 10 times the peak of the first wave. The third wave was witnessed in Jan 2022.

**Age-Wise Distribution of Cases:** “All ages are at risk of getting the illness. This is because the ailment is transmitted through large droplets that result from coughing and sneezing by symptomatic individuals” (Milibari, 2020). The age-wise distribution of covid

**Table-1**

**Age-Wise Distribution of Cases**

Age Group	April to Dec 2020	Jan to Dec 2021	Jan to May 2022
0-9	267	975	498
10-19	1314	3397	2120
20-29	1976	9932	4550
30-39	2179	10779	3817
40-49	1844	7977	2606
50-59	1684	5888	2106
60-69	1305	3939	1397
70 and above	759	2268	729

*Source: CMHO office, Udaipur, 2022*

cases during these three waves in the Udaipur district is shown in Table 1. The table above represents the age-wise distribution of cases of Covid-19 in the district, it can be inferred from the above table that for each age group, the number of cases during the second wave was significantly higher as compared to the first wave and while the number of positive cases increased, the age structure affected by the virus remained similar in both the waves. The highest increase was seen in the 30-39 years age group between the two waves. Due to its higher level of movement outside the home, the working population was affected more in all three waves. The low percentage of cases above 60 years of age can be marginally credited to the effect of vaccination in the 60+ age group before the second wave peak as well as their chances to manage to remain within four walls.

**Gender-Wise Distribution of the Cases:** The gender-wise distribution of the total number of Covid positive cases shows that 56.5% were males and 43.4% were females out of total positive cases. The gender-wise distribution of positive cases during the pandemic is shown in Table 2.

**Table-2**

**Gender-Wise Distribution of Cases**

Gender	April'20 to Dec'20	%	Jan'21 to Dec '21	%	Jan'22 to May '22	%
Female	3862	34.09	17589	38.9	7028	39.5
Male	7466	65.91	27566	61	10808	60.5
Total	11328	100	45155	100	17836	100

*Source: CMHO office, Udaipur*

As seen in table 2, the number of males affected by the disease was significantly higher than the females, and also, we can see the surge of cases in the year 2021 as compared to the previous year. More infection in males can be attributed to their exposure and out-of-home movement.

**Fatality Rate in Study Area:** The fatality rate demonstrates the true impact of any epidemic on society. The period of the second wave was many times more fatal than the rest of the epidemic period. The fatality rate from April 2020 to May 2022 clearly demonstrates

that the death rate during the first wave was significantly less as compared to the second wave and the peak of the first wave nearly corresponds to the peak of the death rate of the first wave. Similarly, the peak death rate of the second wave is in June and July however the number of cases peaked in May. These observations lead us to believe that death due to the Covid is caused by significant morbidity which can take the time up to a month or a fortnight. Also, the overall peak of the death rate was nearly six times higher than the first wave. The third wave had very low mortality because of higher vaccination and better preparedness.

**Availability of Resources during Three Waves:** The district was not well prepared for combating the disease at the beginning of 2020. During the initial lockdown and thereafter the resources were continuously augmented and capacity increased according to need. The level of resource mobilization and percentage of vaccination before each wave played a key factor in the number of hospitalization and fatality due to the disease. Although the second wave was more fatal and the virus strain was also very deadly. The following table gives the availability of resources during the three waves in the Udaipur district: -

**Table-3**

**Availability of Resources before the Three Waves in Udaipur District**

S.No.	Resource/ facility for Covid	Quantity before the respective wave		
		Ist (01.04.2020)	IInd (01.04.2021)	IIIRD (01.01.2022)
1.	Total Bed available	900	1928	3937
2.	Oxygen Bed	289	635	2030
3.	ICU Bed with Ventilator	89	188	243
4.	ICU Bed without Ventilator	54	90	300
5.	Oxygen Plant Capacity	1840	3660	9420
6.	Oxygen Concentrator	14	503	2983
7.	Oxygen cylinder	275	358	587
8.	DG Set in Rural area	8	8	32
9.	Ambulances	9	12	22
10.	First dose % Vaccination of Adults	0	9.36%	94.63%

*Source: CMHO office, Udaipur*

It is evident from this table that the total number of ordinary, oxygen, and ICU bed availability and ventilator availability has significantly increased from the first wave to the second wave and then in the third wave. Similarly, oxygen plant capacity and availability of oxygen concentrators, cylinders, DG sets, and ambulances also increased during the three waves. Overall, the health infrastructure was strengthened with time.

On average 4528 cylinders per day were used from the mid of April 2021 to Mid of May 2021, this usage was nearly constant during this entire period. This is mainly due to the utilization of almost 100% capacity of oxygen beds during this period. If we compare this to the first wave the use of oxygen cylinders was not so rampant during the first wave. Not much oxygen was required during the third wave, similar to the first wave.

**Spatial distribution of Covid Cases:** The spatial distribution of positive cases shows that the majority of cases came from the urban area represented by Udaipur city, however, to comment that this is due to a greater number of cases in the urban area can be far-fetched. There can be various reasons which can contribute to high urban cases as compared to the rural areas. The distribution and density of population, late penetration of the virus in the

rural community due to lockdown and other measures, more movement of urban community within and outside the district or state, and the number of cases can be a reflection of the increased testing in the urban areas as compared to the rural areas are the major factors for this skewed distribution.

### **Impact of Corona on Residents of Udaipur: An Overview**

“Covid-19 has created a global health crisis where countless people are dying, human suffering is spreading and people's lives are being upended” (Nicola et al.2020). This pandemic has not only created health crises but has also left an impact on the social and economic life of people. Health is very important for sustainable development. Before the invention of the covid vaccine, there was uncertainty about fighting this virus. The social impact of covid 19 during the first phase with complete lockdown, had been most severe in comparison to the rest phases. The scenario changed post-vaccination, even with the partial lockdown. During the first lockdown from mid-March 2020 to May 2020, everything was closed except grocery shops, vegetable shops, and emergency services. Intra-district and Inter-State movement of people was restricted. It was a national lockdown. From the first of June 2020, unlock started, and gradually things were relaxed. This invited the first covid wave in October and November 2020. There were almost no restrictions in Feb 2021 and the most severe and deadly second wave was witnessed in April 2020 and May 2021. A local lockdown was imposed during this wave. The wave became severe in the second half of April. This lockdown was with too many relaxations. The mild third wave was witnessed in Jan 2022 and Feb 2022. Out of the total covid positive cases in the three waves witnessed by the Udaipur district, 15.0% of cases were observed in 2020, 60.0% of cases in 2021, and 25.0% of cases were registered in 2022.

People of Udaipur working outside returned homes due to either shutting of various economic activities due to lockdown, or either after losing their jobs or because of work-from-home culture. Due to the lockdown imposed on financial crises, most people could not afford a nutritive diet and hygienic environment for their families. The single patient with covid living in the same house was responsible for making other family members prone to the virus. Despite all the precautions, numerous entire families came under the impact of Covid 19. But in comparison to the other two waves, the number of patients was less in the third wave. There had been a drastic increase in the number of covid patients in the second wave of covid 19 due to the very limited and flexible lockdown and the mutative nature of the virus.

During the complete lockdown in the first wave, all the educational institutions were closed and classes went online. Regarding offices and other departments work from home culture came into practice along with rationalization of manpower with the augment of Covid 19 in the district. There had been Reverse Migration during wave one, that is people working in urban areas migrated to their native places in rural areas. The social life of residents of Udaipur came to a standstill confined only to the four walls of the house if they tested negative and four walls of the room if they tested positive. Few professions went completely online and few came to a standstill. The market experienced a serious setback giving a setback to the economy. Online shopping grew up during this pandemic time. The interaction of humans was confined to gadgets from learning, working, and playing to online shopping. Only the IT market flourished in which Udaipur doesn't have any role to play but Udaipur being a tourist destination, wedding destinations had to go through a setback as its mobility index declined.

The first wave of covid 19 had a smaller number of Covid positive cases in comparison to the number of positive cases recorded in the second wave. During the second wave along with vaccination, partial lockdown, work-from-home culture, and rationalization of manpower continued. The psychological trauma along with the economic crisis the society faced during the complete lockdown in the first wave and with the partial opening of all the activities related to man and society during the second wave of the pandemic had played a vital role in increasing the number of covid cases in Udaipur district in all the four categories i.e. new cases, close contacts, corona warriors and migrants. The number of deaths was also high during the second wave. Migration started again from the suburban area of Udaipur to Udaipur city.

During Covid-19, many individuals lost their jobs and underwent an economic crisis along with a psychological crisis. Society witnessed some discontent during the initial second wave of covid 19 due to the complete opening of a few social institutions and the partial opening of others. But soon society faced hard times with the wide spread of the virus, hospital beds were almost full and the death rate was very high and positivity crossed the 33.0% mark. The fear of covid-19 was to the extent that many families refused to take the bodies of their near and dear ones and few didn't turn up to attend the last rituals. There was a cloud of grief everywhere. Few did not move out of their house for the fear of getting the virus. This was the stage of self-imposed lockdown. Many families could not meet their beloved due to curb on transport activities. The residents of Udaipur from being social moved into the shell of isolation during the second wave of the pandemic.

Before the third wave of covid 19, most of the residents of Udaipur had two doses of vaccination, the senior citizens and corona warriors had booster doses, and vaccination for 14 plus was available. Hence this wave was very mild in comparison to the second wave. Despite the two doses of vaccination and booster dose, the data of cases in all four categories have been more in the third wave than that of the first wave but less than the second wave. During the third wave of the pandemic, with good vaccination, no more lockdowns, and with less fear and more awareness related to the pandemic the cases were but with much less mortality rate, made residents of Udaipur more confident to face the pandemic and brought the life back to normal.

This pandemic has affected almost all sections of society. The social crisis caused by covid 19 has been responsible in a big way for increasing inequality through layoffs, the decline in one's own/personal income, and uncertainty related to income inflow has forced people to spend less which has further triggered increasing xenophobia resulting into loss of jobs and closing of economic activities in Udaipur district during a pandemic. The spread of the pandemic from the migrants had been minimum because of guidelines of quarantine being strictly observed in the district.

The habits of wearing masks, hand washing, hand sanitization, and social distancing became the new normal. Online meetings, conferences, online teaching, work from home, and restriction on people in social gatherings have helped cut costs. People have started to avoid unnecessary travel and have become health conscious. Good habits of healthy food and exercise have been adopted by people. People have adapted to this new normal.

## The Impact of Covid-19 on society

The phenomenon, described above, more or less, had been experienced by almost all, irrespective of the region. The impact of Covid 19 on Indian society has been analysed below:

**Migration of People:** Before the first wave there was a large-scale migration of people from their place of temporary residence to their place of permanent residence in the last week of March to the first week of April 2020 and then in June and July 2020 i.e. reverse migration started. This migration was mainly because of anxiety and fear about the disease. The places of employment were closed during lockdowns and everything was uncertain hence people moved towards their native places where the cost of living was less and people felt more secure with their families.

From March end to June 2020, a total of 79743 people were registered during this period as migrated into the district from outside and were home quarantined. This includes both inter-district and inter-state migration. The majority of interstate migration was from Gujarat and Maharashtra as most of the unemployed adults of Udaipur district seek unskilled and semi-skilled employment in these states. From March end to June 2020, a total of 19,557 people were sent free of cost by train and by buses during this period from the district to other states (unpublished data of the office of CMHO, Udaipur). Although the actual number of out migrations was much higher as many of the migrants also traveled in trucks and other modes of transport like a motorcycle and on foot as other modes of public transport were not allowed during this period. The majority of inter-state migration from the district was to the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, and West Bengal as many laborers from these states work in the district.

The majority of migration was from urban to rural as people were residing temporarily for employment or for studying or for business in urban areas and returned to their native villages. People have started to shift from densely populated inner-city areas to fringe areas as the impact of lockdown measures was ruthlessly implemented in inner-city areas and the spread of the virus was also seen more in densely populated areas.

**Employment:** A large number of people either lost their employment as the employers fired their staff to cut costs during and after the lockdown or they left their job during this period. This is evident from the scale of employment in Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme during this period as compared to the previous year. A total of 138257 people were given employment during the first fortnight and 1,20,517 during the second fortnight of June 2019 in the district while this number rose to 2,71,355 during the first and 250274 during the second fortnight of June 2020. This clearly shows that there were 1.3 lakh more people getting employment under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme during June 2020 as compared to the previous year (data received from the office of District Program Coordinator, MNREGA (District Collector), Udaipur).

The work-from-home culture was promoted, and the rationalizing of staff led to unemployment. Unemployment and loss of business and indebtedness lead to psychological problems resulting in more social issues.

**Effect on Medical Sector:** The medical and pharmaceutical sectors showed growth

during this period while all other sectors of the economy showed negative growth.

**Effect on Education:** The education sector was one of the most heavily affected sectors during this period. Most of the students of primary and middle classes were promoted to the next classes without exams during 2020 and 2021. Schools and Colleges were the first to be shut down and last to reopen after lockdowns.

**Effect on Tourism:** All tourist destinations faced a setback. Tourism was most severely affected during this period. International tourist inflow was negligible. Not only that Governments of different countries were denying visas, but tourists also tried to avoid traveling during covid infection period due to the fear of lockdown and other restrictions and due to fear of getting an infection of disease.

**Effect on Health and Daily Life:** People started prioritizing health. Those who were haves, their dietary habits showed a shift toward healthy, organic, and homemade food. Exercise and Yoga became part of the daily routine of people. Human life was given priority over all other things. On the other hand, the life of have-nots became miserable. They were forced to sustain on limited resources which resulted in various kinds of deficiencies and disorders. People realized the importance of family members, friends, and other members of society during this period.

**Effect on Elections:** The election of Panchayati Raj Institutions and municipalities was conducted during this period in the Udaipur district. The bye-election of Vallabh Nagar and Dhariyawad legislative assembly constituencies was also conducted following Covid appropriate behavior.

**Role of Donors:** During the lockdown, various NGOs, and entrepreneurs came forward to help needy people by providing them with the necessities. People donated liberally to the Chief Ministers relief Fund and Prime Ministers Covid Relief Fund. Donors also build and strengthen the medical infrastructure in the district like oxygen generation plants, power generators, oxygen concentrators, ambulances, and disposal items like masks, gloves, and personal protective equipment.

**Effect on Environment:** “Covid-19 reduced the pollution levels and made the earth a better place to live in and it rejuvenated nature's beauty” (Singhal, T. 2020)

## Conclusion

There was a shift in the planning and strategy of the health department and district authorities in the second and third waves as compared to the first one which led to a better management experience and prepared the district in tackling any subsequent wave in the future. Level of preparedness and mobilization and procurement of various resources resulted in lower fatality and higher cure rate in the third wave and also high percentage of vaccination leads to a negligible effect in the third wave. There was a widespread impact of Covid-19 on society but with each passing day that is from march 2020 to the present, there has been continuous learning for society from the challenges it has had to meet from the inception of the pandemic to the present day. The habits of wearing masks, hand washing, hand sanitization, social distancing together with online working, working from home and fewer people in social gatherings have become the new normal. Good habits of healthy food and exercise have been adopted by people. Covid-19 had adverse effects on the economy, society, and the overall health of the people.

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**Dr. Purnima Singh**, Assistant Professor (Geography), Govt. Meera Girls College, Udaipur (Raj.), purnimasinghbunkar@gmail.com

**Dr. Sandhya Pathania**, Associate Professor (Geography), Govt. Meera Girls College, Udaipur (Raj.), drspathania@gmail.com

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*Based on the interview*

## **Prof. Shyam Lal Jedia : Odyssey of A Noble Mind**

By Dr. Anuja Jain

Prof. Shyam Lal Jedia has a proud record of having a rich and fruitful academic career in the field of Sociology. He has also been Vice-Chancellor of premier universities, namely, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur; University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, and Patna University. I had the honor of meeting him recently and conversing with him in-depth about his life, career, and the significance of his work. The following write-up is based on my interview with him recently.

### **Background**

Prof. Shyam Lal Jedia, a scholar of high repute, prolific writer, pedantic administrator, and vibrant and innovative teacher was born on 20th December 1944, in Jodhpur District of Rajasthan. He comes from a family whose members were treated as untouchables and subjected to socio-economic discrimination. He completed his post-graduate education at Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur in 1967 and his doctorate from the University of Rajasthan in 1980 on the topic entitled 'The Bhangi: A Sweeper Caste, It's Socio-economic Portraits' (with special reference to Jodhpur City), which was later published in the form of a book. He conducted his Ph.D. under the supervision of another academician of eminence Prof. M.M. Lavania, who was vice-principal at D.A.V. College, Ajmer, and Head of the Department of Sociology during that time. This holds the distinction of being the first of its kind in India, and it raised deeper questions about the untouchable community. The doctoral thesis helped open new vistas to explore the socio-economic issues of the depressed class. His experiences and direct contact with the realities of life shaped his active mind which shaped his ideas. His work aims at creating space and visibility for Dalits and readiness to hear their voice. Unrelentingly Prof. Jedia endeavored to bring closer sociological research and his academic interest to focus on various facets of Dalit issues. He has spent decades in writing, publishing, and advocating for the Dalits to have their views heard. As he asserts, under the guidance and inspiration of Prof. Gandhi, Dept. of Political Science, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur his interest in lecturership grew.

### **Areas of Specialization**

His areas of specialization pertain to Social Stratification and mobility, Asparshyeekaran - Dalitisation (Untouchabilisation), Dalit Movement, Mobilization and Socio-Political Development among Dalits, Dalit Politics, Sociology of Religion, Tribal Leadership, Tribals, and Christian Missionaries.

### **Coveted Posts**

Prof. Jedia's career spans more than thirty-three years as a teacher, researcher, and administrator. He spent the first 18 years of his career teaching at Government Colleges of Rajasthan and then in the Department of Sociology, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. After serving the University of Rajasthan as Professor (1989) and also Head of Department (1991 – 1994), he moved to Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur in the year 1996 where he served as the Vice-Chancellor for the next three years. As Vice-Chancellor of Jai Narain Vyas

University, Jodhpur, and officiating Vice-Chancellor of the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur (2002–2003) he rendered his outstanding services to the institution. After that in the year 2008, he moved to Bihar where he remained as Vice-Chancellor of Patna University, Patna, Bihar for the next three years. In his words, it was indeed a momentous turn of events as he happened to be a Dalit Professor and Head of Department despite hailing from the lowest of the low in the caste hierarchy and becoming Vice-Chancellor, for such high posts have always been out of reach of that community. As Vice-Chancellor, he primarily engaged in facing the teachers' and employees' issues, financial crises in the university, lack of infrastructure facilities, uncongenial academic atmosphere, and issues related to conducting examinations, etc at Patna University. He has also been appointed as Chairman of the Drafting Committee (2007 – 2008) by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Foundation, Department of Art, Literature and Culture, Govt. of Rajasthan, Jaipur. He has also been Chairman, of the Committee for Improvement in the Quality of Education and for Improvement in the Academics and Examination System, the Department of Human Resource Development, Government of Bihar, Patna.

### **Academic Awards and Achievements**

Prof. Jedia's rise to prominence was taken note of by everyone. As a result, admiration and acknowledgment of his bold engagements came naturally. Various bodies felt proud in conferring on him awards. He has been honored at different forums including the National Award by Bhartiya Dalit Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi (1996) for outstanding contribution in the field of Dalit Literature. He was honored by Nagar Nigam, Jodhpur (1997), Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Satya Sodhak Sansthan, Jodhpur (1997), and Social Welfare Department, Government of Rajasthan, Jaipur (1999) for extensive contribution in the field of Education. He is the recipient of ICSSR's Dr.B.R.Ambedkar National Fellowship for 2003-2005. In 2007, he was honored with the prestigious Dr. Aim Literary Main Award by Dr.Ambedkar International Mission, Calgary, Canada which carries a cash prize of Rs 25,000 and a Memento for his book “Untouchable Caste in India: The Raigar Movement 1940-2004”. He was honored with Life Time Achievement Award by Rajasthan Sociological Association in 2009 recognizing his valuable contributions as a sociologist, researcher, and teacher. He was acknowledged for his work with giving Amity Academic Excellence Award in 2010 by Amity University, Uttar Pradesh. In the honor of distinguished service rendered for the development of Dalit Sociology in India as well as working for the cause of Dalits in India he was bestowed with Life Time Achievement Award by the Indian Sociological Society (RC-09), New Delhi in 2013. Indian Sociological Society (RC-13) honored him with the Life Time Achievement Award 2021 in appreciation of his contribution to the discipline and profession of Sociology, on the occasion of the 46th All India Sociological Conference held at the University of Mumbai, Mumbai.

For his long and arduous academic journey and achievements, he says that naturally, we all recognize that there is a great deal that goes into anyone's success. For his achievements, he gives credit to his incredible amount of hard work. However, he expresses a deep sense of gratitude to revered and noted sociologist Prof. Gopal Bhardwaj for the encouragement which helped him carve his paths through unforeseen difficulties.

Further, adding to his achievements Prof. Jedia reminisces about his appointment as Vice-Chancellor, of Patna University as more of an honorary title. When he was called for an

interview for the post of Vice-Chancellor, at Patna University he was accompanied to Patna by one of his colleagues Dr. K. S. Saxena, Former Director, UGC Academic Staff College, Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur. Dr. Saxena acted as a motivating guide all along that journey and boosted his morale. Recalling that occasion, he said that soon after his interview he was asked to remain in Patna. Thereafter, Prof. Jedia reached the retiring room with Dr. Saxena. A day after the interview on 24.01.2008 at 8.30 pm, an unknown person suddenly arrived at their retiring room and knocked on the door. He introduced himself and queried who was Prof. Shyam Lal Jedia. Hearing this Dr. Saxena pointed towards Prof. Jedia. Immediately after this he presented one bouquet to him and Dr. Saxena respectively and invited them to Raj Bhawan for an official meeting with the officer on Special Duty. Later on, as per office order, he took charge of the office of Vice-Chancellor of Patna University, the second Dalit to occupy this coveted post. This daunting task Prof. Jedia considers one of the biggest achievements of his Academic Journey.

The late Shri N. K. Baz and Prof. Jedia had a passion to establish Rajasthani Sociology as a separate discipline, but due to his involvement in other preoccupations, they were unable to realize their ideal.

### **Major Works**

His tireless, persistent, consistent efforts and zeal to bring Sociology in action through real-life activities resulted in his writing several books. He authored 17 books and more than 50 research papers published in various journals and volumes. Notable among these are From Higher Caste to Lower Caste: The Process of Asprashyeekaran & the Myth of Sanskritization; The Untold Story of a Bhangi Vice-Chancellor; Ambedkar and Dalit Movement: Special Reference to Rajasthan; Studies in Social Protest; Unforgettable Moments. Prof. Shyam Lal Jedia has written extensively on the downward social mobility of the population in India.

In his book From Higher Caste to Lower Caste: The Process of Asprashyeekaran & the Myth of Sanskritization (1997) he analyzes downward mobility in India, where groups and individuals of upper castes or tribes break away from their affiliation with the parent group and culturally incorporated themselves, formally or legally, into the lower castes, acquiring altogether a new low castes identity - a phenomenon hardly reported by the Sociologists or Social Anthropologists. Thus in his works, he encapsulated the process of De-Sanskritization. This process of the change of caste identity was recorded in Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra. In his study, he tries to establish that the conversion and change of identity of some people/groups from higher castes to lower castes appear to be the result of social, religious, and economic changes as also as Foreign Invasions and other factors. Based on his field observation of the process involved, the reasons for conversion, their religious background, their employment, and so on, he discusses the concept of de-sanskritization of the upper castes into the Bhangi caste ("Bhangiisation"). He showed that "Bhangiisation has two aspects: one may be called the "positional aspect" which involves "social falling" of the individual through the adoption of the customs and practices of the Bhangis. This process results in positional change for the converting individuals. The other may be called "occupational aspect" which involves accepting scavenging as a job by the converting individuals and gradually projecting a Bhangi Image. Thus his work focuses on the theme of de-sanskritization as the only way to

real social change for the unprivileged social masses. His works are shaped and informed by the lives of genuine individuals in unglamorous circumstances. Interestingly, while he was working on this book, he consulted Prof. Ram Ahuja umpteen times to seek his guidance.

Talking about his other book, *Untold Story of a Bhangi Vice-Chancellor* (2001) is a comprehensive work of Prof. Jedia's autobiography which lucidly explains how with his hard work and self-control, he rose from the lowest level to the highest peak of the academic world. In his autobiography, his efforts in search for knowledge and the obstacles faced by him against social atrocities were mentioned.

Prof. Jedia mentions *Unforgettable Moments* (2014) which addresses a range of questions about the socio-economic and educational aspects of 93 years old Patna University. Through his work, he tries to analyze and examine myriad issues about the betterment of the University. His concern for the upliftment of the University academically made him contemplate and raise several issues such as - What measures were initiated for the revival of academic activities /programmes? What measures did the university take recourse in order to get rid of financial crises? How the University handled the mismanagement? What were their genuine demands? What were their expectations? What were University development/reform programmes? Did they give birth to vulgar political culture? Through these basic issues, he tries to analyze and examine University culture. In addition to this, he also demonstrated his keen desire for political change and social transformation which remained with him throughout his entire academic journey.

Currently, he is working on two books for publication entitled *Atrocities on Untouchable* and *Unsung Untouchable Heroes of Freedom Movement*.

### **Academic Experience**

After joining Jai Narain Vyas University, Jodhpur as Vice-Chancellor, he announced recruitment based on reservations after moving beyond the controversy. Before he was appointed Vice-Chancellor, there was no reservation policy in place, but because of his tenacity, he recruited close to 42 teachers and 15 to 20 non-teachers based on category.

Prof. Jedia remembered how Prof. Indu Mathur, a senior co-worker at the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur played a key role in his career development at the time. Although his intellect speaks much for him, he says his selection at the University of Rajasthan was being questioned by many. He faced allegations and had to go through court procedures. But as rightly said, "Truth always wins though it takes time to uncover the truth and evil and wrong Deeds". Later also, people bothered him but Prof. Indu Mathur helped him enshrine progressive ideas. He always kept in touch and worked under her advice and guidance in times of crisis.

The disturbing attitude of people towards him for being untouchable made him vehemently self-conscious. Coming from an untouchable caste, it was a really difficult path, but he worked very hard to regain his caste identity.

When he made some difficult decisions regarding the suspension and dismissal of teachers and the expulsion of students during his time as Vice-Chancellor at Patna University, he faced the wrath of teachers and students. However, he defended his action because he believed it was necessary for the improvement of the University.

Prof. Jedia is a scholar par excellence, a visionary, a dynamic administrator, a philosopher, and an emancipator. During his entire academic sojourn, he stood as a symbol

of the struggle to secure the rights of oppressed and depressed sections of society and for their social justice. His ideology set up a benchmark among the masses in India and abroad. Prof. Jedia is not only a crusader against the caste system, and a valiant fighter for the rights of the downtrodden and weaker sections of society but he also served as a source of inspiration and direction for the general populace. His fight for the emancipation of all those who are enslaved in society gave him recognition as a liberator of humanity from injustice, social and economic.

### **Message For Sociologists**

Prof. S.L. Jedia conveys a message for RSA. The theoretical, empirical, and methodological contributions of sociologists need to be strengthened by Rajasthan Sociological Association. There is a dire need to welcome contributions that explore social issues. Sociologists must prepare themselves to expand their ideas and revise them in light of new emergent social realities. Rajasthan Sociological Association articles need an innovative approach to improve the mainstream of social research. Prof. Jedia narrated and acknowledged the contributions of Prof. Naresh Bhargava who tirelessly worked for the interests of academicians, researchers, and students of sociology through the Rajasthan Sociological Association. This association helped him in shaping the cognitive ability of researchers by bringing out articles in bilingual mode.

Additionally, he claims to recall a comment made by Prof. Dube during a lecture about the tradition of publishing edited books. These days, edited volumes simply seem to be a collaborative anthology of papers by different authors which doesn't seem overwhelming for researchers. He insists that the debate related to the reservation system needs to be analyzed. We need to answer questions related to social, political, and economic issues. More attention should be paid to the reservation system which is still an unfinished agenda. We must try to make it the most achievable strategy to provide social equality and justice.

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**Dr. Anuja Jain**, Assistant Professor, Deptt. of Sociology, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur  
anuja.jain29@gmail.com

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## वन अधिकार अधिनियम : कार्यान्वयन एवं सामाजिक प्रभावों का राजस्थान के संदर्भ में अध्ययन

लालाराम जाट

**सार:** औपनिवेशिक तथा स्वतंत्र भारत में राज्य द्वारा वनों को समेकित करते समय परम्परागत वन निवासियों की पैतृक एवं आजीविका के मुख्य स्रोत से जुड़ी वन भूमि पर वन अधिकारों एवं उनके आवास के हक को कभी मान्यता नहीं मिली जिसके परिणामस्वरूप वन में निवास करने वाली इन अनुसूचित जनजातीय समुदायों और अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों के सामाजिक, आर्थिक एवं राजनीतिक अधिकारों के प्रति ऐतिहासिक अन्याय हुआ है। इस तथ्य को वन अधिकार अधिनियम की प्रस्तावना में स्वीकार किया गया है। इन्हें राज्य के विकास के लिए किये गये विस्थापन एवं हस्तक्षेप के कारण अपने मूल निवास से विस्थापित होना पड़ा। वन क्षेत्र में मालिकाना हक प्राप्त करने के लिए लंबे समय तक इन्हें आंदोलन/संघर्ष करना पड़ा। इन्हें वन विभाग एवं स्थानीय प्रशासन द्वारा कई बार बेदखल करने का प्रयास किया गया। वन विभाग द्वारा इन पर मुकदमे दर्ज किये गए। वन संबंधी कानूनों में इनके मालिकाना हक को कभी स्वीकार नहीं किया गया। इसलिए इनको लम्बे समय तक स्थायी निवास एवं कृषि आजीविका के हक हेतु मोहताज होना पड़ा। यह समुदाय विभिन्न प्रकार की जरूरतों के लिए कई पीढ़ियों से इन वन क्षेत्रों पर निर्भर था, जिसमें उनकी आजीविका, निवास और अन्य सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक आवश्यकताएँ शामिल हैं। इनकी संस्कृति, रीतिरिवाज, परम्पराएँ, सामाजिक नियम तथा सामाजिक संरचना भी प्रकृति के अनुरूप विकसित हुई है। वन में निवास करने वाले इन समुदायों पर हो रहे ऐतिहासिक अन्यायों की समाप्ति तथा उनके सामाजिक एवं आर्थिक विकास में वन अधिकार अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन की स्थिति तथा सामाजिक प्रभावों का विश्लेषण इस लेख में करने का प्रयास किया गया है। लेख में वन अधिकार अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन की कमियों के कारण पड़ रहे सामाजिक-आर्थिक प्रभावों का विश्लेषण तथा अधिनियम के क्रियान्वयन से जुड़े मुद्दों की पहचान करने का प्रयास किया गया है।

**संकेत शब्द :** वन अधिकार, अधिकार-पत्र, अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासी, आजीविका, वनवासी, कार्यान्वयन, ऐतिहासिक अन्याय, मान्यता, वन क्षेत्र, परंपरागत निवासी

भारत में लगभग 27 करोड़ जनजातीय समुदाय या वनों के परंपरागत निवासी रहते हैं। भारत की कुल जनजाति जनसंख्या की पचास प्रतिशत जनसंख्या वन क्षेत्र में निवास करती है। यह वन निवासी समुदाय सदियों से इन्हीं वनों में निवास करते आये हैं। वनवासी लोग अपनी आजीविका के लिए वन एवं वन भूमि पर पूर्णतया आश्रित हैं। ये इन्हीं वनों में उत्पादन करते हैं तथा वनों से उत्पन्न उत्पाद का प्रयोग अपने परिवार की मूलभूत आवश्यकताओं को पूरा करने के लिए करते हैं। प्राचीनकाल से ही यह समुदाय इन जंगलों में, जंगलों के संरक्षक के रूप में निवास करता रहा है। प्राचीन काल में किसी राजा या राजतंत्र ने इन्हें विस्थापित करने का प्रयास नहीं किया, लेकिन सन 1807 में पहली बार ब्रिटिश शासन ने इनके विरुद्ध कानूनी कार्यवाही की तथा इन्हें वन क्षेत्र से हटाकर वनों की कटाई कर वन भूमि पर वाणिज्यिक फसलों का उत्पादन किया जाने लगा। इस तरह से पहली बार इनके वनोत्पादन पर अंग्रेजों ने अपना हक जताया।

इसी दौरान अंग्रेजों ने भारतीय रेलवे की भी स्थापना की गयी थी। रेलवे की स्थापना के साथ ही वनों की अंधाधुंध कटाई कर उस लकड़ी से रेल निर्माण में सीटों एवं स्लीपर बर्थ के निर्माण में भारतीय वनों की टीक, देवदार एवं साल की लकड़ी का बहुतायत उपयोग हुआ तथा भारत से बाहर भी इसका प्रयोग किया गया। इस व्यवस्था से न केवल भारतीय वनों की कटाई हुई, बल्कि उस पर निर्भर जनजातीय समुदायों एवं वनवासी नागरिकों को भी विस्थापित होना पड़ा। इन वन निवासियों की आत्मनिर्भर संस्कृति अंतःनिर्भर संस्कृति में परिवर्तित होने लगी। इन जनजाति समुदायों एवं वनवासी

नागरिकों को पहली बार इन्हीं की ज़मीन पर इनके स्वामित्व से इनकार किया गया। अंग्रेज सभी वन उत्पादों जैसे— भोजन, लकड़ी, औषधीय—पौधे, औषधियां आदि पर अपना अधिकार जमाने लगे तथा जनजाति समुदायों एवं वनवासी नागरिकों को उनके अधिकारों से वंचित किया जाने लगा।

अंग्रेजों के द्वारा सर्वप्रथम कानून के तौर पर वन अधिनियम, 1865 लाया गया। इस अधिनियम के तहत भारतीय वन सेवा की शुरुआत की गई एवं भारतीय वन सेवा के द्वारा वन एवं उनके संसाधनों पर नियंत्रण करने के संबंध में कानूनी प्रावधान किए गए। कुछ ही समय पश्चात् अंग्रेजी शासन द्वारा वन अधिकार अधिनियम, 1878 पारित किया गया। इस अधिनियम द्वारा अंग्रेजी शासन ने अपना अधिकार वनों पर जताने के लिए वन क्षेत्र को तीन भागों में विभाजित किया। सन 1894 में राष्ट्रीय वन नीति की घोषणा की गई, जिसमें वन उपयोगकर्ताओं के अधिकारों को प्रतिबंधित कर दिया गया। इन कानूनों के बावजूद भी अंग्रेजों द्वारा वनों की कटाई एवं वनवासियों का विस्थापन जबरन जारी रहा और वन भूमि के लिए एक नया कानून पारित किया गया एवं छोटा नागपुर टेनेंसी अधिनियम, 1908 लाया गया, जिसके तहत वनवासियों की भूमि पर अवैध रूप से या जबरन उनका स्थानांतरण किया जा सके ताकि अंग्रेजी सरकार को ज्यादा से ज्यादा राजस्व एवं लाभ हो सके। इसी क्रम में भारतीय वन अधिकार अधिनियम, 1927 भी पारित हुआ। इस वैधानिक हस्तक्षेप के कारण जनजाति समुदायों एवं वनवासी समूहों में कई सामाजिक—आर्थिक समस्याएं पैदा हुईं।

आजाद भारत में वाइल्ड लाइफ प्रोटेक्शन एक्ट, 1972 इसी क्रम में पारित हुआ जिसके तहत वनवासियों को वन्य जीवन के विनाश के लिए जिम्मेदार मानते हुए उन्हें वहाँ से हटाया जाने लगा। वन संरक्षण अधिनियम 1980 के द्वारा भी जनजाति समुदायों एवं वनवासियों को वनों को नुकसान पहुंचाने एवं वनों के संरक्षण में बाधक के रूप में देखा गया। सन 1988 में राष्ट्रीय नीति पारित की गई एवं इसके पश्चात् इन जनजाति समुदायों एवं परंपरागत वननिवासी नागरिकों के लिए सन 1996 में पेसा कानून पारित किया गया। वन अधिकार अधिनियम, 2006 से पूर्व वन भूमि संबंधी इनकी असुरक्षा तथा वनों में पहुँच के अधिकारों पर विशेष ध्यान नहीं दिया गया। इन जनजाति समुदायों का वनों के साथ सहजीवी संबंध के साथ—साथ उनके पारंपरिक ज्ञान तथा वनों पर उनकी निर्भरता तथा वन प्रबंधन को कहीं नहीं दर्शाया गया।

**अध्ययन उद्देश्य :** राजस्थान के जनजातीय उप-योजना क्षेत्र एवं पी.वी.टी.जी. क्षेत्र में वन अधिकार अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन की स्थिति को स्पष्ट करना तथा वन क्षेत्र में निवास करने वाले जनजाति समुदायों एवं अन्य परंपरागत निवासियों पर पड़ने वाले सामाजिक प्रभावों का विश्लेषण करना है।

**अध्ययन क्षेत्र :** इस आलेख में जनजाति उपयोजना क्षेत्र से जुड़े उदयपुर, डूंगरपुर, बांसवाड़ा, प्रतापगढ़, सिरोही, चित्तौड़गढ़, पाली एवं राजसमंद जिलों तथा पी.वी.टी.जी. क्षेत्र के बारां जिले से संकलित तथ्यों का उपयोग किया गया है। इस अध्ययन में कुल 74 गांवों को सम्मिलित किया गया है। वन अधिकार अधिनियम के अंतर्गत स्वीकृत एवं अस्वीकृत व्यक्तिगत एवं सामूहिक दावों से जुड़े कुल 729 उत्तरदाताओं को सम्मिलित किया गया किया गया।

**अध्ययन पद्धति :** प्रस्तुत आलेख व्याख्यात्मक, अन्वेषणात्मक एवं आलोचनात्मक प्रकृति का है। व्यक्तिगत जानकारी की अनुपलब्धता एवं क्षेत्र की व्यापकता के कारण उद्देश्यपूर्ण निदर्शन पद्धति द्वारा उत्तरदाताओं का चयन किया गया तथा अध्ययन से जुड़े जिलों एवं उपखंड का चयन कोटा निदर्शन पद्धति से किया गया है। अध्ययन में सम्मिलित सभी गाँवों के ग्रामीणों के साथ समूह चर्चा, पंचायत से जुड़े जनप्रतिनिधियों, वन अधिकार समिति तथा वन विभाग के जुड़े पदाधिकारियों से औपचारिक तथा अनौपचारिक वार्तालाप आयोजित कर अध्ययन विषय से जुड़े तथ्य संकलित किए गए तथा अध्ययन में सम्मिलित एवं अन्य ग्रामीणों के दस्तावेजी सबूतों का अवलोकन कर तथ्यों का संकलन किया गया। उक्त आलेख में प्राथमिक एवं द्वितीयक तथ्यों का उपयोग किया गया है।

## वन अधिकार अधिनियम – 2006

अनुसूचित जनजाति एवं अन्य परम्परागत वन निवासी (वन अधिकार मान्यता) अधिनियम, 2006 को वन अधिकार अधिनियम, 2006 के नाम से भी जाना जाता है। इस अधिनियम में वन में निवास करने वाले अनुसूचित जनजातीय समुदायों और अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों के वन संसाधन एवं उनकी आजीविका के संसाधनों पर अधिकारों को मान्यता प्रदान करने का प्रयास हुआ है। यह अधिनियम वन में निवास करने वाले ऐसे अनुसूचित जनजातीय समुदाय और अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों के लिए है जो ऐसे वनों में कई पीढ़ियों से निवास कर रहे हैं, किंतु उनके अधिकारों को कभी भी वैधानिकता के रूप से अभिलिखित नहीं किया जा सका है। वन अधिकारों और वन भूमि में अधिभोग को मान्यता देने और निहित करने, वन भूमि में इस प्रकार निहित वनों के अधिकारों को अभिलिखित करने, वन भूमि के संबंध में अधिकारों को ऐसी मान्यता देने और निहित करने के लिए अपेक्षित साक्ष्य की प्रकृति को उपलब्ध कराने के लिए यह अधिनियम लागू किया गया। इस मान्यता के अंतर्गत आवास एवं कृषि का अधिकार, चरागाही और घूमंतु समुदाय द्वारा पारंपरिक मौसम के अनुसार संसाधनों के उपयोग, जैव विविधता तक पहुँच, बौद्धिक संपदा और पारंपरिक ज्ञान के लिए सामुदायिक अधिकार, पारंपरिक प्रथागत अधिकारों की मान्यता तथा स्थायी उपयोग के लिए किसी भी सामुदायिक वन संसाधन की सुरक्षा, पुनःसर्जन या प्रबंधन का अधिकार आदि को सम्मिलित किया गया है। यह अधिनियम जैव विविधता, वन्यजीवों, वनों, जलग्रहण स्रोतों एवं पारिस्थितिक दृष्टि से संवेदनशील क्षेत्रों के संरक्षण की जिम्मेदारी के साथ-साथ इन संसाधनों एवं संस्कृति को प्रभावित करने वाली किसी भी विनाशक कार्यवाही/गतिविधि को रोकने का दायित्व भी इन वनों में निवास करने वाले इन जनजाति समुदायों एवं अन्य परंपरागत वननिवासी समूह को प्रदान करता है। इस अधिनियम का उद्देश्य वन में रहने वाले अनुसूचित जनजातीय समुदायों और अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों के साथ चिरकालीन अन्याय को समाप्त करना तथा उनके अधिकारों को वैधता प्रदान करना है। साथ ही वन में रहने वाले अनुसूचित जनजातीय समुदायों और अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों की भूमि, आजीविका और खाद्य सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करना भी है। स्थायी उपयोग और जैव-विविधता संरक्षण प्रणाली एवं पारिस्थितिक संतुलन बनाए रखने के लिए वन में रहने वाले अनुसूचित जनजातीय समुदायों और अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों के उत्तरदायित्व और प्राधिकार को निर्धारित करके वनों का संरक्षण सुदृढ़ करना है। इस अधिनियम का कार्यान्वयन करके व्यक्तिगत एवं सामूहिक अधिकार पत्र प्रदान करना तथा उन्हें विकास की मुख्यधारा से जोड़ना आदि इसके प्रमुख उद्देश्य हैं।

## अनुसंधान अंतराल

वन अधिकार अधिनियम, 2006 के लागू होने से पूर्व एवं बाद में इस विषय से जुड़े कई अनुसंधान अलग-अलग परिप्रेक्ष्य से संपन्न किये गये हैं। इन अनुसंधानों का विश्लेषण कर इस तथ्य का पता लगाने का प्रयास किया गया कि राजस्थान की जनजातियों के संदर्भ में किन-किन पहलुओं पर अनुसंधान किया गया ? इसी अनुसंधान अंतराल का पता लगाने हेतु अनुसंधानकर्ता द्वारा विभिन्न उपलब्ध अनुसंधानों से सम्बंधित साहित्यों का अध्ययन किया गया जो इस प्रकार है –

अर्पिता कोड़ीवेरी (2021) ने यूरोपियन यूनिवर्सिटी संस्थान में प्रस्तुत अपने शोध में भारत के वनों के संदर्भ में विश्लेषण किया है। यह शोध इस बात की जाँच करता है कि भारत में वन कानूनों एवं वन निवासी समुदायों के बीच स्वतंत्र सहमति के आधार पर राज्य एवं इन समुदायों के बीच में संबंधों को किस प्रकार आकार दिया गया है। राज्य एवं वनवासी समुदायों के बीच संबंध कमजोर हैं, क्योंकि वन भूमि को राज्य खनन एवं उद्योगों के लिए अधिगृहीत कर लेता है। पूर्वी राज्य उड़ीसा में तीन खनन स्थलों में व्यापक क्षेत्रीय कार्य के माध्यम से यह शोध इस बात का विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत करता है कि सहमति



का प्रावधान कैसे लागू किया जाता है और कैसे संप्रभु राज्य और वनवासियों के बीच संबंधों में पेशेवर लोगों एवं नौकरशाही द्वारा मध्यस्थता की जाती है। वनों में रहने वाले इन समुदायों के अनुसार राज्य खनन कार्य को सक्षम बनाने एवं अपनी व्यावसायिक महत्वाकांक्षा को पूरा करने के लिए कई तरीकों से जंगलों में कार्य करता है। इस शोध में वनवासी समुदायों के साथ साक्षात्कार किया गया एवं उनकी आकांक्षाओं को समझा गया जिसके द्वारा कानून के आधार पर एक साथ साझा संप्रभुता ढांचा जिसमें विचारशील एवं नोडल शासन के सिद्धांतों को लागू किया जा सके। यह शोध सरकार के साथ बातचीत एवं वनवासी समुदाय के द्वारा किए गए संरचनात्मक असंतुलन को दूर करने के लिए एक संस्थागत मार्ग प्रस्तुत करता है। यह वन निवासी समुदायों और भारतीय सरकार के बीच टूटे हुए संबंधों को सुधारने का मार्ग प्रशस्त कर सकता है।

लवलीन भुल्लर (2008) के भारतीय वन अधिकार अधिनियम-2006 के एक आलोचनात्मक मूल्यांकन शोध के अनुसार यह अधिनियम जनजातीय लोगों तथा समर्थक समूहों के बीच मतभेद दर्शाता है। इनके अनुसार अधिनियम में आदिवासी एवं अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासी इस भूमि का लाभ ले सकेंगे, लेकिन इस बात से इनकार नहीं किया जा सकता है कि 'अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासी' स्पष्ट तौर पर परिभाषित नहीं किया गया है। पर्यावरण समर्थक लोग इस चिंता में हैं कि अधिनियम का लाभ अन्य लोगों तक बढ़ाया जा सकता है जो इसके वास्तविक अधिकारी नहीं हैं। ग्रामसभा को अधिनियम में निर्णय लेने की शक्ति दी गई है जो कि स्थानीय सरकार से प्रभावित हुए बिना नहीं रह सकती। ऐतिहासिक अन्याय को ठीक करने के लिए यह विधायी प्रयास प्रशंसनीय हैं, क्योंकि वनवासी समुदाय की आजीविका और जीविका के मुख्य स्रोत यह वन या वन उत्पाद ही हैं, परंतु इन वनों के विनाश के लिए विनाशकारी गतिविधियां, वनों का अत्यधिक शोषण, उनकी उपेक्षा एवं अनाच्छादन ज्यादा जिम्मेदार हैं, क्योंकि विभिन्न कंपनियों को विकास गतिविधियों से जोड़कर इनकी आड़ में वन भूमि को गैर वन उद्देश्यों के लिए परिवर्तित करने की अनुमति दी है, हालांकि अधिनियम का कार्यान्वयन वास्तविक रूप से अभी और देखा जाना बाकी है।

भारत रूरल लाइवलीहुड फाउंडेशन (2019) ने "रिविजिटिंग द फॉरेस्ट राइट एक्ट" नाम से जुलाई 2019 में एक शोध रिपोर्ट प्रस्तुत की। इस शोध में उन्होंने भूमि काश्तकारों और लघु वन उपज के संग्रहण के संबंध में कार्यान्वयन की स्थिति का परीक्षण किया है। इसमें यह पाया कि देश के बीस करोड़ वनवासी लोगों के भोजन और आजीविका को सुरक्षित करने एवं वन भूमि के सतत प्रबंधन करने के लिए वन अधिकार कानून असाधारण क्षमता रखता है। अध्ययन में पाया गया है कि जिन जनजातीय समुदायों को सामुदायिक दावों को प्राप्त करने में सफलता मिली है उनको लघु वन उपज, जैसे- बांस, तेंदूपत्ता, आदि की बिक्री से काफी लाभ पहुंचा है, लेकिन वन अधिकार अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन में खराब प्रदर्शन को लेकर सर्वोच्च न्यायालय में याचिका लम्बित है, इसमें यह बिंदु उठाया गया कि इस कानून के तहत झूठे दावे पेश कर वन भूमि पर अतिक्रमण की संभावना बढ़ गई है। यह भी देखा गया है कि अन्य परंपरागत वनवासियों को अपना स्वामित्व साबित करने के लिए 75 वर्ष का उस भूमि पर निरंतर कब्जा साबित करना होगा। प्रक्रियात्मक रूप से यह बहुत ही कठिन बनाया गया है, परिणामस्वरूप इस श्रेणी में दायर किए गए दावे अधिकांशतः विफल हो जाते हैं। यह भी माना जाता है कि अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासी वन में निवास करने वाले जनजातियों की अपेक्षा वनों के प्रति कम संवेदनशील होते हैं। अतः अधिनियम में जनजातियों की अपेक्षा गैर जनजाति वन वासियों को कम प्राथमिकता दी जाती है।

इंद्रनिल बॉस (2010) ने अपने शोध में जनजातियों की दुर्दशा को स्पष्ट करने वाले तथ्य प्रस्तुत किये। बॉस ने 1993-94 में लगभग 46.5 प्रतिशत जनजाति आबादी का गरीबी रेखा से नीचे रहने का अनुमान लगाया था जबकि भारतीय समाज में यह 35.97 प्रतिशत था। जनजाति आबादी का 93 प्रतिशत

से अधिक ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में रहता है जबकि राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर यह औसत 74 प्रतिशत है। ये जनजातियां पूर्णतया कृषि पर निर्भर हैं। जनजाति कृषकों का जो प्रतिशत 1961 में 68.18 प्रतिशत था, वो घटकर 1991 में 54.5 प्रतिशत हो गया। यह संख्या कृषि श्रम में इसी अनुपात में बढ़ती चली गई। जनजातियों की गरीबी उनके प्रति होने वाले अत्याचारों (हत्या, यातना, बलात्कार और इसी तरह के अपराधों) के प्रति उन्हें और संवेदनशील बनाती है।

इसी तरह समजाशास्त्री एस. एल. दोषी (1978) ने अपनी पुस्तक *प्रोसेस ऑफ ट्रायबल यूनिफोर्मेशन एंड इंटीग्रेशन : ए केस स्टडी ऑफ दी भील* में राष्ट्रीय मुख्यधारा और अनुसूचित जनजाति, एकीकरण और एकरूपता : कुछ मुद्दे एवं पहलू, क्षेत्रीय समाज और अध्ययन के जनजाति गांव, राष्ट्रीय संरचनाएं: एकीकरण, विरोधाभास और संघर्ष, जनजातीय राजनीति : गुट और संरेखण, उभरती सांस्कृतिक पहचान और मूल्य आदि विषय पर विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत किया। समाजशास्त्री नंदिनी सुन्दर (2016) की पुस्तक "द बर्निंग फोरेस्ट" में बस्तर में पुलिस-नक्सली लड़ाई के बहाने जनजातियों पर हो रहे दमन का दस्तावेजी अनुसन्धान प्रस्तुत किया है। उन्होंने बताया है कि किस तरह उद्योगों को लाभ पहुँचाने के लिए सरकार जनजातियों पर हिंसा कर रही है।

प्रस्तावित अनुसंधान में उपर्युक्त अध्ययनों के अध्ययन अंतराल को दृष्टिगत रखते हुए राजस्थान के जनजाति उपयोजना क्षेत्र एवं पी.वी.टी.जी. क्षेत्र में निवास करने वाले जनजातीय समुदायों और अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों पर अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन के सामाजिक प्रभावों का विश्लेषण करने का प्रयास किया गया है, क्योंकि राजस्थान के सन्दर्भ में इस तरह का अध्ययन नहीं हुआ है। अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन की खामियों के कारण सामाजिक व्यवस्था में टकराव भी उत्पन्न हुआ है जिसको दृष्टिगत रखते हुए अध्ययनों का अभाव महसूस किया गया। इसी अंतराल को प्रस्तावित अध्ययन के द्वारा कम करने का एक सार्थक प्रयास किया गया है। यह आलेख *वन अधिकार अधिनियम की स्थिति और प्रक्रिया का अध्ययन : राजस्थान राज्य* से संबंधित मुद्दे और समस्याएं विषय पर माणिक्य लाल वर्मा आदिम जाति शोध एवं प्रशिक्षण संस्थान, जनजाति क्षेत्रीय विकास विभाग, राजस्थान सरकार द्वारा प्रायोजित शोध-परियोजना (2022) में संकलित तथ्यों के आधार पर तैयार किया गया। लेखक इस शोध-परियोजना के मुख्य शोध-अन्वेषक रहे हैं।

## वन अधिकार अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन की स्थिति और प्रक्रिया का अध्ययन

अध्ययन में सम्मिलित उत्तरदाता एवं अन्य वन अधिकार पत्र प्राप्तकर्ताओं के 350 से अधिक अधिकार पत्रों का अवलोकन किया गया। अनुसूचित जनजाति और अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासी (वन अधिकारों की मान्यता) नियम, 2008 के साथ भारत का राजपत्र : असाधारण में उपबंध-1, नियम-6 (झ), प्रारूप-क वन भूमि के अधिकारों के लिए दावा प्रारूप नियम-11(1) (क) का प्रकाशन 1 जनवरी, 2008 को हुआ था। इससे स्पष्ट है कि अधिकार पत्र का प्रारूप अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन के साथ ही तैयार कर राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर एक ही प्रारूप स्वीकृत किया गया। अधिभोग के अधीन वन भूमि के लिए अधिकार-पत्र के बिंदु संख्या-10 में क्षेत्रफल तथा बिंदु संख्या-11 में खसरा/कम्पार्टमेंट संख्या सहित प्रमुख सीमा चिह्न द्वारा सीमाओं का विवरण देने का प्रावधान किया गया है। इन अनुसूचित जनजाति एवं अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासी परिवारों को वितरित किए गए सभी अधिकार पत्रों में भी यही बिंदु उल्लिखित हैं। अधिकार पत्रों का जब अवलोकन किया गया तो अध्ययन क्षेत्र से जुड़े सभी जिलों में उल्लिखित बिंदु संख्या 10 एवं 11 में अंकित क्षेत्रफल एवं सीमा चिह्न भिन्न-भिन्न स्वरूप में पाए गए हैं। केवल जिलों के अनुसार ही भिन्नता नहीं है, बल्कि एक ही जिले में अलग-अलग समय में दिए गए अधिकार पत्र में भी इसी बिंदु संख्या में अलग-अलग ब्यौरे का उल्लेख पाया गया है।

कुछ अधिकार पत्रों में क्षेत्रफल के अंतर्गत केवल हेक्टर का उल्लेख किया गया है तो कुछ अधिकार पत्रों में बीघा का उल्लेख किया गया है तथा कुछ में लंबाई एवं चौड़ाई का उल्लेख भी किया गया है। इस तरह से सभी अधिकार पत्रों में क्षेत्रफल लिखने का अलग-अलग स्वरूप रहा है। अधिकांश अधिकार पत्रों में क्षेत्रफल में केवल कुल हेक्टर संख्या का उल्लेख कर दिया गया है। अधिकार पत्र में उल्लिखित क्षेत्रफल से यह स्पष्ट नहीं होता है कि आवंटित भूमि की लंबाई एवं चौड़ाई क्या है? लंबाई एवं चौड़ाई का उल्लेख नहीं होना इन अधिकार पत्र प्राप्त परिवारों के लिए सबसे बड़ी चुनौती के रूप में उभरा है, क्योंकि सीमाओं का मूल्यांकन या पहचान केवल लंबाई एवं चौड़ाई के आधार पर ही किया जा सकता है। यह भी उल्लेख करना आवश्यक है कि दावे के आवेदन के साथ वन अधिकार समिति द्वारा नजरी नक्शा तथा पटवारी द्वारा नक्शा ट्रेस लगाने का प्रावधान है। समूह चर्चा एवं साक्षात्कार अनुसूची से यह तथ्य स्पष्ट हुआ है कि सभी आवेदनों के साथ नजरी नक्शा एवं नक्शा ट्रेस लगाया गया है। जी.पी.एस. के माध्यम से आवंटित भूमि का क्षेत्रफल नापा गया था। इसके बावजूद भी आवंटित अधिकार पत्र में व्यवस्थित क्षेत्रफल उल्लिखित नहीं करना, इन लाभार्थियों के लिए एक समस्या के रूप में उठ खड़ा हुआ है। यह कमी लगभग सभी अधिकार पत्रों में दिखाई पड़ी है। लंबाई एवं चौड़ाई संबंधी उल्लेख सहरिया बहुल क्षेत्र किशनगंज में आवासों के अधिकार पत्रों में अवश्य देखने को मिली है। इसके अलावा सभी जगह इसका अभाव महसूस किया गया।

अधिकार पत्र की बिंदु संख्या-11 में खसरा/कम्पार्टमेंट संख्या सहित प्रमुख सीमा चिह्न द्वारा सीमाओं का विवरण देने के प्रावधान के बावजूद भी अधिकांश अधिकार पत्रों में इस बिंदु में केवल औपचारिकता करके छोड़ दिया गया है। कुछ जगह खाली छोड़ा गया तो, कुछ जगह खसरा नंबर, ग्राम तथा उपखंड का उल्लेख कर छोड़ दिया गया। उदयपुर जिले में 2019 में जो अधिकार पत्र आवंटित किए गए हैं, उनमें सीमा चिह्न का उल्लेख मिला है तथा कंार्टमेंट संख्या जी.पी.एस. का विवरण प्रस्तुत हुआ है, ऐसा विवरण कुछ अन्य जिलों के भी अधिकार पत्रों में देखने को मिला है, परंतु इस तरह के अधिकार पत्र बहुत ही कम संख्या में देखने को मिले अर्थात् अधिकांश अधिकार पत्रों में इसका उल्लेख नहीं पाया गया है। इसी तरह से राजस्थान के जनजाति उपयोजना क्षेत्र एवं पी.वी.टी.जी. क्षेत्र में भी अधिकार पत्र के बिंदु संख्या 11 के अधूरे विवरण के अधिकार पत्र वितरित किए गए हैं जो इन परिवारों के लिए अब एक समस्या के रूप में उभरा है।

अध्ययन क्षेत्र में वितरित किए गए अधिकार पत्र में वन अधिकारों के धारकों के नाम (पति/पत्नी) का उल्लेख करने की प्रवृत्ति भी अलग-अलग देखी जा सकती है। कुछ जगह पति-पत्नी के नामों का उल्लेख किया गया तो कुछ जगह केवल पत्नी या केवल पति के नाम का ही उल्लेख किया गया है। इस तरह से हकधारक के नाम उल्लेख में भी समानता नहीं पाई गई। अधिकार पत्र के भौतिक सत्यापन के दौरान यह भी देखने को मिला है कि आवास एवं कृषि भूमि के पृथक्-पृथक् अधिकार पत्र भी दिए गए हैं। यह प्रवृत्ति सहरिया बाहुल्य किशनगंज क्षेत्र में ज्यादा देखी गई है। इसी तरह कुछ अधिकार पत्र केवल बड़े पुत्र के नाम पर जारी कर दिया गया बाकी भाइयों के नाम आश्रित में भी सम्मिलित नहीं हुए हैं। इस तरह की कई छोटी-मोटी त्रुटियाँ वितरित अधिकार पत्रों में क्षेत्रीय अध्ययन के दौरान पाई गई हैं। बांसवाड़ा जिले की महेशपुरा तहसील में फोटोयुक्त अधिकार पत्र वितरित किए हैं जो अन्य अध्ययन क्षेत्र में नहीं देखे गये हैं।

अध्ययन क्षेत्र में अस्वीकृत दावों से संबंधित नोटिस का अवलोकन किया गया। काबिज भूमि से जुड़े दस्तावेजी सबूत का अवलोकन तथा पड़ोसी जिनके दावे स्वीकृत हुए हैं उनसे काबिज भूमि की तथ्यात्मक रिपोर्ट लेने का प्रयास किया है। अस्वीकृत दावे से जुड़े परिवारों को जो नोटिस दिया गया उसका अवलोकन करने से ज्ञात हुआ कि कुछ नोटिसों में इन आवेदकों को पक्ष रखने की दिनांक का

उल्लेख नहीं किया गया है तथा कुछ नोटिस में अस्वीकृत होने के कारण का स्पष्ट उल्लेख नहीं किया गया या फिर कई कारणों का उल्लेख तो कर दिया गया है, परंतु उसमें से कौन-सा कारण इस अस्वीकृत आवेदक का है, यह स्पष्ट नहीं किया गया। इस तरह से कुछ काबिज परिवारों के अपना पक्ष प्रस्तुत करने या कारण की अस्पष्टता में दस्तावेज प्रस्तुत करने में वंचित रहने की संभावना है। कहीं ना कहीं इन खामियों के कारण वास्तविक हकदार को अधिकार पत्र से वंचित होना पड़ रहा है।

### सामाजिक समस्याएं एवं चुनौतियां

जनजातीय समुदाय की पहचान सामुदायिक भावना एवं पारस्परिक सहयोग की संस्कृति से है। इस कानून के कार्यान्वयन की खामियाँ इस संस्कृति अर्थात् उनकी सामाजिक संरचना को कहीं न कहीं प्रभावित कर रही हैं। वन में निवास करने वाले इन समुदायों की आर्थिक स्थिति पहले से ही कमजोर है। जिन परिवारों को वन अधिकार पत्र प्राप्त हुआ है, उसमें 83.96 प्रतिशत 60,000 रुपए वार्षिक आय वाले परिवार हैं। शिक्षा स्तर भी बहुत ही कम है। जिन परिवारों को अधिकार पत्र वितरित किए गए हैं, उसमें 68.54 प्रतिशत केवल निरक्षर या साक्षर ही हैं। अध्ययन में सम्मिलित हर तीसरा व्यक्ति निरक्षर पाया गया। ऐसी स्थिति में अधिकार-पत्रों में उल्लिखित क्षेत्रफल एवं सीमा चिह्न के अभाव में इनकी आवंटित भूमि का मौका मुआयना एवं भौतिक सत्यापन करना असंभव-सा है। आपसी विवादों का निपटारा करने के लिए जो आधार होने चाहिए वही अधिकार पत्र में गायब हैं। अधिकार पत्र के आवेदन के साथ पड़ोस संबंधी सीमा चिह्न अर्थात् चारों दिशाओं के पड़ोस का ब्यौरा संबंधी नजरी नक्शा संलग्न किया गया था। यह तथ्य समूह चर्चा तथा आवेदन की प्रतिलिपि से पता चलता है। अधिकार पत्र में उल्लिखित क्षेत्रफल एवं सीमा चिह्न में रही खामी के कारण आपसी विवाद एवं मनमुटाव पैदा हो रहा है तथा आने वाले समय में इन आवंटित परिवारों के समक्ष अनेक चुनौतियां पैदा हो सकती हैं। अधिकार पत्र में आवंटित भूमि का रेखाचित्र भी इन अधिकार पत्रों में उल्लिखित नहीं किया गया है। रेखाचित्र का चित्रण करना आवंटित भूमि की सीमाओं को स्पष्ट करने का दस्तावेजी सबूत होता है, जो इन अधिकार पत्रों में उल्लेखित नहीं है।

इस तरह की कमियां वन में निवास करने वाली इन जनजाति समुदायों एवं अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों के समक्ष कई तरह की सामाजिक समस्याओं को पैदा करती हैं जो मुख्य रूप से आपसी विवादों एवं संघर्ष को बढ़ाता है तथा सामुदायिक भावना को कमजोर करता है। आपसी सहयोग की भावना एवं अंतर संबंधों को भी कमजोर करता है। अध्ययन के दौरान ऐसे कई परिवार देखे गए हैं जिनमें इस अधिकार पत्र की कमियों के कारण परिवार बिखरा है तथा इन परिवारों के सामाजिक संबंधों में बिखराव देखा गया है। उनके मध्य लड़ाई-झगड़े हुए हैं तथा इन लड़ाई-झगड़ों से न केवल सामाजिक संबंधों में बिखराव हुआ है, बल्कि इन विवादों के निपटारे के लिए सामाजिक स्तर पर परंपरागत पंचायतों का आयोजन करना पड़ता है जिसके सभी खर्चे इन्हीं परिवारों को वहन करने पड़ते हैं। यह उन पर एक आर्थिक भार है। सामाजिक स्तर पर विवादों का निपटारा न होने की स्थिति पर पुलिस एवं प्रशासन से भी ये सहयोग लेते हैं जिसमें प्रत्यक्ष-अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से उन्हें आर्थिक नुकसान होता है। इनकी सामाजिक एकता इनकी जो प्रमुख पहचान थी, उसको भी यह कमजोर करती है।

इन अधिकार पत्रों में मुखिया के रूप में पिता/माता या दोनों को बनाया गया है जबकि व्यावहारिकता में पिता का परिवार तथा विवाहित बच्चों का परिवार स्वतंत्र आवास एवं स्वतंत्र कृषि कार्य कर रहा है। जो अधिकार पत्र दिए गए हैं, वह भी नियमानुसार 4 एकड़ से ज्यादा नहीं हो सकते हैं। इस पाबंदी के कारण भी इन्हें वास्तविक कब्जे की तुलना में कम भूमि का अधिकार प्राप्त हुआ है। इसका भी प्रभाव इन जनजातीय परिवारों पर पड़ रहा है। माता-पिता एवं उनके बच्चों के मध्य सामाजिक संबंध भी खत्म हुए हैं तथा पारिवारिक संबंधों में बिखराव स्पष्ट रूप से देखने को मिला है।

## सामाजिक—आर्थिक स्थिति में बदलाव

अधिकार—पत्र मिलने के पश्चात् वन क्षेत्र में निवासरत परिवारों को हर वर्ष वन विभाग द्वारा किया जाने वाला जुर्माना, बेदखल करने के अभियान, वन भूमि के विवादों के लिए न्यायालयों में बार—बार पेशी पर उपस्थित होना, इन पेशियों पर होने वाला समय व खर्च, सरकार की योजनाओं के लिए भूमि का मालिकाना हक नहीं होने के कारण अयोग्य घोषित हो जाना, जनजाति समुदाय में वन क्षेत्र में काबिज परिवारों की सामाजिक स्थिति उसी समूह में नीचे/कम आंका जाना आदि समस्याओं से काफी हद तक मुक्ति मिल चुकी है। अधिकार—पत्र हासिल करने के सहरिया बाहुल्य जनजाति क्षेत्र के साथ—साथ अन्य क्षेत्रों में विभिन्न आवास योजना के अंतर्गत इन वन निवासियों के भी कुछ मकान बन गए, तो कुछ बन रहे हैं। न केवल मकान बने बल्कि उनमें बिजली के लिए सौर ऊर्जा के उपकरण भी लग गए हैं। इन कुछ बस्तियों में पानी व्यवस्था के लिए सौर ऊर्जा से जुड़े पानी पनघट योजना लगने से पीने योग्य पानी उपलब्ध हो रहा है।

इन वन क्षेत्र में निवास करने वाले परिवारों को जबसे अधिकार पत्र मिले हैं तब से उन्हें असुरक्षा की भावना से मुक्ति मिली है तथा कृषि क्षेत्र में अब वे स्थायी संसाधन जुटा रहे हैं। कुछ जगह पर कृषि कार्य हेतु पानी के लिए सौर ऊर्जा पंप भी लगा है। यह सब अधिकार पत्र हासिल करने से ही संभव हुआ है। अधिकार—पत्र ने इन परिवारों को न केवल सुरक्षा प्रदान की बल्कि इनके आर्थिक एवं सामाजिक विकास के रास्ते भी खोले हैं।

**परिकल्पना :** अनुसूचित जनजाति एवं अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासी (वन अधिकार मान्यता) अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन से जमीन का स्वामित्व मिला जिससे जनजातीय व्यक्तियों की सामाजिक एवं आर्थिक स्थिति में सुधार हुआ है।

**सत्यापन :** अध्ययन से संकलित तथ्यों के आधार पर अध्ययन से पूर्व बनाई गई परिकल्पना का सत्यापन करने से पता चलता है कि राजस्थान में कुल व्यक्तिगत आवेदनों में से 53.16 प्रतिशत वनवासी परिवारों को काबिज भूमि का अधिकार—पत्र प्राप्त हो चुका है। जिन परिवारों को वन भूमि का अधिकार प्राप्त हुआ है उन्होंने अपनी काबिज भूमि पर व्यवस्थित खेती एवं पक्का मकान का निर्माण करना प्रारंभ कर दिया है। अध्ययन के तथ्य से यह भी पता चला है कि 2005 से पूर्व बिजली का अभाव था। जब से इन्हें वन अधिकार पत्र प्राप्त हुआ है तब से उन्हें बिजली एवं कई परिवारों को सौर ऊर्जा की व्यवस्था सरकार से प्राप्त हुई है। अधिकार पत्र के अभाव में जनजातीय समुदायों एवं अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों को इन लाभकारी योजनाओं से वंचित होना पड़ रहा था। जब से अधिकार—पत्र प्राप्त हुए हैं, तब से इनकी आवासीय बस्तियों में मनरेगा के कार्य से विकास होने लगा है। विभिन्न आवास योजना के माध्यम से कई क्षेत्रों में इन वन निवासियों के भी पक्के आवास बनने लगे हैं। अधिकार—पत्र हासिल करने के लिए इन वन निवासियों को पंचायत से लेकर दिल्ली तक आंदोलन करने पड़े। जिसमें उनका समय तथा धन काफी खर्च हुआ है। अब इस तरह समय व धन खर्च करने में कमी आएगी। काबिज कब्जों का जब से अधिकार—पत्र प्राप्त हुआ है, तब उन परिवारों को सरकारी योजना का परिलाभ मिलने लगा है। अब इनके काबिज कब्जों को हटाने का डर खत्म हो गया है तथा कब्जे हटाने से होने वाले नुकसान से भी मुक्ति मिल गयी है। अब इस भूमि पर ये परिवार आधुनिक खेती कर सकते हैं। मोटे तौर पर कहा जा सकता है कि इनकी आर्थिक—सामाजिक स्थिति में सुधार हो रहा है। अतः अध्ययन से संकलित तथ्यों के आधार पर यह परिकल्पना सही साबित हुई है।

## निष्कर्ष

राजस्थान के जनजाति उपयोजना क्षेत्र एवं पी.वी.टी.जी. क्षेत्र में निवास करने वाले जनजातीय

समुदायों और अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों में वितरित किए गए अधिकांश अधिकार—पत्रों में समरूपता नहीं है। यह समरूपता इनके शीर्षक, हकदार के नाम, भूमि के क्षेत्रफल, सीमा चिह्न, रेखाचित्र आदि को लेकर नहीं पाई गई है, जबकि केंद्र सरकार ने गजट नोटिफिकेशन के माध्यम से संपूर्ण देश में एक ही प्रारूप तैयार कर लागू करने का प्रयास किया है। इन अधिकार—पत्रों में उल्लिखित क्षेत्रफल एवं सीमा चिह्न को लेकर कई खामियां दिखाई पड़ती हैं। अधिकांश अधिकार—पत्रों में कुल क्षेत्रफल का ही अंकन किया गया है जिसमें भूमि की लंबाई एवं चौड़ाई का उल्लेख सम्मिलित नहीं है। केवल सहरिया जनजाति बाहुल्य क्षेत्र किशनगंज में आवास के अधिकार—पत्रों में इसका उल्लेख पाया गया है जबकि यहाँ पर भी कृषि संबंधी अधिकार—पत्र में इसका उल्लेख नहीं है। इसी तरह सीमा चिह्न को लेकर भी अधिकार—पत्रों में काफी असमानता देखी गई है। कुछ ग्राम पंचायतों में वितरित अधिकार—पत्र निश्चित अवधि को छोड़कर अधिकांश अधिकार पत्र में सीमा चिह्न का उल्लेख नहीं पाया गया है या खसरा संख्या, ग्राम पंचायत एवं उपखंड का उल्लेख कर रखा है। यह स्थिति ज्यादातर अधिकार—पत्रों में दिखाई पड़ती है। यहां यह भी ज्ञात हुआ कि अधिकार—पत्र में रेखाचित्र का चित्रण नहीं दिया गया है। यह स्थिति शत—प्रतिशत अधिकार—पत्रों में देखने को मिली है। सीमा चिह्न, क्षेत्रफल एवं रेखाचित्र का उल्लेख न होने से इन अधिकार—पत्र धारकों के सीमा विवादों, भूमि का पुनः सत्यापन तथा स्थायी चहारदीवारी का निर्माण, आदि कार्य करने में काफी बाधा उत्पन्न हो रही है तथा आगे यह समस्या और गंभीर होगी। इसी तरह अधिकार—पत्र में हकदार के नाम केवल पति या पत्नी या दोनों का उल्लेख कर रखा है। प्रावधान अनुसार पति—पत्नी के संयुक्त नाम से अधिकार—पत्र वितरित किया जाना था जो अध्ययन के दौरान कम देखने को मिला है। अध्ययन क्षेत्र में यह भी तथ्य उभर कर आया है कि कुछ अधिकार—पत्र अपने बड़े भाई या बड़े भाई व पत्नी के नाम से जारी करवा लिए गए हैं जिससे उस परिवार के छोटे भाइयों को अधिकार—पत्र से वंचित होना पड़ रहा है। सहरिया बाहुल्य क्षेत्र में कई ऐसे ग्रामीण मिले हैं जिन्हें काबिज भूमि का कुछ हिस्सा अधिकार—पत्र के रूप में मिला है बाकी काबिज भूमि का जुर्माना वन विभाग को देना पड़ रहा है।

वन अधिकार अधिनियम के कार्यान्वयन में जमीनी स्तर पर कई तरह की खामियां रही हैं। उक्त खामियों के कारण वन क्षेत्र में निवास करने वाले इन जनजातीय समुदायों एवं अन्य परंपरागत वन निवासियों की सामाजिक व्यवस्था अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से प्रभावित हो रही है जिसमें मुख्य रूप से सामुदायिक विकास की भावना कमजोर हो रही है। सामाजिक संबंधों में बिखराव पैदा हो रहा है, संघर्ष की प्रवृत्ति में वृद्धि हुई है, सामाजिक न्याय व्यवस्था में आधुनिक न्याय व्यवस्था की ओर झुकाव बढ़ रहा है, जो काफी महंगी न्याय व्यवस्था है। पारिवारिक संबंधों में भी तनाव पैदा हो रहा है, जो आपसी सहयोग की भावना के स्थान पर अविश्वास को बढ़ावा दे रहा है।

## सुझाव

- वन अधिकार अधिनियम के अंतर्गत दिए गए अधिकार—पत्रों की खामियों को ठीक करने के लिए अधिनियम एवं नियम में अधिकार—पत्रों के संशोधन हेतु प्रावधान किया जाना चाहिए जो अभी तक नहीं किया गया है।
- अधिकार—पत्र में भू—भाग का नजरी नक्शा तथा क्षेत्रफल का उल्लेख अनिवार्य रूप से किया जाना चाहिए तथा जिन अधिकार—पत्रों में उल्लेख नहीं हुआ है ऐसे अधिकार—पत्रों में अति आवश्यक जानकारी का उल्लेख करके संशोधित अधिकार पत्र जारी करने की आवश्यकता है।
- अधिकार—पत्र द्वारा आवंटित भूमि का भी भौतिक सत्यापन करने की आवश्यकता है तथा जिनके आवेदन निरस्त हुए हैं, उनको न्यायोचित पक्ष रखने का अवसर दिया जाना आवश्यक है।

- जनजाति समुदाय की संस्कृति के अनुसार परिवार के स्वरूप को स्वीकार करते हुए पृथक्-पृथक् अधिकार-पत्र जारी किए जाने चाहिए।

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## वर्तमान समय में युवाओं पर सोशल मीडिया का प्रभाव: एक समाजशास्त्रीय अध्ययन

मीनाक्षी मीना

**सार :** सोशल मीडिया का जाल आज पूरे विश्व में फैल चुका है। सोशल मीडिया वर्चुअल वर्ल्ड में संचार का सबसे तीव्र गति का माध्यम साबित हो रहा है। यह एक विशाल नेटवर्क है जो सारे विश्व को आपस में जोड़े रखता है। सोशल मीडिया के कई रूप हैं, जैसे— इंटरनेट, यूट्यूब, ट्विटर, व्हाट्सएप, इंस्टाग्राम, शेयर चैट, स्नेपचैट, आदि। सोशल मीडिया राष्ट्रीय—अंतरराष्ट्रीय स्तर पर सभी सूचनाएं एवं जानकारी लोगों तक पहुंचाता है। सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट परस्पर एक दूसरे से जुड़ने, विचारों का आदान—प्रदान करने का एक प्रचलित मंच है। आज युवाओं में इसकी लोकप्रियता चरम पर है। युवाओं के साथ—साथ बुजुर्गों एवं बच्चों में भी इसका प्रयोग लगातार बढ़ रहा है। यह एक ऐसा मंच है जहां प्रत्येक व्यक्ति को अपनी राय, विचारों की अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता होती है, परंतु क्या हमारे युवा इसका सही रूप से इस्तेमाल कर रहे हैं? सोशल मीडिया के प्रयोग से युवाओं के व्यवहार और आचरण में क्या परिवर्तन आया है और उनके स्वास्थ्य पर इसका क्या असर पड़ रहा है? इन सभी बातों का पता लगाने के लिए प्रस्तुत आलेख में उत्तरदाता के रूप में युवाओं को चुना गया है। सोशल मीडिया के प्रभाव के बारे में बहुत सारे तथ्य सामने आए हैं, जहां कुछ लोग इसे वरदान मानते हैं तो कुछ लोग इसको अभिशाप भी मानते हैं।

**संकेत शब्द :** सोशल मीडिया, संचार, इंटरनेट, यूट्यूब, ट्विटर, व्हाट्सएप।

समाजशास्त्र विषय में संचार की अवधारणा मूल रूप से स्वीकृत है। जब तक दो या दो से अधिक व्यक्तियों के बीच कोई अंतःक्रिया नहीं होती है, तब तक वो न तो समूह का निर्माण कर सकते हैं, न ही समाज का। इसीलिए प्रत्येक व्यक्ति अपनी आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति के लिए दैनिक जीवन में संचार किए बिना नहीं रह सकता है, चाहे वह अपने मित्रों से हो परिवार से या रिश्तेदारों से। संचार की वजह से ही एक व्यक्ति दूसरे व्यक्ति से जुड़ता है और सामाजिक संबंध स्थापित करता है। संचार के माध्यम से सूचना, संदेश, अभिव्यक्ति, व्यक्तिगत विचार, भावनाओं आदि को एक दूसरे तक पहुंचाया जाता है। समाजशास्त्र के अंतर्गत संचार का मतलब है एक व्यक्ति से दूसरे व्यक्ति तक सूचनाओं का आदान—प्रदान करना। जब यही संचार अनेक व्यक्तियों, समुदाय या पूरी दुनिया तक पहुंचाना होता है, तब उसे जनसंचार कहा जाता है, जैसे—जब एक व्यक्ति अपने मित्र से टेलीफोन पर वार्तालाप करता है तो वह संचार कहलाएगा, परंतु यदि कोई सूचना अनेक लोगों तक पहुंचती है तब वह जनसंचार कहलाता है। “जन संचार के साधनों (टी.वी, रेडियो, समाचार—पत्र, सिनेमा) का विकास आधुनिक विचारों को प्रसारित करने का एक महत्वपूर्ण साधन है। परंतु खतरा यह है कि यदि इन पर सरकारी नियंत्रण हो जाएगा तो ये साधन एक ही प्रकार की विचारधारा को प्रसारित करेंगे।” (आहूजा, 2000) पुराने समय में लोगों के पास जनसंचार के सीमित माध्यम ही हुआ करते थे जिनसे वे सूचनाएं प्राप्त करते थे, जैसे—टी.वी, रेडियो, समाचार—पत्र, सिनेमा, टेपरिकॉर्डर, ग्रामोफोन, साहित्य, आलेख, आदि। इन माध्यमों से ज्यादातर सकारात्मक सूचनाएं ही लोगों तक पहुंचती थीं। साथ ही लोगों में आपस में भाईचारा, देशभक्ति, शिक्षा के प्रति जागरूकता, सुख—शांति, पारस्परिक सहयोग, विश्वास, आदि में भी बढ़ावा इन्हीं जनसंचार के माध्यमों से समाज में देखने को मिलता था। परंतु धीरे—धीरे आधुनिक युग में तकनीकी विकास के कारण सामाजिक परिवर्तन हुए। सामाजिक विकास व आधुनिकीकरण से जनसंचार के माध्यमों में बढ़ोतरी हुई और साथ ही साथ संदेशों, सूचनाओं का तीव्र गति से पूरी दुनिया में आदान—प्रदान होने लगा। आधुनिक युग में सोशल मीडिया व इंटरनेट का लगातार प्रयोग बढ़ने लगा। सोशल मीडिया का सबसे ज्यादा प्रभाव बच्चों व युवाओं पर पड़ने लगा है। इससे वे आधुनिकता तथा उपभोक्तावादी जीवनशैली की तरफ भी बढ़ते जा रहे हैं।



वर्तमान समय में सोशल मीडिया का प्रयोग आम आदमी की दिनचर्या में किसी न किसी रूप में शामिल हो चुका है। प्रत्येक व्यक्ति प्रत्यक्ष व अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से इससे किसी न किसी तरह जुड़ा हुआ है। मनुष्य हमेशा से ही एक जिज्ञासु प्राणी रहा है। वह अपने चारों तरफ होने वाली सभी घटनाओं के बारे में जानकारी हासिल करना चाहता है जिसमें मीडिया की अहम भूमिका है। वह घर बैठकर भी सारी जानकारी प्राप्त कर सकता है। सोशल मीडिया युवाओं की जिंदगी का एक अहम हिस्सा बन चुकी है जिसके माध्यम से वे सूचनाओं का आदान-प्रदान, मनोरंजन व शिक्षा संबंधी सभी जानकारीयों को जानने का प्रयास करता है। सोशल मीडिया वर्चुअल वर्ल्ड में संचार का सबसे अच्छा माध्यम साबित हो रहा है। यह एक विशाल नेटवर्क है जो कि सारे विश्व को जोड़े रखता है और हर क्षेत्र की जानकारीयों को लोगों तक पहुंचाता है। कोविड-19 महामारी की वजह से स्मार्टफोन युवाओं तक पहुंचा है जो कि आज उनके जीवन का एक अहम हिस्सा बन गया है। पहले से भी स्मार्टफोन का उपयोग होता आ रहा है, किंतु कोरोना महामारी ने इसके उपयोग को कई गुना बढ़ा दिया है जिसकी वजह से प्रत्येक युवा एक कृत्रिम दुनिया से जुड़ता जा रहा है। युवाओं पर सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट का प्रभाव ज्यादा पड़ता है।

भारत में सोशल मीडिया का विस्तार क्रांति के रूप में हुआ है। यह प्रचार-प्रसार का एक सरल माध्यम है, जो चाहे किसी भी क्षेत्र में हो, जैसे- चुनाव, व्यवसाय, फिल्म जगत्, शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में आदि। इलेक्ट्रॉनिक मीडिया का दिनों-दिन निवेश बढ़ता ही जा रहा है। इसका सबसे ज्यादा प्रयोग युवाओं में बढ़ा है, क्योंकि युवाओं की जिज्ञासा, उनके विचार उनकी उत्सुकता और उनके सवालों के जवाब उनको इन सोशल मीडिया के माध्यम से ही मिल रहे हैं तो वह इनकी तरफ आकर्षित क्यों नहीं होंगे?

प्रत्येक वर्ष 30 जून को सोशल मीडिया दिवस मनाया जाता है। इसका मुख्य उद्देश्य सोशल मीडिया के प्रभाव और वैश्विक संचार को उजागर करना है। वर्तमान समय में युवाओं द्वारा क्रमशः ट्विटर, इंस्टाग्राम, स्नैपचैट, फेसबुक, यूट्यूब, मौज, टेलीग्राम, शेयर चैट, व्हाट्सएप, ब्लॉग, आदि सोशल मीडिया के माध्यमों द्वारा सूचनाएं एकत्र की जा रही हैं। तेजी से बदलते समय में सोशल मीडिया युवाओं को काफी प्रभावित कर रहा है, परंतु क्या हमें इसकी भी जानकारी है कि यह सोशल मीडिया हमारी आने वाली पीढ़ी पर क्या प्रभाव डाल रहा है। अभी हाल ही में स्मार्टफोन के यूजर्स की संख्या में बढ़ोतरी हुई है जिसका युवाओं पर गंभीर प्रभाव देखने को मिला है। इसमें कुछ प्रभाव सकारात्मक व कुछ नकारात्मक हैं। "मीडिया और समाज को लेकर कई सैद्धांतिक सवाल महत्वपूर्ण हो जाते हैं कि क्या मीडिया इसलिए बदल रहा है क्योंकि समाज, उत्पादन संबंध, लोगों में विश्वास, उनके विचार बदल रहे हैं? मीडिया के बारे में सी. राइट. मिल्स ने माना है कि सत्ता का इस्तेमाल करने वाली संस्थाएं एक दूसरे से गुंथी हुई होती हैं।" (मंडल, 2011) सोशल मीडिया के प्रभाव के बारे में बहुत सारे तथ्य सामने आते हैं। "20वीं और 21वीं सदी में समाज में आए सामाजिक परिवर्तन की वजह है तकनीकी क्रांति। तकनीकी क्रांति आज की कोई नई क्रांति नहीं है बल्कि इसकी शुरुआत हुए 200 साल हो गए हैं। परंतु पहले की तुलना में आज इसकी गति तेज है। टी.वी, इंटरनेट, प्रिंट मीडिया, सभी की भाषा अलग-अलग होगी। यह भाषा के लिए एक चुनौती होगी और लोगों को उसी भाषा के अनुरूप ढलना भी होगा।" (पचौरी, शर्मा 2002).

सोशल मीडिया के उपयोग का असर युवाओं पर ज्यादा पड़ रहा है, क्योंकि इसका कारण यह हो सकता है कि सोशल साइट्स पर लगातार अपनी प्रोफाइल फोटो बदलने, उस पर ज्यादा से ज्यादा लाइक पाने की इच्छा, घंटों अपने मित्रों से चैटिंग करना, बार-बार स्टेटस अपडेट करना, आदि सभी आदतों ने युवाओं को काफी प्रभावित किया है। यह सोशल मीडिया समाज के प्रति युवाओं को सोशल भी बनाता है और एकाकी भी, क्योंकि सोशल साइट्स पर पुराने मित्रों को देख व्यक्ति हर्षोल्लासित होता है। वही अजनबी लोगों के साथ धोखे का शिकार भी हो जाता है। इसलिए सोशल मीडिया के प्रयोग में सतर्कता बेहद जरूरी है। कुछ लोग सोशल मीडिया को वरदान मानते हैं तो कुछ लोग इसको अभिशाप

भी मानते हैं। यह एक सशक्त माध्यम है जिसका प्रभाव तुरंत ही युवाओं पर पड़ता है। लेजर सफेल्ड और मर्टन ने लिखा है कि "जनसंचार आम जन पर नशीला प्रभाव उत्पन्न करते हैं। इसके अधिक प्रयोग से सामाजिक संबंधों में दूरियां आई हैं, क्योंकि इनके प्रयोग से आपसी अंतः क्रिया सीमित हो जाती है। ये साधन इतने अधिक विकल्प प्रस्तुत करते हैं कि लक्ष्य और साधनों के मध्य भ्रांतियां उत्पन्न हो जाती हैं। साथ ही नवीनता का प्रचार इतना अधिक होता है कि परंपराएं इस प्रचार में खो जाती हैं।" (सक्सेना, 2016)

युवाओं के विकास से ही देश और राष्ट्र का विकास संभव है इसलिए उनके हित को ध्यान में रखते हुए राष्ट्रीय बाल नीति 1974 बनाई गई इस नीति के अनुसार राज्य का उत्तरदायित्व माना गया है कि वह जन्म पूर्व व पश्चात् बच्चे और बच्चियों के विकास हेतु पर्याप्त व समुचित सेवाएं उन्हें उपलब्ध कराएगा। आने वाली पीढ़ी ही हमारे देश का भविष्य है इसलिए युवाओं व बच्चों का शारीरिक व मानसिक रूप से संपूर्ण विकास होना बहुत जरूरी है। सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी (संशोधन) अधिनियम 2008 साइबर सुरक्षा से संबंधित है जिसमें इलेक्ट्रॉनिक हस्ताक्षर शब्द को आईटी अधिनियम (संशोधन) 2008 में पेश किया गया था। इसे ई-कॉमर्स भी कहा जाता है। यह अधिनियम सोशल मीडिया के माध्यम से बढ़ते साइबर अपराध के विभिन्न स्वरूपों के तहत जुर्माना और दंड के प्रावधान को आरोपित करता है।

### डिजिटल 2022: ग्लोबल ओवर व्यू रिपोर्ट

"सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी ने समाज के पूरे ढांचे को क्रांतिकारी ढंग से बदल दिया है। कंप्यूटर नेटवर्क के व्यवसायीकरण ने ऐसी स्थिति पैदा की है कि विश्व के किसी भी कोने में बैठे हुए लोग इन सोशल मीडिया के माध्यम से विचारों का आदान-प्रदान करने लगे हैं। ऐसे माहौल में कम खर्च में विचारों का आदान-प्रदान होने लगा है।" (कुमार, 2004) सोशल मीडिया ने बड़े पैमाने पर युवाओं में बच्चों को सांस्कृतिक आदान-प्रदान के लिए एक मंच प्रदान किया है साथ ही इसके माध्यम से युवाओं में सम-सामयिकी चर्चाओं में संवाद भी बढ़ा है। मीडिया का विकास यूरोप और ब्रिटेन में व्यवसायिक स्वार्थों की पूर्ति के लिए हुआ था। (मिश्र, 2004)

भारत की कुल जनसंख्या 1.38 अरब में से लगभग 467 मिलियन सोशल मीडिया यूजर हैं। वर्ष 2022 की रिपोर्ट के अनुसार भारतीय उपयोगकर्ता औसतन 2.46 घंटे सोशल मीडिया पर बिताते हैं। जबकि इस आधार पर जापानी उपयोगकर्ता सबसे कम औसतन 45 मिनट सोशल मीडिया का प्रयोग करता है। भारत में सबसे ज्यादा इंस्टाग्राम 76.50 प्रतिशत, मैसेज के लिए व्हाट्सएप 81.2 प्रतिशत, सबसे ज्यादा प्रयोग में लिया जाने वाला डिवाइस मोबाइल 75.91 प्रतिशत और सबसे ज्यादा सर्च किया जाने वाला साइट गूगल 98.57 प्रतिशत रहा है। डिजिटल 2022: ग्लोबल ओवर व्यू रिपोर्ट के अनुसार भारत की कुल 467 मिलियन जनसंख्या सोशल मीडिया का प्रयोग करती है। "सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट से बढ़ते अपराध के कई मनोवैज्ञानिक व सामाजिक पहलू सामने आ रहे हैं। कई बड़े महानगरों, जैसे-दिल्ली आदि में सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट के ज्यादा प्रयोग की वजह से उनकी कंपनियों की उत्पादकता भी घटी है।" (माथुर, 2010)

सिडनी की यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ टेक्नोलॉजी के वैज्ञानिकों ने चेतावनी दी है कि "सोशल मीडिया के इस्तेमाल से लगभग पचास हानिकारक प्रभाव पड़ते हैं जो कि मानसिक रूप से प्रभाव डालते हैं। इन शोधकर्ताओं ने फेसबुक, ट्विटर, इंस्टाग्राम और अन्य सोशल मीडिया साइट में इन हानिकारक प्रभावों की जानकारी दी है। इसमें चिंता, अवसाद, परेशान किया जाना, आत्महत्या के लिए उकसाने वाले विचार, साइबरस्टॉकिंग, अपराध, ईर्ष्या, सूचना अधिकार, और ऑनलाइन सुरक्षा में कमी होना, आदि सभी को शामिल किया है।" (हिंदी न्यूज़ 2021)

सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट मुख्यतः फेसबुक, इंस्टाग्राम, पिंटेरेस्ट, व्हाट्सएप, ट्विटर, स्नैपचैट, यूट्यूब, आदि बहुत ही लोकप्रिय हैं।

## शोध के उद्देश्य

प्रस्तुत शोध के उद्देश्य इस प्रकार हैं –

- सोशल मीडिया के प्रयोग से युवाओं के व्यवहार और आचरण में क्या परिवर्तन आया है।
- युवाओं द्वारा सोशल मीडिया का प्रयोग अधिकतम कितने समय के लिए किया जाता होगा।
- युवाओं में सोशल मीडिया के प्रयोग से उनके ज्ञान में वृद्धि हुई है।

## सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट के प्रकार



## अध्ययन विधि

प्रस्तुत अध्ययन के लिए शोध क्षेत्र जोधपुर जिले के नगरीय क्षेत्र को चुना गया है। नगरीय क्षेत्र में सीनियर सेकेंडरी, स्नातक और स्नातकोत्तर में पढ़ने वाले विद्यार्थियों को उत्तरदाताओं के रूप में चुना गया है जिसमें कुल 90 सहभागी उत्तरदाताओं को शामिल किया गया है। उत्तरदाताओं का चयन सुविधाजनक निदर्शन विधि से किया गया है। अध्ययन विषय से संबंधित सूचनाओं का संकलन करने हेतु प्राथमिक स्रोत के अंतर्गत साक्षात्कार प्रविधि तथा द्वितीयक स्रोत के अंतर्गत ऑनलाइन वेबसाइट, समाचार-पत्र, पत्रिकाएं, लाइब्रेरी, सरकारी आंकड़े, किताबें, शोध साहित्य, आदि का प्रयोग करके सूचनाओं का संकलन किया गया है। अध्ययन में उन्हीं उत्तरदाताओं का चयन किया गया है जो सोशल मीडिया का प्रयोग करते हैं। साक्षात्कार में पांच प्रश्नों को शामिल किया गया है जो कि सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट के युवाओं पर पढ़ने वाले प्रभाव से संबंधित रहे हैं। जैसे— क्या आप सोशल मीडिया के बारे में जानते हैं? सबसे ज्यादा कौन-कौन से सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट्स का प्रयोग आपके द्वारा किया जाता है? कितना समय आप इन सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट पर व्यतीत करते हैं? इसके उपयोग से आप पर क्या-क्या प्रभाव पड़े हैं? क्या आपके ज्ञान में वृद्धि हुई है? इत्यादि।

## तथ्यों का विश्लेषण

अध्ययन के अंतर्गत साक्षात्कार से प्राप्त आंकड़ों के विश्लेषण से निष्कर्ष के रूप में जो महत्वपूर्ण परिणाम निकल कर आए हैं वह इस प्रकार हैं –

### सारणी संख्या-1

युवाओं द्वारा सूचनाओं को प्राप्त करने के लिए प्रयोग में लिए जाने वाले सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट्स

क्रम संख्या	सोशल सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट	उत्तरदाताओं का शैक्षिक स्तर			
		सीनियर सैकण्डरी	स्नातक	स्नातकोत्तर	योग
1.	यूट्यूब	12 (40.0 %)	8 (26.67 %)	7 (23.33 %)	27 (30.0 %)
2.	फेसबुक	5 (16.66 %)	6 (20.0 %)	3 (10.0 %)	14 (15.56 %)
3.	इंस्टाग्राम	7 (23.34 %)	5 (16.66 %)	9 (30.0 %)	21 (23.35 %)
4.	व्हाट्सएप	3 (10.0 %)	8 (26.67 %)	5 (16.67 %)	16 (17.77 %)
5.	ट्विटर	1 (3.34 %)	2 (6.66 %)	3 (10.0 %)	6 (6.66 %)
6.	अन्य	2 (6.66 %)	1 (3.34 %)	3 (10.0 %)	6 (6.66 %)
	<b>योग</b>	30 (100%)	30 (100%)	30 (100%)	90 100%

सारणी-1 से ज्ञात होता है कि सीनियर सैकण्डरी के उत्तरदाताओं में से लगभग 40 प्रतिशत यूट्यूब, 23.34 प्रतिशत इंस्टाग्राम, 16.66 प्रतिशत फेसबुक, 10 प्रतिशत व्हाट्सएप का प्रयोग करते हैं। स्नातक के उत्तरदाता सबसे ज्यादा यूट्यूब (26.67 प्रतिशत) व व्हाट्सएप (26.67 प्रतिशत) तथा 20 प्रतिशत फेसबुक का प्रयोग करते हैं। स्नातकोत्तर उत्तरदाता इंस्टाग्राम (30 प्रतिशत), यूट्यूब (23.33 प्रतिशत) व व्हाट्सएप (16.67 प्रतिशत) का प्रयोग करते हैं। सभी उत्तरदाताओं द्वारा सबसे कम ट्विटर (3.34 प्रतिशत, 6.66 प्रतिशत, 10 प्रतिशत) का प्रयोग किया गया है। सभी उत्तरदाताओं के तथ्यों को मिलाकर देखा जाए तो यूट्यूब (30 प्रतिशत), इंस्टाग्राम (23.35 प्रतिशत), व्हाट्सएप (17.77 प्रतिशत), फेसबुक (15.56 प्रतिशत), ट्विटर (6.66 प्रतिशत) तथा 6.66 द्वारा प्रतिशत अन्य दूसरे सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट्स को प्रयोग में लाया गया है।

### सारणी संख्या-2

युवाओं द्वारा सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट पर दिया जाने वाला समय

क्रम संख्या	समय	उत्तरदाताओं का शैक्षिक स्तर			
		सीनियर सैकण्डरी	स्नातक	स्नातकोत्तर	योग
1.	20-30 मिनट	4 (13.34%)	5 (16.67%)	3 (10.00%)	12 (13.34%)
2.	30 मिनट से 1 घंटा	6 (20.00%)	7 (23.33%)	9 (30.00%)	22 (24.45%)
3.	1-2 घंटा	8 (26.66%)	11 (36.66%)	10 (33.34%)	29 (32.23%)
4.	2-3 घंटा	9 (30.00%)	5 (16.67%)	6 (20.00%)	20 (22.22%)
5.	3 घंटा से ज्यादा	3 (10.00%)	2 (6.66%)	2 (6.66%)	7 (7.76%)
	योग	30 (100%)	30 (100%)	30 (100%)	90 (100%)

सारणी संख्या-2 के अनुसार सीनियर सैकण्डरी के उत्तरदाता सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट्स पर लगभग 2 से 3 घंटे तथा स्नातक और स्नातकोत्तर स्तर के उत्तरदाता 1 से 2 घंटे इन पर बिताते हैं। यह सभी उत्तरदाता औसतन 52 मिनट नेटवर्किंग साइट्स पर अपना समय व्यतित करते हैं।

### युवाओं पर सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट के सकारात्मक और नकारात्मक प्रभाव

अध्ययन के उद्देश्य को ध्यान में रखते हुए उत्तरदाताओं से पूछे गए प्रश्नों के माध्यम से यह जानकारी प्राप्त हुई है कि युवाओं पर इन सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट के प्रयोग से सकारात्मक व नकारात्मक दोनों प्रभाव पड़े हैं। कोरोनाकाल के बाद से युवा वर्ग सोशल मीडिया का प्रयोग ज्यादा करने लगे हैं। वे अब अपनी दिनचर्या का कुछ समय सोशल मीडिया पर व्यतीत करने लगे हैं। अगर सकारात्मक पहलुओं की बात करें तो युवाओं को सोशल मीडिया से काफी फायदा हुआ है, क्योंकि वे घर से ही अपने कार्य को करना, फोटो, सूचना, डाक्यूमेंट्स, वीडियो, आदि का आदान-प्रदान करना सीख गए हैं। उनमें तकनीकी ज्ञान का विकास भी हुआ है। किसी भी तरह की जानकारी सोशल मीडिया के द्वारा प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। यह तीव्र गति से संचार का एक सरल माध्यम है जो हर जगह उपलब्ध हो सकता है। साथ ही शिक्षा से जुड़ी हुई सभी जानकारी तथा समाज के प्रति जागरूकता में भी युवाओं की सहभागिता बढ़ी है। सोशल मीडिया का एक सकारात्मक प्रभाव यह भी पड़ा है कि इससे परिवार व रिश्तेदार, जो कि दूर-देश में रह रहे हैं वे आमने-सामने एक दूसरे को देखकर आपस में वार्तालाप भी कर सकते हैं जिससे उनमें एक घनिष्ठता की भावना भी बढ़ रही है। सोशल मीडिया सभी वर्गों के लिए उपयोगी है, चाहे वह शिक्षित वर्ग हो या अशिक्षित वर्ग। अगर नकारात्मक पहलुओं की बात करते हैं तो युवाओं में सोशल मीडिया के प्रयोग से उनमें एकाग्रता, अकेलापन, आंखों से संबंधित समस्याएं,

चिड़चिड़ापन, आदि के संकेत प्राप्त हुए हैं। कोरोनाकाल के समय युवा वर्ग सोशल मीडिया के माध्यम से ही अपना समय व्यतीत करते थे। जिसकी वजह से उन्हें पता ही नहीं चला कि कब उन्हें सोशल मीडिया की लत लग गई। वे सोशल मीडिया के माध्यम से ही अपनी खुशी को खोजने लगे हैं। साइबर अपराध भी सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट के अधिकतम प्रयोग की एक वजह है। साथ ही साथ सोशल मीडिया के द्वारा प्राप्त भ्रामक जानकारियों, सामाजिक घटनाओं को तोड़-मरोड़ कर पेश करना, अश्लील फोटो, हिंसक वीडियो आदि की एडिटिंग से आमजन एवं युवाओं के भविष्य को नुकसान पहुंचाया जा रहा है।

### सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट के प्रभाव

#### सकारात्मक प्रभाव

- ✦ तकनीकी व संचार के विकास।
- ✦ तेज गति के संचार का माध्यम।
- ✦ सभी वर्गों के लिए उपयोगी है, जैसे- शिक्षित, अशिक्षित।
- ✦ फोटो, वीडियो, सूचना, डाक्यूमेंट्स का आसानी से आदान-प्रदान।
- ✦ ज्ञान में वृद्धि।
- ✦ सरलता से सूचना व समाचारों का प्रदान होना।
- ✦ समाज के प्रति जागरूकता।
- ✦ शिक्षा से जुड़े कार्यक्रम में बढ़ोतरी।

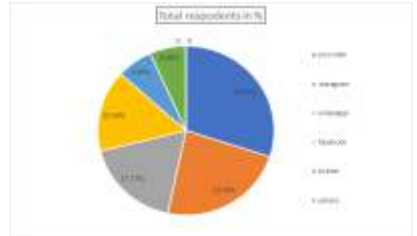
#### नकारात्मक प्रभाव

- ✦ भ्रामक जानकारियों का आदान-प्रदान।
- ✦ सामाजिक-घटनाओं को तोड़-मरोड़ कर पेश किया जाना।
- ✦ फोटो, वीडियो की एडिटिंग से आमजन को नुकसान पहुंचाना।
- ✦ डिप्रेशन, मानसिक तनाव, आदि में बढ़ोतरी।
- ✦ साइबर अपराध में बढ़ोतरी।
- ✦ चिड़चिड़ापन, एकाग्रता, अकेलापन, अनिद्रा की समस्याएं।

### निष्कर्ष

सोशल मीडिया ने व्यक्ति को अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता का एक नया आयाम दिया है। जहां प्रत्येक व्यक्ति बिना किसी डर के अपनी राय, विचार शेर करता है।

प्रस्तुत अध्ययन में उत्तरदाताओं की जानकारी और प्राप्त तथ्यों के अनुसार शोध के उद्देश्यों में यह स्पष्ट होता है कि औसतन प्रत्येक युवा प्रतिदिन दैनिक जीवन में लगभग एक से दो घंटा सोशल मीडिया पर अपना समय व्यतीत करता है। जिसमें सभी उत्तरदाताओं के तथ्यों को मिलाकर देखा जाए तो यूट्यूब (30.0), इंस्टाग्राम (23.35), व्हाट्सएप (17.77), फेसबुक (15.56), ट्विटर (6.66), 6.66 अन्य दूसरे सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट्स को प्रयोग में लाया गया है।



सोशल मीडिया के प्रयोग से युवाओं के व्यवहार और आचरण में भी काफी परिवर्तन आया है। जैसे हर सिक्के के दो पहलू होते हैं वैसे ही सोशल मीडिया के भी दो पहलू सामने आए हैं – जिसमें एक सकारात्मक पहलू और दूसरा नकारात्मक पहलू है। इन दोनों पहलू का प्रभाव युवाओं के व्यवहार और आचरण पर पड़ रहा है। नकारात्मक पहलुओं को देखा जाए तो सोशल मीडिया की वजह से युवा वर्ग आउटडोर गेम्स, आमने-सामने के वार्तालाप, आदि से दूर होते जा रहे हैं, और उन्होंने इस कृत्रिम समाज को अपने जीवन का एक हिस्सा बना लिया है। इसकी वजह से उन्हें अकेलापन, चिड़चिड़ापन, पढ़ाई से विचलित हो जाना, अच्छे अंक नहीं आना, बनावटी जीवनशैली के प्रति आकर्षण होना और उसे पा लेने की लालसा, इत्यादि के प्रभाव भी देखने को मिले हैं। इन्हीं कारणों की वजह से वर्तमान समय में युवाओं में आत्महत्या करने की प्रवृत्ति भी बढ़ रही है।

सकारात्मक पहलू की बात करते हैं तो अच्छी बात यह है कि इससे युवाओं में राष्ट्रीय और अंतरराष्ट्रीय मुद्दों के प्रति जागरूकता बढ़ी है। उनके ज्ञान में भी वृद्धि हुई है क्योंकि तर्क-वितर्क करने का यह एक नया मंच उनको मिला है जिससे नई जानकारी भी मिलती है। आज घर बैठकर स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा या कैरियर संबंधी किसी भी जानकारी को प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। वर्तमान युवा पीढ़ी अधिक सूचनाओं से युक्त तथा अधिक होशियार है। छोटे-छोटे बच्चे भी आज अपनी उम्र से अधिक जानकारी रखते हैं अधिक स्मार्ट लगते हैं। लेकिन अनुभव कहता है कि उनमें गहराई की कमी है, जल्दी से गुमराह हो जाते हैं और बहुत हद तक भावनात्मक रूप से कमजोर और अकेले भी हैं। टेलीनार ग्रुप द्वारा 'वर्सट इंटरनेट हैबिट्स' पर किए गए सर्वेक्षण से पता चला है कि 65 प्रतिशत भारतीय भारतीयों ने स्वयं को इंटरनेट एडिक्ट होना स्वीकार किया है। जून 2019 में स्वीडन की विश्व प्रसिद्ध टेलीकॉम कंपनी एरिक्सन ने अपनी वार्षिक रिपोर्ट में कहा है कि दुनिया का सबसे सस्ता इंटरनेट डाटा भारत में मिलता है जहां प्रति यूजर 98 जी.बी. इंटरनेट डाटा प्रति महीना है।" (बजाज, 2021)

"सोशल मीडिया ज्यादातर लोगों के जीवन की एक दैनिक आदत बन गई है। अलग-अलग उम्र के लोग आपस में जुड़े रहने और नेटवर्किंग के लिए फेसबुक, इंस्टाग्राम, यूट्यूब और ट्विटर जैसे सोशल मीडिया प्लेटफॉर्म का इस्तेमाल करते हैं। एक रिपोर्ट में पाया गया है कि भारतीय सोशल मीडिया पर दिन में लगभग 2.4 घंटे बिताते हैं। 18-24 साल के युवा सोशल मीडिया पर सबसे ज्यादा समय बिताते हैं। फेसबुक और इंस्टाग्राम के साथ भारत में अकेले इस आयु वर्ग के 97.2 मिलियन और 69 मिलियन यूजर्स हैं, जो साफ तौर से सोशल मीडिया पर बढ़ती निर्भरता को प्रदर्शित करता है।" (गुड न्यूज़ टुडे, 2022)

सामाजिक संबंधों पर सोशल मीडिया के प्रभाव की बात की जाए तो सोशल मीडिया ने लोगों के बीच की दूरी को भी समाप्त किया है। परिवार, रिश्तेदार, मित्र, सगे-संबंधी दूर-दूर होने के बावजूद सोशल नेटवर्किंग साइट जैसे व्हाट्सएप आदि के माध्यम से एक-दूसरे से जुड़े रहते हैं। सुखद पहलू यह है कि युवाओं में इसके नकारात्मक की अपेक्षा सकारात्मक प्रभाव ज्यादा देखने को मिला है। इसलिए जरूरी है कि युवाओं का अपने स्वयं पर नियंत्रण हो कि वह सोशल मीडिया के प्रयोग को अपनी आदत न बनाकर उस पर अपना नियंत्रण बनाए, क्योंकि हर वस्तु की अधिकता हानिकारक होती है। इसका प्रयोग एक सुव्यवस्थित तरीके से किया जाए तो यह एक अच्छा माध्यम भी साबित हो सकता है।

## सुझाव

सोशल मीडिया युवाओं की प्रतिदिन दैनिक जीवन का महत्वपूर्ण हिस्सा बनता जा रहा है। इसलिए हमारा दायित्व यह है कि हमें सोशल मीडिया के प्रयोग के बारे में युवाओं को सचेत करना होगा। सोशल मीडिया की सही जानकारी भी उन्हें देनी होगी। सोशल मीडिया पूर्ण रूप से हानिकारक नहीं है। शिक्षक, माता-पिता और हमारे समाज, समुदाय का उत्तरदायित्व बनता है कि वे युवाओं को मार्गदर्शन दें और उन्हें बताएं कि सोशल मीडिया का उपयोग कैसे करें ताकि वे आने वाले खतरों से अपने आप को बचा सकें। साइबर अपराध में सोशल मीडिया संबंधित जागरूकता के पहलुओं के बारे में भी युवाओं को जानकारी देना अति आवश्यक है। युवाओं को सोशल मीडिया संबंधित सकारात्मक और नकारात्मक दोनों प्रभावों के बारे में बताना होगा ताकि वे स्वास्थ्य, शिक्षा व अपने कैरियर का विकास कर सकें। उनका शारीरिक व मानसिक विकास अच्छे ढंग से होगा तभी देश व राष्ट्र का विकास भी संभव है।

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*शोध संचयन*, जनवरी—जुलाई, भाग 7 अंक 1 व 2

[www.internetworldstatus.com](http://www.internetworldstatus.com)

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**डॉ. मीनाक्षी मीना**, सहायक आचार्य, समाजशास्त्र विभाग, जय नारायण व्यास विश्वविद्यालय, जोधपुर, राजस्थान | [meenakshi380@gmail.com](mailto:meenakshi380@gmail.com)

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## बदलता सामाजिक परिदृश्य और मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा

श्रुति टण्डन

**सार:** मूल्य, समाज और शिक्षा में गहरा संबंध है। मूल्य परिवर्तनशील समाज की वह धुरी है जिसके कारण समाज का अस्तित्व बना रहता है तथा शिक्षा समाज की एक महत्वपूर्ण उप-प्रणाली है, जिसके सहयोग से सामाजिक व्यवस्था सुचारु रूप से कार्य करती है। जब हम शिक्षा के सामाजिक आधार की बात करते हैं तो इसका अर्थ है कि शिक्षा की व्यवस्था समाज की आवश्यकताओं, आकांक्षाओं, मूल्यों और आदर्शों के आधार पर की जाती है। इसीलिए बदलते सामाजिक परिदृश्य में शिक्षा, मूल्य और मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा की बात करना आवश्यक है। बढ़ते मीडिया, सूचना के प्रभाव के कारण वर्तमान समाज को मीडिया का समाज, सूचना का समाज का संबोधन दिया गया है। आज सामाजिक परिदृश्य में भौतिकता, कृत्रिमता की प्रधानता होने से व्यक्ति में असंतोष, अवसाद और अवसरवादिता की प्रधानता दिखाई देती है। इसीलिए समाज में प्रगाढ़ सामाजिक संबंधों की कड़ियां टूट रही हैं और इसकी जगह आभासी पटल पर औपचारिक संबंधों, सूचनाओं और प्रौद्योगिकी ने जड़ें गहरी कर ली हैं। यह सोचना कि व्यक्ति विज्ञान और तकनीकी संसर्ग से युक्त संस्कृति को छोड़ दे, कठिन होगा।

इस संक्रमणकाल में सहज जीवन जीने के लिये शाश्वत जीवन मूल्यों को पुनः प्रतिष्ठित करने की आवश्यकता है जो कि मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा द्वारा ही संभव है। मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा समाज में व्यवस्था और संतुलन को बनाने में सहायक सिद्ध हो सकती है। प्रस्तुत लेख में मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा की आवश्यकता का अध्ययन द्वितीयक स्रोतों के द्वारा बदलते सामाजिक परिदृश्य के संदर्भ में करने का प्रयास किया गया है।

**संकेत शब्द:** समाज, शिक्षा, परिवर्तन, मूल्य, मूल्यसंकट, मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा, भूमिका।

मानव को अपनी विचारशक्ति और विवेक शक्ति के कारण ही प्रकृति की सर्वोत्तम रचना स्वीकारा गया है। इन्हीं दो शक्तियों के कारण उसने संस्कृति और विज्ञान दोनों को विकसित किया है। संस्कृति और विज्ञान के मेल से युक्त मानव जीवन की यात्रा मूल्यों को समाहित करके ही आगे बढ़ी। मूल्य और समाज अंतः संबंधित हैं जिन्हें एक दूसरे से अलग नहीं किया जा सकता है। ये सामाजिक विरासत के अंग होते हैं, जिन्हें एक पीढ़ी से दूसरी पीढ़ी को हस्तांतरित समाजीकरण की प्रक्रिया के जरिए किया जाता है। ये परिवर्तनशील समाज की वह धुरी है, जिसके कारण समाज का अस्तित्व होता है। इसीलिए जैसे-जैसे मनुष्य एक विशिष्ट प्रकार की जीवन पद्धति विकसित करने हेतु प्रयास करता है, उसे मूल्यों को श्रेणीकृत करने की आवश्यकता महसूस होती है। सामाजिक जीवन को संभव व श्रेष्ठ बनाने के लिए मूल्य आवश्यक हैं। मूल्य वे अन्तहीन विश्वास होते हैं, जो व्यक्तिगत और सामाजिक रूप से स्वीकृत एक निश्चित व्यवहार को निर्धारित करते हैं।

प्रत्येक संस्कृति में कुछ विशिष्टताएं होती हैं, जिसमें व्यक्ति अपनी परिस्थितियों व मूल्यों के अनुसार स्वयं को समायोजित करता है। भारतीय संस्कृति में जीवन का हर पक्ष मूल्य से जुड़ा है। वेदों, उपनिषदों, महाकाव्यों में प्रेम, सत्य, अहिंसा, क्षमाशीलता, परोपकार, दया, सौहार्द, आदि जीवन मूल्यों का संदर्भ बार-बार मिलता है। इन्हीं मूल्यों पर चलकर 'वसुधैव कुटुंबकम्' की प्रेरणा विश्वपटल पर भारत द्वारा अग्रेषित की गई है। यही कारण है कि व्यक्ति स्वस्थ और संयमित जीवन 100 वर्षों तक जीता था। आश्रम व्यवस्था का अध्ययन करने से यह बात और अधिक स्पष्ट हो जाती है। धर्म, अर्थ, काम और मोक्ष (चार पुरुषार्थों) की प्राप्ति मानव जीवन में संभव स्वीकारी गई। जन्म से मरण तक का मानवीय जीवन संस्कारों से बंधा होने के कारण अधिक व्यस्थित था। लेकिन धीरे-धीरे मनुष्य ने परम्परागत मूल्यों के महत्व को बिसराते हुए, हर फ्रिक को धुएं में उड़ाने वाले तत्वों को तवज्जो देना शुरू कर दिया। विकासवादी विचारधारा के प्रभाव के कारण आज अध्यात्मिकता एवं आस्था की भावना क्षीण हो रही है।



औद्योगिकीकरण, नगरीकरण, जनसंख्या विस्फोट को बढ़ावा देने वाली पद्धतियों के प्रचार—प्रसार, आदि ने मानवीय आदर्शों, शाश्वत मूल्यों, विश्वबंधुत्व की भावना, धर्म निरपेक्षता आदि मूल्यों को हाशिए पर ला खड़ा किया है। आधुनिक दर्शन एवं मार्क्सवाद, व्यक्तिवाद, अस्तित्ववाद, फ्रायडवाद, भौतिकवाद के ज्यादा प्रचार के कारण तर्क एवं बौद्धिकता का आधिक्य हो गया है। परिणामस्वरूप चाहे भोजन (बनाने या करने के सलीकों) की या पहनावे की बात हो, धर्म या अध्यात्म की या रीति—रिवाजों की बात हो, सभी में कृत्रिमता, दिखावेपन, प्रतिस्पर्धा या होड़ अधिक दिखाई देती है।

### बदलता सामाजिक परिदृश्य

वैश्वीकरण, उदारीकरण और निजीकरण की प्रक्रियाओं के चलते प्रौद्योगिकी तथा विज्ञान का विकास एवं आर्थिक, तकनीकी और सामाजिक वातावरण में परिवर्तन तीव्र गति से हुआ है। प्राथमिक संस्थाओं की जगह बाजार आज नए मूल्यों के वाहक बन गए हैं। परिवार, विवाह, नातेदारी जैसी मूलभूत संस्थाओं पर भी आर्थिक तंत्र हावी हो गया है। जीवन का प्रत्येक क्षेत्र अब बाजार द्वारा संचालित हो रहा है। व्यक्ति का भोजन, रहन—सहन, खान—पान की रुचि, व्यवहार, विचार, भावनाएं बाजार की संस्कृति से प्रभावित हो गए हैं। व्यक्ति सामाजिक सरोकारों की पूर्ति के बजाए व्यक्तिगत स्वार्थों की पूर्ति में अधिक व्यस्त दिखाई देता है। संयुक्तता के मूल्य का स्थान एकाकीपन ने ले लिया है। औद्योगिक समाज में तनाव और बढ़ती महत्वाकांक्षाओं ने संबंधों की प्रगाढ़ता को इस तरह प्रभावित कर दिया है कि बच्चों की मासूमियत छिन गई, वृद्ध बोज़ बन गए, संयुक्त परिवार संकट में और पति—पत्नी के संबंध में दरारे आ गई हैं। अनिर्णय और भौतिकवाद की इस चकाचौंध में निजी स्वार्थों की पूर्ति में लोगों में अशांति, निराशा, भय, लोभ, मोह, ईर्ष्या का भाव बढ़ रहा है और कर्तव्यपरायणता तथा ईमानदारी जैसे गुणों में कमी दिखाई दे रही है।

कम्प्यूटर तथा मोबाईल पर अधिक समय बिताने से मानवीय भावनाएं, संवेदनाएं कम होती जाती हैं, कार्य को टालने की मानसिकता बढ़ती है जो धीरे—धीरे निराशा, भय, शारीरिक और मानसिक व्याधियों की संख्या को बढ़ा रहा है (टर्कल, 2011)। पैसों की बढ़ती भूख ने भ्रष्टाचार के मामलों में इजाफा किया है। भ्रष्टाचार बोध सूचकांक 2021 में भारत 85वें स्थान पर है। उपभोक्तावादी संस्कृति के कारण आज वस्तुएं आवश्यकता पूर्ति या संतुष्टि की अपेक्षा दिखावे के लिये खरीदी जा रही हैं परिणामस्वरूप व्यक्ति में असंतोष अधिक दिखाई देता है।

ऐसी घटनाएं बढ़ रही हैं जो मानवता को तार—तार कर रही हैं। चाहे वो युद्ध या आतंकवाद हो, जघन्य हत्याकाण्ड हो, लैंगिक भेदभाव, बाल व महिला तस्करी, बलात्कार हो या साइबरक्राइम, फ्रॉड, जालसाजी की घटनाएं हों। ये खबरें कि ऑनलाइन गेम के आदी हो चुके युवक ने अवसाद में आकर आत्महत्या कर ली तथा नाबालिग ने आक्रामक होकर अभिभावकों की हत्या इसलिये कर दी, क्योंकि वे उसे मोबाईल का अधिक प्रयोग करने से रोक रहे थे, सोचनीय है। स्ट्रेस, अवसाद तथा आत्महत्या में सकारात्मक सहसंबंध दर्शाते आंकड़े यह सोचने पर विवश कर रहे हैं कि आखिर समाज किस ओर जा रहा है? ऐसा समाज जोखिम समाज है जिसमें अनिश्चितता, अज्ञानता और भय की विशेषता पाई जाती है (बेक, 1992)।

मोबाईल नेटवर्क की दुनिया में सामाजिक अंतःक्रिया और संवाद धीरे—धीरे समाप्त होते जा रहे हैं। व्यक्ति सदैव कैमरे की निगाह में है। संचार और संवाद की प्रणाली में बदलाव ने मासकल्चर और लाईककल्चर प्रचलन को बढ़ावा दिया है। आज व्यक्ति चारों ओर 'छाया के संसार' से घिरा हुआ है जहां वास्तविक और आभासी में अंतर करना असंभव प्रतीत होता है (बाज़ीलार्ड, 1994)। 'द अमेरिकन सॉइकोलाजिकल एसोसिएशन' ने इस बात की पुष्टि की है कि स्क्रीन पर अधिक समय बिताने वालों के

विचार और भावनाएं आक्रमक हो जाती हैं। ये आक्रमक व्यवहार किसी भी तरह से अनैतिक मूल्यों को बढ़ाने के लिये प्रेरित करता है। सवाल यह है कि क्या भूमण्डलीकरण, नगरीकरण, तकनीकी विकास जैसी प्रक्रियाएं मनुष्य को सिर्फ भौतिकता की ओर धकेल रही हैं? सामाजिक जीवन को एकता, प्रेम, सौहार्द के सूत्र में बांधने वाले मूल्य क्यों दिखाई नहीं दे रहे हैं? मूल्ययुक्त जीवन को जीने की प्रेरणा देने वाली शिक्षा समाजीकरण में कहां रह गई? इसीलिये मूल्यों की बात करना आवश्यक है।

## मूल्य और मूल्य संकट

साधारण बोलचाल में मूल्य शब्द का प्रयोग अधिकतर बाजार व्यवस्था के संदर्भ में किया जाता है। इस दृष्टि से मूल्य किसी वस्तु, उत्पाद या सेवा के बदले चुकाई गई वस्तुओं अथवा कीमत के रूप में पहचान रखता है। मूल्य के लिए अंग्रेजी में VALUE शब्द का प्रयोग किया जाता है। इसकी निष्पत्ति लैटिन भाषा के शब्द VALERE से हुई है, जिसका अर्थ WORTH यानी उपयोगिता/महत्व से है। इस प्रकार किसी कर्म के महत्व को उसके परिणाम, प्रभाव या गुण के संदर्भ में मापित करना उसका मूल्य होता है। दूसरे शब्दों में हम कह सकते हैं कि जब किसी कृत्य, कर्म या प्रक्रिया की गुणवत्ता प्रभाव एवं परिणाम पर तर्कसंगत तथा बौद्धिक ढंग से विचार किया जाता है तो यह न केवल व्यक्ति विशेष के लिये वरन् दूसरों के लिये भी उसी अनुपात में समान रूप से लागू होता है। साथ ही वह अपने पूर्णिकरण से गहन संतोष की अनुभूति भी करता है तब वह मूल्य कहलाता है। मूल्य विचारों, आदर्शों, आकांक्षाओं और विश्वासों का सम्मिलित रूप है।

व्यापक अर्थ में मूल्य का संबंध व्यक्ति के भावात्मक पक्ष से होता है। मूल्य एक अमूर्त सम्प्रत्यय है पर इसका प्रदर्शन और प्रयोग व्यवहार में होता है। ये सामाजिक जीवन को मनोवैज्ञानिक आधार प्रदान करते हैं तथा सामाजिक एकरूपता स्थापित करने में सहायक सिद्ध होते हैं। इसी कारण मूल्य व्यक्ति के व्यवहार को निर्देशित और नियंत्रित करते हैं। इनमें समाज की सहमति व असहमति सम्मिलित होती है। मूल्यों के संबंध में वैयक्तिकता की बात ही नहीं है। वे दार्शनिक एवं सामूहिक-भावनात्मक अधिक हैं जो श्रेष्ठ लक्षणों के वैचारिक नैरंतर्य के परिणाम हैं। परम्परागत समाज के सत्य, अहिंसा, करुणा, स्वतंत्रता, साहस, क्षमा, अस्तेय, अपरिग्रह, ब्रह्मचर्य जैसे मूल्य से लेकर संवैधानिक मूल्य जैसे समता, समानता, न्याय, बंधुत्व आदि तक के मूल्य आत्म-कल्याण के साथ-ही-साथ समाज और विश्व का कल्याण करते हैं (मैनीडी, 2005)।

मूल्यों की एक सामाजिक-आर्थिक पृष्ठभूमि होती है, जिसके कारण प्रत्येक समाज में मूल्यों की भिन्नता होती है। मूल्यों के अध्ययन की प्राचीनता इस बात से ही स्पष्ट हो जाती है कि 400 बी. सी. में एपिक्यूरियन्स (ग्रीक) ने सुख के रूप में तथा 18वीं शताब्दी में कांट (जर्मन) ने अच्छी इच्छा के रूप में इसे परिभाषित किया। बेथम (ब्रिटिश) ने 19वीं शताब्दी में इसे अधिकतम लोगों के अधिकतम सुख के रूप में बताया तो रसेल (ब्रिटिश) ने 20वीं शताब्दी में रुचि के रूप में स्वीकृत किया। धर्मशास्त्रों में पारलौकिकता, आध्यात्मिकता के संदर्भ में मूल्यों के अस्तित्व को बनाए रखा। अर्थात् प्रत्येक सभ्यता में, हर काल में मूल्यों की बात होती रही। जीवन व्यवहार के जितने क्षेत्र हैं, उतने मूल्य भी हैं जैसे वैयक्तिक मूल्य, सामाजिक मूल्य, शैक्षिक मूल्य, राजनैतिक मूल्य, आर्थिक मूल्य, पर्यावरणीय मूल्य, सौन्दर्यात्मक मूल्य, आध्यात्मिक मूल्य, वैश्विक मूल्य, आदि।

भारत में ही नहीं वरन् विश्व भर में विभिन्न विद्वानों ने मूल्यों के बारे में विस्तार से चर्चा की है। स्वामी विवेकानंद, महर्षि अरविंद आदि ने भारतीय मूल्यों जैसे सत्य, करुणा, ज्ञान, धैर्य, शांति, क्षमाशीलता, अहिंसा आदि की प्रासंगिकता को उजागर किया है।

दुर्खीम ने मूल्यों के सिद्धान्त को प्रतिपादित करते हुए लिखा है कि सामाजिक अन्तःक्रिया के

परिणामस्वरूप मूल्यों का जन्म होता है। व्यक्ति सामाजिक प्राणी है। इसी कारण वह अन्य प्राणियों से संपर्क में आता है। दूसरे व्यक्ति के संपर्क में आने के कारण ही वह अंतःक्रिया करता है, जो मूल्यों को जन्म देती है। दुर्खीम (1893) के अनुसार, मूल्य सामूहिक स्वीकृति का प्रतिनिधित्व करते हैं। इनके अनुसार सामाजिक मूल्य ही सामाजिक तथ्य हैं। प्रसिद्ध शिक्षाविद् जॉन डीवी (1916) के अनुसार मनुष्य की शक्तियों एवं रुचियों का वास्तविक मूल्य वही हैं, जो समाज उन्हें देता है। चार्ल्स बघल (1926) ने अपनी प्रमुख कृति द इवोलुशन ऑफ वैल्यूज में मानवीय प्रक्रियाओं की व्याख्या प्रस्तुत की है, जिनमें सामाजिक मूल्य एक पीढ़ी से दूसरी पीढ़ी को हस्तांतरित होते हैं। उनके अनुसार जब व्यक्ति व्यवहार करता है तो उसके मन में सामूहिक जीवन से संबंधित ऐसे विचारों का जन्म होता है जो सामूहिक कल्याण से संबंधित होते हैं, जिन्हें समूह अपनी स्वीकृति प्रदान करता है और वे मूल्य के रूप में बदल जाते हैं। राधा कमल मुकर्जी ने अपनी पुस्तक द सोशल स्ट्रक्चर ऑफ वैल्यूज (1949) तथा द डार्डेमेन्शनस ऑफ वैल्यू (1964) में सामाजिक मूल्य के सिद्धान्त की विस्तार से चर्चा की। उनके अनुसार मूल्य समाज के द्वारा स्वीकृत वे इच्छाएं तथा लक्ष्य हैं, जिन्हें समाजीकरण की प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से सीखा जाता है और जो कि इसके पश्चात् व्यक्तिपरक अधिमान्यताएं, प्रतिमान और अभिलाषाएं बन जाती हैं। मुकर्जी ने सामाजिक जीवन में ही मूल्यों को खोजने का प्रयास किया है। उनके अनुसार मूल्य समाज के ही अंग हैं। वे हमारे व्यवहार का सामान्य तरीका है।

प्रसिद्ध समाजशास्त्री एम.एन. श्रीनिवास ने अपनी रचना सोशल चेंज इन मॉडर्न इंडिया (1966) में भारतीय समाज में परिवर्तन के सामाजिक, राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, वैज्ञानिक, पर्यावरणीय और तकनीकी पक्षों पर ध्यान आकर्षित करते हुए पश्चिमीकरण, संस्कृतीकरण और आधुनिकीकरण द्वारा भारतीय समाज में बदलते मूल्यों पर प्रकाश डाला।

टी. के. उमन ने अपनी पुस्तक स्टेट एंड सोसायटी इन इंडिया (1990) में परंपरागत और आधुनिक मूल्यों में तुलनात्मक अध्ययन करने का प्रयास किया तथा इससे जुड़े वृहत् मूल्य जैसे राष्ट्र, नागरिकता, राष्ट्रियता, नृजातीयता, आदि पर भी अपने विचार रखे। प्रो. अविजित पाठक ने अपनी पुस्तक मॉडर्निटी, ग्लोबलाइजेशन एंड आइडेंटिटी (2006) में आधुनिकता के उद्भव के लिए जिम्मेदार मूल्यों पर प्रकाश डाला। प्रो. योगेन्द्र सिंह (2006) ने भी परम्परागत मूल्य को भारतीय समाज की एक मुख्य विशेषता बताया। इस प्रकार विद्वानों ने मूल्यों और मूल्यतंत्र के विषय में विचार रखे हैं।

उत्तर वैश्वीकरण के इस दौर में मीडिया, विज्ञापन व बाजार के माध्यम से एक ऐसी नई संस्कृति को बढ़ावा मिला है, जो मूल्य संकट को जन्म देती है। जब समाज में स्वार्थपरता, अर्थ प्रधानता, निजता का हनन, प्रतिस्पर्धा का अंधानुकरण प्रवेश करता है तो मूल्यसंकट की बात सामने आती है। समाज मूल्य संकट का सामना उस स्थिति में करता है जब भ्रष्ट आचरण और अनैतिक गतिविधियों को सामान्य स्वीकृति प्राप्त होती है। बिखरे पारिवारिक मूल्य, बढ़ते अपराध, वैश्यावृत्ति, अविश्वास, अव्यवस्थित जीवन शैली व जंकफूड के कारण स्वास्थ्य समस्याएं, अश्लील मनोरंजन, कृत्रिमता, आदि भी मूल्यों के पतन को दर्शाते हैं। आज व्यक्ति एक ओर स्वयं को इस नवीन संस्कृति की चकाचौंध से अलग नहीं कर पाता है और दूसरी ओर अपने पुराने मूल्यों को भी छोड़ने में संकोच करता है। मूल्यों को जड़ स्वीकारने के कारण, समस्या अधिक गंभीर प्रतीत होती है। कोई भी मूल्य सार्वदेशिक अथवा सार्वकालिक नहीं होते। ये मूल्य देश-काल के अनुसार परिवर्तित होते रहते हैं। वे समयानुसार कम या अधिक प्रासंगिक हो सकते हैं किन्तु पूरी तरह से अप्रासंगिक कभी नहीं होते। मूल्यों में संशोधन एवं परिवर्तन मूल्यों के चिंरजीवी होने के लिये आवश्यक है (सक्सेना, 2000)। मूल्यमय आचरण व विचार कल की भी जरूरत थे और आने वाले कल के लिये भी जरूरी रहेंगे। इसके लिये मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा सफल एवं सार्थक प्रयत्न सिद्ध हो सकती है।

## मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा

समाज केवल भौतिक मूल्यों से ही संचालित नहीं हो सकता है। अतः उत्कृष्ट आध्यात्मिक वातावरण सृजित करने हेतु सार्वभौमिक मानवीय मूल्यों की श्रेष्ठता निर्धारित कर उन्हें आत्मसात् करने की आवश्यकता है। ऐसे में मूल्यों की ओर लौटने और उनके संरक्षण के लिये शिक्षा को मूल्योन्मुख बनाने की आवश्यकता है। वास्तविक अर्थों में मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा न तो सिर्फ ज्ञान आधारित शिक्षा का अंश है और ना ही सिर्फ कौशल आधारित प्रशिक्षण का। इसका न तो कोई परीक्षोपयोगी संदर्भ है और ना ही अंक योजना आधारित परिप्रेक्ष्य। इसका संबंध सुदृढ़ मनोवैज्ञानिक, मानसिक व्यक्तित्व निर्माण से है जो कि आदर्श अभिवृत्तियों और आदतों से निर्मित होता है तथा व्यवहार और आचरण में इसकी अभिव्यक्ति करता है। इसीलिये शिक्षा के प्रत्येक स्तर पर और प्रत्येक प्रकार में मूल्यों को समावेशित करने की आवश्यकता है। मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा वह है जिसमें हमारे नैतिक, सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक और आध्यात्मिक मूल्य समाहित हों। इसे न तो सिर्फ पाठ्यक्रम का भाग बनाकर छोड़ दिया जा सकता है और न ही सिर्फ व्याख्यान तथा प्रवचन देकर। यह मानव निर्माण का व्यापक कार्यक्रम है। इसमें विज्ञान, तकनीकी ज्ञान के साथ आध्यात्मिकता, सामाजिक कार्य, अन्तर्राष्ट्रीयवाद और वैज्ञानिक मानवतावाद को साथ लेकर चलना होगा। यह मात्र सैद्धान्तिक अवधारणा न होकर, आचरणयुक्त व्यवहार है।

भारत में समय-समय पर गठित विभिन्न आयोगों एवं समितियों की रिपोर्टों में भी मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा प्रदान करने पर विशेष जोर दिया जाता रहा है (एन.सी.ई.आर.टी, 2012)। राधाकृष्णन् आयोग (1948-49) ने विद्यालयों के साथ-साथ विश्वविद्यालयों एवं महाविद्यालयों में प्रातःकाल प्रार्थना सभा और विभिन्न महापुरुषों के विचारों को पढ़ाने पर जोर दिया है। मुदालियर कमीशन (1952-53) ने चरित्र निर्माण को शिक्षा का लक्ष्य निर्धारित करने की बात कही। कोठारी आयोग (1964-66) ने सामाजिक, नैतिक एवं आध्यात्मिक मूल्यों की शिक्षा के लिए महान धर्मों के नैतिक मूल्य और शिक्षाओं को सिखाने पर जोर दिया। राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति (1986) तथा शिक्षा नीति की कार्ययोजना (पी.ओ.ए., 1992) में विद्यालय शिक्षा के प्रत्येक स्तर पर मूल्य शिक्षा के विभिन्न अवयवों को समन्वित करने का प्रयास किया। राष्ट्रीय पाठ्यचर्चा की रूपरेखा (2005) में भी स्पष्ट किया गया कि शिक्षा ऐसी होनी चाहिए कि विद्यालय की प्रत्येक क्रिया में मूल्य निर्माण की झलक दिखाई दे। मूल्यों की शिक्षा जीवन के प्रारम्भिक वर्षों में निर्मित होती है जिसमें परिवार व मित्र-मण्डली, की भूमिका महत्वपूर्ण होती है। इसलिये मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा प्रदान करने का दायित्व सबका है, परिवार का, विद्यालय का और समाज का भी (लोढा, 2013)। मूल्यों का विकास कर एक बहुसांस्कृतिक समाज में शांति, मानवता, सहनशीलता, आदि गुणों के विकास की बात नई शिक्षा नीति 2020 में भी स्वीकारी गई है। समानता और समग्र विकास पर जोर देने वाली इस नीति का लक्ष्य ऐसी शिक्षा प्रणाली स्थापित करना है, जहां किसी भी सामाजिक और आर्थिक पृष्ठभूमि से संबंध रखने वाले शिक्षार्थियों को समान रूप से सर्वोच्च गुणवत्ता की शिक्षा उपलब्ध हो। राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 2020 भारतीय लोकाचार में शामिल वैश्विक सर्वश्रेष्ठ शिक्षा प्रणाली के निर्माण की परिकल्पना करते हैं और इन्हीं सिद्धांतों के साथ संरक्षित है, ताकि भारत को एक वैश्विक ज्ञान महाशक्ति के रूप में स्थापित किया जा सके। यह नीति भारत की परंपरा और सांस्कृतिक मूल्यों के आधार को बरकरार रखेगी। छात्रों के समग्र विकास और जीवन मूल्य केंद्रित शिक्षा इस नई राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति की मूल भावना है। शिक्षा में सत्य, धर्म, शांति, प्रेम एवं अहिंसा जैसे मानवीय मूल्य इस प्रकार समावेशित किए जाएं कि वे छात्रों की अभिव्यक्ति, आदत एवं व्यवहार में जुड़ जाएं।

मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा एक व्यापक कार्यक्रम है। यह मानव निर्माण का सजीव विज्ञान है, जिसमें आध्यात्मिकता, विज्ञान तकनीकी, सामाजिक कार्य, आधुनिकता, अंतरराष्ट्रीयवाद एवं वैज्ञानिक मानववाद सम्मिलित हैं। मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा की प्रक्रिया बिना मूल्यों के आधार पर पूरी नहीं हो सकती है। शिक्षा के

समस्त कार्यक्रमों में मूल्य जुड़े हुए होते हैं। इसके अंतर्गत विभिन्न विषयों में मनोवैज्ञानिक ढंग से मूल्य समाहित करके उन्हें छात्र के व्यक्तित्व में समाहित करने पर बल दिया जाता है।

मूल्य, परिवार, समाज, शैक्षणिक संस्थानों, आदि द्वारा बालक को प्रदान किये जाते हैं। समाजीकरण की प्रक्रिया के द्वारा सिखाए जाते हैं। इस कारण उसका व्यवहार परिष्कृत और परिमार्जित होता है। यह सर्वविदित है कि बच्चे अपने माता-पिता और परिवार के अन्य सदस्यों का अनुकरण कर सीखते हैं। प्यार, करुणा, सहानुभूति, बलिदान, देखभाल जैसे मूल्य, परिवार के सदस्यों के बीच देखकर, अनुभव कर बालक द्वारा सीख लिए जाते हैं। परिवार का लोकतांत्रिक वातावरण बच्चों में निष्पक्षता, धैर्य, सहनशीलता जैसी मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा देने में सहायक सिद्ध होता है। बड़ों के प्रति, संस्कृति के प्रति, रीति-रिवाजों के प्रति आदर का भाव, पारिवारिक माहौल में देखने और उसमें भाग लेकर बालमन पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव डालता है। प्रोत्साहन और दंड बालक में मूल्य विकसित करने के उपकरण हैं। यदि परिवार के सदस्यों के बीच भौगोलिक दूरियां हों, तो, भी मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा की डोर से बंधे सदस्य स्वयं को एक दूसरे के निकट रिश्तों के डोर से बंधा हुआ पाएंगे।

समाजीकरण के औपचारिक साधनों में मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा देने में शिक्षण संस्थानों की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका है। शिक्षण-संस्थान आधारभूत तथा उच्च शिक्षा दोनों प्रदान करने में योगदान देते हैं। शिक्षक की भूमिका इस संदर्भ में प्रभावी है। उनके आचरण और व्यवहार के अच्छे उदाहरण प्रस्तुत करने होंगे, जिसका प्रभाव छात्रों के व्यक्तित्व पर पड़ेगा। पूर्व में शिक्षक, शिक्षण कार्य तक सीमित थे, आज उनकी भूमिका में इस कार्य के संग अन्य कार्यों का जुड़ाव भी देखा जाता है। साथ ही कोचिंग क्लासेस व मल्टीमीडिया तकनीकों ने उनकी भूमिका को साझा करने का प्रयास किया है। इसलिए शिक्षकों को सजग रहकर न सिर्फ स्वयं के प्रति बल्कि छात्रों और समाज के प्रति अपनी जिम्मेदारी को निभाना होगा। उनको न सिर्फ व्यावसायिक रूप से तैयार करने के लिए प्रशिक्षण दिया जाना चाहिए बल्कि मूल्य निर्धारण में उनकी भूमिका आंतरिक बनाने के लिए तैयार किया जाना चाहिए। मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा एक समन्वित कार्यक्रम है, जिसमें विद्यालयी विषयों तथा पाठ्यक्रमों के साथ पाठ्य सहगामी क्रियाओं जैसे खेलकूद, एन.सी.सी., कहानी कथन, प्रार्थना सभा, समूहगान, समाजसेवा, श्रमदान, आदि के आयोजन द्वारा औपचारिक शिक्षा से इसे जोड़ना सम्भव है। प्रत्यक्ष रूप से स्वतंत्र विषय के रूप में नियमित अध्ययन मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा का उपागम है तथा अप्रत्यक्ष रूप में समग्र वातावरण को मूल्यों के आत्मसातीकरण के लिये प्रेरणा बनाकर इसे प्रदान करने का सतत प्रयास है।

## निष्कर्ष

मानव के अस्तित्व को बनाये रखने के लिये सामाजिकता के गुण को बनाए रखना आवश्यक है। मानव मूल्य एक ऐसी आचार संहिता या सदगुणों का समूह है, जिसे अपने संस्कारों और पर्यावरण के माध्यम से अपनाकर मनुष्य अपने निर्धारित लक्ष्यों की प्राप्ति हेतु अपनी जीवनशैली का निर्माण करता है और अपने व्यक्तित्व का विकास करता है। ये मानव मूल्य एक ओर व्यक्ति के अंतःकरण द्वारा नियंत्रित होते हैं तो दूसरी ओर संस्कृति एवं परम्परा द्वारा पोषित होते हैं। आज मूल्यों की जानकारी होने मात्र से समस्या का हल संभव नहीं। इसके लिये आवश्यकता है मूल्यों को जीवनचर्या का हिस्सा बनाने की और इसे मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा के द्वारा ही प्राप्त किया जा सकता है। यह शिक्षा कुछ दिनों, महीनों और सालों के लिये नहीं बल्कि जीवनपर्यन्त चलने वाली प्रक्रिया है। मूल्योन्मुख शिक्षा का जीवन के प्रत्येक स्तर से जुड़ाव अनिवार्य है (शर्मा व शर्मा, 2011)। इसको प्रदान करने में शिक्षा के सभी औपचारिक और अनौपचारिक साधनों की भूमिका पर ध्यान देना समसामायिक है।

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डॉ श्रुति टंडन, सहायक आचार्य, समाजशास्त्र विभाग, राजकीय मीरा कन्या महाविद्यालय, उदयपुर  
hrutitandonkalia@yahoo.com

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## लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप: वैवाहिक संस्था का एक परिवर्तित आधुनिक स्वरूप

मंजु नावरिया

**सार** परिवर्तन प्रकृति का शाश्वत नियम है और भारतीय समाज भी इस नियम का अपवाद नहीं है। युवा तेजी से अपने जीवन जीने के अंदाज बदल रहे हैं। वैश्विक स्तर पर लोगों में धीरे-धीरे पूर्व वैवाहिक संबंधों और लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप के विचार को समायाजित कर रहे हैं। परन्तु भारत में लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप का जिक्र आते ही ज्यादातर लोग रूढ़िवादी हो जाते हैं। जिससे इन दिनों भारतीय सामाजिक विमर्श का एक प्रमुख मुद्दा लिव-इन संबंधों की स्वीकार्यता का भी है। भारत में जाति धर्म की दीवारों को तोड़ते हुए लिव-इन संबंधों की पारिवारिक स्वीकार्यता लगभग असम्भव हो जाती है क्योंकि भारतीय समाज में विवाह संस्था प्रकार्यात्मक रूप से बहुत महत्त्वपूर्ण रही है, विवाह का महत्त्व बच्चों का समाजीकरण, पारिवारिक कार्यों का निर्वहन, अंतर पीढ़ीगत संबंधों से लेकर वैयक्तिक व पारिवारिक विघटन को रोकने तक रहा है। विवाह संस्था हिन्दू समाज के संयुक्त परिवार की रीढ़ रही है। स्वतंत्रता के पश्चात् औद्योगिकीकरण एवं आधुनिकीकरण की प्रक्रिया एवं स्वतंत्रता और जनतंत्रीय मूल्यों के कारण विवाह संस्था के प्रकार्यों तथा उसकी प्राथमिकताओं में संरचनात्मक परिवर्तन परिलक्षित हुए हैं, परिणामस्वरूप परिवारों में तलाक बढ़ रहे हैं। समाज में सामाजिक-आर्थिक परिस्थितियों, सांस्कृतिक संक्रमण, औद्योगिक विस्थापन, शैक्षणिक विस्थापन, व्यावसायिक विस्थापन, औद्योगिक एवं व्यावसायिक प्रतिष्ठानों में एक साथ कार्य करना, मनोभावनात्मक अलगाव से उत्पन्न भावनात्मक सहयोग, आदि के कारण लिव-इन संबंधों के स्वरूप तथा संख्या में मात्रात्मक एवं गुणात्मक रूप से वृद्धि देखी गयी है, इसे कार्य-कारणत्व स्वरूप के रूप में भी देखा जा सकता है। उपर्युक्त मुद्दों को लेकर विवाह के इस बदलते प्रतिमान लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप के बारे में बहुत से विचारकों तथा एक्टिविस्टों ने कार्य प्रारम्भ कर दिया है, इनमें से कुछ नाम हैं – राजेन्द्र यादव, तसलीमा नसरीन, अरुंधती रॉय, अनिल यादव, शोभा डे, आदि। प्रस्तुत लेख एक विश्लेषणात्मक अध्ययन का प्रयास है, जिसके तहत लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप का अर्थ, कारण, उससे सम्बंधित नियमों, कानूनों, लिव-इन के सकारात्मक एवं नकारात्मक पहलुओं, इससे जुड़े महिला-पुरुषों एवं संतानों के अधिकारों एवं सावधानियों जैसे बिंदुओं पर तथ्यात्मक बात रखने का प्रयास किया गया है।

**संकेत शब्द** विवाह, परिवार, प्रतिमान, लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप, धार्मिक-संस्कार, औद्योगिकीकरण, आधुनिकीकरण

विवाह एक सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक संस्था है। यह वह आधार स्तम्भ है जिसके द्वारा मानव का अस्तित्व बना हुआ है। समाज की निरंतरता का आधार संतान है तथा संतान की उत्पत्ति जन्म पर आधारित होती है। जन्म स्त्री-पुरुष के लैंगिक संबंधों पर निर्भर है, इन्हीं लैंगिक संबंधों को नियमित करने के उद्देश्य से समाज में कानून एवं प्रथाओं के अनुसार विवाह नामक संस्था का प्रादुर्भाव हुआ है।

हिन्दू विवाह में धर्म को प्रधानता दी गई है जिसमें हिन्दू विवाह का प्रमुख उद्देश्य धर्म का पालन, संतानोत्पत्ति एवं यौन आकांक्षा की पूर्ति है। आर. एस. लोवी के अनुसार विवाह उन स्वीकृत संगठनों को व्यक्त करता है जो यौन संतुष्टि के अतिरिक्त भी स्थिर रहता है तथा पारिवारिक जीवन को आधार प्रदान करता है। (लोवी, 1964) हिन्दू विवाह एक धार्मिक संस्कार है। हिन्दू सामाजिक व्यवस्था में वैदिक युग से ही विवाह धार्मिक क्रिया के रूप में माना जाता रहा है। ऋग्वेद के अनुसार विवाह का उद्देश्य गृहस्थ बनकर यज्ञों का संपादन करना तथा संतान उत्पन्न करना है। हिन्दू विवाह में धर्म की प्रधानता होने के कारण आज भी विवाह में स्थायित्व बना हुआ है। हिन्दू विवाह अधिनियम, 1955 द्वारा हिन्दुओं के लिए एकल विवाह को वैधानिक दृष्टि से मान्यता प्रदान की गई है। हिन्दू विवाह अन्तर्विवाह, विवाह एवं सगोत्र, सप्रवर सपिंड बहिर्विवाह विवाह, एक विधि एवं विभिन्न संस्कारों एवं अनुष्ठानों द्वारा संपन्न धार्मिक संस्कार माना गया है। औद्योगिकीकरण, पाश्चात्य सभ्यता, शिक्षा, कानूनी प्रभाव, व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता, जीवन का अधिकार, धर्म, वर्ग सम्बन्धी बाध्यताओं, कॅरियर, विलम्ब विवाह, भ्रूमंडलीकरण,

स्वतंत्रता और गोपनीयता के साथ मानसिकता में आये भारी बदलाव के कारण भारतीय समाज में विवाह के उद्देश्य और संबंधित संस्कारों में परिवर्तन आता जा रहा है।

भारतीय समाज या समाज, सामान्य रूप से विवाह पूर्व सेक्स और लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप की अवधारणा के प्रति अधिक खुला होता जा रहा है। यह अपने आस-पास की वर्जनाओं को धीरे-धीरे मिटाने की ओर अग्रसर हो रहा है। एक नजरिये से देखा जाये तो लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप आज की पीढ़ी के लिए रिश्ते का एक नया मोड़ या नाम है।

## विवाह का धर्म शास्त्रीय एवं समाजशास्त्रीय पहलू

विवाह एक ऐसी सामाजिक संस्था है जो विश्व के प्रत्येक भाग में पाई जाती है। प्रत्येक समाज में, चाहे वह आदिम हो अथवा आधुनिक, ग्रामीण हो अथवा नगरीय, विवाह अनिवार्य रूप से पाया जाता है। विवाह ही परिवार की आधारशिला होता है। विवाह के माध्यम से व्यक्ति अपनी यौन-इच्छाओं की पूर्ति, संतानोत्पत्ति एवम् उनका पालन-पोषण करते हैं।

मानव विज्ञानी वेस्टरमार्क ने अपनी पुस्तक *The History of Human Marriage* में लिखा है कि विवाह एक या अधिक पुरुषों का एक या अधिक स्त्रियों के साथ होने वाला सम्बन्ध है, जिसे प्रथा या कानून द्वारा स्वीकृति प्राप्त होती है, तथा जिसमें इस संगठन में आने वाले दोनों पक्षों एवं उनसे उत्पन्न बच्चों के अधिकार और कर्तव्यों का समावेश होता है। (वेस्टरमार्क, 1891)

इससे स्पष्ट होता है कि विवाह विषम-लिंगियों का वह सम्बन्ध है जिसे प्रथा या कानून द्वारा मान्यता प्राप्त होती है तथा इस बंधन में बंधने वाले स्त्री-पुरुषों के एक-दूसरे के प्रति कुछ पारस्परिक अधिकार एवं कर्तव्य भी होते हैं।

भारत में हिन्दुओं में विवाह प्रत्येक व्यक्ति के लिए एक आवश्यक संस्कार के रूप में स्वीकार किया गया है और 'मोक्ष प्राप्ति' हिन्दू जीवन का अंतिम लक्ष्य माना गया है जिसकी प्राप्ति विवाह में ही निहित है। हिन्दू विवाह को के. एम्. कापड़िया ने एक संस्कार कहा है। जिसके धर्म, प्रजा (संतति) और रति (आनंद) प्रमुख उद्देश्य माने गए हैं। (कापड़िया, 1966)

विवाह रूपी संस्था किसी न किसी रूप में विश्व के सभी समाजों में पाई जाती है। परन्तु परिवर्तन की प्रक्रिया से विवाह संस्था भी अछूती नहीं रही है। सामाजिक परिवर्तन लाने में औद्योगीकीकरण, नगरीकरण, शिक्षा, यातायात तथा संचार क्षेत्र में हुए चमत्कारिक क्रांति तथा व्यक्तिवादी जीवन दर्शन का प्रमुख योगदान रहा है। वैश्वीकरण, पाश्चात्य सभ्यता एवं संस्कृति तथा संचार के साधनों के प्रभाव से लोगों की मानसिकता में बहुत तेजी से बदलाव आया है।

भारतीय संस्कृति में स्मृतिकाल से ही हिन्दुओं में विवाह को एक पवित्र संस्कार माना गया है और हिन्दू विवाह अधिनियम 1955 में भी इसको इसी रूप में बनाये रखने की चेष्टा की गई है। किन्तु विवाह, जो पहले एक पवित्र धार्मिक संस्कार एवं अटूट बंधन माना जाता था, कुछ विधि विचारकों की दृष्टि में यह विचारधारा अब शिथिल पड़ गई है। अब यह जन्म-जन्मान्तर का सम्बन्ध अथवा बंधन नहीं है वरन् विशेष परिस्थितियों के उत्पन्न होने पर इस वैवाहिक सम्बन्ध को कानूनन विघटित किया जा रहा है।

अधिनियम की धारा 10 के अनुसार वैवाहिक पृथक्करण निम्न आधारों पर न्यायालय से प्राप्त हो सकता है— त्याग (2 वर्ष), निर्दयता (शारीरिक एवं मानसिक) कुष्ठ रोग (1 वर्ष), रतिज्वर (3 वर्ष), विकृतियां (2 वर्ष) तथा पर-पुरुष अथवा पर-स्त्री गमन (एक बार भी)। इसी तरह अधिनियम की धारा 13 के अनुसार संसर्ग, धर्म-परिवर्तन, पागलपन (3 वर्ष), संयास, मृत्यु (7 वर्ष), होने पर न्यायिक पृथक्करण की डिक्री पारित होने के दो साल बाद तथा दाम्पत्याधिकार प्रदान करने वाली डिक्री पास होने के दो साल बाद 'सम्बन्ध-विच्छेद' हो सकता है। अर्थात् हिन्दू विवाह संस्कार अब सात जन्मों का बंधन नहीं



रहा है बल्कि व्यक्ति की आवश्यकताओं पर निर्भर बंधन बन गया है। आज जब परम्परागत समाज आधुनिक समाज में बदल रहा है, आधुनिक समाजों में विवाह के इस पारम्परिक दृष्टिकोण को आधुनिक युवाओं द्वारा स्वीकार किए जाने में झिझक होने लगी है। वे अब सामाजिक रूप में अविवाहित रहते हुए भी विवाहित के रूप में साथ-साथ रहने में विश्वास करने लगे हैं। पश्चिमी समाजों में अब धीरे-धीरे विवाह का रूप मात्र 'सुविधात्मक सम्बन्ध' (अरेंजमेंट) अथवा समझ पर आंतरिक सम्बन्ध अर्थात् मात्र 'समझौता' बनते जा रहे हैं। अमेरिका और ब्रिटेन में अभी हाल में विवाह के बारे में हुए शोध बताते हैं कि एक संस्था के रूप में विवाह में क्षीणता आ रही है, तलाक की संख्या बढ़ रही है। प्रतिदिन टूटते हुए वैवाहिक संबंधों के कारण अब इन देशों में संयुग्मी विवाह (समान सामाजिक-आर्थिक, शैक्षिक पृष्ठभूमि वालों के बीच (विवाह) पुरुष समलिंगी (गे), महिला समलिंगी (लेस्बियन) और उभयलिंगी संबंधों और लिव इन रिलेशनशिप की प्रवृत्ति बढ़ने लगी है।

वर्तमान में लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप का चलन बढ़ता जा रहा है। लिव-इन-रिलेशन पश्चिम की जीवन शैली है तथा भारतीयों ने इसे तेजी से अपनाना शुरू किया है। भारत में जाति, धार्मिक बंधन तथा दहेज प्रथा, आदि होने के कारण युवक-युवतियां लिव-इन में साथ रहने को प्राथमिकता देने लगे हैं। आखिर भारत में भी काफी बहस, ढेरों सवालों और काफी विरोधों के बीच लिव-इन-संबंध को कानूनी दृष्टि से वैध घोषित कर दिया गया है। हालांकि आधुनिक काल में इनका प्रचालन काफी बढ़ रहा है, फिर भी सामाजिक रूप से उन्हें व्यापक मान्यता प्राप्त नहीं हुई है। भारत में लिव-इन-संबंध ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में शायद ही कभी देखे गए हैं, जबकि शहरी और मेट्रो शहरों में आम हो रहे हैं। जहां उद्योग, व्यापार और लोगों की जीवनशैली में प्रगति और विलासिता देखी गई, वहां ये सम्बन्ध ज्यादा और पुराने या पारम्परिक शहरों या क्षेत्रों में कम देखने को मिलते हैं। मुंबई जैसे शहर में तो मैरिज ब्यूरो की तरह विशेष रूप से लिव-इन-संबंधों के बनाने में सहायता करने वाले लोग और संस्थाएं मौजूद हैं।

हालाँकि सर्वोच्च न्यायालय द्वारा लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप के समर्थन में की गई टिप्पणी के बाद एक बार फिर 'परिवार' नामक सामाजिक संस्था के अस्तित्व पर बहस छिड़ गई है। युगों से सहेजी गई भारतीय संस्कृति और संस्कारों का क्या होगा? पी. वी. काणे ने हिन्दू विवाह के सम्पन्न होने के लिए 39 प्रमुख अनुष्ठानों एवं संस्कारों का उल्लेख किया है (काणे, 1953)। जबकि लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप में इन धार्मिक कृत्यों और धार्मिक विश्वासों की उपेक्षा कर उन्हें गैर-जरूरी माना गया है। ऐसे रिश्तों में रहने वालों के प्रति लोगों का व्यवहार अत्यंत घृणित या उपेक्षित होता है। अधिकतर भारतीय संस्कृति और परम्पराओं की दुहाई देकर लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप को गैर-परम्परावादी मानकर गलत कहते हैं तो तथाकथित उदारवादी और खुद को आधुनिक कहने वाले लोग लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप को महिलाओं की स्वतंत्रता के लिए बेहद जरूरी मानते हैं। सच यह है कि लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप सदियों से चली आ रही उप-पत्नी व्यवस्था का ही आधुनिक स्वरूप है, जिसे बड़े ही आकर्षक ढंग से हमारे युवाओं के सामने प्रस्तुत किया जा रहा है। सर्वोच्च न्यायालय द्वारा लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप को 2006 में वैध घोषित किया गया है। एक मुकदमे का फैसला देते हुए न्यायालय ने कहा था कि "वयस्क होने के बाद व्यक्ति किसी के साथ रहने या शादी करने के लिए आजाद है" (बीबीसी न्यूज़, 29 अक्टूबर, 2021)। इस फैसले के साथ लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप को कानूनी मान्यता मिल गई। लोगों की नजर में अनैतिक माने जाने के बावजूद ऐसे रिश्ते में कोई अपराध नहीं है। इसके तहत वयस्क जोड़ों की सुरक्षा संविधान के अनुच्छेद 21 के तहत दिए 'राइट टू लाइफ' की श्रेणी में आता है, और भारतीय विधि इसे कोई अपराध नहीं मानती है। आज का भारतीय युवा आधुनिक संस्कृति के किसी भी रूप को अपनाने में हिचकिचाता नहीं है और लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप इस आधुनिक संस्कृति का ही एक हिस्सा है। ऐसे युवा शादीशुदा जिन्दगी जीने से बेहतर लिव-इन-रिलेशन को मानने लगे हैं।

आज भारतीय समाज में लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप एक विवाद का मुद्दा बन गया है। कई लोग इसके कुछ फायदे बताते हैं तो कई नुकसान। जहां एक बड़ा वर्ग इसे समाज और मानवीय मूल्यों के लिए खतरा बताता है, दूसरी ओर एक ऐसा वर्ग है जो इसे पुरातन परम्परा में हुए बदलाव के रूप में देखकर इसको अपनी आजादी से जोड़कर अच्छा बताता है। भारतीय समाज में न्यायालय द्वारा वैध घोषित की गयी इस नयी प्रथा के बारे में विस्तार से समझने के लिये यहां इसके विभिन्न पहलुओं पर प्रकाश डालने का प्रयास किया गया है।

### लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप की अवधारणा

यह समाज में एक ऐसी व्यवस्था है जिसमें वो लोग जिनका विवाह नहीं हुआ है, साथ रहते हैं और एक पति-पत्नी की तरह आपस में शारीरिक सम्बन्ध बनाते हैं। यह सम्बन्ध स्नेहात्मक होता है और रिश्ता गहरा होता है। सम्बन्ध कई बार लम्बे समय तक चल सकते हैं या फिर स्थाई भी हो सकता है। (अप्रैल 2006)

इस प्रकार के सम्बन्ध विशेषतया पश्चिमी देशों में आम हैं वहीं भारत में भी इसको काफी बल मिला है, जिसका कारण बदलते सामाजिक विचार हैं, विशेषकर विवाह, लिंग भागीदारी और धर्म के मामलों में। भारत के सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने लिव-इन संबंधों के समर्थन में एक ऐतिहासिक निर्णय सुनाते हुए कहा कि यदि दो लोग लम्बे समय से एक दूसरे के साथ रह रहे हैं और उनमें सम्बन्ध है, तो उन्हें शादीशुदा ही माना जायेगा। (Oxford dictionaries.com)

आज भारतीय समाज में लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप एक विवाद का मुद्दा है। कई लोग इसके फायदे बताते हैं तो कुछ नुकसान। जहां एक बड़ा वर्ग इसे समाज और मानवीय मूल्य के लिए खतरा बताता है तो दूसरी ओर एक ऐसा वर्ग भी है जो इसको पुरातन परम्परा में हुए बदलाव के रूप में देखकर इसको अपनी आजादी से जोड़कर अच्छा बताता है। इसकी शुरुआत महानगरों के शिक्षित और आर्थिक तौर पर स्वतंत्र, ऐसे लोगों ने की जो विवाह की जकड़न से आजादी चाहते थे क्योंकि इस रिश्ते को दूसरे पक्ष की सहमति के बिना भी कभी भी समाप्त किया जा सकता है।

जबकि दूसरी ओर शादी न सिर्फ दो व्यक्तियों का बल्कि दो परिवारों का मिलन होता है। शादी में लड़का-लड़की को सामाजिक तौर पर एक सूत्र में बंधने की मान्यता प्राप्त होती है। विवाह में स्त्री व पुरुष दोनों का सम्मान व प्रतिष्ठा निहित होती है और विवाह की परम्परा भारतीय समाज में आरम्भ से चली आ रही है। विवाह को परिवार की नींव व परिवार को समाज का आधार माना जाता है, परन्तु लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप जैसी नवीन परम्पराएँ परिवार एवं विवाह संस्था के लिए खतरा साबित हो सकती है।

### लिव इन रिलेशनशिप पर भारतीय समाज की स्वीकारोक्ति

लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप प्रथा पश्चिमी देशों से आकर हमारे देश में पैर पसार रही है। भारतीय युवाओं की जीवनशैली में तेजी से बदलाव आ रहा है। इसके लिए ये आधुनिक संस्कृति को अपनाने में कोई भी झिझक महसूस नहीं करते। लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप आधुनिक संस्कृति की ही शैली है। कई युवा इस प्रथा को वैवाहिक जीवन से बेहतर मानने लगे हैं।

लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप एक ऐसी व्यवस्था है जिसमें दो लोग यानी कि एक लड़का और लड़की आपसी सहमति से बगैर विवाह के (living together without marriage) पति-पत्नी की तरह रहते हैं। आजकल विदेशों के साथ-साथ भारतीय महानगरों में भी यह प्रचलन तेजी से बढ़ रहा है। लड़का-लड़की एक दूसरे को जान्चने-परखने के उद्देश्य से एक-दूसरे के साथ रहते हैं और इस बात की प्रैक्टिस करते हैं कि भविष्य में ये दोनों एक साथ मिलकर जिन्दगी गुजार सकते हैं या नहीं। कुछ लोग इस प्रथा का समर्थन टाइम-पास और इच्छापूर्ति का जरिया मानकर करने लगे हैं। ये प्रथा जितनी

आसान लगती है उतनी ही पेचीदा भी है। जितने इसके फायदे हैं उससे कहीं ज्यादा नुकसान भी हैं। पश्चिमी देशों की संस्कृति के साथ भारतीय व्यवस्था में भी इस प्रथा को स्वीकार किया जाने लगा है। जिसके पीछे महानगरों में बसने वाले कुछ लोगों के बदलते सामाजिक विचार, विवाह की समस्या, व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता व जिम्मेदारियाँ एवं धर्म से जुड़े मामले, धर्म, जाति, वर्ण और नस्ल के परे सम्बन्ध, उपयुक्त जीवन जीने की चाह, सही उम्र में विवाह न हो पाना, आर्थिक संकट, पसंदीदा वर का न मिलना आदि का होना माना जा सकता है। वहीं समाज का एक बड़ा वर्ग इसे भारतीय संस्कृति के लिए सबसे बड़ा खतरा मानता है इस प्रथा में रिश्ते में सामान्यतया महिलाएं अनिश्चितता, तनाव, सामाजिक एवं पारिवारिक तिरस्कार एवं अवसाद की शिकार रहती है। ऐसे रिलेशनशिप से जन्म लेने वाले बच्चे मर्यादाओं और समाज के व्यवहार और व्यवस्था से अलग कूटित जीवन जीने के लिए मजबूर होते हैं। उनकी सामाजिक वैधता पर भी प्रश्नचिह्न होता है। वहीं इस प्रथा में सम्मिलित युवक-युवतियाँ सम्बन्ध टूटने के बाद अलग-अलग किसी और के साथ शादी करके जीवन की शुरुआत करना चाहें तो आगे उनका वैवाहिक जीवन भी बर्बाद हो जाता है। लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप मुख्यतया महानगरों के शिक्षित और आर्थिक रूप से संपन्न लोगों की प्रथा है जो विवाह बंधन से बाहर सम्बन्ध रखकर भी अपना परिवार भी बचाये रखना चाहते हैं। आधुनिक काल में उसे युवा स्त्री-पुरुषों का बिन फेरे हम तेरे सहजीवन कहा जा सकता है, लेकिन समाज उसे पूर्णतया स्वीकार नहीं करता, क्योंकि यह रिश्ता सामाजिक मर्यादाओं और दायित्वों को अमान्य करता है जबकि यह व्यवस्था धर्म, जाति, वर्ग और नस्ल के परे सम्बन्धों को मान्यता प्रदान करती है। बावजूद इसके इंदौर हाईकोर्ट के जस्टिस सुबोध अभ्यंकर ने कहा कि लिव-इन सम्बन्धों का यह अभिशाप नागरिकों को जीवन और व्यक्तिगत स्वतंत्रता की संवैधानिक गारंटी का बाय प्रोडक्ट है। यह प्रथा भारतीय समाज के लोकाचार को निगल रहा है। तीव्र कामुक व्यवहार के साथ व्यभिचारिता को बढ़ावा दे रहा है, जिससे यौन अपराधों में लगातार इजाफा हो रहा है। हाल ही में सामने आए पुलिस महिला सुरक्षा शाखा के एक अध्ययन में खुलासा हुआ कि मध्यप्रदेश में वर्ष 2019, 2020, व 2021 के दौरान लिव-इन में रहने वाली युवतियों ने सबसे ज्यादा रेप के मामले दर्ज कराये। इस अवधि में कुल 14476 मामले बलात्कार के दर्ज हुए, इनमें से 85 फीसदी प्रकरण लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप से जुड़े थे। केवल 2 फीसदी मामलों में आरोपी अजनबी थे। बावजूद, इसके राजस्थान हाइकोर्ट की जोधपुर खंडपीठ एवं पंजाब और हरियाणा हाइकोर्ट ने लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप के पक्ष में फैसला दिया था कि जो भी व्यक्ति लिव इन का रास्ता अपनाता है उसे अन्य नागरिकों की तरह कानून का बराबर संरक्षण एवं संवैधानिक सुरक्षा प्रदान की जानी चाहिए अन्यथा अपराधों के मामले बढ़ते ही रहेंगे। (अमर उजाला, 22 अप्रैल, 2022)

### लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप के लिए आवश्यक परिस्थितियाँ

भारतीय कानून में इसे स्वीकृति दी गयी है और इसे वैध एवं कानूनी माना गया है। लेकिन सुप्रीम कोर्ट के अनुसार एक रिश्ते को कानूनी तौर पर लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप माना जाने के लिए कुछ शर्तों को तय किया है। जिनके अधीन रहते हुए वैध लिव-इन किया जा सकता है। उच्चतम न्यायालय में इन्दिरा शर्मा बनाम वी ए वी शर्मा 2013 के मामले में लिव-इन से सम्बंधित सम्पूर्ण गाइडलाइंस को प्रस्तुत किया है। उच्चतम न्यायालय ने डी वेसुस्वामी और वी. डी. पटचैम्मल मुकदमे में यह निर्णय सुनाया था कि 2005 के अधिनियम के अनुसार विवाह के भाव में सम्बन्ध माने जाने के लिए कुछ शर्तों का होना आवश्यक है। और जिसके अनुसार लिव-इन के लिए आवश्यक शर्तें निम्नानुसार हैं- (C-A- No-Sc 2028&29, 2010)

1. किसी भी लिव-इन में साथ रहने के लिए एक युक्तियुक्त अवधि आवश्यक है। युक्तियुक्त अवधि से आशय ऐसी अवधि है, जिससे यह माना जा सके कि किसी एक विशेष समय से लिव-इन के पक्षकार साथ में रहे हैं। इस अवधि में निरंतरता होनी चाहिए फिर वह अवधि 1 माह, या 1 वर्ष भी हो सकती है।

2. लिव-इन के पक्षकारों का पति-पत्नी के भांति एक घर में साथ रहना आवश्यक है। एक छत, एक घर को लिव-इन के पक्षकारों द्वारा अपना एक ठिकाना या एक घर मानना होता है।
3. लिव-इन के दोनों पक्षकार एक ही घर की वस्तुओं का संयुक्त रूप से उपयोग कर रहे हों, जिस प्रकार एक पति-पत्नी किसी एक घर में साथ रहते हुए चीजों का उपयोग करते हैं।
4. घर के कामों में एक-दूसरे की सहायता करते हों और दोनों के बीच घर के काम बंटे हुए हों।
5. लिव-इन सम्बंधों से उत्पन्न संतानों को स्नेहपूर्वक अपने साथ रखते हों, उनसे स्नेह, प्रेम वैसे ही रखते हो जिस प्रकार माता-पिता अपने बच्चों से रखते हैं।
6. लोगों को इस बात की सूचना हो कि दोनों साथ रहते हैं। एक घर को साझा करते हैं, पति-पत्नी की भांति साथ रहते हैं और उनमें शारीरिक सम्बन्ध भी बनते हैं। यह जारकर्म की भांति कोई दब-छिपकर किया गया सम्बन्ध नहीं होना चाहिए।
7. लिव-इन के पक्षकार वयस्क हो, भारतीय वयस्कता अधिनियम के अंतर्गत वयस्कता की आयु 18 वर्ष हो।
8. स्वस्थचित हो और
9. एक महत्वपूर्ण शर्त यह है कि लिव-इन में रहते समय दोनों पक्षकारों में से कोई भी पति या पत्नी के रहते हुए भी लिव-इन करता है, तो वह अवैध होगा और कानूनन उसे कोई संरक्षण नहीं मिलेगा।

### लिव-इन-रिलेशन का सकारात्मक पक्ष एवं स्थायित्व की संभावना

**पार्टनर को जानने में आसानी:** इसमें पार्टनर को जानने का पूरा समय मिलता है इसमें आप पार्टनर के हर व्यवहार को बेहद करीब से देखते और समझते हैं। एक दूसरे के व्यक्तित्व को जान सकते हैं जबकि शादी में एक या दो दिन में मिलने से आप सामने वाले के बारे में कुछ भी नहीं जान पाते हैं।

**आर्थिक रूप से निर्भर:** इन तरह के रिलेशनशिप में आर्थिक रूप से किसी भी पक्ष को किसी के ऊपर बोझ बनने की जरूरत नहीं होती है और सम्बन्ध खत्म होने पर भी किसी पर भी कोई आर्थिक बोझ नहीं पड़ता है। इसमें सामने वाले को पैसे खर्च करने के लिए बाध्य नहीं किया जा सकता है।

**सामाजिक दायित्वों से आजादी:** लिव-इन-रिलेशन में रहने का फैसला ही सामाजिक एवं पारिवारिक दायित्वों से मुक्ति देना है। इस रिश्ते में सामाजिक और पारिवारिक नियम आप पर लागू नहीं होते हैं। ऐसे में इनको मानने का भी आपके ऊपर कोई दबाव नहीं होता है। साथ ही आपके पास खुद के लिए भी पूरा समय मिल पाता है।

**किसी भी विषय पर जवाबदेही नहीं:** इन रिश्तों में बेशक आप अपने कार्यों के बारे में खुलकर बात करते हों फिर भी आपको, आप ऐसा कार्य क्यों कर रहे हो? इस बात के लिए किसी को जवाब देने की जरूरत नहीं होती है।

**कानूनी मामलों में फंसने से मुक्ति:** लिव-इन रिश्ते में आप शादी की तरह कानूनी प्रक्रिया से नहीं गुजरते हैं। इसके अलावा शादी के टूटने पर आपको कई तरह की कानूनी प्रक्रिया से गुजरना पड़ता है, लेकिन इसमें आपको रिश्ते के खत्म करने में इतनी मुश्किल नहीं होती है। (न्यूज़, 3 दिसम्बर, 2020)

**एक दूसरे को सम्मान देना:** इस तरह के रिश्ते में किसी भी तरह की परेशानी होने पर वो व्यक्ति रिश्ते से आसानी से बाहर जा सकता है। रिश्ते से बाहर निकलने की पूरी आजादी होने के कारण दोनों को ही एक दूसरे के सम्मान का पूरा ध्यान रखना पड़ता है। अर्थात् हर पक्ष दूसरे का सम्मान करता है। (C.A.No.6466 of 2004)

इस प्रकार इस रिश्ते में व्यक्ति पूर्णतः स्वतंत्र होता है चाहे वह आर्थिक, सामाजिक या पारिवारिक ही क्यों न हो। इसमें कानूनी झंझटों जैसे तलाक आदि से मुक्त रहकर स्वतंत्रतापूर्ण जीवन जी सकता है।

## लिव-इन रिलेशन के नकारात्मक प्रभाव एवं विघटन की स्थिति

**अविश्वास का डर:** लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप में रहने वालों में अविश्वास का डर हमेशा ही सताता रहता है। इस रिश्ते में दोनों ही पार्टनर रिश्ते से बाहर आने के लिए आजाद होते हैं इसलिए दोनों को ही यह डर सताता रहता है और इस कारण ही वे अपनी जिन्दगी को खुलकर खुशी-खुशी व्यतीत नहीं कर पाते हैं।

**रिश्ता टूटने में आसान:** कई बार एक पार्टनर दूसरे को आहत कर आगे बढ़ जाता है। इस रिश्ते में वादे और कसमें तो हैं, पर सब अपनी इच्छा पर निर्भर करते हैं। अतः रिश्ता टूटने में आसानी होती है और आप इसमें आसानी से बाहर आ सकते हैं जबकि शादी में आपको रिश्ते से बाहर आने में कई कानूनी प्रक्रियाओं से गुजरना पड़ता है और कई बार तो इसमें वर्षों लग जाते हैं।

**रिश्ते का महत्त्व कम होना:** इसमें दोनों ही पार्टनर में रिश्ते के सम्मान व महत्त्व को कम देखा जाता है। क्योंकि दोनों के ही मन में यह बात पहले से ही होती है कि वो इस रिश्ते से कभी भी बाहर आ सकते हैं। इस तरह के रिश्ते में अपनी आर्थिक और व्यक्तिगत आजादी के लिए शादी करने के फैसले को टालते रहते हैं। (C.A.No.7108 of 2003)

**बच्चों पर बुरा प्रभाव:** इस रिश्ते से उत्पन्न बच्चों पर रिश्ता टूटने पर बुरा प्रभाव पड़ता है। अमूमन इनके बच्चों में सामाजिक एवं पारिवारिक नियमों के प्रति जानकारी नहीं होती है। यदि उनके माता-पिता किसी कारणवश अलग हो जाते हैं तो उनको पारिवारिक मान्यताओं व उसकी जरूरतों के बारे में सही से कुछ पता नहीं चल पाता है।

**सामाजिक निंदा का सामना करना:** भले ही आज के समाज में लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप तेजी से युवाओं के बीच प्रचलन में हो, लेकिन आज भी भारतीय समाज में इसको सामाजिक मान्यता नहीं मिल पाई है। इसलिए इस रिश्ते में रहने वालों को घृणा की दृष्टि से देखा जाता है। उन्हें आसानी से मकान किराए पर नहीं मिलता है।

**महिलाओं के लिए कठिनाई:** भारतीय समाज में आज लोगों की मानसिकता में पुरुष प्रधान सोच में थोड़ी तो कमी आई है, परन्तु फिर भी इस मानसिकता को कई लोग बढ़ावा दे रहे हैं। ऐसे में इस रिश्ते से यदि पुरुष साथी चला जाए, तो महिला को समाज में कई तरह की प्रताड़नाओं का सामना करना पड़ता है। इसके अलावा महिला को फिर दोबारा पार्टनर मिलने में भी मुश्किल होती है।

इस प्रकार लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप में रहने पर समाज की अस्वीकृति और तिरस्कार सहन करना पड़ता है। यह सम्बन्ध विवाह की तरह टिकाऊ नहीं होता है। रिश्ता टूटने पर रिश्तियों को एवं उनसे पैदा बच्चों की कई समस्याओं का सामना करना पड़ता है ऐसे बच्चे पारम्परिक पारिवारिक मर्यादाओं को समझने और अपनाने में असमर्थ होते हैं। दोनों पक्षों में विवाह जैसे सम्बन्ध के आदर-सम्मान की कमी साफ दिखाई देती है। अतः ऐसे रिश्ते बनाने से पहले इसके विभिन्न पहलुओं को ठीक से सोच-समझ लेना चाहिए।

## लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप के संबंध में सावधानियां

लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप में रहने वालों को कुछ महत्त्वपूर्ण बातों का ध्यान रखना आवश्यक है। इसमें सर्वप्रथम लिव-इन में रहने वालों को यह देखना चाहिए कि कहीं उनका साथी, उनका इस्तेमाल तो नहीं कर रहा है। लिव-इन में रहने वालों की कोई भी पर्सनल फोटो या वीडियो एक-दूसरे के पास न रहे,

इस बात का भी ध्यान रखा जाना चाहिए, क्योंकि लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप टूटने के बाद इनके दुरुपयोग की संभावना बढ़ जाती है। कुछ शांतिर लोग अपनी आर्थिक जरूरतों के लिए भी लिव-इन के प्रति आकर्षित हो सकते हैं, अतः ऐसे लोगों से बचकर रहना भी जरूरी है। इसी तरह यह जानना और समझना भी आवश्यक है कि लिव-इन में रहने का उद्देश्य किसी भी साथी द्वारा मन बहलाना तो नहीं है। लम्बे समय तक एक-दूसरे के साथ लिव-इन में रहने वालों को यदि इस प्रकार के रिश्ते में अपना कोई भविष्य नज़र नहीं आए तो बिना देरी किए ऐसे रिश्ते से खुद को अलग कर लेना चाहिए। यह कहना गलत न होगा कि इस रिश्ते में रहने का फैसला करने से पहले उसके बारे में पूरी जानकारी ले लेनी चाहिए। यह तथ्य भी गौरतलब है कि कम उम्र के युवाओं को आधुनिकता के नाम पर कभी भी भूलकर लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप में नहीं रहना चाहिए।

लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप आपराध नहीं है, लेकिन लिव-इन रिश्ते में जिन्दगी भर रहने वालों को इस रिश्ते को लम्बे समय तक टिकाने के लिए, इससे जुड़ी व्यावहारिक बातों और नियम-कायदों को अवश्य जान लेना चाहिए। सामाजिक स्तर पर लिव-इन को भले ही स्वीकार्यता नहीं दी जाती हो तथा विभिन्न धर्मों की मान्यताएं भी इसे मंजूरी प्रदान न करें, परन्तु भारतीय विधि लिव-इन को कोई अपराध नहीं मानती। भारत में लिव-इन जैसी प्रथा वैध है और कोई भी दो लोग लिव-इन में रह सकते हैं। यह भारतीय विधि या कानून में पूर्णतः वैध है। भारत के उच्चतम न्यायालय द्वारा दिए गए निर्णय किसी संहिताबद्ध कानून जैसा स्थान रखते हैं तथा किसी कानून के अभाव में उच्चतम न्यायालय द्वारा दिए गए निर्णय ही कानून की तरह कार्य करते हैं, भले ही कोई संहिताबद्ध कानून लिव-इन व्यवस्था के सन्दर्भ में उपस्थित नहीं हो, परन्तु उच्चतम न्यायालय के न्याय-निर्णय लिव-इन से सम्बंधित व्यवस्था पर मार्गदर्शन करते हैं। लिव-इन रिश्ते में महिलाओं को सुरक्षा को ध्यान रखते हुए कुछ लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप कानून बनाए गए हैं ताकि इसमें कोई पुरुष केवल शारीरिक सम्बन्ध के लिए किसी लड़की के साथ लिव-इन में रहने के बाद छोड़ न सके। अगर वह छोड़ता है तो उस पर कानूनी कार्यवाही की जा सकती है।

### लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप का कानूनी / वैधानिक पक्ष

लिव-इन में रहने वाली महिलाओं के पास वो सारे कानूनी अधिकार हैं, जो भारतीय पत्नी को संवैधानिक तौर पर दिए गए हैं।

**घरेलू हिंसा से संरक्षण प्राप्त:** घरेलू हिंसा अधिनियम 2005 की धारा 2 (f) के अनुसार लिव-इन में साथ रहने वाले लोग भी संरक्षण प्राप्त कर सकते हैं। क्योंकि इस अधिनियम के अनुसार घरेलू नातेदारी से ऐसे दो व्यक्तियों के बीच नातेदारी अभिप्रेत है जो साझी गृहस्थी में एक साथ रहते हैं या किसी समय एक साथ रह चुके हैं, जब वे स्वतंत्रता, विवाह या दत्तक ग्रहण की प्रकृति की किसी नातेदारी द्वारा सम्बंधित है या एक अविभक्त कुटुंब के रूप में एक साथ रहने वाले कुटुंब के सदस्य हैं। घरेलू हिंसा अधिनियम की धारा से प्रतीत होता है कि लिव-इन जैसे संबंधों को भारतीय विधानों में स्थान दिया गया है। {(Sect.2 (9)}

**सम्बन्ध विच्छेद की स्थिति में महिला को भरण-पोषण का अधिकार:** चनमुनिया बनाम वीरेन्द्र कुमार कुशवाहा मामले में उच्चतम न्यायालय ने स्पष्ट करते हुए यह कहा है कि लिव-इन में महिला पक्षकार पुरुष पक्षकार से दंड प्रक्रिया संहिता की धारा 125 के अंतर्गत भरण-पोषण प्राप्त करने का अधिकार रखती है तथा महिला को यह कहकर भरण-पोषण के अधिकार से वंचित नहीं किया जा सकता कि उसने कोई वैध विवाह नहीं किया था। महिला दंड प्रक्रिया संहिता की धारा 125 के अंतर्गत भरण-पोषण की मांग कर सकती है।

**लिव-इन से उत्पन्न हुई संतान को संपत्ति में उत्तराधिकार:** लिव-इन की अवधि में साथ रहते हुए इसके पक्षकारों में यदि कोई संतान उत्पन्न होती है तो इस प्रकार से उत्पन्न हुई संतान को पिता की सम्पत्ति में तथा माता की सम्पत्ति में और इन दोनों को विरासत में मिली हुई सम्पत्ति में उत्तराधिकार का अधिकार उसी प्रकार होगा, जिस प्रकार एक वैध विवाह से उत्पन्न हुई संतानों को होता है। यह बात रवीन्द्र सिंह बनाम मल्लिकार्जुन के मामले में 2011 को भारत के उच्चतम न्यायालय द्वारा कही गयी। इस प्रकार उच्चतम न्यायालय द्वारा महिला पक्षकार को सुरक्षा देने के लिए उपर्युक्त अधिनियमों में स्वीकृति प्रदान की गई है जिससे लिव-इन में रहने के बाद कोई लड़का-लड़की को छोड़ देता है तो उसको उपर्युक्त सुख-सुविधाएं कोर्ट दिलाने का काम करेगा। इसके लिए पीड़िता लड़की को लिव-इन में होने के सबूत खासकर, आर्थिक लेन-देन के कागज कोर्ट के सामने पेश करने होते हैं। (C.A.No.-7108, 2003)

बावजूद इन सब कानूनी संरक्षण के ऐसे लिव-इन-कपल जिनकी शादी अन्य व्यक्तियों के साथ अब भी अस्तित्व में है, परन्तु अब वह दोनों एक साथ रह रहे हैं, ऐसा लिव-इन वैध नहीं होगा और कानून के तहत किसी भी संरक्षण के हकदार नहीं होंगे। (इलाहबाद हाइकोर्ट, rcno.6681,2020))

## निष्कर्ष

इस प्रकार वर्तमान समय में प्राचीन विवाह को प्रस्थापित करती इस नयी आधुनिक प्रथा का चलन बढ़ता जा रहा है और आज के कामकाजी युवा शादी के स्थान पर लिव-इन को महत्त्व दे रहे हैं। इससे वर्तमान परिदृश्य में वैवाहिक परम्पराओं का एक बदलता स्वरूप उभर रहा है। समाज की परिवर्तनशील प्रकृति के कारण विवाह संस्था जो समाज का ही एक घटक है, में परिवर्तन की प्रक्रिया अछूती नहीं है। समय और परिस्थितियों में परिवर्तन के साथ-साथ विवाह संस्था में भी परिवर्तन देखे जा सकते हैं। आजकल आधुनिक समाजों में विवाह के परम्परागत स्वरूप को अस्वीकार करते हुए पश्चिमी समाजों के 'सुविधात्मक सम्बन्ध' (अरेंजमेंट) अथवा समझ पर आंतरिक सम्बन्ध अर्थात् मात्र समझौते के विवाह स्वरूप को स्वीकार करने लगी है। भारत के महानगरों (मुंबई, दिल्ली, कोलकाता, आदि) में भी इस प्रवृत्ति का प्रभाव दृष्टिगोचर होने लगा है।

इससे एक सामाजिक संस्था के रूप में विवाह और परिवार की प्रकृति, आकार, प्रकार और उद्देश्यों में तीव्र गति से परिवर्तन आ रहा है। आजकल तो कम्प्यूटर के बढ़ते प्रभाव, इंटरनेट एवं सोशल साइट्स ने भी विवाह संस्था को प्रभावित किया है।

वर्तमान समय में भारतीय विवाह संस्था उस दो-राहे पर खड़ी है जहाँ एक ओर तो शिक्षित युवक-युवतियां विवाह के प्रति अपना दृष्टिकोण बदलने में यकीन रखते हैं, वहीं दूसरी ओर एक ऐसा वर्ग है जो परम्परावादी विचारों से संतुष्ट है। परन्तु विवाह को आज के युवक-युवतियां अपनी स्वतंत्रता पर आघात मानने लगे हैं। युवाओं का उच्च शिक्षा प्राप्त करना, आर्थिक दृष्टि से आत्मनिर्भर होना, जनसंख्या को सीमित रखना, बढ़ती महत्वाकांक्षाओं को पूरा करना और कॅरियर सर्वोपरि जैसी सोच ने विवाह की अनिवार्यता को कम किया है। (आहूजा, 2013) आज समाज में लिव-इन-रिलेशनशिप अर्थात् बिना विवाह के साथ-साथ रहना, जैसा एक नया स्वरूप उभर कर सामने आ रहा है, जो परिवार, जाति, धर्म एवं अन्य वैवाहिक बाधाओं से मुक्त माना जाता है। धर्म के प्रति आस्था में शिथिलता तथा विभिन्न गर्भनिरोधक साधनों के आविष्कार ने विवाह विषयक पुरानी मान्यताओं का प्राग्वैवाहिक सतीत्व और पवित्रता को गहरा धक्का पहुंचाया है। किन्तु ये सब परिवर्तन होते हुए भी भविष्य में विवाह प्रथा के बने रहने को प्रबल कारण यह है कि इससे कुछ ऐसे उद्देश्य पूर्ण होते हैं जो किसी अन्य साधन या संस्था से नहीं हो सकते हैं। पहला उद्देश्य वंश वृद्धि का है चाहे विज्ञान ने प्रयोगशालाओं में शिशु उत्पादन एवं विकास प्रारंभ कर दिया, परन्तु वह पूर्णतया सफल नहीं है, दूसरा संतानों का पालन चाहे कितने राज्य

एवं समाज शिशु शालाएं विकसित कर ले परन्तु उनमें बच्चों का सर्वांगीण विकास वैसा संभव नहीं है जैसा विवाह आधारित परिवार संस्था में होता है। तीसरा दाम्पत्य और सच्चे प्रेम की प्राप्ति विवाह के अतिरिक्त अन्य साधन से संभव नहीं है। इन उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति के लिए भविष्य में विवाह एक महत्त्वपूर्ण संस्था बनी रहेगी, भले ही उनमें कुछ न कुछ परिवर्तन होते रहते हों।

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डॉ मंजू नावरिया, सह-आचार्य, समाजशास्त्र विभाग, प. न. कि. श. राजकीय स्नातकोत्तर महाविद्यालय, दौसा  
nawriyamanju@gmail.com

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## वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य में नाता प्रथा : गुर्जर समाज के सन्दर्भ में

सीता गुर्जर

**सार :** नाता प्रथा राजस्थान में प्रचलित पुरानी प्रथाओं में से एक है। यह राजस्थान की कुछ जातियों एवं जनजातियों में व्याप्त है। नाता प्रथा जहां एक ओर समाज में विधवाओं एवं परित्यक्ता महिलाओं को सामाजिक जीवन जीने की मान्यता देती है। वहीं दूसरी ओर इस प्रथा के कुछ नकारात्मक पहलू भी हैं। वर्तमान में इस विषय पर कोई विशेष कार्य सम्पन्न नहीं हुआ है। इसलिए राजस्थान के उदयपुर जिले में गुर्जर समाज में नाता प्रथा के कारण एवं नाता प्रथा से प्रभावित महिलाओं एवं उनके बच्चों की स्थिति को जानने के लिए यह शोध अध्ययन किया गया है। यह एक सूक्ष्म स्तरीय अध्ययन के रूप में प्रस्तुत किया जा रहा है, जिसमें नाता प्रथा का वर्तमान परिप्रेक्ष्य तथा नाता प्रथा की समाज में स्थिति को स्पष्ट करने का प्रयास किया गया है।

**संकेत शब्द:** नाता प्रथा, घरेलू हिंसा, बाल विवाह, गौना, झगड़ा

मानव समाज और सभ्यता के विकास के साथ विभिन्न सामाजिक संस्थाएं भी विकसित हुई हैं। विवाह और परिवार ऐसी ही आधारभूत सामाजिक संस्थाएं हैं जो न केवल स्त्री-पुरुष के पारस्परिक संबंधों के विभिन्न रूपों को अपने में समाहित करती हैं बल्कि उन्हें सामाजिक-वैधानिक स्वीकृति प्रदान करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती हैं।

वेस्टरमार्क (1922) ने मानव विवाह की बात करते हुए कहा है कि "विवाह एक या अधिक पुरुषों का एक या अधिक स्त्रियों के साथ होने वाला वह संबंध है जिसे प्रथा या कानून स्वीकार करता है और जिसमें विवाह करने वाले व्यक्तियों के और उससे पैदा हुए संभावित बच्चों के दूसरे के प्रति होने वाले अधिकारों और कर्तव्यों का समावेश होता है।" यह परिभाषा न केवल विवाह के विभिन्न पहलुओं को स्पष्ट करती है बल्कि विवाह से स्थापित परिवार और स्वजन (नातेदारी) व्यवस्था को भी अपने में समेट लेती है।

यद्यपि एक संस्था के रूप में विवाह सर्वव्यापी है लेकिन विवाह की पद्धति, उसकी अधिमान्यताएं और वर्जनाएं सर्वव्यापी नहीं होतीं। इनमें देश-काल-वातावरण के अनुसार परिवर्तन आता रहता है। यही कारण है कि विभिन्न संस्कृतियों और धर्मों, जातियों और वर्गों में विवाह के नियमों, प्रणालियों, स्वरूपों, आदि में विविधता दिखाई देती है। भारत जैसे विविधता पूर्ण राष्ट्र में स्थानीय संस्कृतियों, नृजातीय समूहों, जातियों और वर्गों में यह भिन्नता स्पष्ट रूप से परिलक्षित होती है।

विवाह की तरह परिवार भी एक संस्था के रूप में स्त्री-पुरुष के पारस्परिक संबंधों, उनके दायित्वों और अधिकारों को अपने में सम्मिलित करता है। परिवार का पितृसत्तात्मक या मातृसत्तात्मक रूप इन विषम लिंगीय संबंधों को असमानता के आधार पर देखता है और संबंधित प्रथाएं और परंपराएं इस असमानता को बनाए रखने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती हैं। भारत में भी स्त्रियों से संबंधित कुछ प्रथाओं, जैसे दहेज प्रथा, बाल विवाह, विधवाओं की निम्न स्थिति, आटा-साटा (विनिमय विवाह) की प्रथा, के कारण स्त्रियों को समाज में न केवल निम्न स्थिति प्राप्त होती है बल्कि वे शोषित और दबू बन जाती हैं। वे अपने अधिकारों के प्रति सजग और सशक्त रह कर उनकी मांग भी नहीं कर पातीं। प्रस्तुत आलेख में इसी प्रकार की एक प्रथा नाता व्यवस्था की विवेचना की गई है।

अनेक समाजों में विवाह के कुछ लचीले स्वरूप देखने को मिलते हैं जिसमें विवाह संस्कार के स्वीकृत रूप तो देखने को नहीं मिलते, परंतु इसके माध्यम से स्त्री-पुरुष को पति-पत्नी के रूप में सामाजिक जीवन जीने की स्वीकृति प्राप्त हो जाती है। नाता प्रथा भी एक ऐसी ही प्रथा है इसमें पुरुष

और स्त्री को साथ रहने की स्वीकृति प्राप्त हो जाती है। नाता प्रथा विवाह-विच्छेद का माध्यम भी है और विवाह का वैकल्पिक स्वरूप भी।" (नागर, 2015) यह प्रथा महिलाओं को अपनी पसंद के साथी के साथ जीवन यापन का अधिकार या स्वतंत्रता देती है लेकिन इसके साथ ही यह महिलाओं के अधिकारों के हनन का माध्यम भी बन जाती है।

### नाता प्रथा का अर्थ

नाता प्रथा एक सामाजिक व्यवस्था है, जिसमें महिला एवं पुरुष के विवाह होने के बाद उस विवाह को त्यागने के पश्चात् किसी अन्य महिला या पुरुष के साथ बिना विवाह किए पति-पत्नी के रूप में एक साथ रहा जाता है। ऐसे विवाह को सामाजिक स्तर पर झगड़े की राशि को चुकाने के पश्चात् वैध विवाह माना जाता है। दूसरे अर्थों में नाता का आशय ऐसे सम्बन्ध से है, जिसमें एक विवाहित या विधवा अथवा परित्यक्ता महिला किसी अन्य पुरुष के साथ पत्नी के रूप में रह सकती है, परन्तु विवाहित महिला होने की स्थिति में वह पुरुष उस महिला के पूर्व पति को जब तक एक निर्धारित धन राशि का भुगतान न कर दे तब तक ऐसा विवाह सामाजिक दर्जा प्राप्त नहीं कर सकता। यानी वह समाज के नियम-कायदे से मान्य नहीं होगा। (जैन, 2004)

इस प्रकार नाता से अभिप्राय यह है कि इसमें विवाह होने के बाद जब पत्नी अपने पति के घर ना जाकर या पति अपनी पत्नी को घर न लाकर दोनों अलग-अलग नए सिरे से घर बसाना चाहते हैं, और इसके लिए पति अपनी पहली पत्नी को छोड़कर दूसरी पत्नी लाता है या फिर ऐसे ही पत्नी अपने पहले पति के पास न जाकर दूसरे व्यक्ति के साथ अपना घर बसाना चाहती है। इन दोनों के माध्यम से जहां महिला-पुरुष अपने पहले विवाहित जीवन से असंतुष्ट होकर दोबारा अपने नए वैवाहिक जीवन की शुरुआत करना चाहते हैं। महिला को जिस प्रक्रिया के माध्यम से नए ससुराल भेजा जाता है या फिर पुरुष दूसरी पत्नी लाता है, उसे ही 'नाता' कहा जाता है। (नागर, 2015) यह प्रथा मूल रूप से आदिवासी समाज की विशेषता है। राजस्थान के भील, डामोर और गरासिया तथा गुजरात के भील में भी यह प्रथा प्रचलित है। (नाइक, 1956) नाता बिना धूमधाम के विवाह है, जिसमें वधूमूल्य की कीमत बहुत ऊंची होती है। यह वधू मूल्य लड़की के माता-पिता पति के रिश्तेदार में बराबर बंट जाता है। भील जनजाति में कोई भी स्त्री अपने बच्चों सहित दूसरे पुरुष के साथ विवाह कर सकती है। दूसरे पति को इसके लिए मुआवजा देना पड़ता है। इसी प्रकार से गरासिया जनजाति में भी नाता प्रथा प्रचलित है। इस प्रकार के विवाह में समाज के पंच वधू मूल्य तय करते हैं और उसके भुगतान पर ही नाता होता है। बहुत से मामलों में विवाह-विच्छेद की हुई महिला भी नाता के माध्यम से विवाह कर लेती हैं। लेकिन ऐसे मामलों में वधू मूल्य उसका पूर्व पति ही तय करता है। (दोषी, 1992)

उपर्युक्त अर्थों से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि नाता प्रथा एक रूढ़िवादी परम्परा है, जो महिला एवं पुरुष के विवाह के पश्चात् का सम्बन्ध है, जिसमें ये नाता करने वाले महिला एवं पुरुष कानूनी रूप से तलाक लिए बिना समाज की स्वीकृति लेने या समाज द्वारा निर्धारित राशि उस महिला के पूर्व पति को देने के पश्चात् एक साथ बिना विवाह किये रह सकते हैं। ऐसे नाता में महिला एवं पुरुष को विवाह के पश्चात् बिना विवाह के साथ रहने की आजादी समाज देता है। ये दम्पति चाहे तो नाता द्वारा एक या अधिक सम्बन्ध भी कर सकते हैं यदि समाज की पंचायत की शर्तों की पालना करते हुए विवाह करते हैं तो (कुमारी, 2007)।

### गुर्जर समाज में नाता प्रथा

नाता प्रथा राजस्थान में प्रचलित पुरानी प्रथाओं में से एक है। यह प्रथा मुख्य रूप से पिछड़ा वर्ग के 70.52 प्रतिशत परिवारों में प्रचलित है, जिसमें गुर्जर, धाकड़, जोगी, गड़िया लोहार, विशनोई, बंजारा,

नाई, कुम्हार इत्यादि सम्मिलित हैं। 36 जातियों में यह प्रथा पिचहत्तर से अधिक परिवारों में व्याप्त है। विशेषकर गुर्जर जाति में तो यह प्रथा अत्यधिक प्रचलित है। इस प्रथा का प्रचलन ब्राह्मण, राजपूत एवं जैन समाज में नहीं है। इसके अतिरिक्त सभी समाजों में इस प्रथा का प्रचलन है।

वर्तमान समय में राजस्थान में इस नाता प्रथा की परम्परा को उसी रूप में माना जा रहा है, जिस रूप में पूर्व में प्रचलित रही। यह प्रथा कहीं न कहीं महिला अधिकार एवं पुनर्विवाह की भावना को विकसित करती हुई सी प्रतीत होती है, परन्तु वर्तमान समय में इस नाता प्रथा ने एक कुप्रथा के रूप में जन्म लिया है। नाता प्रथा खाप पंचायत एवं पुरुष प्रधान समाज की कठपुतली बन कर रह गयी है। इस प्रथा ने महिलाओं की खरीद-फरोख्त को बढ़ावा दिया है। साथ ही इस प्रथा से पीड़ित समाजों में महिलाओं को पंचायत के समक्ष बोलने एवं बैठने का अधिकार भी नहीं है। साथ ही महिलाएं पंचायत एवं पुरुष प्रधान समाज के निर्णयों को मौन होकर ही स्वीकार कर लेती हैं या उन्हें स्वीकार करना पड़ता है (गुर्जर, 2022)।

### नाता प्रथा में जाति पंचायत की भूमिका

गुर्जर समाज में नाता प्रथा में कोई भी विवाहित महिला अपने पति को छोड़कर किसी दूसरे पुरुष के साथ रह सकती है। इसी प्रकार कोई भी विवाहित पुरुष अपनी पत्नी को छोड़कर दूसरी महिला के साथ रह सकता है। लेकिन इस प्रकार के नाते में पंचायत की मंजूरी मिलने के बाद ये लोग एक शादी-शुदा युगल की तरह रहने के अधिकारी हो जाते हैं।

कुछ पिछड़े समाजों में जहां पर नाता प्रथा का प्रचलन है वहां पर यदि पति-पत्नी एक दूसरे को पसन्द नहीं करते हैं तो तलाक लेकर दूसरा विवाह नहीं करते बल्कि उन समाजों में नाता किया जाता है तथा समाज की पंचायत उन समाजों में एक न्यायालय की भूमिका का निर्वाह करती है। उन समाजों में जाति पंचायत का निर्णय ही मान्य होता है और उसे ही सर्वोपरि माना जाता है। जाति पंचायत के सदस्य गांव के ही प्रबुद्ध वर्ग के लोग होते हैं तथा ये पंच गांव में होने वाले नाते के विवाद में अपना निर्णय देते हैं। इन पंचों का निर्णय अन्तिम निर्णय होता है और वह सभी को मान्य होता है।

नाते में कुछ प्रथाएं ऐसी हैं, जिनमें अगर कोई पुरुष विधवा या परित्यक्ता महिला से नाता करता है तो ऐसे में उसे नाते की राशि अदा करने की आवश्यकता नहीं होती, परन्तु कोई पुरुष अपनी विवाहित पत्नी को छोड़कर किसी अन्य महिला को नाते लाता है तो ऐसी स्थिति में उस परित्यक्ता महिला को ससुराल द्वारा विवाह के समय पूर्व में दिये गये गहने एवं एक लाख रुपये (जाति पंचायत द्वारा निर्धारित राशि) भरण-पोषण के रूप में दिये जाते हैं। देखा जाए तो नाते की राशि, जो कोई व्यक्ति अपनी परित्यक्ता पत्नी को दे रहा है, और वही अगर यह राशि जब कोई पुरुष किसी विवाहित महिला को नाते लाने पर उसके पूर्व पति को दे रहा है तो दोनों में बहुत अन्तर है। यहां हम समझ सकते हैं कि नाते की रकम को लेकर पंचायत की मानसिकता महिला एवं पुरुष के भेदभाव को दर्शाती है। इसलिए कुछ लोग इस प्रथा को महिला की खरीद-फरोख्त का नाम भी देते हैं।

इस प्रथा के तहत दी जाने वाली नाते की राशि का उपयोग विभिन्न तरह से किया जाता है। पुरुष के सन्दर्भ में उस राशि का उपयोग यदि वह किसी विवाहित महिला से नाता करता है तो उसके पूर्व पति को वह राशि अदा करता है। वहीं अगर वह किसी विधवा या परित्यक्ता महिला से नाता करता है तो उस राशि का उपयोग अपने व्यक्तिगत हित के लिए करता है। वहीं महिलाओं के सन्दर्भ में कई बार वह राशि उस महिला के पीहर पक्ष वाले या कभी उस महिला के नाता के सम्बन्ध वाले पति द्वारा ले ली जाती है। अतः हम समझ सकते हैं कि नाता प्रथा के बहाने हम महिलाओं के विवाह को लेकर स्वतंत्रता की बात करते हैं; वहीं नाता प्रथा में महिलाओं का आर्थिक रूप से शोषण भी हो रहा है। दूसरी ओर कुछ स्थितियों

में कोई व्यक्ति मुंह मांगी रकम किसी महिला के पति को देकर भी उस महिला के साथ नाता कर लेता है। वहीं उस महिला की मर्जी पूछना भी आवश्यक नहीं समझा जाता। इस प्रथा के दौरान कहीं न कहीं महिला अधिकार के बहाने महिलाओं का शारीरिक शोषण भी हो रहा है। कुछ मामलों में यदि नाता करने वाली महिला के पहले से ही सन्तान है तो पंचायत ही इस मुद्दे पर निर्णय देगी कि सन्तान किसके साथ रहेगी। इस प्रथा में सबसे अधिक सन्तान प्रभावित होती है।

गुर्जर समाज में व्याप्त नाता प्रथा में अगर नाता करने वाला पुरुष या महिला पंचायत के निर्णय को नहीं मानते हैं या पुरुष किसी महिला को पंचायत की बिना स्वीकृति के ही नाता ले आए तो जाति पंचायत उस व्यक्ति पर कठोर कार्यवाही करती है, जिसमें जाति पंचायत नाता करने वाले पुरुष के परिवार को समाज से निष्कासित कर देती है। कुछ प्रकरणों में नाता लेकर जाने वाले पुरुष या उसके पिता का मुंह भी काला कर दिया गया। कभी कभी गधे पर बिठाकर बिन्दोली निकाली जाती है तो कभी नाते ले जाने वाले पुरुष के परिवार की महिलाओं के साथ अभद्रता भी की जाती है।

उपर्युक्त कठोर कार्यवाही पंचायत के पंचों द्वारा उस दोषी पुरुष के साथ की जाती है और अन्त में उस पुरुष को नाता द्वारा विवाह करने वाली महिला को पुनः छोड़ना पड़ता है।

### नाता के कारण

नाता प्रथा कई समाजों में प्रचलित समाजिक व्यवस्था है। लेकिन यह कहना उचित नहीं होगा कि सही समाजों में नाता होने का कोई एक अथवा दो निश्चित कारण हैं। संक्षेप में नाता प्रथा के प्रचलन के पीछे कई कारण हो सकते हैं, जो निम्न हैं—

**पति व पत्नी में से किसी एक की जल्दी मृत्यु होना:** विवाह के पश्चात् पति-पत्नी दोनों में से किसी एक की बीमारी, दुर्घटना या आत्महत्या करने से मृत्यु हो जाने पर विवाहित जोड़े में से किसी एक के रह जाने पर वह व्यक्ति नाता द्वारा दूसरा विवाह करके पुनः अपना वैवाहिक जीवन व्यतीत करता है।

**परिवार में महिलाओं के साथ घरेलू हिंसा:** सामान्यतः यह माना जाता है कि महिलाएं परिवार के बाहर सुरक्षित नहीं हैं, परन्तु महिलाएं घर के अन्दर भी सुरक्षित नहीं हैं, विशेषतः विवाहित महिलाएं भी घर के अन्दर सुरक्षित नहीं हैं। जब महिलाएं विवाह करके अपने ससुराल में आती हैं तो कई बार उन्हें घर के अन्य सदस्य स्वीकार नहीं करते हैं तथा उन्हें हिंसा करके परेशान करते हैं। अगर पति भी हिंसा के खिलाफ नहीं लड़े व उस हिंसा में सहयोग दे तो ऐसे में महिलाओं को उस घर से मुक्ति का एक ही विकल्प मिलता है; नाता।

**विवाहित होने पर भी पुरुष अगर घर में किसी और महिला को लाए या प्रेम करे:** कई बार विवाहित पुरुष अपनी पत्नी से सन्तुष्ट नहीं होता है। ऐसी परिस्थिति में वह विवाहित होने के बावजूद परस्त्री से प्रेम करता है या अपने घर में ही उसे स्थान देकर पत्नी की तरह ही रखता है। ऐसे में परेशान होकर उनकी पत्नी नाते जाने का ही एक विकल्प मानती है।

**पति की आर्थिक स्थिति सही नहीं होना या कम आय होना:** कई बार पति द्वारा पत्नी को पैसा नहीं देने या पति की आय कम होने अथवा पति के नहीं कमाने या अचानक नौकरी के छूट जाने पर भी महिलाएं अपनी जाति के किसी धनी व्यक्ति के यहां नाते चली जाती हैं।

**पत्नी की आवश्यकता को पूरा नहीं करना:** विवाह जैसे रिश्ते में पति पर ही जिम्मेदारी होती है कि वह अपनी पत्नी की शारीरिक, भावनात्मक एवं आर्थिक आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति करे, लेकिन जब वह इन आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति नहीं कर पाता है तो महिलाएं नाता करके ही सन्तुष्ट रहती हैं।

**सन्तान नहीं होना या पुत्र नहीं होना:** विवाह के पश्चात् जब किसी कारण सन्तान नहीं होती है

या पुत्र की प्राप्ति नहीं होती है तो मात्र महिला को ही दोष दिया जाता है। इस कारण कई बार पुत्र की चाह में पुरुष अपनी पत्नी को छोड़कर नाता करके नया जीवन साथी बना लेता है।

**बाल विवाह:** बाल विवाह होने से पति-पत्नी के विचारों एवं भावनाओं के नहीं मिलने के कारण कुछ लोग नाता प्रथा को भी एक विकल्प के रूप में देखते हैं।

### नाता प्रथा का सन्तान पर प्रभाव

नाता द्वारा होने वाले विवाह से महिला अपने पूर्व विवाह की समस्याओं से राहत तो प्राप्त करती है, परन्तु वहीं पूर्व विवाह से उत्पन्न सन्तान अथवा नाते के विवाह से पूर्व जन्म लेने वाली सन्तान, जिनकी माताएं नाता करके चली जाती हैं, उन सन्तानों को समाज, पड़ोस एवं स्कूल इत्यादि स्थानों पर अवमानना सहन करनी पड़ती है।

दक्षिण राजस्थान के एक निजी संस्थान (एनजीओ) द्वारा कुछ अनुसन्धान किए गए हैं, जिसमें यह ज्ञात हुआ कि ऐसे बच्चे जिनकी माता ने नाता प्रथा द्वारा विवाह किया है, वे बच्चे अपने पिता के पास ही रह रहे हैं। ऐसे बच्चों को स्कूल में अवमानना का सामना करना पड़ता है और अधिकतर बच्चे स्कूल में अपने साथियों से भी अपनी भावनाएं साझा नहीं कर पाते। इस शोध में यह ज्ञात हुआ कि लगभग 13 प्रतिशत बच्चे, जिनके माता-पिता ने नाता विवाह किया है उन्हें स्कूल स्तर पर भी अवमानना का सामना करना पड़ा तथा उनमें 6 प्रतिशत बच्चों को मौखिक एवं शारीरिक हिंसा भी सहन करनी पड़ी है। अध्ययन में यह भी पाया गया कि 20 प्रतिशत नाता प्रभावित बच्चे अपने प्रतिदिन के जीवन में परिवार में भी हिंसा के शिकार होते हैं। वहीं यूनिसेफ के सहयोग से एक वाग्धारा नामक निजी संस्थान (एनजीओ) ने भी अपने अनुसन्धान में बताया है कि 4 से 14 साल की आयु वर्ग के 35 लाख आदिवासी बच्चों में से दो फीसदी यानी 70 हजार बच्चे नाता प्रथा के कारण प्रभावित हुए हैं।

### उद्देश्य

यह अध्ययन नाता प्रथा की पूर्व एवं वर्तमान की स्थिति को जानने के लिये किया गया है, जिसके उद्देश्य निम्न हैं—

- नाता प्रथा के पीछे छिपे कारणों को जानना।
- नाता प्रथा से प्रभावित महिलाओं की स्थिति का अध्ययन करना।
- प्रभावित महिलाओं के बच्चों की समस्याओं को जानना।
- नाता के पश्चात् महिलाओं की सामाजिक प्रतिष्ठा को जानना।

### तथ्य एवं पद्धतियां

यह वर्णनात्मक अध्ययन पद्धति के माध्यम से किया गया अध्ययन है, जिसमें तथ्यों को प्राप्त करने के लिए प्राथमिक एवं द्वितीयक स्रोतों का उपयोग किया गया है। अवलोकन एवं साक्षात्कार अनुसूची तथा वैयक्तिक अध्ययन एवं केन्द्रीय समूह चर्चा के माध्यम से नाता प्रथा से प्रभावित महिलाओं की स्थिति का अध्ययन सम्भव हो पाया है। इस अध्ययन में उद्देश्य पूर्ण निदर्शन पद्धति का उपयोग करते हुए उदयपुर जिले की मावली पंचायत के करीब 10 गांवों की महिलाओं के साथ कुल 100 साक्षात्कार एवं लगभग 10 वैयक्तिक अध्ययन किये गए, जिनमें से कुछ वैयक्तिक अध्ययनों का वर्णन निम्न प्रकार से है।

### वैयक्तिक अध्ययन—एक

रामपुरा गांव के नाना गुर्जर (उम्र 15 वर्ष) के माता-पिता ने नाना का विवाह कम उम्र में ही उनके निकट के गांव के निवासी भेरू गुर्जर की पुत्री नोजी (उम्र 10 वर्ष) के साथ कर दिया। विवाह के 4 वर्ष

पश्चात् नोजी को गौना करवाकर ससुराल भेजा गया। तो कुछ समय बाद ही नोजी व नाना के बीच सम्बन्धों में कड़वाहट होने लगी व इसी दौरान नोजी को किसी अन्य व्यक्ति (कालू) से प्रेम हो गया तथा कुछ समय बाद नोजी अपने प्रेमी के साथ नाते चली गई। जब नोजी के ससुराल वालों को इसकी सूचना मिली तो उन्होंने गांव के जाति पंचों को बुलाया तथा सम्पूर्ण घटना से अवगत करवाया। गांव में पहली बार ऐसी घटना हुई थी; इसलिए गांव के पंचों ने क्रोध में आकर कालू के पिता की मूर्छें काट दीं। इस घटना पर कालू व उसके पिता पुलिस में वाद दायर करवाने गए तो वापस बस से लौटते समय उन दोनों को गांव वालों तथा पंचों ने काला मुंह करके निर्वस्त्र कर दिया। उसके पश्चात् सम्पूर्ण गांव में गधे पर बिठाकर बिन्दोली निकाली गई। साथ ही कालू के घर व खेत पर, जो कुआं था उसकी दीवार भी गिरा दी गई। उसके पश्चात् पंचों ने कालू पर 6 लाख रुपये का जुर्माना भी लगाया। इसके बाद नाना ने नोजी को छोड़ दिया। वर्तमान में नोजी बाई कालू के साथ सुखी वैवाहिक जीवन व्यतीत कर रही है। दूसरी ओर नाना ने नाते की रकम से पुनः नया नाता किया व आज नाना भी अपने चार पुत्रों के साथ सुखी जीवन व्यतीत कर रहा है।

### वैयक्तिक अध्ययन—दो

कमला का विवाह 20 साल पहले भगवान लाल से हुआ था। विवाह से उनके तीन बच्चे थे। भगवान लाल एक दिहाड़ी मजदूर था व कमला घर पर अपने तीनों बच्चों की देखभाल के साथ खेती का कार्य भी करती थी। भगवान लाल ज्यादा नहीं कमाता था, वहीं कमला चाहती थी कि उसका पति ज्यादा कमाए और उसकी हर इच्छा की पूर्ति करे। इसी कारण से दोनों के बीच में आए दिन झगड़े होते रहते थे। इसी बीच भगवान लाल ने अपने खेत के कुएं की मरम्मत के लिए समीप के ही गांव के किशन लाल को ठेका दिया। उन दिनों कमला भी कुएं के काम की निगरानी के लिए कुएं पर जाया करती थी। इसी दरमियां किशन लाल और कमला को एक दूसरे से प्रेम हो गया। वहीं किशन लाल भी विवाहित था और उसके भी एक 10 साल का लड़का था। लेकिन उसकी पत्नी के साथ भी उसकी नहीं बन रही थी। फिर एक दिन कमला अपने दोनों बच्चों को छोड़कर किशन लाल के साथ नाते चली गयी। जब भगवान लाल को पता चला कि उसकी पत्नी किशन लाल के साथ नाते चली गयी है तो उसने गांव के पंचों को बुलवाया और फ़ैसला करने के लिए कहा। तब पंचों ने किशन लाल को 10 लाख रुपये देने का आदेश दिया। किशन लाल ने अपने खेत की जमीन बेचकर पैसे चुकाए। वहीं किशन लाल ने कमला के पूर्व पति के बच्चों को स्वीकार करने से मना कर दिया। अब भगवान लाल उन तीनों बच्चों की देखभाल कर रहा है। वहीं कमला अपने नाते वाले पति के साथ रह रही है। किशन लाल की पहली पत्नी भी उसी घर में अलग कमरे में अपने बच्चे के साथ रह रही है।

### वैयक्तिक अध्ययन—तीन

खेमपुर गांव की रहने वाली श्यामा गुर्जर (उम्र 12 वर्ष) का विवाह बड़गांव निवासी तुलसीराम (उम्र 10 वर्ष) के साथ हुआ। विवाह के 7 वर्ष तक श्यामा अपने पीहर में ही थी। परिवार की आर्थिक स्थिति ठीक नहीं होने के कारण श्यामा स्कूल पढ़ने नहीं गयी। वह घर और खेती का कार्य ही करती थी। विवाह के 8 वें वर्ष में जब श्यामा को गौना करवाकर ससुराल भेजा गया तब ससुराल में कुछ दिन व्यतीत करने के बाद श्यामा को पता चला कि उसके पति को मिर्गी के दौरे आते हैं। श्यामा जब अपने पीहर गयी तो पति की स्थिति के बारे में माता—पिता को अवगत करवाया। श्यामा के माता—पिता ने बेटे के भविष्य को देखते हुए उसे ससुराल नहीं भेजा। कुछ समय बाद श्यामा के माता—पिता ने पंचों को बुलाकर श्यामा का फ़ैसला करवा लिया। इसके पश्चात् श्यामा का नाता ऐसे व्यक्ति से करवाया, जो पेशे से एक व्यवसायी था। वर्तमान में श्यामा अपने नाते के पति और दो बच्चों के साथ सुखी जीवन व्यतीत कर रही है।

## वैयक्तिक अध्ययन—चार

रेखा गुर्जर (उम्र 9 वर्ष) तथा सुमन गुर्जर (उम्र 7 वर्ष) दोनों बहनों का विवाह एक ही घर में दो भाइयों के साथ हुआ। विवाह के छः वर्ष बाद दोनों बहनों का गौना करवाकर ससुराल भेजा गया। गौने के दो वर्ष बाद ही रेखा का अपने पति से झगड़ा होने लगा। रेखा की बहन सुमन की भी अपने पति से नहीं बन रही थी, क्योंकि वह कुछ काम नहीं करता था। तभी रेखा की सहेली ने उसे एक लड़का बताया, जो पेशे से व्यवसायी था और उसने भी अपनी पहली पत्नी को छोड़ रखा था। रेखा उस लड़के से मिली और दोनों ने एक दूसरे से नाता करने का मन बना लिया। क्योंकि रेखा की बहन उसी घर में थी और वह भी अपने पति के साथ नहीं रहना चाहती थी इसलिए रेखा ने उसके लिए भी एक धनी और अच्छा लड़का देखकर उसे भी नाते भेज दिया। जब उनके ससुराल वालों को इस घटना के बारे में पता चला तो उन्होंने जाति पंचायत बुलाई व सम्पूर्ण घटना बताई। तत्पश्चात् पंचों ने दोनों बहनों को नाता लेकर जाने वालों पर 10-10 लाख रुपये का जुर्माना एवं ससुराल वालों द्वारा बनवाए गए गहने दोनों को पुनः पहले पति को देने का आदेश दिया। अब दोनों बहनें अपने-अपने पति के साथ सुखपूर्वक रह रही हैं।

उपर्युक्त वैयक्तिक अध्ययनों में नाता प्रथा के कारणों को देखा जाए तो गुर्जर समाज में बाल विवाह का प्रचलन अत्यधिक है। इसीलिए शोध में भी प्रमुख रूप से जिन परिवारों में बाल विवाह हुआ था उनमें ही नाता के केसेज अधिक पाये गये। साथ ही पति की आर्थिक व शारीरिक स्थिति ठीक नहीं होना एवं पति-पत्नी के विचारों का नहीं मिलना आदि ऐसे कारण रहे हैं जिसके लिए नाता किया गया व इन वैयक्तिक अध्ययनों में नाते के बाद महिलाओं की स्थिति सामान्य पायी गयी।

## निष्कर्ष

नाता प्रथा का प्रचलन पति-पत्नी के सामान्य जीवन नहीं होने की स्थिति में आरंभ हुआ। अतः नाता प्रथा गुर्जर समाज की ऐसी महिलाओं के लिये एक सभ्य प्रथा है, जो उन्हें पुनः वैवाहिक जीवन यापन करने का अवसर प्रदान करती है। वहीं इस प्रथा से ऐसी महिलाएं, जिनके पति ने उन्हें छोड़ दिया है उन परित्यक्ता तथा बेबस महिलाओं को भी जीवन जीने का अवसर मिलता है। ये महिलाएं नाते जाकर अपना नया परिवार बना सकती हैं और पुनः विवाह करके अपने जीवन को नये तरीके से प्रारम्भ कर सकती हैं। यह प्रथा बाल विवाहित स्त्री एवं पुरुषों को भी पुनः विवाह का अवसर प्रदान करती है। विशेष रूप से गुर्जर समाज में बाल विवाह अत्यधिक प्रचलित है और ऐसे विवाह के बाद कई बार युवावस्था में आने पर महिला एवं पुरुष की सोच तथा विचार नहीं मिलते हैं, जिसके कारण ये युगल एक दूसरे से अलग हो जाते हैं और फिर उन लोगों के पास नाता प्रथा ही एक ऐसा विकल्प होता है, जिसके माध्यम से बचपन के विवाह से वे स्वयं को मुक्त कर नये विवाह के बंधन में बंध सकते हैं। फलस्वरूप वे अपने नये जीवन साथी के साथ अपनी पसंद से अपना जीवन व्यतीत कर सकते हैं।

कई बार यह स्थिति भी होती है कि किसी स्त्री या पुरुष का किसी से प्रेम हो, लेकिन उसकी शादी उससे न होकर किसी अन्य स्त्री या पुरुष से हो जाए तो भी वह नाता प्रथा के माध्यम से अपने प्रेमी या प्रेमिका के साथ रह सकता है। कभी कभी शादी के बाद भी यदि किसी शादी-शुदा महिला या पुरुष को किसी और से प्यार हो जाए तो भी वह एक निश्चित राशि अदा करके अपने नए प्यार के साथ वैवाहिक जीवन यापन कर सकता है।

पश्चिमी राजस्थान में आज भी झटपट शादी की प्रथा प्रचलित है। इस प्रथा से वैवाहिक जीवन में घुटघुट कर जीने वालों को शान्ति व सुकून की जिन्दगी मिलती है। इस प्रथा को आधुनिकीकरण से वर्तमान समय में लिव-इन रिलेशनशिप की अवधारणा से भी जोड़ा जा सकता है।

अध्ययन में यह भी पाया गया कि कुछ अविवाहित जोड़े भी नाता प्रथा के माध्यम से अपनी गृहस्थी बसा रहे हैं। शोध के सार में यह भी निकल कर आया कि नाता प्रथा के माध्यम से महिला एवं पुरुष को काफी सरलता से बिना तलाक लिये ही साथ रहने का अवसर मिल जाता है। शोध में उत्तरदाताओं का मानना था कि इस प्रथा से उन्हें अदालती झंझटों से मुक्ति मिल जाती है तथा दोनों की सहमति एवं जाति पंचायत की रजामन्दी से अनौपचारिक तलाक मिल जाता है।

लेकिन यह प्रथा उस समय घातक हो गई, जब इसके माध्यम से महिला को खरीद-फरोख्त की वस्तु समझा जाने लगा। दुर्खीम कहते हैं कि व्याधिकीय सामाजिक तथ्य के माध्यम से समाज में असंतुलन बढ़ता जाता है। (दुर्खीम, 1895) ठीक उसी तरह नाता के माध्यम से समाज में महिलाओं को लाभ की वस्तु समझा जा रहा है। जहां परिजनों को अधिक लाभ मिल रहा है उससे लाभ लेकर स्त्रीयों को दूसरी जगह भेजा जा रहा है। फलस्वरूप सामाजिक विघटन अधिक दिखाई देता है। इसका प्रभाव संबंधित व्यक्ति, संतानों (साथ में जाने वाली या बाद में होने वाली) के भविष्य पर देखने को मिल रहा है। (नागर, 2015)

अध्ययन में यह देखा गया कि कुछ महिलाओं का तीन से चार बार नाता हुआ है फिर भी उन्हें उपयुक्त जीवनसाथी नहीं मिला है, जिसके कारण उन्हें अकेले या माता-पिता के साथ रहकर जीवन व्यतीत करना पड़ रहा है। लगभग 20 प्रतिशत मामलों में विवाहित महिला अपने पति के साथ रहना चाहती थी, लेकिन फिर भी पति द्वारा नापसन्द होने के कारण उसे छोड़ दिया गया। वहीं 30 प्रतिशत मामलों में उस महिला के होने के बाद भी पति एक और महिला को नाता करके घर ले आया। ऐसे में समाज भी उस महिला को स्वीकार कर रहा है और दो महिलाओं को रखने का अधिकार भी दे रहा है। वहीं कानून हिन्दू समाज में दो पत्नी को रखने की स्वतन्त्रता नहीं देता, लेकिन फिर भी आज जाति पंचायतें अपनी मनमानी से यह कार्य कर रही हैं। अनुसन्धान में यह भी पाया गया कि एक महिला या पुरुष द्वारा तीन से चार बार नाता करने से उनके स्वास्थ्य पर भी गम्भीर प्रतिकूल प्रभाव पड़ा है। वहीं कुछ उत्तरदाताओं ने दो से तीन नाता करने के कई कारण बताए हैं, जिनमें सन्तान नहीं होना या पुत्र की प्राप्ति या मनपसन्द जीवनसाथी का नहीं मिलना तथा महिला का चरित्र सही न होना जैसे जवाब दिये गए। शोध में यह पाया गया कि लगभग 20 प्रतिशत मामलों में विवाहित महिला अपने बच्चों को भी पहले पति के पास छोड़कर नाते चली गई। ऐसे में उन बच्चों के साथ उनकी नई मां द्वारा सौतेला व्यवहार किया जाता है और कुछ उदाहरण में ये बच्चे अपने दादा-दादी या नाना-नानी के सहारे पल रहे हैं। इन बच्चों को सामाजिक स्तर पर भी बहुत अवमानना सहन करनी पड़ती है।

एक ओर हम वर्तमान में नारी सशक्तिकरण, विकास की बात कर रहे हैं तो दूसरी ओर नाता प्रथा उनके शोषण की दास्तां को व्यक्त कर रही है। आवश्यकता है, महिला स्वयं सुदृढ़ता के साथ इस कुप्रथा के खिलाफ खड़ी हो तथा परिवार, समाज के सहयोग से गरिमामय जीवन जिए। नैतिक मूल्यों के प्रति जागरूकता लाकर, मीडिया और शिक्षा के प्रसार द्वारा, गैर सरकारी एवं स्वयंसेवी संगठनों के नियोजित प्रयासों से इस कुप्रथा को दूर करने के लिए सक्रिय प्रयास करने की आवश्यकता है।

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डॉ. सीता गुर्जर, सहायक आचार्य, एम.एस.डब्ल्यू. कॉलेज, राजस्थान विद्यापीठ, उदयपुर  
sitagurjar2@gmail.com

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## भारत में महिलाएं तथा शिक्षा : दशा एवं दिशा

राजेन्द्र सिंह खींची

**सार:** परिवार समाज और देश की उन्नति में महिलाओं की भूमिका बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है। शिक्षित महिलाएं ही सर्वत्र खुशहाली समृद्धि का कारण होती हैं। शिक्षा न सिर्फ महिलाओं के प्रति समाज की संख्या सोच में परिवर्तन करती है बल्कि समाज में उनके स्तर को ऊंचा उठाने में सहायता भी प्रदान करती है। वर्तमान में महिला साक्षरता दर 65.46 प्रतिशत है। राष्ट्र के विकास के लिए महिला शिक्षा को बढ़ावा देना आवश्यक है। इस लेख के अन्तर्गत प्राचीन भारत में महिलाओं की स्थिति, मध्यकाल में महिलाओं की हीन स्थिति तथा ब्रिटिश कालीन भारत में महिलाओं की स्थिति में आये बदलावों एवं परिवर्तनों पर विस्तार से चर्चा करते हुए भारत की विभिन्न सफल महिलाओं की चर्चा की गई है। भारतीय महिला शिक्षा के मार्ग में आने वाली बाधाओं के बारे में बताते हुए द्वितीयक स्रोतों के आधार पर लेख में यह प्रतिपादित किया गया है कि शिक्षा एक ऐसा महत्वपूर्ण उपकरण है जो महिलाओं की दशा में सुधार ला सकता है।

**संकेत शब्द:** शिक्षा, भारतीय महिलाएं, प्रस्थिति, बाधाएं, सुझाव।

शिक्षा एक निरंतर चलने वाली प्रक्रिया है। यह व्यक्ति को उसके अतीत से परिचित कराती है, वर्तमान में जीवन जीने की कला सिखाती है एवं भविष्य का निर्माण करने की क्षमता प्रदान करती है। मानव अपने जीवन काल में जन्म से मृत्यु तक जो कुछ भी सीखता है, अनुभव करता है, वह शिक्षा के द्वारा ही करता है। मेनहीम शिक्षा का कार्य समान मूल्यों के प्रति आस्था पनपाकर सामाजिक एकीकरण प्राप्त करना और एक प्रजातंत्र व्यक्तित्व का निर्माण करना मानते हैं।

प्रसिद्ध समाजशास्त्री दुर्खीम (1922) ने शिक्षा की भूमिका को व्यापक अर्थ में देखते हुए विचार व्यक्त किया है कि इसका उद्देश्य बालक में उन भौतिक, बौद्धिक और नैतिक स्थितियों को जागृत करना है जो समग्र रूप में समाज तथा उन विशिष्ट स्थितियों के अनुरूप उनसे अपेक्षित है जिनमें वह रह रहा है। यह कथन इस रूप में सर्वकालीन तथा लिंग तटस्थ है कि शिक्षा का स्वरूप विद्यमान सामाजिक व्यवस्था के अनुरूप होता है। किसी भी देश की आर्थिक, सामाजिक और सांस्कृतिक परिस्थितियों को देखकर यह अनुमान सहज ही लगाया जा सकता है कि अमुक देश में नारी की स्थिति, सम्मान और समाज में उसकी क्या स्थिति और भूमिका है? यह गहराई से महसूस किया जा रहा है कि देश की आधी आबादी का यानी महिलाओं का यदि समुचित विकास नहीं हुआ तो प्रगति नहीं हो सकती। स्त्री-पुरुष की विकास सहभागिता ही देश को प्रगति के पथ पर अग्रसर करती है। इस दृष्टि से स्त्री और पुरुष के विकास के कार्यों में संतुलन होना आवश्यक है। इसके लिए आवश्यक है कि स्त्री को पर दृष्टि से योग्य, सक्षम, शिक्षित एवं प्रगतिशील बनाया जाए। शिक्षा इस दृष्टि से महत्वपूर्ण साधन है।

**सारणी संख्या-1**

**भारत में साक्षरता दर (1961 से 2011 तक)**

जनगणना वर्ष	व्यक्ति	दशकीय वृद्धि	पुरुष	महिला	लैंगिक अन्तर
1961	28.30	9.97	40.40	15.35	25.05
1971	34.45	6.15	45.96	21.97	23.99
1981	43.57	9.12	56.38	29.76	26.62
1991	52.21	8.64	64.13	39.29	24.84
2001	64.83	12.64	75.26	56.67	21.59
2011	74.04	9.21	82.14	65.46	16.68

(<https://www.tvqhindi.com>)

हम आंकड़ों पर दृष्टिपात करें तो पाते हैं कि 1961 में जहां महिला साक्षरता दर 15.35 प्रतिशत थी

वहीं वर्ष 2011 में यह आंकड़ा 65.46 प्रतिशत पहुँच गया। वर्ष 1961 में स्त्री-पुरुष साक्षरता अन्तर जो 25.05 प्रतिशत था वह वर्ष 2011 तक घटकर 16.68 प्रतिशत रह गया (इण्डिया स्टेट.कॉम)। वर्तमान समय में एक ओर पुरुष-महिला साक्षरता दर में अन्तर कम हो रहा है वहीं दूसरी ओर शिक्षा प्राप्ति के क्षेत्र में महिलाएँ पुरुषों से आगे भी निकल रही हैं। फिर भी महिलाओं की शिक्षा की दशा और दिशा जानकर सुधार करना आश्यक है।

## विभिन्न कालों में भारतीय महिलाओं की प्रस्थिति

भारत में महिलाओं के सम्मान, अधिकारों और भूमिका की दृष्टि से वैदिक काल को स्वर्ण युग माना जा सकता है। इस समय के साहित्य में लिंग-भेद, पर्दा प्रथा और उनकी घर तक सीमित भूमिका का उल्लेख नहीं मिलता। (मिश्र; 2006) पाणिनी ने अपनी पुस्तक अष्टाध्यायी में लिखा है कि राजपरिवारों और अभिजात वर्ग की स्त्रियाँ सम्मान और गरिमा को व्यक्त करने के लिए लज्जा भाव से अपने मुख पर अवगुंठन डाल दिया करती थीं ताकि लोगों की दृष्टि उन पर नहीं पड़े। महाभारत में कहीं भी परदे का रूढ़ प्रथा के रूप में उल्लेख नहीं मिलता है (वही)। कादम्बरी में बाण ने कादम्बरी, महाश्वेता और उसकी सखियों को कहीं भी पर्दे में प्रदर्शित नहीं किया है। किन्तु उसी के दूसरे ग्रन्थ हर्षचरित्र में अवगुंठन (परदा) का वर्णन है (वही)। गुप्त युग की स्त्री-प्रतिमाओं तथा अजन्ता, एलोरा, सांची, मरहूत, आदि के चित्रों और मूर्तियों में अवगुंठन का कहीं भी चित्रण नहीं है (वही)। कल्हण के ग्रन्थ राजतरंगिणी में भी पर्दा-प्रथा का कहीं कोई संदर्भ नहीं मिलता (वही)। बारहवीं सदी तक ऐतिहासिक साहित्य में पर्दा प्रथा का हम कोई उल्लेखनीय वर्णन नहीं पाते (वही)। संक्षेप में कहा जा सकता है कि इस समय में महिलाओं को सामाजिक दृष्टि से सम्मानपूर्ण स्थान मिला हुआ था। राजपरिवारों की स्त्रियों, विशेषकर रानियों की स्थिति राजाओं के समकक्ष मानी जाती थी। वे कई महत्वपूर्ण निर्णयों में राजा की मुख्य सलाहकार की भूमिका अदा किया करती थीं। वे सामाजिक नीतियों के निर्धारण, नियन्त्रण व संचालन में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाती थीं। कोई भी धार्मिक अनुष्ठान नारी की अनुपस्थिति में अपूर्ण माना जाता था। उस समय में नारी शिक्षा की भी सम्पूर्ण व्यवस्था थी।

ऐसा प्रतीत होता है कि पर्दा प्रथा का प्रचलन भारत में 12वीं सदी के बाद हुआ, जब देश और समाज विदेशी आक्रमणों से आक्रान्त होने लगा था और अपनी स्त्रियों की सुरक्षा निवासियों के लिए महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न बनने लगी थी। परिणामस्वरूप हिन्दू समाज में अपनी स्त्रियों की रक्षा के लिए पर्दा जैसा प्रतिबंध लगाया गया। तेरहवीं से पन्द्रहवीं सदी तक भारत में बाहर से आकर राज्य करने वालों में क्रमशः गुलाम वंश, खिलजी वंश, तुगलक वंश, सैयद वंश, लोदी वंश और मुगल वंश रहे। ये लोग अपने साथ स्त्रियाँ नहीं लाए थे। शासक, उनके सैनिक व अन्य लोग यहां की स्त्रियों से विवाह करके भारत में बसते गए। ऐसे समय में महिलाओं की रक्षा के लिए उनका सामाजिक जीवन प्रतिबन्धित किया जाने लगा।

उस समय के इतिहास से अनुमान लगता है कि राजपरिवारों तथा उच्च कुलों में महिलाओं की शिक्षा की व्यवस्था घरों में ही की जाती थी। कला और साहित्य के अतिरिक्त अनेक स्थलों पर उनके द्वारा राजनीति के ज्ञान, शास्त्र संचालन, युद्धों का नेतृत्व करने आदि के उदाहरण मिलते हैं। रजिया सुल्ताना एक ऐसा ही अपवाद थीं। मुगल वंश में भी राजपरिवार में अनेक ऐसी विदुषियाँ हुई हैं जिन्होंने साहित्य रचना की। बाबर की पुत्री गुलबदन बेगम ने हुमायूँनामा की रचना की (कश्यप)। नूरजहां, मुमताज महल, आदि की शिक्षा साहित्यिक अभिरुचि, लेखन आदि के अनेक प्रमाण मिलते हैं। पूरे भारत में अधिकांश राजवंशों व कुलीन परिवारों में महिलाओं की शिक्षा के उदाहरण मिलते हैं। अन्य प्रदेशों में शासन संचालित करने वाली स्त्रियों में रानी दुर्गावती, रानी कर्णवती, रानी लक्ष्मी बाई, आदि कुछ विख्यात उदाहरण हैं। लेकिन यह भी सत्य है कि आम परिवारों में स्त्रियों को शिक्षा के अवसरों से वंचित रखा जाता था।

अंग्रेजी शासन काल में भारतीय महिलाओं पर योजनाबद्ध तरीके से दुर्व्यवहार के प्रमाण दृष्टिगत नहीं होते। इसके विपरीत आधुनिक शिक्षा के प्रसार, लिंग, जाति और धर्म के भेद के बिना शिक्षा प्राप्ति के अवसरों की उपलब्धता, स्कूलों, कॉलेजों और विश्वविद्यालयों की स्थापना तथा भारतीय बुद्धिजीवियों और समाज सुधारकों के प्रयत्नों ने भारतीय महिलाओं की स्थिति पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव डाला। बाल विवाह और सती प्रथा निषेध के लिए बने कानूनों तथा स्वतन्त्रता संग्राम के दौरान नमक सत्याग्रह, असहयोग आन्दोलन, स्वदेशी आन्दोलन, आदि में महिलाओं की घर से निकलकर सार्वजनिक सभाओं में उपस्थिति, धरनों और प्रदर्शनों में भागीदारी, आदि ने लोगों, विशेषकर महिलाओं को न केवल पर्दा प्रथा छोड़ने के लिए प्रेरित किया बल्कि शिक्षा के अवसरों का लाभ उठाने का मौका भी दिया।

सन 1947 में स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के पश्चात् देश में सामाजिक सुधारों ने और अधिक गति पकड़नी शुरू की। सन 1950 में लागू भारतीय संविधान में सभी भारतीय नागरिकों को समानाधिकार प्रदान किए गए। नागरिकों के मूल अधिकारों में समानता, स्वतन्त्रता और शिक्षा का स्पष्ट उल्लेख संविधान निर्माताओं की दूरदर्शी सोच को प्रकट करता है। समय-समय पर बनी राष्ट्रीय नीतियों और कार्यक्रमों में भारतीय महिलाओं को सशक्त व सुदृढ़ बनाने हेतु विशेष प्रावधान किये गए हैं। वहीं भारतीय शिक्षा व्यवस्था में भी छात्राओं की पहुँच शिक्षा तक लाने के लिए विशेष रास्ते खोले गए हैं। भारतीय शिक्षा व्यवस्था का प्रारम्भ से ही यह प्रयास रहा है कि स्त्रियाँ शिक्षा प्राप्त करके अपनी बुद्धिमत्ता, कार्य कुशलता, योग्यताओं एवं क्षमताओं को विकसित करें और यह तभी संभव है जब महिला शिक्षित हो। वास्तव में बालिकाएं शैक्षिक अवसरों से वंचित थीं और अब उनमें शिक्षा के प्रति जागृति, सुविधाओं को प्रदान कर प्रगति लाने के प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं।

अतः वैदिककाल से वर्तमान समय तक यदि हम भारतीय शिक्षा प्रणाली व इसके प्रचार-प्रसार के सन्दर्भ में बात करें तो पाएंगे कि भारतीय शिक्षा प्रणाली समय-समय पर वांछित परिवर्तनों के द्वारा हमेशा ही प्रभावी एवं उपयोगी बनी रही है। भारतीय पुरुषों के लिए तो हमेशा ही इसके द्वार खुले थे परन्तु कुछ वर्षों तक यह महिलाओं की पहुँच से बाहर थी। लेकिन समाज सुधारकों, शासन प्रणाली व हमारी संवैधानिक लोकतान्त्रिक व्यवस्था ने इसे लड़कियों के लिए भी सहज बना दिया। जब भी लड़कियों को शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के अवसर प्राप्त हुए लड़कियों ने भी इसे प्राप्त कर इसकी उपयोगिता साबित की है। शिक्षा प्राप्त कर लड़कियाँ भी अनेक क्षेत्रों में आई तथा सामाजिक सुधार एवं उन्नति में सहभागिता निभा इसे सार्थक किया है।

### विभिन्न शिक्षा आयोगों में स्त्री शिक्षा:

शिक्षा के महत्व और सामाजिक परिस्थितियों के अनुसार शिक्षा के संगठन, प्रशासन और अंतर्वस्तु को तय करने में विभिन्न शिक्षा आयोगों और शिक्षा नीतियों का योगदान रहा है। इनमें महिला शिक्षा केंद्रित कुछ बातें इस प्रकार हैं— राधाकृष्णन् आयोग 1945-49 में महिला शिक्षा पर बल देते हुए ये सुझाव दिए — नारी को सुगृहिणी बनाने की शिक्षा दी जाए। उनके लिए गृह प्रबंधन में उच्च शिक्षा की व्यवस्था हो, ऐसा पाठ्यक्रम बनाया जाए जो बालिकाओं को समाज में समान स्थान दिखा सके। योजना आयोग द्वारा प्रथम एवं द्वितीय पंचवर्षीय योजनाओं में बालिका शिक्षा को अधिक बजट आवंटित किया गया तथा नवीन शैक्षिक योजनाओं को प्रारंभ किया गया।

1952 के मुदालियर आयोग ने भी बालक-बालिका की समान शिक्षा की बात रखते हुए, बालिका विद्यालयों को आवश्यकतानुसार खोलने पर बल दिया। कला तथा संगीत के साथ ही गृह विज्ञान की शिक्षा बालिकाओं को देने के लिए कहा। 1962 की हंसा मेहता समिति ने प्राथमिक स्तर पर सहशिक्षा अपनाने का सुझाव दिया। गृह विज्ञान के साथ ही बालिकाओं को विज्ञान और गणित पढ़ाने पर जोर

दिया। 1964 के कोठारी आयोग ने भी महिला शिक्षा को लेकर कई महत्वपूर्ण सिफारिशें रखी, जैसे— महिला शिक्षा के प्रोत्साहन के लिए विशेष योजना और आर्थिक सहायता देनी चाहिए तथा सिर्फ महिलाओं के लिए हॉस्टल और अंशकालीन तथा वोकेशनल पाठ्यक्रम की व्यवस्था होनी आवश्यक है। राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 1986 में बालिकाओं की शिक्षा के लिए उचित वातावरण के निर्माण पर बल देते हुए, औपचारिक एवं अनौपचारिक दोनों प्रकार की शिक्षा की बात कही गई। बालिका शिक्षा तथा निरक्षर स्त्रियों के लिए साक्षरता कार्यक्रम में स्वयंसेवी संगठनों का उपयोग करने का सुझाव भी इसके द्वारा दिया गया। राममूर्ति समिति 1991 ने महिला शिक्षा के लिए पृथक् से बजट प्रावधान तथा बालिकाओं के लिए प्रोत्साहन छात्रवृत्ति, निःशुल्क पाठ्य पुस्तकें, आदि देने के सुझाव भी प्रस्तुत किए।

राष्ट्रीय शिक्षा नीति 1968 एवं नवीन शिक्षा नीति 1986 के पश्चात् भारत में नई शिक्षा नीति 2020 को 1 जुलाई 2020 को घोषित एवं 29 जुलाई 2020 को लागू किया गया। (<https://kisansuchna.com>) नई शिक्षा नीति 2020 में छात्र-छात्राओं को सुविधानुसार एवं समय की उपलब्धतानुसार शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के प्रावधान किए गए हैं। स्कूली शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के पश्चात् स्नातक करते-करते हमारे भारतीय समाज में वयस्क होने की अवस्था में कई कन्याओं का विवाह कर दिया जाता है। ऐसी स्थिति में उनका अध्ययन प्रभावित होता है और कई अवसरों पर पढ़ाई छूट भी जाती है। कई छात्रों को भी परिस्थितिवश कॉलेज शिक्षा बीच में छोड़नी पड़ती है। ऐसी स्थिति में यदि विद्यार्थी कॉलेज के पहले वर्ष की पढ़ाई पूर्ण करता है तो उसे सर्टिफिकेट, दूसरे वर्ष पर डिप्लोमा व तीसरे और चौथे वर्ष में डिग्री दी जाती है। वैसे तो यह नीति सभी के लिए है पर यह छात्राओं के लिए विशेष उपयोगी साबित होने की सम्भावना है।

भारतीय महिलाओं ने विभिन्न उपलब्धियाँ प्राप्त कर अपना लोहा मनवाया है। जहाँ रानी पद्मिनी, पन्नाधाय, मीरा बाई, रानी लक्ष्मीबाई, सावित्री बाई फुले, सुभद्रा कुमारी चौहान, आदि जैसी महिलाओं ने अपने साहस, पराक्रम, त्याग व बलिदान जैसे कर्मों से भारतीय इतिहास में अपनी अमर पहचान छोड़ी तो वहीं सुचेता कृपलानी, सरोजनी नायडू, राजकुमारी अमृता कौर, विजयलक्ष्मी पण्डित, इंदिरा गाँधी, यशोदा देवी, महारानी गायत्री देवी, बछेन्द्रीपाल, किरण बेदी, रीता फारिया पावेल, सुभिता सेन, ऐश्वर्या राय, प्रतिभा देवी सिंह पाटिल, पी.टी. उषा, के. मल्लेश्वरी, सानिया मिर्जा, लता मंगेशकर, आदि महिलाओं ने भी राजनीति, प्रशासनिक, कला, साहित्य व खेल आदि क्षेत्रों में प्रथम भारतीय महिलाओं के रूप में उपलब्धि हासिल की तथा अन्य भारतीय महिलाओं की प्रेरणा स्रोत (आईडियल) बनीं। यहां पर भारत की कुछ उन महिलाओं की चर्चा की जा सकती है, जिन्होंने विपरीत परिस्थितियों में भी शिक्षा के बल पर नया मुकाम स्थापित किया।

### विभिन्न क्षेत्रों में सफल कुछ भारतीय महिलाएं

यदि बात महिलाओं की हो और साथ में शिक्षा की हो और सावित्री बाई फूले एवं उनके कार्यों का वर्णन न हो तो चर्चा को अधूरा ही समझा जाएगा। 03 जनवरी, 1831 को जन्मी सावित्री बाई फूले ने देश एवं समाज में अपना महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया है। सावित्री बाई फूले देश की प्रथम शिक्षिका थी। उन्होंने महिला शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में अतुलनीय कार्य किया।

सावित्री बाई फूले भारत के पहले कन्या विद्यालय में पहली शिक्षिका थीं। उन्होंने 1848 में पुणे में बालिका विद्यालय की स्थापना की थी। इस विद्यालय में उस समय मात्र नौ कन्याओं ने दाखिला लिया था। फूले इसी विद्यालय की प्रधानाध्यापिका बनी थीं। सन 1852 में फूले ने अछूत बालिकाओं के लिए भी विद्यालय की स्थापना की थी। सावित्री बाई फूले के शिक्षा ग्रहण करने, विद्यालय की स्थापना करने व समाजसेवा करने में उनके पति ज्योतिबा फूले की बड़ी भूमिका रही है। (शिमला ; 2021 : 94-95)

महिला स्वतंत्रता सेनानी एवं विख्यात कवयित्री श्रीमती सरोजिनी नायडू जिनका जन्म 13 फरवरी,

1879 को हैदराबाद में हुआ था, वे संविधान सभा की सदस्य भी थीं। वह देश की प्रथम महिला राज्यपाल बनीं। (वही : 124) सन 1964 के डाक टिकट पर श्रीमती सरोजिनी नायडू का चित्र था। इनके पिता श्री अघोरनाथ चट्टोपाध्याय एक नामी विद्वान् तथा माता कवयित्री थीं। वे बांग्ला में लिखती थीं। बचपन से ही कुशाग्र-बुद्धि होने के कारण श्रीमती सरोजिनी नायडू ने 12 वर्ष की अल्पायु में ही 12वीं की परीक्षा अच्छे अंकों के साथ उत्तीर्ण की और 13 वर्ष की आयु में 'लेडी ऑफ दी लेक' नामक कविता रची। सर्जरी में क्लोरोफॉर्म की प्रभावकारिता साबित करने के लिए हैदराबाद के निज़ाम द्वारा प्रदान किए गए दान से सरोजिनी नायडू को इंग्लैंड भेजा गया था। सरोजिनी नायडू को पहले लंदन के किंग्स कॉलेज और बाद में कैम्ब्रिज के गिरटन कॉलेज में अध्ययन करने का मौका मिला। (<https://hi.m.wikipedia.org>)

सुचेता कृपलानी (मूल नाम : सुचेता मजूमदार) ये संविधान सभा की सदस्य थीं। साथ ही ये किसी भी राज्य की मुख्यमंत्री बनने वाली प्रथम भारतीय महिला थीं। वे उत्तर प्रदेश की मुख्यमंत्री बन प्रथम महिला मुख्यमंत्री कहलाईं। स्नातक व स्नातकोत्तर की पढ़ाई करने के पश्चात् वे बनारस हिन्दू विश्वविद्यालय में इतिहास की प्राध्यापिका भी रहीं।

24 जनवरी, 1966 को भारत में तीसरे, लेकिन पहली महिला प्रधानमंत्री के रूप में इंदिरा गांधी को नियुक्त किया गया। इंदिरा गांधी भी तत्कालीन विकट परिस्थियों में शिक्षा से जुड़ी रहीं। मॉर्डन स्कूल, दिल्ली, सेंट सेसियाज पब्लिक स्कूल, दिल्ली, सेंट मैरी क्रिश्चियन कांवेन्ट स्कूल, इलाहाबाद, आदि स्कूलों में अपनी शिक्षा पूर्ण कर उन्होंने विश्व भारती महाविद्यालय में दाखिला लिया लेकिन राजनीतिक व्यस्तता के कारण पढ़ाई बीच में ही छोड़नी पड़ी। (<https://hindi.starsunfolded.com>)

भारतीय समाज में राजनीति, अभिनय, गायन, वैज्ञानिक, खेल, आदि क्षेत्रों में शिक्षित महिलाओं के होने के साथ-साथ उच्च स्तरीय शिक्षा प्राप्त कर भारतीय महिलाओं ने प्रशासनिक क्षेत्र में भी सफलता अर्जित की है। किरण बेदी ने स्कूल व स्नातक की पढ़ाई अमृतसर में की। उन्होंने स्नाकोत्तर की डिग्री राजनीति विज्ञान विषय में पंजाब वि.वि. से प्राप्त कर एल.एल.बी. दिल्ली वि.वि. से की। इसके पश्चात् आई.आई.टी. दिल्ली के सोशल साइन्स विभाग से उन्होंने पीएच.डी. की उपाधि हासिल की। वर्ष 1972 में उनका इण्डियन पुलिस सर्विस में चयन हुआ। वे पहली भारतीय महिला आई.पी.एस. बनीं।

सन 2009 के आम चुनावों के बाद देश के इतिहास में पहली बार एक महिला, मीरा कुमार लोकसभा अध्यक्ष पद पर विराजमान हुईं और वह भी निर्विरोध (शिमला ; 2021 : 131)। मीरा कुमार भी एक उच्च शिक्षित महिला हैं। उनकी प्रारम्भिक शिक्षा दिल्ली के महारानी गायत्री देवी स्कूल में हुई। मीरा कुमार ने दिल्ली के इन्द्रप्रस्थ और मिरांडा हाउस कॉलेजों से एम.ए. और एल.एल.बी. तक शिक्षा ग्रहण की। वर्ष 1973 में वे भारतीय विदेश सेवा (आईएफएस) के लिए चुनी गईं (<https://hi.m.wikipedia.org>)। तत्पश्चात् उन्होंने राष्ट्रीय राजनीति में कदम रखा।

'आयरन गर्ल' के नाम से जानी जाने वाली रेलवे सुरक्षा बल में कांस्टेबल की पुत्री कर्णम मल्लेश्वरी ने एक गरीब परिवार से होते हुए भी अपने बचपन के शौक खेलकूद के साथ शिक्षा भी प्राप्त की। आन्ध्रप्रदेश के छोटे से गाँव अमदालावासा से आई इस महिला भारोत्तोलक कर्णम मल्लेश्वरी सन 2000 में ओलम्पिक खेल में पदक जीत ओलम्पिक खेलों में भारत के लिए किसी महिला खिलाड़ी द्वारा पदक जीतने वाली पहली महिला खिलाड़ी बनीं। एक गरीब परिवार एवं पिछड़े गांव से होने के बावजूद भी कर्णम मल्लेश्वरी ने अपनी स्कूली शिक्षा जेड.पी.पी.एस. स्कूल से पूर्ण की। इसी प्रकार टेनिस खिलाड़ी सानिया मिर्जा भारत के लिए ग्रैंडस्लैम जीतकर यह खिताब जीतने वाली प्रथम भारतीय महिला खिलाड़ी बनीं। हैदराबाद के एन.ए.एस.आर. स्कूल से आरम्भिक शिक्षा प्राप्त कर उन्होंने सेंट मैरी कॉलेज से स्नातक किया। उन्हें एम.जी.आर. शैक्षिक और अनुसंधान संस्थान वि.वि. चैन्सई से डाक्टरेट की मानद उपाधि से भी नवाजा गया।

साठ के दशक में विश्व के अन्य विकसित देश की नज़रों में गरीब देश माना जाने वाला भारत विश्व पटल पर अपनी पहचान बनाने के लिए जूझ रहा था। उस समय एक भारतीय महिला रीता फारिया पॉवेल ने 1966 में मिस वर्ल्ड का खिताब जीतकर सभी को चौंका दिया। 1966 में मिस वर्ल्ड का खिताब जीतने वाली रीता फारिया न केवल पहली भारतीय बल्कि एशियाई मूल की पहली महिला बनीं। उन्होंने मुम्बई स्थित ग्रांट मेडिकल कॉलेज और सर जमशेदजी जीजाबाई ग्रुप ऑफ हॉस्पिटल से एम.बी.बी.एस किया। इसके पश्चात् उन्होंने किंग्स कॉलेज एवं अस्पताल, लंदन से उच्च अध्ययन भी किया।

अपने आप को विश्व की महाशक्ति अमेरिका के समकक्ष समझने व उसकी महाशक्ति के वर्चस्व को हथियाने की चाह रखने वाले चीन में भी जहां महिलाओं की स्थिति हाशिए पर है (राज. पत्रिका ; 2022) वहीं भारत में महिलाओं की उत्तरोत्तर उन्नति एक सुखद संकेत है। जहाँ चीन में शीर्ष निकाय में एक भी महिला नहीं है, राजनीतिक क्षेत्र में महिलाओं की उपेक्षा हुई है वहीं पूर्व से वर्तमान समय तक भारतीय राजनीति में महिलाओं की भागीदारी निरन्तर बढ़ी है। वर्तमान समय में भारत के आर्थिक क्षेत्र में सराहनीय कार्य करने वाली भारत की महिला वित्त मंत्री श्रीमती निर्मला सीतारमण को इस पद पर देख शिक्षित तथा योग्य भारतीय महिलाओं की राजनीति में सक्रिय भागीदारी का अनुमान लगाया जा सकता है।

सम्पूर्ण भारत में पंचायती राज व्यवस्था में महिलाओं के आरक्षण की व्यवस्था ने उनकी प्रशासनिक—राजनैतिक भागीदारी को बढ़ाया है। गांवों में सरपंच बनने के बाद महिला सरपंचों की जीवनशैली भी बदल गई है। पहले जहां वे घूँघट में घरों में रहती थीं वहीं अब वे कम्प्यूटर पर कार्य कर रहीं हैं। सरपंच बनने के बाद उनके रहन—सहन, कामकाज, दिनचर्या सहित कई तरह के बदलाव देखने को मिले हैं। (राज. पत्रिका, 2022)

जहाँ भारतीय महिलाएँ पंचायत में अपनी नेतृत्व क्षमता व प्रतिभा का प्रदर्शन कर रही हैं वहीं देश के शीर्ष राष्ट्रपति पद पर भी रह चुकी हैं। श्रीमती प्रतिभा पाटिल 25 जुलाई 2007 को भारत गणराज्य की राष्ट्रपति बनीं। राष्ट्रपति बनने से पहले वे राजस्थान की राज्यपाल थीं। इन्हें भारत की प्रथम महिला राष्ट्रपति होने का गौरव प्राप्त हुआ। प्रारम्भ से ही वे समाज सेवा से भी जुड़ी रहीं और अनेक जनकल्याणकारी कार्यों को निष्पादित किया। महिलाओं की स्थिति, समस्याओं एवं निदान से सम्बन्धित मामलों में उनकी विशेष रुचि रही है (शिमला, 2021)। श्रीमती प्रतिभा पाटिल एक उच्च स्तरीय शिक्षित महिला हैं। उन्होंने जलगाँव के मूलजी जेठा कॉलेज से स्नातकोत्तर (एम.ए.) और मुंबई के गवर्नमेन्ट लॉ कॉलेज (मुंबई वि.वि. से संबद्ध) से कानून की पढ़ाई की। (<https://hi.m.wikipedia.org>)

जुलाई 2022 को राष्ट्रपति के पद पर द्रौपदी मुर्मू ने जीत दर्ज की। वे इस पद के लिए देश की दूसरी महिला राष्ट्रपति होने के साथ पहली आदिवासी महिला राष्ट्रपति हैं। 64 वर्ष की द्रौपदी मुर्मू ओडिसा के मयूरभंज जिले की हैं। मुर्मू झारखंड की पहली आदिवासी महिला राज्यपाल रहीं। वे रायचंगपुर से विधायक रह चुकी हैं। भाजपा—बीजेडी सरकार में 2002—2004 तक मंत्री रहीं। (दैनिक भास्कर, 2022)

द्रौपदी मुर्मू का गांव इतना पिछड़ा है कि राष्ट्रपति पद की उम्मीदवार घोषित होने के पश्चात् उनके गांव में पहली बार बिजली पहुंचाने का कार्य किया गया। विकट एवं विपरीत परिस्थितियों से जूझते हुए उन्होंने गरीबी की अवस्था में भी भुवनेश्वर के रमादेवी महिला कॉलेज से स्नातक तक पढ़ाई पूर्ण की। फिर ओडिशा सरकार में सिंचाई व ऊर्जा विभाग में जूनियर असिस्टेंट की नौकरी की। शिक्षा में रुचि के चलते द्रौपदी मुर्मू लम्बे समय तक शिक्षिका के रूप में कार्य करती रहीं। रायचंगपुर के श्री अरविंदो इंटीग्रल एजुकेशन एंड रिसर्च सेंटर में शिक्षिका के तौर पर उन्होंने अपनी सेवाएँ दीं। ([www.tv9hindi.com](http://www.tv9hindi.com))

संक्षेप में कहा जा सकता है कि जहां कई क्षेत्रों में शिक्षित महिलाएँ अग्रिम पंक्ति में नज़र आ रही हैं वहीं शारीरिक दमखम वाले क्षेत्रों में भी सक्रिय भागीदारी निभाने लगी हैं। वे डॉक्टर, इंजिनियर, शिक्षिका, वैज्ञानिक, आदि क्षेत्रों के साथ पुलिस, सेना आदि को भी अपने पेशे के रूप में चुनने लगी हैं। यह सब शिक्षा की चेतना के कारण ही संभव हो पाया है।

### भारतीय महिला शिक्षा के मार्ग में बाधाएं

इस बात को नकारा नहीं जा सकता है कि भारत में महिला शिक्षा का मार्ग सरल नहीं है। इसमें कई बाधाएं देखने को मिलती हैं –

- भारत में पितृसत्तात्मक समाज की परंपरा रही है। महिलाओं का स्थान सदैव पुरुषों की तुलना में द्वितीयक माना जाता है। उन्हें घर की चारदीवारी के घरेलू कार्य तक सीमित रखने के कारण शिक्षा के लिए अधिक प्रेरित नहीं किया जाता है।
- अशिक्षा के कारण भी भारत में महिला शिक्षा का मार्ग अवरुद्ध रहा। भारत में महिला साक्षरता का प्रतिशत 2011 की जनगणना के अनुसार 64.6 तथा पुरुष साक्षरता 80.9 प्रतिशत है। साक्षरता का यह अंतर भी समाज में पुरुष प्रधानता को प्रदर्शित करता है।
- लैंगिक असमानता की चुनौती आज हमारे समक्ष एक वास्तविकता के रूप में खड़ी है। बालिकाओं की शिक्षा की अपेक्षा बालकों की उच्च शिक्षा के प्रति जन मानसिकता अधिक सकारात्मक देखने को मिलती है।
- बालिकाओं के लिए पृथक् विद्यालय न होने से कई अभिभावक बालिकाओं को ऐसी शालाओं में भेजना पसंद नहीं करते, जहां सहशिक्षा है। प्राथमिक शाला के बाद तो नजदीक विद्यालय ना होना भी इनकी शिक्षा की दिशा में बड़ा अवरोध है।
- निर्धनता के कारण भी कई परिवारों की बालिकाएं, महिलाएं दूसरों के घरों में बर्तन साफ करना, कपड़े धोना, खाना बनाना, आदि कार्य करने के कारण अध्ययन हेतु शाला नहीं जा पाती हैं। निर्धन परिवार बालिका शिक्षा पर व्यय करने में असमर्थ होते हैं।
- शिक्षा अनिवार्यता के सख्त कानून का अभाव होने के कारण भी महिला शिक्षा प्रभावी रूप से प्रदान नहीं की जा रही।
- शिक्षण संस्थाओं में महिला स्टाफ की कमी होने के कारण भी महिला शिक्षा को प्रोत्साहन नहीं मिलता है। महिला स्टाफ की कमी होने के कारण अभिभावक भी बालिकाओं को शिक्षण संस्थाओं में भेजने से कतराते हैं

### सुझाव

इस सन्दर्भ में निम्न सुझाव रखे जा सकते हैं –

- महिलाओं में शिक्षा के विस्तार हेतु उनकी सुविधाओं में विस्तार किया जाये तथा छात्रवृत्तियों में वृद्धि की जाये।
- बोर्ड परीक्षाओं एवं विश्वविद्यालयी परीक्षाओं में सर्वोच्च अंक प्राप्त करने वाली बालिकाओं एवं महिलाओं को सेवाओं में प्राथमिकता मिलनी चाहिये।
- ड्राप आउट रेट को रोकने हेतु परिवारों, माता-पिता एवं संरक्षकों की काउंसलिंग की जानी चाहिये।
- स्कूली व महाविद्यालयी पाठ्यक्रमों को लैंगिक रूप से संवेदनशील बनाया जाना चाहिये अर्थात् महिलाओं से सम्बन्धित विषयों को पाठ्यक्रम का भाग बनाया जाना चाहिये।



- महिलाओं से सम्बन्धित कानूनों का क्रियान्वयन गंभीरता से किया जाना चाहिये।
- पुरुषों में भी शिक्षा का विस्तार किया जाना चाहिये ताकि पुरुष मानसिकता में बदलाव लाया जा सके।

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डॉ. राजेन्द्र सिंह खीची, सहायक आचार्य, समाजशास्त्र विभाग, जयनारायण व्यास विश्वविद्यालय, जोधपुर (राज.)  
rsinghkheechee@gmail.com

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## BOOK REVIEWS

**Stebbins, Robert (2020).**

### **The Serious Leisure Perspective: A Synthesis**

Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan. 2020. 240pp., ISBN-10: 3030480356, Kindle price \$ 23.30.

Reviewed by **Madhu Nagla**

Rtd Professor, Sociology, M.D. University, Rohtak

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The Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP) is a theoretic framework developed by Robert A. Stebbins in 1973, that brings together three main forms of leisure known serious leisure, casual leisure, and project-based leisure. This textbook provides a synthesis of the many concepts and propositions comprising the perspective, and the data supporting them. In this overview, Stebbins organizes the entire framework along conceptual lines, with careful attention to the level of empirical support and validation of each concept, presenting an up-to-date version of the SLP that allows interested students and researchers of social psychology, sociology, and leisure studies, to pinpoint exact elements of the theory, the empirical base, and its application.

The Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP) treats leisure at all levels of individual, organizational, societal, and cultural complexity. Notwithstanding that it started in fieldwork, which tends to favour the discovery of micro-level groups and processes (a social psychological focus), the perspective has in its 47 years of development incorporated numerous propositions that also bear on relevant meso-and macro-level phenomena. At these latter levels, the SLP is sometimes cultural, sometimes historical, sometimes geographical, and sometimes economic. Throughout, philosophy occasionally dominates the discussion (e.g., Aristotle). Stebbins recently developed an analytic scheme based on these three levels (Stebbins 2017), which is used in the present book as the framework for presenting its promised synthesis. He calls this “contextual analysis,” one strength of which is to yield a “big picture” of the subject being considered, in this case, the SLP and its component concepts.

In other words, the SLP is interdisciplinary, as leisure studies itself, which indicates that there is no core discipline such as sociology or psychology around which all other component fields revolve. The full SLP – considered on all three of its contextual levels – shows how disciplines like geography, history, philosophy, and economics are also crucial for a complete explanation of leisure. True, sociology and social psychology loom large in present-day leisure studies, but the so-called non-core fields are also contributing significantly to the SLP and hence to leisure studies.

The present book has three goals, namely, to take stock of the research on the SLP, to provide a badly needed synthesis of the Perspective's years of extensive theoretical and empirical growth, and to conduct contextual analysis to show most effectively the complexity of the SLP. In this sense, the present book is a sequel to the 2017 volume, but only in the sense of the third goal. Thus, in the chapters that follow, Stebbins also reviews supporting data and provides where needed clarification and refinement of the component

concepts. Additionally, this volume can also be used as a handbook, in that research and theory in the area are reviewed by way of the conceptual rubric to which they are related. To facilitate this function, Stebbins has prepared an exceptionally detailed index that can serve as a map through the jungle of terms, research studies, and levels of analysis that constitute today's SLP.

The review of the literature on SLP is also critical. From time to time in the text, weaknesses and strengths of empirical support are noted as are the needs for confirmatory precision and improvement in existing instruments, especially the various measurement scales. Moreover, conceptual precision is sometimes weaker than desirable thus demanding further work. In other words, the SLP in 2020 is in its adolescence, awaiting future maturation.

Robert Stebbins Pioneered the Serious Leisure Perspectives (SLP) is an original writing on the conceptualization of serious leisure and the body of work. he has contributed and has inspired numerous researchers to critically examine and seek to understand this phenomenon and this application. In this volume, Stebbins has synthesized decades of theorizing and empirical research in a comprehensive and accessible manner.

The Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP) is a paramount theory in leisure services/studies. This book explains (SLP) with depth, breadth, clarity, precision, accuracy, and with great logical order. It is the most important book written on the important theory in leisure services/studies. The SLP is an immeasurable contribution to our understanding of leisure. Stebbins offers a contemporary synthesis of the key ideas, concepts, and contexts that have underpinned this contribution, and as such, it has become the first book that anyone interested in the Serious Leisure Perspective should look to.

Professors Graham Cuskelly of Griffith University, Australia, Rodney B. Dieser, Professor of Northern Iowa, USA, Ian Jones, Associate Professor, Bournemouth University, UK and others found that the volume will serve as an invaluable resource for the next generation of leisure researchers and students.

# Saurav Ghosh: The Santals of Bankura

Kolkata: Sarat Books. 2022. Rs.1495. ISBN: 978-93-91741-03-7

Reviewed by **Naresh Kumar Bhargava**

Rtd Professor, Sociology, M.L. Sukhadia University, Udaipur

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This book is a version of research work, undertaken by the author in the Santal community in West Bengal (Bankura district). The work concentrates on data of two blocks, chosen for an intensive understanding of the region as well as of tribal 'Santal' living in the region. It is, as earlier suggested a socio-anthro narration as well as certain explanations on life and other aspects of Santals, the tribe. A well-known region Santal Pargana is the core of the book. The book is informative as well as evaluative on the life of the Santals. Limited to three chapters, the work concentrates on several aspects of the tribe studied.

The studies on tribals are not new. There has been a long tradition of studying tribal regions. Primitive life as it exists has been a fascination to anthropologists and sociologists. Anthropological Survey of India has published a lot of anthropological studies on tribals living in various parts of India. The tribal problems and the factors generating tribals have also been studied on a large scale. The book presents a combination of several aspects and issues of a tribe specific and tribals in general. The earlier part may be called the introduction as well as the proposals, which can be found in the text presented. It is interesting to find an ethnographical account of the Santals, their social life, clans, sub-clans, rituals, festivals, marriages, health, education, and several other aspects.

As per the description, the Santal tribe is an isolated one, composed, and has its ways of life. Contact with other communities is very limited. An interesting issue raised is – whether Santals are Hindus. It is a relevant issue for the present-day polity as well as for a new society emerging due to the transformational process in Indian society. The facts indicate the existence of traditional features dominating the tribes. This may be taken as an issue of debate among social scientists. By earlier sociologists and anthropologists, changes were indicated to be of different nature. It may be said that the change process is very limited and tribals still prefer the traditional mode of ritualistic living. But situations differ from tribe to tribe. The study raises a number of seminal questions which need to be attended and investigated. A list is given for conclusive remarks. However, the book on Santals points out to few basics – which are to be probed.

The book is important for understanding a specific tribe, their way of living and the problems they are facing. However, the book is worth reading and useful for students, who are interested in such studies.

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## **Meenakshi Yadav: Motivation@ Women Bureaucrats**

Delhi: Modern Publications, 2022, 109pp. (Paperback). Rs 250. ISBN:9788189879594

Reviewed by **Anjana Yadav**

Asstt Professor, Sociology, G.D. Govt. College for Women, Alwar

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Being a scholar of sociology, topics like motivation and job satisfaction have always been close to my heart. To come across a new book on motivation that is related to women civil servants is a delight. The book brings out various nuances of motivation among women bureaucrats very lucidly and systematically. The author has taken up the issues of immense importance and their bearing on the performance and satisfaction of women civil servants. Interestingly, the book has a very catchy title 'Motivation@ Women Bureaucrats'!

Motivation among women bureaucrats is a topic that, in the present context, should draw the attention of more and more researchers and scholars. This, indeed, is a subject of immense importance in changing the demographic, socio-economic, and family fabric of present society. Understanding a complex subject like motivation in women bureaucrats is an intricate mix of analysing the concept of motivation and its application in the fast-evolving work ethos of women at different levels. This book not only focuses on the concept of motivation but also tries to delineate various issues, factors, and challenges concerning motivation among women bureaucrats.

The book, starting with an introduction to the topic, goes on to discuss the need and importance of the topic itself, in addition to a dissection of the various aspects of motivation. The author has discussed various theories of motivation and its basic concept, which involves a complex combination of individual needs, drives, tensions, discomforts, and expectations. Elucidating the importance of motivation in an organization, the author has emphasized that one can't create the desire but can create an environment that brings out the desire and allows the employee to shine. At the core of this concept, lie three important sub-concepts—Motive, Motivation, and Motivator. The three sub-concepts are beautifully explained by the author. The author made genuine efforts in discussing the relationship between motivation and job satisfaction and has also tried to compare the concepts of motivation and job satisfaction. The book explains how motivation can help the self-development of an individual, which, in the further course, not only increases the commitment and loyalty towards the organization of an individual but also helps improve the overall environment of an organization.

Along with the discussions on the socio-economic profile of working women, the book also provides a glimpse of the reasons why women choose to work. This aspect of the book will come in handy for scholars pursuing research in this area. The book also covers a fair part of discussing the history of women's education in India. It focuses on the ancient education system which provides a sound base and equal opportunity for growth for men as well as women. The author has attempted to highlight the position of women from the Vedic period to till the modern age of education specifically. It is a delight to know through this book, many women scholars of India and their contributions have helped, guided, and encouraged many women to explore and excel in different fields.

The 'Motivation@ Women Bureaucrats' goes on to give an elaborate account of the wonders of women bureaucrats of India who have walked the tightrope between

responsibility and pressure on all sorts of things, both personally and professionally. This provides an insight into the professional lives of glaring and tall-standing women in the Indian civil service, whose work and lives have been legendary and exemplary. The book also tells us about the journey and initial hurdles faced by Indian women to mark their position in the male dominant paradigm. The author has demonstrated how difficult it is to tell us anything about the quality of performance, particularly when the criteria and method of evaluating the role of women at higher positions have not evolved and are empirically verified in developing societies. I felt that discussing such challenges of women executives at higher level roles, would not only help women administrators themselves, the top bosses, and the policymakers but would also dispel myths and stereotyped notions regarding the ability of women to occupy the position of prestige, power, and authority.

The text is packed with real-life experiences and stories of working women bureaucrats representing various civil services. The author has experimented with the idea of incorporating personal details and experiences of women bureaucrats from different services and has made it the most interesting and inspiring section of the book. It will come in handy and will be inspiring for civil service aspirants. To my mind, it is fortunate for the readers that various women civil servants have taken out time and shared their rich experiences and the author has penned down the same very interestingly.

Essentially, the book is written in simple language and has been systematically and chronologically guided through various chapters. The book tries to succinctly grasp the complex issues of motivation and job satisfaction in a special context for women civil servants. The book is divided into eleven chapters and the last chapter on the personal experiences of women bureaucrats is the highlight. Being simple in language and low in price, the book is easily affordable and can be comprehended by anyone who reads it.

It is always encouraging and inspiring to come across a motivational book, especially one related to women. Women, being placed crucially in the socio-demographic setup, have in recent times taken more attention of scholars and researchers and this book dwells upon an immensely important aspect of women bureaucrats, their motivation, and job satisfaction at work.

This book explores the intricacies of the agency of women working in different services, at different levels of bureaucracy, and enables the readers to understand. The book comprises the author's insight and experiences as a research scholar and teaching professional in Public Administration and remarkably brings to light the multitude of challenges and approaches concerning motivation amongst women bureaucrats.

'Motivation@ Women Bureaucrats' evinces its prominence by discerning the multi-faceted confrontations of working women and is an exceptionally insightful treatise indeed. In the end, I extend my heartiest congratulations to the author for taking up such a relevant topic. It will help academicians, research scholars, and students to enrich their knowledge. Above all, it will inspire and educate anyone and everyone who reads it and knows about motivation among women bureaucrats, which has been brilliantly kept up by the author.

# **N K Bhargava, Ashutosh Vyas, B.N. Prasad and Sampat Kale (Eds): Agrarian Structure and Social Transformation**

Jaipur: Book Enclave. 2022. Pp 184. Rs. 1350. ISBN

## **Reviewed by Shailja Nagendra Sole**

Associate. Professor, Sociology, SPC Girls College, Ajmer

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The book under review is a collection of 11 papers put together by the editors of the book. Researching agrarian structure and social transformation is one of the favorite areas for scholars of sociology. In the first paper, Notan Bhusan Kar highlighted agrarian distress and farmers' suicide in the context of neo-liberal policy in India. He pointed out that the globalization process is the main reason for the agrarian crisis in India. Due to the adoption of neoliberal policies and the capitalist development trajectories the agriculture sector has undergone several changes in terms of a) in-egalitarian land structure, b) de-peasantisation, and c) abysmal condition of agricultural labor, tenants, and small peasants. The author analyzed the issue of farmers' suicides across the States. Failure of crops, increasing prices of inputs, financial stress, and lack of credit facilities are the major factors for farmers' suicides in India. Kar has observed that a few "packages" is not the permanent solution to address the agrarian crisis in India; however, there is a need to change the existing economic policies.

The second paper is titled "Farming for Future: A Study of Sustainable Livelihoods and Participatory Irrigation Management in Maharashtra" by Sampat Kale. He has asserted that sustainable water resource management and a participatory approach proved helpful in preventing youth migration towards urban centers in search of better job opportunities. Kale further provided an in-depth analysis of intervention on livelihood generation programs, impacts of sustainable rural livelihoods on farmers, sustainable water resources, and the intervention by Yuva Mitra. Organizations like Yuva Mitra work for sustainable development, playing a very important role in mobilizing the people at the grassroots level, and enabling and empowering them to improve their livelihood through institutionalized support.

The third paper is by Soma Roy on "Peasants and Changing Nature of Agrarian Structure: A Case of Singur, West Bengal" overviewed the anti-land acquisition protest movement at Singur in West Bengal during 2006- 08. She has explained the changes in the agrarian structure of west Bengal and how land acquisition policy is affecting the structure. The author used data such as population, distribution of land, ownership, land holding in affected villages, and the land acquired from affected villages to explain the structure of agrarian society. It is concluded that the peasants are not opposed to industrialization, but their emotional sentiments make them oppose land acquisition.

The fourth paper is by Kumar Vivek Kant on exclusion, inclusion, and crisis in an agrarian society focused on the class as an embodiment of productive relations. He discussed the concept of social closure and the agrarian social processes of exclusion and inclusion inherent in the agrarian categories and the inherent contradictions in the agrarian social structure of Bihar. He concluded that lower caste groups have now become more conscious about the exclusion imposed on them by the *maliks* and, are more assertive for their inclusion in the mainstream of the agrarian social structure.

The fifth paper is by Ashutosh Vyas on organic farming practices in India. Vyas's approach considers organic farming as a holistic production management system, which promotes agri-ecosystem. It is the method of producing higher yields in agriculture and excluding the use of synthetically compounded materials. Organic farming principles such as health, ecology, fairness, and care brought the spirit of organic farming to the world. The paper explained the major components of organic farming (crop, soil, livestock and nutrient management, soil, water, and plant protection) through systematic government schemes and indigenous farming practices. The major constraint of organic farming in India is the inability of government policy to make a firm decision to promote organic farming. The lack of financial and technical support, lack of awareness, shortage of biomass, infrastructure, marketing, and high input cost are also the challenges of organic farming.

N K Bhargava in his paper has critically analyzed the agrarian reforms in India. He explained the sociological aspects of agrarian structure and its reform in India. There are different strata with inequality which makes the system more complex. It leads to tension, exploitation, and conflict between the strata. The agrarian transformation started from the beginning of colonialism. The Marxist approach and Vinoba Bhave's ideology also encouraged social transformation. After the independence, the rural development program, community development program, and Panchayat raj system also encouraged social transformation.

The seventh paper discussed the environmental crisis, agrarian distress, and sustainability potential of MGNREGA. Prasad emphasized that the neoliberal policy has an interlink between the environmental crisis and agrarian distress. The most vulnerable of society are affected by its impact. Rural ecology and sustainable agrarian development are also under distress. Poverty, unemployment, inequality, and injustice with environmental degradation make the situation worse. Dr. Prasad described the importance of the MGNREGA program in the areas such as economic impact and social sustainability and concluded that the scheme was criticized for corruption, but it is a large experiment in the contemporary sustainable paradigm.

The eighth paper by Vinita Lal and Harinandan Kushwaha discusses the participation of women farmers in the rural employment guarantee scheme act (MNREGS) in Uttar Pradesh. The authors mentioned some of the challenges faced during the implementation of MNREGAs such as inadequate budget allocation, delays in payment of wages, poor wage rates, and corruption. In conclusion, the authors pointed out some of the major outcomes regarding the initiative and how it improved the participation of women in a holistic manner in terms of social, economical, and cultural empowerment. It minimized the vulnerability factors and encourages women to come out from the four walls and visit banks and panchayat offices.

The ninth paper by Afreen Almas focused on the human rights of '*Anadaata*' and new farm laws. Almas focuses on the question that arises that how far are new farm laws that were passed by Parliament in 2020 going to open the gateways for farmers in enjoying their human rights? She mentioned that the new laws are pro-farmers and traders. Each of the three laws deals with one common aspect of agricultural marketing. Collectively, they are designed to reduce hindrances that diverse agri-food supply chain actors face in connecting to farmers. In the end, the Afreen concluded that although the new farm laws have been



formed with good intentions, while framing these laws it would have been better to make it in alignment with human rights perspectives of farmer's rights as enunciated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People working in Rural Areas.

The tenth paper by Churu Giri dwells upon the Indian Agrarian Scenario in the Context of the Globalization of the Economy. The author mentioned the economic reforms considered by the Indian government to address the principle of reforms towards encouraging private investments, land reforms, taxing the agricultural market and managing the terms of trade, and promoting exports of agricultural goods. The author also highlighted the WTO recommendations for Indian agriculture.

The last paper by Naba Krishna Bora, Kughatoli V Aye focuses on the role of North East Affect Area Development Society on the Socio-Economic and Environmental Transformation in Rural Jhanjimukh, Assam. The authors mentioned that NGOs are playing a vital role in policy formulation, implementation, and governance, especially in the area of rural development, water, agriculture, health, etc. This paper focuses on the actions of NEADS (an NGO) in the rural economy. The study find out that NEADS, a local NGO played a major role in resource mobilization, awareness generation, disaster management strategies, and agricultural development.

Overall, the book is a welcome addition and a valuable contribution to the studies on the agrarian structure and social transformation. The book will be very much useful for students, scholars, and academics working in the areas of the agrarian structure.

# Meenu Tanwar : Health Status of Women- A Sociological Viewpoint

Zittau, Germany. Weser Books. 2021. 196 pp. (Hardcover). Price: € 10. ISBN: 978-3-96492-352-3.

Reviewed by **Subodh Kumar**

Associate Professor, Sociology, Govt. Arts Girls College, Kota

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Health plays an indispensable role in the lives of human beings; and it is equally important for every nation's development. Any country's growth and development largely depend on the health of its citizens. The volume under review highlights the status of health of Indian women who constitute almost half of the total population of India. It explores not only general health condition of Indian citizens, but also the reasons behind poor health condition of women in India following a sociological perspective. The health of women in different cultures does not present a pleasant sight because of prejudices and perceptions rooted in socio-cultural features. Woman's health is not only determined uniquely by biological aspects and reproduction but also due to the effect of internal (familial) or external (social) stress and anxieties. Other factors like conflicts, relocation, involvement in heavy household activities and nutrition problems too cause negative impact on female's health at large. Gender acts as a significant social determinant of the health since women's health is influenced just not by their physical condition but also in other aspects such as domestic responsibilities, poverty, unemployment etc. Although international, national and regional programs and policies have facilitated women to enjoy healthy lives, but still gender-based differences remain in many countries including India.

In the first chapter of the volume health status of Indian women has been depicted covering various dimensions. It starts with status of women health in ancient, medieval as well as pre-independence and post independence period. The author is of the opinion that status of women health was as good as of men in the ancient period. But all other periods witness very low health status of women in India till independence due to various socio-cultural and economic reasons. The condition of health services was too very poor before independence. But later on after independence various initiatives were taken by Indian Government to improve the health facilities for all Indian citizens. As a result there was continuous improvement in the health care facilities throughout India. But due to various socio-cultural and economic obstacles, gender biases regarding health in pre-dominantly male-dominated society women are still cursed to have low health status in society. Various indicators of health in statistical form have been given in the volume which show the reasons of low status of women in India. Further actual indicators of women's health and government initiatives by the Government of Rajasthan to improve women's health status in the state have been covered too. At last, the author provides a brief description of Ganganagar tehsil of Rajasthan, which is the study area of research findings.

The second chapter of the volume mentions the target group and study area with an aim to draw attention of millions of scholars towards the poor and pathetic conditions of women. At the same time the study seeks for women's empowerment by helping them to sustain and recover their health. The author has clearly mentioned the aims and objectives, hypothesis and methodology applied for this research work which is based on the sample size of 300 women from Ganganagar tehsil covering all sections and strata of women.

Chapter Third of the volume analyses the health status of women in Sriganganagar. This chapter portrays socio- economic traits of the respondents and their household. Through various indicators it is clear that the author has covered almost every section of women across caste, class, religion, nature of jobs, educational background, health awareness etc.

In the Fourth Chapter the author checks the health standard of women. Interestingly the findings are mixed here. According to the study report 28.33 percent women are found healthy and having no health problem. 41.00 percent women enjoy good health and 30.67 percent were found having poor health. Regarding awareness about consequences of illness it was found that 14.33 percent were having good awareness, whereas 43.67 percent were having low and 42.00 percent had poor awareness. On many such criterion the women's health status is found having mixed result. Various indicators in this chapter show that women's health status has improved. But still there are many obstacles which hinder the women in general from enjoying good health.

Chapter Fifth of the volume narrates the problems and suggestions regarding women's health. In this chapter author presents various suggestions based on the queries from respondents. Gender equality, women's empowerment, prevention of child marriages, prevention of feticide, awareness of personal hygiene, prevention of infectious diseases, protection from malnutrition, need for child nutrition, need to eliminate illiteracy among women, need of proper gap between two children, need to provide better health facilities for women etc. and many such suggestions are given to improve the health status of women.

Chapter Sixth of the volume narrates in detail about various policies and programmes being implemented and run at national level by the Government of India. This chapter deals with National Health Police-2017 and various health programmes being run at national level including national family welfare programme. Certainly these programmes and policies have improved the status of health of people in India including the women population too. At last the author presents the conclusion based on the findings of the study.

Thus we see that the present volume is an interesting account of health status of women in India in general and Rajasthan in particular. It systematically presents the status of women health at present, various causes of poor health of women and suggestions to improve women's health. This volume would have been more comprehensive if it would have covered cultural and psychological barriers in the way of better health status for women. Though the findings of this volume cannot be generalized for other states of India, even then this volume is certainly an interesting and useful read for academicians, research scholars, as well as policy makers and administrators. It provides valuable insights and suggestions for better health status of women in India. Therefore it can be suggested a must read volume for understanding the status of women from health perspective.

## श्रद्धा तिवारी : जनजातीय समाज प्रमुख प्रशासनिक योजनाएं

उदयपुर : सुरेश बुक सर्विस. 2020. पृष्ठ 140, मूल्य 695 रुपए. ISBN 978-93-8505-324-5

समीक्षक : आशुतोष व्यास

सह-आचार्य, समाजशास्त्र, महाराणा प्रताप राजकीय स्नातकोत्तर महाविद्यालय, चित्तौड़गढ़

समीक्षित पुस्तक श्रद्धा तिवारी द्वारा लिखित जनजातीय समाज में लागू विभिन्न योजनाओं पर आधारित है। जनजातीय विकास योजनाएं प्रारंभिक काल से ही प्राथमिकता का विषय रही हैं। लगभग प्रत्येक पंचवर्षीय योजना में जनजातीय क्षेत्र के विकास हेतु कई विशेष प्रयास भी किए गए हैं। जनजातीय समुदाय के विकास के लिए बनाई गई विभिन्न योजनाओं के कारण जनजातीय समाज के क्रमबद्ध विकास का चरण भी प्रारंभ हुआ। जनजातीय समाज के उत्थान हेतु जनजातीय क्षेत्र में आधारभूत संरचना का विकास भी किया गया। पंचायतीराज व्यवस्था के फलस्वरूप जनजातीय क्षेत्र में शिक्षा से लेकर तकनीकी तक विकास के कई आयाम भी स्थापित हुए। जनजातीय समाज में प्रशासनिक योजनाओं का महत्वपूर्ण स्थान है तथा इसके फलस्वरूप सामाजिक परिवर्तन और रूपांतरण की प्रक्रिया में बहुत तीव्रता आई है।

यह पुस्तक एक प्रकार से प्रशासकीय योजनाओं तथा उसके फलस्वरूप जनजातीय समाज पर होने वाले प्रमुख प्रभावीकरण का मूल्यांकन है। यह अध्ययन लेखिका के शोध कार्य से संबंधित प्रकाशन है, जिसे पांच अध्यायों में विभाजित किया गया है।

पुस्तक के प्रथम अध्याय में जनजातीय समाज का परिचयात्मक विवरण प्रस्तुत किया गया है। जिसके अंतर्गत भारत की जनजातियों का उल्लेख किया गया है। जैसे गोंड, संथाल, उरांव, मुंडा, खौण आदि तथा राजस्थान की भील और मीणा जनजातियों की सामाजिक-आर्थिक स्थिति का भी उल्लेख किया गया है। जनजातीय क्षेत्र के अंतर्गत विभिन्न संवैधानिक प्रावधानों पर भी प्रकाश डाला गया है। द्वितीय अध्याय में शोधपद्धति का वर्णन करते हुए अध्ययन की रूपरेखा व अध्ययन पद्धति को स्पष्ट किया गया है। अध्ययन के उद्देश्य, अध्ययन क्षेत्र एवं अध्ययन की सीमाएं तथा जनजातीय समाज की विभिन्न समस्याओं के स्वरूप को भी प्रतिपादित किया है। प्रस्तुत पुस्तक में योजनाओं के मूल्यांकन हेतु उदयपुर संभाग की 10 तहसीलों का चयन किया गया है। तृतीय अध्याय में केंद्र सरकार एवं राज्य सरकार की जनजातीय विकास की 21 योजनाओं का वर्णन किया गया है। साथ ही जनजातियों की मूलभूत समस्याओं जैसे जंगल, कृषि, भूमि, स्वास्थ्य तथा गरीबी, बेरोजगारी एवं संस्कृति से संबंधित समस्याओं पर भी प्रकाश डाला गया है।

चतुर्थ अध्याय में जनजातीय प्रशासनिक योजनाओं की प्रभावशीलता का मूल्यांकन किया गया है। इसी प्रारूप में योजनाओं के फलस्वरूप होने वाले परिवर्तनों को प्रस्तुत किया गया है, इससे विभिन्न योजनाओं के कारण जनजातीय लोगों में शिक्षा एवं व्यवसाय के क्षेत्र में परिवर्तन आया है, आधुनिक उपकरणों का व्यापक उपयोग होने लगा है, कृषि के क्षेत्र में नवीन तकनीक का प्रयोग करने लगे हैं, विशेषकर युवा महिलाओं की राजनीति में भागीदारी बढ़ी है। अंतिम अध्याय निष्कर्ष के रूप में निरूपित है जिसमें संपूर्ण अध्ययन का संक्षिप्त सार है, जो यह दर्शाता है कि जनजातीय विकास में प्रशासकीय योजनाओं के फलस्वरूप कई परिवर्तन हुए हैं, जिसमें नए लक्ष्य, विचार, तकनीक और संबंधों के प्रकार भी सम्मिलित हैं। लेखिका ने योजनाओं के सफल क्रियान्वयन के लिए कुछ महत्वपूर्ण सुझाव भी दिए हैं। लेखिका द्वारा इस पुस्तक में कुछ महत्वपूर्ण योजनाओं जैसे- वनों के विकास, नरेगा, कौशल विकास योजना, तकनीकी व स्वास्थ्य से संबंधित योजनाओं आदि का यदि मूल्यांकन भी किया जाता, तो पुस्तक समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टिकोण से और अधिक प्रभावी एवं उपयोगी हो सकती थी। यह पुस्तक जनजातीय विकास एवं सामाजिक परिवर्तन को समझने की दृष्टि से उपयोगी है, तथा जनजाति अध्ययन में रुचि रखने वाले विद्यार्थी इस पुस्तक को आधार मानकर अपना समाजशास्त्रीय शोध कर सकते हैं।

## बबीता महावर: बाल अपराध: अवधारणा एवं विश्लेषण

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प्राचार्य, महावीर अंबेश गुरु स्नातकोत्तर महाविद्यालय फतहनगर

बबीता महावर द्वारा लिखित पुस्तक बाल अपराध: अवधारणा एवं विश्लेषण, उनके द्वारा किए गए शोध का पुस्तकीय रूप है। प्रायः इस रूप में लिखित पुस्तकों की अपनी ही उपयोगिताएं तथा प्रासंगिक दृष्टि से सीमाएं हैं। पुस्तक की समस्या वे बालक तथा किशोर हैं, जो अपराधों के साथ जुड़ जाते हैं या अपराधों की अन्य श्रेणियों के साथ अपने आप को जोड़ लेते हैं। इस पुस्तक को मुख्य रूप से तीन खंडों में विभक्त किया जा सकता है। प्रथम खंड का संबंध बाल अपराध से जुड़ी अवधारणाओं और सैद्धांतिक परिप्रेक्ष्य से है; दूसरा खंड उन तथ्यों से जुड़ा हुआ है जो अध्ययनकर्ता को क्षेत्र में उपलब्ध हुए हैं। तीसरे खंड का संबंध बाल अपराध के लिए किए गए निदानों और निदान के लिए बनाई गई संस्थाओं और समितियों के मूल्यांकन से है। लेखिका द्वारा पुस्तक में यह भी प्रयास किया गया है कि प्रमुखतः क्या किया जाए जिससे इस वर्ग की आपराधिक प्रवृत्ति को रोका जा सके। पुस्तक में देश और प्रदेश की आपराधिक प्रवृत्तियों की जानकारी उपलब्ध है। राजस्थान के प्रमुख जिलों को इस दृष्टि से गंभीर मानते हुए भी लेखिका ने अपनी समीक्षाओं को जयपुर तक सीमित कर दिया है। कहने का तात्पर्य यह है कि संपूर्ण अध्ययन केवल जयपुर जिले तक ही सीमित है। हालांकि कुछ आंकड़ों और तथ्यों से राजस्थान के अन्य जिलों की भी जानकारी मिल जाती है जो एक तुलनात्मक दृष्टि प्रस्तुत करती है। पुस्तक तुलनात्मकता रूप से राष्ट्रीय, प्रदेश और जिले के तारतम्य से जुड़ी हुई है। पुस्तक का मूल उद्देश्य सैद्धांतिक परिप्रेक्ष्य की समीक्षा, बाल अपराध के सामाजिक स्रोतों का परीक्षण, सरकार द्वारा अपचार और अपचारी के निदान हेतु की गई व्यवस्थाओं का परीक्षण एवं मूल्यांकन तथा अंत में कुछ सुझावों के प्रस्तुतीकरण के साथ सारबद्ध है।

महावर ने अपनी इस कृति में यह बताने का प्रयास किया है कि आखिर बच्चे आपराधिक क्यों हो जाते हैं? परिवार, संगत और समाजीकरण जैसी अनेक व्यवस्थाएं हैं जो बच्चों को अपराध की ओर खींच ले जाती हैं। यह भी विचित्र संयोग है कि पारस्परिकता भी अपराध प्रवृत्ति को जागृत कर देती है। यदि तथ्यों को स्वीकार करें और जैसा कि पुस्तक में दिए गए संकेत भी दर्शाते हैं कि पारिवारिक अवस्थाएं भी बाल आपराधिक प्रवृत्ति को जन्म दे देती हैं।

अपराध क्यों होते हैं?, कौन-कौन से सामाजिक परिवेश इस तत्व को जन्म दे देते हैं, इसके निवारण के स्वरूप क्या हैं? समाजशास्त्र अपनी अध्ययन प्रणाली में अपराध के विविध आयामों का संपूर्ण अध्ययन करता है। विघटन, परिणाम और अपराध के निवारण की व्यवस्थाओं के प्रसंग सभी कुछ समाजशास्त्र के प्रसंग भी हैं। बबीता महावर की इस पुस्तक में दोनों ही व्यवस्थाएं उपलब्ध हैं। चूंकि अध्ययन के संपूर्ण तथ्य जयपुर तक सीमित हैं, इसीलिए तथ्यों के प्रसंग भी उसी का प्रतिनिधित्व करते हैं। वैसे भी अपराध जगत समाज में एक रुचिकर विषय रहा है; इसीलिए बहुत कुछ पहले से अध्ययित तथ्य बदले हुए रूप में इस पुस्तक में भी मौजूद हैं। यह कोई पुनरावृत्ति नहीं है, अपितु अध्ययन क्षेत्र की अपनी ही विशेषताओं के कारण हैं।

लेखिका ने पुस्तक में सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक परिवेश की जो चर्चा की है; वह बहुत ही रुचिकर है। अध्ययन में समाज की उस पृष्ठभूमि का उल्लेख भी किया गया है जो आपराधिक व्यवहार की पृष्ठभूमि को निर्धारित करती हैं। अर्थात् महावर ने यहां पृष्ठभूमि का उल्लेख कर दिया है जो किसी भी बालक में अपराध प्रवृत्ति को जन्म देने में सहायक है। जाति, वर्ग, आर्थिक परिस्थितियां, पारिवारिक पृष्ठभूमि, व्यवसायियों की छाया, पढ़ाई से छुटकारा और विद्यालयों का वातावरण आदि सभी तत्वों को इस पुस्तक में विस्तृत रूप से प्रस्तुत किया गया है।

पुस्तक का तीसरा और अंतिम पक्ष सुधार व्यवस्था, पुलिस और सामाजिक संगठनों के मूल्यांकनों से संबंधित है। इस पुस्तक का सबसे महत्वपूर्ण अंश बाल अपराध तथा किशोर न्याय व्यवस्था से संबंधित है। इसी अंश में पुलिस अपराधी संबंधों, सरकारी और गैर-सरकारी संस्थाओं की चर्चा भी की गई है; जो अपचार कार्यों के निवारण में संलग्न हैं। लेखिका का मानना है कि इस क्षेत्र में सुधार के प्रयास होते रहे हैं साथ ही अपराधिक सुधार के प्रयासों का अपना ही एक इतिहास है। इस दृष्टि से किशोर न्यायालय एक विशिष्ट स्थान रखते हैं, जो शासन एवं शासित व्यवस्था के साथ जुड़े हुए हैं। अनेक प्रकार के गृह विकसित किए गए हैं जो अपना कार्य सफलता से कर ही रहे हैं। जैसे किशोर पुलिस संपर्क की व्यवस्था भी की गई है, किशोरों के लिए विशेष न्यायालयों, बोर्डों, आदि की स्थापना भी एक सराहनीय कदम है। साथ ही स्वयंसेवी संगठन, शिक्षा तथा अन्य साधनों के माध्यम से अपनी जिम्मेदारी निभा रहे हैं। पुस्तक में ऐसे अन्य प्रयासों की भी चर्चा की गई है।

अंततः हम कह सकते हैं कि यह पुस्तक जहां एक ओर अपराध के समाजशास्त्र के अंतर्गत बाल तथा किशोर अपराधियों की विस्तृत व्याख्या करती है; वहीं दूसरी ओर अपचारी कारकों की व्याख्या भी है। इस दृष्टि से समाजशास्त्र में बाल अपराध से संबंधित विश्लेषण विद्यार्थियों के लिए बहुत उपयोगी है। साथ ही यह पुस्तक पुलिस, प्रशासन तथा अन्य ऐसे लोग जो शांति व्यवस्था को समझना और संभालना चाहते हैं, के लिए भी उपयोगी है। समीक्षाओं और विश्लेषण के आधार पर यह पुस्तक अधिकारियों और सामाजिक संगठनों के लिए भी बहुत उपयोगी सिद्ध हो सकती है। समाजशास्त्र की अपनी विशेषताओं के लिए यह एक महत्वपूर्ण योगदान है और स्वयं समाजशास्त्रियों के लिए भी यह पुस्तक एक विशेष स्थान बनाती है।

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## श्याम एस. कुमावत: प्रकार्यवादी विचारक

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सहायक—आचार्य, राजनीति विज्ञान, विद्या भवन रूरल इंस्टीट्यूट, उदयपुर

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समाज और सामाजिक संरचनाओं को जीवंत बनाए रखने के लिए इनके भीतर कुछ निश्चित गतिविधियों का संचालन अनिवार्य होता है, जिन्हें इन संरचनाओं के प्रकार्य के रूप में जाना जाता है। दूसरे शब्दों में सामाजिक संरचना का निर्माण करने वाली छोटी और बड़ी सभी इकाइयों की अपनी एक विशिष्ट और निश्चित भूमिका होती है, जिनके निर्वाहन से सामाजिक संरचना और सामाजिक व्यवस्था का अस्तित्व निरंतरता प्राप्त करता है। इन्हीं प्रकार्यों के कारण किसी भी समाज व्यवस्था में अनुकूलन और सामंजस्य की स्थिति स्थापित होती है। संरचना और प्रकार्य दोनों एक दूसरे से प्रभावित भी होते हैं। इस प्रकार संरचना और प्रकार्य के बीच एक गहरा अंतर्संबंध होता है। इसी पृष्ठभूमि पर समाज अथवा किसी व्यवस्था के अध्ययन के एक उपागम के रूप में प्रकार्यवादी उपागम 19वीं शताब्दी में अस्तित्व में आया। प्रारम्भ में मुख्यतः समाजशास्त्रीय अध्ययन में इस उपागम का प्रयोग हुआ, किन्तु कालान्तर में अन्य समाज विज्ञानों यथा राजनीति विज्ञान, मनोविज्ञान, अर्थशास्त्र, दर्शनशास्त्र, इतिहास आदि के अध्ययन में भी इस उपागम का प्रयोग बहुतायत से किया जाने लगा। लेकिन समाजशास्त्र में इस उपागम का अपना एक विशेष महत्त्व है। समय—समय पर विभिन्न विचारकों के द्वारा प्रकार्यवादी उपागम के नए—नए स्वरूप और नई—नई मान्यताओं को प्रस्तुत किया गया। श्याम एस. कुमावत की पुस्तक "प्रकार्यवादी विचारक" इन्हीं तथ्यों को प्रस्तुत करने का महत्त्वपूर्ण प्रयास है।

20 अध्यायों में विभक्त यह पुस्तक विभिन्न प्रकार्यवादी विचारकों के विचारों का प्रस्तुतीकरण है। पुस्तक के प्रारंभ में प्रकार्यवाद अथवा संरचनात्मक प्रकार्यवादी उपागम के सैद्धांतिक परिप्रेक्ष्य और इसके विकास को प्रस्तुत करने का प्रयास किया गया है, जो पाठकों को इस उपागम से संबंधित आधारभूत समझ प्रदान करता है। इसके पश्चात प्रकार्यवाद के आदि पुरुष कहे जाने वाले हरबर्ट स्पेंसर के जैव—सामाजिक सादृश्यता प्रकार्यवाद को प्रस्तुत किया गया है, जिसमें स्पेंसर द्वारा सामाजिक संस्थाओं और उनमें परिवर्तन की प्रकार्यत्मक परिप्रेक्ष्य में की गई चर्चा को उजागर किया गया है। तीसरे अध्याय में विलफ्रेड पेरेटो के प्रकार्यवादी विश्लेषण को प्रस्तुत किया गया है। पेरेटो ने समाज को एक व्यवस्था बताते हुए सामाजिक घटनाओं और तथ्यों में अंतर्संबंध एवं अंतरनिर्भरता के आधार पर प्रकार्यवादी विश्लेषण प्रस्तुत किया। चौथे अध्याय में समाजशास्त्र में प्रकार्यवादी परिप्रेक्ष्य को प्रारंभ करने वाले एमाइल दुर्खीम का प्रकार्यवादी विश्लेषण स्पष्ट किया गया है। मैलिनोवस्की का सांस्कृतिक प्रकार्यवाद अध्याय पांच में देखने को मिलता है। लेखक ने मैलिनोवस्की द्वारा प्रस्तुत संस्कृति की जैविकीय आवश्यकताओं के आधार पर उनके सार्वभौमिक प्रकार्यवाद के विभिन्न पक्षों यथा धर्म, जादू और विज्ञान के प्रकार्यवादी विश्लेषण को सरल शब्दों में व्यक्त किया है।

अध्याय छः में रेडक्लिफ ब्राउन के द्वारा आदिवासी समाज और समुदायों के अध्ययन के आधार पर प्रस्तुत संरचनात्मक प्रकार्यवादी सिद्धांत को प्रस्तुत किया गया है। अध्याय सात में सभ्यता और समाज का प्रकार्यवादी विश्लेषण रॉबर्ट रेडफील्ड के नजरिए से स्पष्ट किया गया है, जिसमें लोक समाज और नगरीय समाज के अंतर्संबंधों के आधार पर सांस्कृतिक परिवर्तन की प्रक्रिया को समझने में सहायता मिलती है। अध्याय आठ में ईवान्स प्रिचर्ड के द्वारा सामाजिक संरचनाओं और उनकी संस्कृति के पारस्परिक संबंधों के आधार पर प्रस्तुत प्रकार्यवादी सिद्धांत का विश्लेषण लेखक के द्वारा बताया गया है। एस. एफ़. नाडेल का संरचना सिद्धांत और प्रकार्यवादी विश्लेषण अध्याय नौ में है। संरचनावाद के सिद्धांत तथा संस्कृति एवं सामाजिक संबंधों पर लेवी स्ट्रॉउस का प्रकार्यवादी विश्लेषण अध्याय दस में उल्लेखित किया गया है। रेमंड फर्थ ने विश्वास व्यवस्थाओं के व्यावहारिक पक्ष को उजागर करते हुए

आर्थिक संदर्भ में उनकी प्रकार्यात्मकता और तार्किकता को स्पष्ट किया, जिसे लेखक अध्याय ग्यारह में प्रस्तुत करते हैं।

अध्याय बारह में किंग्सले डेविस और विलबर्ट मूर का स्तरीकरण का प्रकार्यात्मक सिद्धांत प्रस्तुत किया गया है। संरचनात्मक प्रकार्यात्मक विश्लेषण पर लेवी के विभिन्न पक्ष लेखक के द्वारा अध्याय तेरह में प्रस्तुत किए गए हैं। टालकट पारसंस के संरचनात्मक प्रकार्यवाद अथवा आदर्शवादी प्रकार्यवाद का उल्लेख अध्याय चौदह में है। अध्याय पन्द्रह में रॉबर्ट मर्टन का प्रकार्यवादी विश्लेषण और पेराडिम देखने को मिलता है। नव प्रकार्यवादी उपागम के संदर्भ और संरचनात्मक प्रकार्यवाद से उसका अंतर अध्याय सोलह में है। जेफ्रे सी. एलेक्जेंडर तथा जी. ए. कोहेन के विचारों को लेखक ने अध्याय सत्रह में प्रस्तुत किया है। अध्याय अट्ठारह निकलस लुहमन के नव प्रकार्यवादी विचारों पर आधारित है। इसी तरह अध्याय उन्नीस में रिचार्ड मंच और अध्याय बीस में जॉर्ज रिट्ज़र के नव प्रकार्यवादी विश्लेषण को प्रस्तुत किया गया है।

श्याम एस. कुमावत की यह पुस्तक प्रकार्यवाद और नव-प्रकार्यवाद पर पाठकों विशेषकर समाज विज्ञान के विद्यार्थियों को इस विषय पर एक गहरी समझ प्रदान करने में सहायक है। इस विषय पर विभिन्न विचारकों के विचारों में तुलनात्मक तथ्य भी लेखक द्वारा यथास्थान उल्लेखित किये गये हैं जो विषय पर विचारकों की विशिष्टता को बताते हैं। एक खास बात और यह है कि लेखक ने विभिन्न प्रकार्यवादी विचारकों के ना केवल जीवन परिचय पर प्रकाश डाला है, वरन उनकी रचनाओं को भी तथ्यात्मक रूप में प्रस्तुत किया है, जो प्रतियोगी परीक्षाओं के दृष्टिकोण से भी परीक्षार्थियों के लिए उपयोगी बन गया है। पुस्तक की भाषा सरल है, जिसमें संदर्भ ग्रंथों के माध्यम से लेखक के द्वारा प्रामाणिक बात कहने का सटीक प्रयास झलकता है।



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**शरण, एम.आर. : लास्ट अमंग इक्वल्स: पॉवर, कास्ट एण्ड पोलिटिक्स इन बिहारस विलेजेज**  
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सहायक—आचार्य ,समाजशास्त्र, राजकीय मीरा कन्या महाविद्यालय ,उदयपुर

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भारत सरकार की सामाजिक सुरक्षा योजना नरेगा (मनरेगा) देश में ग्रामीण श्रमिकों को रोजगार और आजीविका प्रदान करने का प्रयास करती है। नरेगा योजना प्रारम्भ से ही नीति—निर्माताओं, सरकारी अधिकारियों, श्रमिकों के साथ अनुसंधानकर्ताओं और लेखकों का ध्यान भी समय—समय पर आकर्षित करती रही है। लेखक एम.आर. शरण की पुस्तक लास्ट अमंग इक्वल्स—पॉवर, कास्ट एण्ड पोलिटिक्स इन बिहारस विलेजेज का ताना—बाना भी इसी योजना के आस—पास निर्मित हुआ है। मोटे तौर पर यह पुस्तक 21वीं सदी के बिहार की ग्रामीण राजनीति की कहानियां कहती है जो दो भिन्न लेकिन गहनता से जुड़े हुए विवरणों के रूप में है। इसके द्वारा कई पक्षों का वर्णन किया गया है जैसे बिहार का ग्रामीण जीवन, जातिगत ऊंच—नीच व्यवस्था, आर्थिक असमानता, भ्रष्टाचार, राज्य और न्यायिक उदासीनता, चुनावी राजनीति आदि। विश्व के सबसे बड़े ग्रामीण गरीबी निवारण कार्यक्रम नरेगा के इस अध्ययन में शरण ने बाहरी और अन्दरूनी लोगों की बात की है।

पुस्तक के लेखक एम. आर. शरण मूलतः “विकास अर्थशास्त्री” हैं। वर्तमान में ये मेरीलैण्ड विश्वविद्यालय में एग्रीकल्चर एण्ड नेचुरल रिसोर्स इकोनोमिक विभाग में सहायक आचार्य के पद पर विकास अर्थशास्त्री के रूप में कार्यरत हैं। सन् 2020 में पीएच. डी. की उपाधि अर्जित करने के पश्चात् अपने एक मित्र की प्रेरणा से प्रोत्साहित होकर बिहार राज्य के नरेगा योजना पर अपने अनुसंधान अध्ययन के दौरान डायरी में लिखे गए महत्वपूर्ण अवलोकन बिन्दुओं, विचारों एवं टिप्पणियों को पुनः देखना प्रारम्भ किया। अन्ततः पुस्तक लास्ट अमंग इक्वल्स: पॉवर, कास्ट एण्ड पोलिटिक्स इन बिहारस विलेजेज ने यह स्वरूप लिया।

इस प्रकार यह पुस्तक एक अर्थशास्त्री द्वारा लिखित अर्थशास्त्रीय रचना है। पुस्तक में प्रस्तावना के बाद नौ अध्यायों में वर्णन प्रस्तुत किया गया है। लेखक ने अपनी पुस्तक में ग्रामीण शक्ति संरचना, जाति और बिहार के ग्रामीण लोगों में राजनीतिक जागरूकता एवं समाज में व्याप्त शोषण एवं भ्रष्टाचार पर विस्तृत एवं बारीकी से विभिन्न मुद्दों को बिहार मनरेगा वाच (Bihar Mnarega watch) के चश्मे से देखा है।

सभी अध्याय बाहरी (आरूट साईडर) और अन्दरूनी (इनसाइडर) लोगों के बीच निरंतर संघर्ष की दास्तान बताते हैं। बाहरी लोग वे हैं जो नरेगा में मजदूरी करते हैं। इनमें अधिकांश महिलाएं, अनुसूचित जनजाति एवं अनुसूचित जाति, निम्न एवं पिछड़ी और दलित जाति के लोग हैं, जो पूरी तरह दैनिक मजदूरी पर आश्रित हैं जबकि अन्दरूनी लोग मुखिया, पार्षद, स्थानीय सरकारी लोग, सचिव, ग्रामीण विकास विभाग एवं इसके अधिकारी आदि सम्मिलित हैं।

लेखक यह प्रश्न उठाते हैं कि ये लोग, महिलाएं, निम्न जाति, पिछड़ी जाति, गरीब एवं दलित, आदि, किस प्रकार अपने अधिकारों की मांग को लेकर जुड़ते हैं। अपनी इच्छाओं को किस प्रकार आवाज देते हैं और अपनी शिकायतों को स्पष्ट रूप से अभिव्यक्त करते हैं। एकता किस प्रकार निर्मित होती है ? शरण ने विस्तार से और दिलचस्प अंदाज में स्पष्ट रूप से अपनी बात कही है। वे गांव के मुखियाओं और मजदूरों के बीच प्रभुत्व के अदरूनी सूत्र और सीमांत की कहानी अभिव्यक्त करते हैं। मुजफ्फरपुर में कार्यरत नरेगा के लोगों के आंदोलन की कहानी बताते हुए वे व्यक्तिगत चरित्रों को जिस तरह से प्रस्तुत करते हैं, देखते ही बनता है।

यहां पर दो महत्वपूर्ण वर्णनों का उल्लेख करना आवश्यक है। प्रथम वर्णन बाहरी लोगों (आउट साईडर) की कहानी पर केन्द्रित है। बेरोजगारी की स्थिति में मजदूरों का संगठित होना और अंत में राजनीति में शोषण और भ्रष्टाचार को उजागर करते हुए आंदोलन का असफल होना हृदय विदारक है। मजदूरों का संगठन इसलिए असफल हो जाता है, क्योंकि राजनैतिक दलों की तुलना में आर्थिक रूप से चंदा इकट्ठा करने में वे असफल हो जाते हैं और मजदूरों (आउट साईडर) की एकता में से कुछ मजदूरों को पैसे एवं शराब के दम पर राजनैतिक दल अपनी ओर वोट देने का दबाव बनाते हैं। सभी मजदूर 'बाहरी लोगों' की श्रेणी में आते हैं, क्योंकि ये नरेगा कार्यक्रम से बाहरी हैं। महत्वपूर्ण यह भी है कि मुजफ्फरपुर के मजदूरों में महिलाओं की न सिर्फ संख्या ज्यादा है वरन् सामाजिक कार्यकर्ता एवं प्रभावशाली मजदूरों का नेतृत्व भी इनके हाथों में है। इस प्रकार बाहरी लोगों (आउट साईडर) की कहानी अपने सम्मान, सरकार का ध्यान अपनी स्थिति की ओर आकर्षित करने तथा अपेक्षित लाभों आदि की मांगों के लिए आंदोलनरत लोगों की कहानी है।

दूसरा वर्णन ग्रामीण स्थानीय प्रशासन के आंतरिक लोगों (इनसाइडर) पर केन्द्रित है, स्थानीय प्रशासन की इकाइयां आधारभूत ग्राम पंचायतें हैं, जिसमें गांव का मुखिया (सर्वाधिक शक्तियुक्त), पार्षद (वार्ड का सदस्य), ग्रामीण परिषद के सदस्य एवं अन्य प्रशासनिक अधिकारी आते हैं। ये सब आन्तरिक सदस्य (इनसाइडर) होते हैं। जिनका आउटसाइडर से संघर्ष रहता है। यह संघर्ष आर्थिक ही नहीं होता बल्कि शक्ति, जाति, राजनीति और शोषण के कारण भी देखने को मिलता है। यह पुस्तक सिद्ध करती है कि राजनीतिक संघर्ष में किस प्रकार राजनीतिक दल, धन-बल के आधार पर मजदूरों के आंदोलन को कमजोर कर देते हैं।

अंग्रेजी भाषा में लिखी यह पुस्तक हमें प्रभावशाली एवं गहन दृष्टि देती है। इसकी सहायता से पाठक समझ पाते हैं कि कैसे स्थानीय राजनीति और नागरिक सक्रियता ग्रामीण बिहार में लोगों के जीवन को प्रभावित करती है। पुस्तक से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि जब विकास अर्थशास्त्री अपने अनुसंधान क्षेत्र के अनुभवों से जुड़ता है तब उसकी रचना गहन और समृद्ध हो जाती है। यह पुस्तक 'विकास अर्थशास्त्री' द्वारा लिखित है परन्तु यह सामाजिक चिन्तकों, समाजशास्त्रियों तथा विद्यार्थियों के लिये भी महत्वपूर्ण है। इसकी विषयवस्तु समाजशास्त्र का क्षेत्र है। पुस्तक का अध्ययन करने से सामाजिक क्षेत्र में अनुसंधान पद्धति का सफल प्रयोग कर उसका वर्णन सरल रूप में करने की प्रेरणा मिलती है। निस्संदेह, पुस्तक समसामयिक और सामाजिक दृष्टिकोण से महत्वपूर्ण और पठनीय है।

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## महावीर कुमार जैन : जनजाति महिलाएँ : सामाजिक प्रस्थिति एवं स्वास्थ्य

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सहायक—आचार्य, समाजशास्त्र विभाग, मोहनलाल सुखाड़िया विश्वविद्यालय, उदयपुर

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प्रस्तुत पुस्तक महावीर कुमार जैन के पीएच. डी. शोध प्रबन्ध का परिष्कृत स्वरूप है। इस पुस्तक में लेखक ने जनजातीय महिलाओं की सामाजिक प्रस्थिति एवं स्वास्थ्य से जुड़े विभिन्न पहलुओं का गहन अध्ययन किया है। जनजातीय समाज में महिलाओं की भूमिका बहुत उपयोगी है। जनजातीय समुदाय की जीवन संरचना तथा प्रकार्यात्मकता में महिलाओं की प्रस्थिति एवं उनके स्वास्थ्य के आयामों को प्रभावित करने वाले अनेक कारकों को भी इस पुस्तक में सम्मिलित किया है। अनेक समाज वैज्ञानिकों ने सामाजशास्त्र के कई परिवर्तित आयामों का अध्ययन किया है, लेकिन किसी ने इनके स्वास्थ्य के मुद्दों को नहीं उठाया है। इसलिए इस पुस्तक में जनजातीय महिलाओं के स्वास्थ्य के सभी आयामों को देखने का प्रयास किया गया है। जनजातीय समाज में स्त्री का स्थान पुरुष के समान है, उसमें किसी भी प्रकार के भेदभाव का अभाव रहा है। दोनों को समान दृष्टिकोण से देखा गया है। जनजातीय महिलाओं में वर्तमान में स्वास्थ्य के प्रति जागरूकता आ रही है। शिक्षा के प्रति उनकी लगन में वृद्धि हो रही है।

वर्तमान में जनजाति समाज में स्त्री को अपने पति को चुनने का अधिकार है। इसी तरह विवाह—विच्छेद का अधिकार, विवाह—विच्छेद के पश्चात् जीवन निर्वाह राशि पाने का अधिकार, परिवार के सभी निर्णयों में उसकी सहभागिता भी देखने को मिलती है। वर्तमान में जनजाति समाज में महिलाओं में जागरूकता आ रही है। अन्धविश्वास, कृपथाओं का भी अन्त हो रहा है। भोजन, आवास, आमदनी, शिक्षा, वैवाहिक जीवन आदि में आंशिक परिवर्तन हो रहे हैं।

पुस्तक के प्रथम अध्याय में आदिवासी समाज की सामाजिक व्यवस्था एवं उनकी संस्कृति को स्पष्ट किया गया है। वर्तमान में इस समाज पर वैश्वीकरण, औद्योगिकीकरण, नगरीकरण तथा विकास की नवीन प्रक्रियाओं के चलते अन्य समूहों के साथ इनके सम्पर्क से, इस समाज में दिखाई देने वाले प्रभावों की ओर संकेत इस पुस्तक में किया गया है। आदिवासी नवीन मानकों को अपना रहे हैं, जिसके फलस्वरूप उनकी सामाजिक गतिशीलता में वृद्धि हुई है। शहरी सम्पर्क एवं बाहरी हस्तक्षेप ने उनकी संस्कृति, सभ्यता, समाज व उनके स्वास्थ्य को प्रभावित किया है। विभिन्न कालों में महिलाओं की प्रस्थिति को भी प्रदर्शित किया गया है। महिलाओं की स्वास्थ्य की दशाओं पर भी प्रकाश डाला गया है। जनजाति महिलाओं के विकास की योजनाओं एवं पूर्व में इन पर किए गए अनुसंधानों को भी इसमें दर्शाया गया है।

दूसरे अध्याय में अनुसंधान प्रारूप के अन्तर्गत अध्ययन क्षेत्र, निदर्शन प्रारूप, अनुसंधान चर, आनुभाविक मान्यताएँ एवं अध्ययन का विस्तार तथा उपकरण प्रविधियों को सम्मिलित किया गया है। इन्हीं बिन्दुओं के अन्तर्गत उदयपुर जिले के ग्रामीण एवं नगरीय आदिवासी महिलाओं की प्रस्थिति एवं स्वास्थ्य का अध्ययन किया गया है। आदिवासी सामाजिक व्यवस्था में महिलाओं की प्रस्थिति एवं स्वास्थ्य पर अब तक किसी भी अनुसंधानकर्ता ने शोध कार्य नहीं किया है। इस दृष्टि से यह कार्य अनुसंधानकर्ता का एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रयास है। अध्ययन क्षेत्र के अन्तर्गत दक्षिणी राजस्थान को चुना गया जिसके तहत प्रतिदर्श चयन के लिये उदयपुर जिले के ग्रामीण एवं शहरी क्षेत्र में बसे आदिवासी परिवारों की महिला उत्तरदाताओं के माध्यम से तथ्य संग्रहित किये गए हैं। इस अध्याय में विभिन्न परिवारों की

वरिष्ठ महिलाओं की प्रस्थिति एवं स्वास्थ्य के सम्बन्ध में पर्दा प्रथा, विवाह-विच्छेद के पश्चात् अधिकार, पैतृक सम्पत्तियों में हिस्सा, शिक्षा, नौकरी करने की स्वतन्त्रता पारिवारिक कार्यक्रमों में सहयोग आदि पर उनके अभिमत, राय, दृष्टिकोण, विचार उनकी पसन्द आदि का विश्लेषण अनुसंधानकर्ता ने विशेष रूप से स्पष्ट किया है।

तीसरे अध्याय में उत्तरदाताओं की सामाजिक-आर्थिक पृष्ठभूमि के अन्तर्गत आदिवासी परिवारों की सामाजिक-आर्थिक पृष्ठभूमि का विश्लेषण किया गया है। उत्तरदाताओं की सामाजिक-आर्थिक पृष्ठभूमि को उनकी आयु, शिक्षा, वैवाहिक स्थिति, परिवार का स्वास्थ्य, व्यवसाय, वार्षिक आय आदि के आधार पर विश्लेषित किया गया है। अध्याय तीन के अन्तर्गत आदिवासी महिलाओं की प्रस्थिति, उसके शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के अवसर, व्यवसाय करने की स्वतन्त्रता, आत्मनिर्भरता, समाज का सांस्कृतिक स्तर, समानता के आधार पर निर्मित पति-पत्नी के सम्बन्ध, महिला को अपनी पसन्द का पति चुनने का अधिकार, पारिवारिक सम्पत्ति जैसे- भवन और भूमि को बेचने और खरीदने का अधिकार, विवाह-विच्छेद का अधिकार और विवाह-विच्छेद होने के पश्चात् जीवन निर्वाह राशि पाने का अधिकार इत्यादि आयामों को इस अध्याय में सम्मिलित किया गया है।

पुस्तक के चतुर्थ अध्याय में बताया गया है कि आदिवासी समाज में महिला की प्रस्थिति प्रदत्त आधार पर तय होती है, और इन समाजों में सामाजिक रीति-रिवाज भिन्न-भिन्न होते हैं। आदिवासी महिलाओं में शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के अवसरों की स्वतन्त्रता, आत्मनिर्भरता, समाज का सांस्कृतिक स्तर, समानता के आधार पर निर्मित पति-पत्नी के सम्बन्ध, उसको जीवन साथी चुनने का अधिकार, सम्पत्ति में अधिकार, आत्मनिर्भरता, सम्पत्ति जैसे- भवन, भूमि, विवाह-विच्छेद आदि के आधार पर महिलाओं को कई अधिकार प्राप्त हैं। इन्हें भी पुस्तक में विस्तृत रूप से दर्शाया गया है।

अध्याय पाँच के अन्तर्गत लेखक ने आदिवासी महिलाओं की स्वास्थ्य प्रस्थिति और महिलाओं की सामाजिक-सांस्कृतिक प्रस्थिति का स्वास्थ्य स्तर पर पड़ने वाले प्रभाव का अध्ययन किया है। आदिवासी सामाजिक सांस्कृतिक ढाँचे में महिलाओं के स्वास्थ्य की देखभाल भी अच्छी तरह से होती है। आदिवासी समाज में स्वास्थ्य संरक्षण सम्बन्धी ज्ञान भी हस्तान्तरित होता है। आदिवासी लोग अपनी बीमारियों में चिकित्सा भी प्राकृतिक औषधियों के माध्यम से करते हैं। ये लोग प्राकृतिक औषधियों के बहुत जानकार होते हैं। ये आधुनिक चिकित्सा सुविधाओं का उपयोग कम ही करते हैं। आधुनिक चिकित्सकीय ज्ञान से ज्यादा परिचित नहीं होने वाले जनजाति लोगों द्वारा उपयोग में लायी जाने वाली स्वास्थ्यवर्धक एवं स्वास्थ्य संरक्षक दवाओं के सन्दर्भ में हम तार्किक अन्तःक्रिया के द्वारा यह भी कह सकते हैं कि उन्हें चिकित्सा पद्धतियों के मानकों के आधार पर उपयोगी दवाओं की जानकारी है। वे अपनी आर्थिक स्थिति, कुशलता और आपसी सौहार्द के द्वारा इस ज्ञान को सम्भालने का प्रयत्न करते हैं। अध्याय छः के अन्तर्गत लेखक ने 10 आदिवासी महिलाओं का वैयक्तिक अध्ययन भी किया है, जो शोध अध्ययन की गहनता को दर्शाता है। इसमें महिलाओं के स्वास्थ्य के विभिन्न आयाम स्पष्ट होते हैं।

अध्याय सात के अन्तर्गत लेखक ने आदिवासी महिलाओं के स्वास्थ्य के प्रति जागरूकता को लिया है। उनमें नवीन चेतना का होना आवश्यक है। सरकार की विभिन्न सरकारी योजनाओं को उन तक पहुँचाने के सुसंगठित प्रयत्न करना आवश्यक है, इस पर प्रकाश डाला है। आदिवासी समाज के परम्परागत मूल्य, विश्वास और सामाजिक संरचना जिन आर्थिक व्यवहारों में संचालित हो रहे हैं, उनमें वर्तमान विकास की आवश्यकताओं के अनुरूप परिवर्तन लाकर तथा अन्य शैक्षणिक एवं सांस्कृतिक सुधारों को प्रतिस्थापित कर स्वास्थ्य एवं चिकित्सा के प्रति नये आयामों का विकास किया जा सकता है। लेखक ने आदिवासी समाज की महिलाओं के सम्पूर्ण विकास के लिए कई नवीन आयामों को सुविकसित रूप में प्रस्तुत किया है। आदिवासी महिलाओं के लिए सरकार द्वारा चलाई जा रही योजनाओं को भी उन

तक पहुंचाना आवश्यक है। उनके बहुमूल्य सुझावों को लेकर कार्य करने से महिला विकास को सुचारु रूप से गति देने में सुविधा रहेगी ताकि महिलाओं का सर्वांगीण विकास हो सके। आदिवासी समाज की महिलाओं के लिए लेखक द्वारा लिखित यह पुस्तक, जो कि जनजाति महिलाएं: सामाजिक प्रस्थिति एवं स्वास्थ्य विषय के अन्तर्गत है, इस पुस्तक का शीर्षक भी सुरुचिपूर्ण और उपयोगी सिद्ध होता है। लेखक का आदिवासी समाज को नवीन दिशा देने के लिए यह लेखन कार्य एक महत्वपूर्ण मार्गदर्शन का कार्य करेगा।

अतः यह पुस्तक ज्ञान के क्षेत्र में एक बहुमूल्य योगदान है। आदिवासी स्त्री प्रश्नों की विवेचना और विश्लेषण में यह पुस्तक आदिवासी स्त्री के समाजशास्त्रीय अवलोकन और लेखन की दृष्टि को अपनाती है। राजस्थान में इस दृष्टि से किया गया समाजशास्त्रीय लेखन अभी कम ही उपलब्ध है। इसलिए इस पुस्तक की प्रासंगिकता बढ़ जाती है। लेखक ने महिलाओं पर लेखन की कई चुनौतियों को स्वीकार करते हुए यह महत्वपूर्ण कार्य किया है। प्रस्तुत पुस्तक राजस्थान में आदिवासी स्त्रियों के जीवन से जुड़े कई साक्ष्यों का सुगठित खजाना प्रस्तुत करती है। यह एक प्रामाणिक प्रयास है, जिसमें कई बार यह भी प्रतीत होता है, कि लेखक ने अपनी तथ्यात्मक जानकारी में कहीं-कहीं वृहद् स्त्रीवादी निष्कर्ष खोजने के प्रयास भी किये हैं। यही कारण है कि यह पुस्तक सभी के लिए आवश्यक रूप से पठनीय है। समाजशास्त्रीय शोध में स्वास्थ्य के समाजशास्त्र की शाखा के क्षेत्र में यह एक महत्वपूर्ण कृति है, जो आने वाले शोधार्थियों का भी मार्गदर्शन करेगी।

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## अशोक कुमार ( अनुवादक ): ज्यां द्रेज व अमर्त्य सेन : भारत और उसके विरोधाभास

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समीक्षक : जगराम गुर्जर

सहायक—आचार्य, समाजशास्त्र स्वामी विवेकानंद राजकीय स्नातकोत्तर कॉलेज, खेतड़ी

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भारतीय समाज वर्गों, जातियों व समूहों में बंटा हुआ है, जिसमें सामुदायिक पहचान केंद्रित राजनैतिक व आर्थिक भागीदारी के प्रति चेतना बढ़ती जा रही है। भारतीय समाज में ऐतिहासिक रूप से सामाजिक—सांस्कृतिक विशिष्ट संरचनाएं संस्थाबद्ध हैं, जो एक कॉकटेल समाज का निर्माण करती है। पुस्तक में राज्य की सामाजिक, आर्थिक नीति एवं समाज में परिवर्तनों के संबंधों को विश्लेषित किया है। सार्वजनिक सेवाओं व निजीकरण से सामाजिक—आर्थिक विषमता पर प्रभाव का विश्लेषण भी किया गया है। शिक्षा व स्वास्थ्य क्षेत्र में निजीकरण से विषमता बढ़ने को इंगित किया गया है। लेखक के द्वारा दुनिया के अनेक देशों से भारत के ही विभिन्न राज्यों की जनांकिकीय स्थिति की तुलना, नीतिगत कार्य योजनाओं के आधार पर यह स्पष्ट किया गया है कि कैसे शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य जैसी मूलभूत आवश्यकताओं में निजीकरण के घातक प्रभाव देखने को मिल सकते हैं। इस पुस्तक में भारत के राजनीतिक, सामाजिक व आर्थिक पक्षों के उन विरोधाभासों को प्रकट किया गया है, जिनके कारण वांछित परिवर्तन व प्रगति में संरचनात्मक बाधाएं उत्पन्न हुई हैं। अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता और विचार—विमर्श के वातावरण में बाधा भी लोकतंत्र पर गंभीर चोट करती है। पुस्तक में तुलनात्मक आंकड़ों व चिंतकों के उद्धरण से असमानता के विभिन्न स्वरूपों को प्रस्तुत किया गया है।

पुस्तक में कुल 10 अध्याय हैं, जिनमें उभरते भारत के नए प्रतिमानों, विषमता, भ्रष्टाचार तथा सार्वजनिक सेवाओं में सार्वजनिक व्यय के परिणामों के संबंध में विस्तृत दृष्टिपात किया गया है। लेखक द्वय द्वारा गरीबी और विषमता के सम्बन्ध में तथा लोकतांत्रिक व्यवस्था में सकारात्मक परिवर्तनों के प्रति एक आशा प्रकट की गई है। तुलनात्मक तथ्यों और आंकड़ों के आधार पर आर्थिक विकास दर का जीवन स्तर में सुधार की दर से सकारात्मक संबंध विश्लेषित किया है लेकिन लेखकों के अनुसार सभी देशों में एक जैसा संबंध नहीं देखा गया है। मसलन जरूरी नहीं कि तीव्र आर्थिक विकास दर से औसत आयु और बाल मृत्यु दर कम हो। इसके उलट तीव्र निजीकरण से भी विकास दर बढ़ सकती है, जो वर्ग विभाजन व विषमता बढ़ा सकती है। इसके अतिरिक्त शिक्षा, स्वास्थ्य व गरीबों पर दबाव बढ़ता है, जिससे शिशु मृत्यु दर, मातृ मृत्यु दर, औसत आयु उसी तरह से परिवर्तित नहीं होते, जैसा कि आर्थिक वृद्धि दर बढ़ती है। शैक्षणिक असमानता जाति व लैंगिक असमानता को प्रतिबिंबित करती है। इसी प्रकार उच्च पद व संपत्ति वितरण में जातिगत व लैंगिक विषमता प्रतिबिंबित होती है। पुस्तक में संसाधनों के वितरण और पर्यावरणीय पक्षों जैसे स्वच्छता, स्वच्छ पानी, स्वच्छ हवा इत्यादि के साथ—साथ महंगे उत्पाद, बिजली आपूर्ति, गैस आपूर्ति में संस्थागत बाधाओं को रेखांकित किया गया है। भारतीय समाज में विषमता के लिए उत्तरदायी कारणों की भी पुस्तक में चर्चा की गई है, जिसमें सार्वजनिक जवाबदेही कमतर होना भी एक कारण बताया गया है। सार्वजनिक सेवाओं में निजीकरण के कारण अधिकार विहीनता की स्थिति उत्पन्न हो जाती है तथा समृद्ध तबके को ध्यान में रखकर बनाई गई निजीकरण की नीतियां विषमता बढ़ाती हैं।

सार्वजनिक व्यय से संचालित योजनाओं जैसे मनरेगा, परिवार कल्याण कार्यक्रम, दोपहर का भोजन योजना आदि से आत्मचयन के सिद्धांत पर आधारित विकल्पों की उपलब्धता तथा महिला

सशक्तिकरण व लैंगिक समानता में सकारात्मक परिवर्तन देखा गया है। इस पुस्तक में भ्रष्टाचार को रोकने में सूचना के अधिकार और उसके उपयोग, सूचना के अधिकार के उपयोगकर्ताओं की सुरक्षा तथा अनावश्यक कानूनों को हटाने या परिवर्तन करने और प्रभावी व तीव्र न्याय व्यवस्था की भूमिका को इंगित किया गया है। लेखकों ने परंपरागत व्यवस्था में परिवर्तन करने के प्रति सुझाव भी रखे हैं, जिनमें व्यक्तिगत व सामूहिक प्रतिकार, कानूनी व संस्थागत परिवर्तन, सूचना के अधिकार, आधुनिक तकनीक का प्रयोग जैसे कंप्यूटर तकनीक, विकेंद्रीकरण, मीडिया व सार्वजनिक विमर्श की स्वतंत्रता को मुख्य रूप से रखा है। इस पुस्तक में एक सर्वथा उपयुक्त नई अवधारणा उदासीनता का वाम व दक्षिण गठबंधन नाम से जवाबदेही के प्रति सार्वजनिक संस्थाओं में होने वाली उदासीनता को स्पष्ट किया गया है।

पुस्तक में शिक्षा के केंद्रीय महत्त्व को बताते हुए भारत की स्कूली शिक्षा व उच्चतर शिक्षा की स्थिति पर चिंता प्रकट की गई है जिसमें वैश्विक स्तर पर नाममात्र के उच्च शिक्षण संस्थान भारत में होना और परंपरागत व्यवस्था व बुनियादी शिक्षा व्यवस्था का कमजोर होना प्रमुख है। शैक्षणिक विकास मानव अधिकारों तथा अवसरों तक पहुंच आसान करता है। भारत में शिक्षा व शिक्षण व्यवस्था में वर्ग विभाजन को भी इंगित किया गया है।

पुस्तक में सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य सेवाओं में निजीकरण, भ्रष्टाचार, टीकाकरण कार्यक्रम में वांछित सफलता नहीं मिलना, स्वास्थ्य बीमा की कम पहुंच इत्यादि स्थितियों ने लाभ को निम्न स्तर तक नहीं पहुंचने देने को भ्रष्टाचार का उत्पाद बताया है। पुस्तक के लिखे जाने तक भारत में शौचालयों की संख्या मात्र 35 प्रतिशत थी, यद्यपि इस पुस्तक के प्रकाशन के बाद बड़ी संख्या में स्वच्छता के मिशन ने सफलता प्राप्त की है। पुस्तक में स्वच्छता के प्रति जागरूकता में कमी और उसके महिलाओं पर दुष्प्रभावों को रेखांकित किया गया है। संक्षेप में इस पुस्तक में ज्ञानात्मक व अनुप्रयुक्त समाजशास्त्रीय दृष्टि से विभिन्न पक्षों पर समीक्षात्मक अध्याय लिखे गए हैं, जिसमें समाज के राजनीतिक, आर्थिक, सामाजिक व सांस्कृतिक पक्षों में अन्तर्सम्बंधों को स्पष्ट किया गया है, जो एक दूसरे को प्रभावित व परिवर्तित करते हैं। साथ ही यह भी बताने का प्रयास देखने को मिलता है कि इन विविध पक्षों में कैसे परिवर्तन को दिशा दी जा सकती है और कैसे अनुप्रयुक्त तथा सैद्धांतिक समाजशास्त्र को एक वैचारिक आधार प्रदान किया जा सकता है। भारतीय समाज के आर्थिक, राजनैतिक, सामाजिक तथा सांस्कृतिक विरोधाभास एवं भारतीय समाज में बढ़ती असमानता को समझने में अमर्त्य सेन और ज्यॉं द्रेज की यह कृति अत्यंत उपयोगी साबित होगी। यह पुस्तक समाजशास्त्र के अन्य विज्ञानों से संबंध और परस्पर ज्ञान और सिद्धांतों की सीमाएं कैसे मिलती हैं, इत्यादि को वैचारिक धरातल प्रदान करती है। निश्चय ही यह पुस्तक नियोजित परिवर्तनों के सैद्धान्तिक आधारों से समाजशास्त्र के महत्त्व को स्थापित करेगी।









# Rajasthan Sociological Association

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Sir,

I would like to be a Life Member (Rs.3500/-or the revised fee, whichever is in force) or Research Scholar/ Student Member (Rs.700/- or the revised fee, whichever is in force) for one year.....OR Institutional Member (Rs.10000/-or the revised fee, whichever is in force) of Rajasthan Sociological Association and remit Rs..... by Cash/Bank Draft/NEFT in favour of the Secretary, Rajasthan Sociological Association payable at Jaipur.

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11-12 GRD Colony, Opp. M.B. College, Udaipur - 313 001, Rajasthan, INDIA

+ (91) - (294) - 2584071, + (91) - (294) - 2485784