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**Dr Neerja A Gupta**

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## EDITORIAL

Bharat is the land of metaphysics and quantum physics, where the science is not different from religion. The studies here are the results of an eternal voyage bearing the cultural, spiritual and intellectual gathri.

Today, when the world is struggling with uncertainty, violence and stubbornness, the responsibility of an academic researcher has increased in thousand folds. The institutions cannot stand alone. The thoughts of a learner has to sync with the society. Thus we make a larger cosmos. We need to bring back the discourses in the academia to bring solutions. There may be multiple calls to bring solutions.

For example, the study of cosmology makes us feel 'smaller than small'. From the vastness of space, earth is just a pale blue dot, barely visible from the furthest reaches of the galaxy. This perspective generates humility in our world, which leads to less arrogance and more acceptance. At the same time, cosmology also makes us feel 'bigger than big'. We are composed of the same elements - carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen, oxygen - as the stars, creating a deep connection with the cosmos. As the Shvetashvatara Upanishad states, 'Amritasya putraha vayam', meaning, 'We are the children of the gods.' This can be interpreted as 'we are the children of the stars.' This interconnectedness lessens our sense of loneliness and makes us more fearless.

This recognition that we are interdependent on everything - from the sun, moon, and stars, to the microscopic planktons and chlorophyll - for our existence creates a greater sense of

compassion for nature and natural forces.

Now is an opportunity to rediscover our past and deep-discover our future. After the digital and virtual revolutions, and now the AI revolution, perhaps the next big thing could be astral communication and astral travel - mind to mind, and mind to moon communication. May these academic deliberations become a platform to catapult us into a more advanced world, hidden in our scriptures and spiritual science."

यत्र नान्तो निहितं मुहायां  
विश्व व्याप्त चराचर विभाति  
आत्मैक्य ज्ञात्वा मृत्युमेति ।

In that place where there is no end, no beginning, and only the self exists, one should realize that the universe is a manifestation of the self.

Regards,  
**Dr Neerja A Gupta**

## **Translation Scaffolding in Social Media Activation during the Covid-19 Emergency Lockdown**

**S K Agrawal**

### **Abstract**

Translation ends Communication Emergency and ensures community involvement. Translation as a connect language and communication bridge has stood out to lessen uncertainty, to respond to and resolve the situation by ensuring Social-Media activation during the times of Covid-19. However, there is still room to improve translation linguistics to help serve the mankind better.

The article also highlights the emerging role of Knowledge Translation Platforms in managing a communication connect during the Covid-19. Translation has acquired prominent roles for the pandemic has been challenged by scientific uncertainties, scarcity of relevant research, proliferation of misinformation and fake news, poor access to actionable evidence, time- constraints and weak collaboration among relevant stake holders, and the remedy lies in creating a Social-Media Translation Framework including the Knowledge Translation Platforms.

**Keywords:** Linguistics, Communication, Linguistic Competence, Misinformation, Contextualization, Knowledge Translation Platforms

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**Introduction**

The role of translators and interpreters in health settings is a critical element for the proper functioning of any health system, especially in countries with a multilingual and multicultural background like India. They help to bridge the linguistic gap between physicians and their patients. Language is not a static identity, and is likely to be influenced by major social changes. There is an overwhelming wave of information associated to the Pandemic Covid-19. This clearly leads to a surge in the creation of new words and concepts- a wave of new terminology that will eventually need translation into several languages. In the high- risk situations, communication plays a vital role. Many stranded patients (belonging to a different linguistic background from that of the place where they were admitted for treatment in India) could not receive appropriate medical attention because of their being of a different linguistic background. It is, therefore hardly debatable that the role of translation is significant to defeat the global threat of pandemic-Covid-19.

The outbreak of Covid-19, a new coronavirus has swept the whole world and triggered upheavals in all human societies, with countries forced to lockdown and citizens quarantined to control the spread of the disease. As a result of isolation, the normal function of society has adversely been affected. In the times when lockdowns and isolation cause confusion, increase contradiction and even exacerbate harm, communication always stands out to lessen uncertainty, respond to, and resolve the situation.

**Conceptualization**

The function of translation is, undoubtedly, communication. As a bridge of communication, the power of translation during the pandemic was beyond imagination. During the Pandemic, the dissemination of pandemic-related information to the whole world ranked the top priority. Translators, in cooperation with pandemic professionals, have translated valuable materials about the pandemic into major world languages. Translation in crisis communication was facilitated by the cooperation of volunteer groups as well. Cooperative translation, especially among patients, interpreters and medical staff is also significant

in facilitating the process of treatment and promoting treatment outcome. The researches have brought out that language barriers can be a threat to patient safety, and professional translators are able to reduce medical risks and promote the relationship between doctors and patients (Wilson; 2013). This is proved in the treatment of a Korean patient in a Chinese hospital when the patient, without a good command of Chinese, was reluctant to accept treatment and refused to communicate because of apprehension; however, with the help of interpreter comforting him in his mother tongue, the patient was gradually convinced and the procedure of medical treatment became successful (Guo et al; 2020). It is thus evident that translation is not merely communication; to a certain extent, it is psychological relief rendered to the patient by removing the language barriers for patients.

Translation during the critical times must consider the varied needs of the receiver to match his needs, values, background, culture and experience. Multi-modal translation can effectively satisfy the needs of different groups effectively by providing translated information through words, pictures, audios, videos and other available modes. Translation applications in mobile devices, multi-modal translation and online translation are sure to create a potential in the times of health crisis. Translators breathe life into content to help move the world with words. It is their translations that connect communities and families across languages. Right now, when the world is turning to digital experiences, translation has become more important than ever.

### **Translation and Covid-19 Challenge**

The current situation, however, has clearly led to a change in demand. There has been a decrease in demand for some major industries like hospitality and travel and a massive boost in eCommerce and digital services. As a result, some brands are translating more than ever before, others are translating far less than usual. A significant shift in the content has also been noticed. The translator Daniel writes:

“It has been a bit of everything from announcements explaining the measures that certain companies are taking to protect their staff

and clients, to companies telling users how their products can help them during the outbreak to communicate effectively with customers, to help vulnerable people, to move their work from an office to an online setting.” (<https://www.smartling.com/resources>)

The response to the Covid-19, the worst public health crisis has been challenged by several factors such as scientific uncertainties, scarcity of relevant research, proliferation of misinformation and fake news, poor access to actionable evidence, time constraints and weak collaborations among the stakeholders. In such a case, translation can play an important role in providing relevant and timely evidence to inform pandemic responses and bridge the gap between science, policy, practice and politics. Translation can engage world decision-makers and stakeholders in setting priorities, and help in synthesizing the best available evidence. It turns the noise into music by contextualizing and disseminating actionable evidence to target audience, it promotes trust and counter misinformation, it breaks down silos by providing platforms for cross-sectoral/ cultural dialogue, it monitors and evaluates policy response, it activates rapid-response services, it remains alert and responsive to changing priorities and needs, it searches for evidence beyond conventional types and resources, it harnesses the strength of complimentary evidence networks, leverages multiple dissemination channels tailored to varied audience, etc. Therefore, translation be positioned as a credible source of evidence during a pandemic.

Translation's role in prioritizing relevant issues on Social Media Platforms, mapping knowledge gaps and aligning research and evidence synthesis topics with priority needs during a public health crisis can hardly be exaggerated. Providing decision-makers and practitioners with policy and practice relevant evidence can help inform critical decisions and contribute to strengthening health systems and improving population health. Translation can harness the large pool of knowledge through synthesis to inform policy and practice; it enables them address the priority issues in a timely and transparent manner. The availability of evidence is not a sufficient condition for evidence-informed response during public health crisis. Translators recognize that one approach

for all in responding to public health crisis may not be appropriate and, therefore, they provide context-specific and actionable evidence to enable countries to adapt global solutions to local needs and realities; they can produce a range of translation products by combining insights from multiple sources in the form of systematic/rapid reviews, primary studies, etc.- in a user-friendly format and plain language in accordance with the local needs.

### **Knowledge Translation Platforms**

Knowledge Translation Platforms are the means to serve as a credible hub that provides trustworthy evidence that can be acted upon by the policy-makers, stakeholders, citizens and media in times of crisis. They can provide a platform that brings together the different stakeholders such as policy-makers, researchers, practitioners, civil society organizations from different sectors including health, education and economy to shape policy problems, increase mutual understanding, deliberate about policy and practice solutions and discuss implementation considerations. Significantly, they can ensure that the voices of those who are most affected by a public health-crisis are meaningfully included in the decision-making process.

Knowledge Translation Platforms can assist in monitoring the effectiveness of prevention and mitigation measures during a crisis and in assessing the impact on different population groups to guide a response effort that is more inclusive, equitable and responsive to the contextual needs. Given the high level of uncertainty associated with a health crisis such as Covid-19, there is a huge appetite for evidence to guide decision-making at all levels. This brings a critical opportunity for Knowledge Translation Platforms to not only respond to decision-makers' priorities and needs, but to also proactively shape the policy agenda by bringing often overlooked important issues to the attention of the decision-makers. For this, the Knowledge Translation Platforms have to closely watch the changes in the health system, monitor social media and keep abreast of how the Covid-19 situation is unfolding at the international level.

During the times of health crisis, evidence-informed decision-making may be challenged by scientific uncertainties and

scarcity of research, especially during the early phases of the crisis. Conventionally, the good standards for informing decisions are systematic reviews and randomized controlled trials. However, in crisis situations, evidence is needed to address a broad range of questions beyond what works. Usually, evidence at the time of crisis is scattered around different databases, journals, websites, etc. Therefore, the search for the best available evidence cannot remain confined to peer-reviewed journals and electronic databases but must include the other sources of information such as reports by international agencies, governmental websites, social media platforms, media websites, blogs and direct correspondence with decision-makers and health-professionals in the field. This non-conventional way for searching the evidence may be necessary in a context of rapid evolution and complexity with knowledge constantly changing. Translation platforms broaden the hemispheres of search.

No single entity can provide all the needed support for a comprehensive support to the pandemic. Researchers, public health specialists, guideline developers, epidemiologists, data analysts and evaluation experts are all generating relevant and timely evidence to inform the various aspects of the pandemic- from controlling the spread of virus to assessing the effectiveness of public health and social interventions to evaluating the impact on health and the economy. The pandemic Covid-19 has exposed the lacunae of siloed approaches to informing decision-making processes, and reinforced the need to build bridges to serve as networks between the organizations and institutions working in the complementary areas to inform decision-making related to different aspects of the pandemic. Further, it is critical to establish mechanism for coordinating and integrating researches, data and expertise across stakeholders and sectors in transparent and comprehensible ways for a more effective policy response during pandemics. It is possible only through Translation Platforms.

### **Translation Scaffolding and Social Media Activation**

Dissemination of the evidence to target the right audience is crucial to achieve the desirable impact. In the times of Pandemic, when conventional dissemination methods may not be feasible,

it is critical for Knowledge Translation Platforms to innovate and leverage multiple dissemination channels suited to the context and audience at the right time. It is through networking with the Social -Media that the Knowledge Translation Platforms can leverage to help disseminate the evidence to a wide range of audience comprising policy-makers, health-care professionals, non-governmental organizations and the general public. For this Knowledge Translation Platforms need to evolve a communication strategy to allow a timely response in times of crises and emergencies.

Covid-19 is an opportunity to amplify the roles of Knowledge Translation Platforms and position them as go-to-hubs for trustworthy evidence that can inform policies and practice during public health crises. In the Post-Covid Era, the focus will shift to strengthening the public health system. The integral components of strengthening the public health system are the organizations, initiatives and networks. Therefore, the need of the hour is to invest in strengthening these entities by promoting their integration and institutionalization within the policy-making processes.

Covid-19 is history's biggest translation challenge. So far as Machine translation is concerned services like Google Translate support only 100 languages. What about thousands of other languages-spoken by people just as vulnerable to the pandemic? As a result, we are facing what the Epidemic Intelligence Service Program of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention considers – a Communication Emergency, or what the WHO calls an “Infodemic”. This has given rise to several Covid translation projects such as Adivasi Lives Matters (in India) dealing with Kodava, Marathi and Odia, etc. Linguistic competence is important for providing a sufficient context about how a disease works; this helps people to figure out reasonable precautions in unanticipated circumstances and in putting out this information in appropriate community language to convince the people that the advice is reputable and should be followed.

During a crisis whether it is local to one region or is a worldwide pandemic, communicating effectively in the languages and formats people understand is central to any

effective program on the ground. It is, therefore evident that community engagement in relevant languages be recognized as a key-strategy. Translation linguistics has played a vital role in crisis management by ensuring community involvement.

Translators, although solitary professionals who rarely need to leave their homes for their work, have been affected by Covid-19 in more than one way. We cannot ignore the fact that several talented linguists have worked hard in translating and interpreting medical research and data to ensure a consistent flow of accurate information for healthcare providers and citizens worldwide.

Misinformation can cause damage. Besides the Virus, we are forced to combat a second challenge. The translators/interpreters have to find correct data buried in massive amounts of inaccurate information that spreads across social media faster than the Virus itself. Like any other country, India is also expected to collaborate and overcome communication barriers to make sure all citizens receive correct instructions, regardless of the language or dialect they speak. As such, interpreters and translators work closely with public authorities and healthcare providers to facilitate vital information exchange. For instance, President Trump's administration was required to translate Covid-19 information to help the Spanish Community in the US. Unfortunately, a leading country like India could not develop such a mechanism. Keeping up with the new information about the Virus and translating any further detail that can help people protect themselves has become a challenge.

Another crucial area in which translation can make a difference in the fight against Covid-19 is the academic field. Medical translation requires cent-percent accuracy. Therefore, the linguists need to have in-depth knowledge of concepts and terminology to make sure that no detail is added or lost in translation. Information in native language helps scientists to focus on their work instead of wasting time and energy in going through reports written in languages that they are less comfortable using. Furthermore, linguists should also explain the scientific facts and transfer them from scientists to politicians and citizens. Gaps in communication is bound to leave space for speculation, misinformation and panic, all with

harmful effects on citizens' health and well-being. As a consequence, the linguistic inputs change the way the people communicate.

Examining the Covid-19 English language corpus from the terminological point of view, scientific research literature refers to the disease Covid-19 approximately and uses the lexical unit 'coronavirus' with modifiers such as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus. However, the analysis of the English language ad-hoc corpus of newspaper articles from international mass media shows 'coronavirus' is not always used in this way. On the contrary, it is widely used to refer to the Covid-19 disease as a metonymic term. This common usage may result in misleading a layman as the Covid-19 is not the first disease caused by a coronavirus and is unlikely to be the last. Multilingual mass media is a significant source of information about the pandemic. When searching for information on the Internet using the term 'coronavirus' in Hindi instead of SARS-COV-2 or COVID-19, researchers and common men may find search results on avian coronavirus, MERS or SARS-COV-2 which is a human pathogen-that is, it infects humans, a characteristic not shared by most of the coronaviruses until 2003 when SARS-COV-1 appeared.

### **Translation in Multilingual Indian Social -Media during Covid-19 Emergency Lockdown**

In India, a country dominated by English-centered multilingualism in medical and technical sciences, the translation linguistics has, somehow, loitered. The most confusing phrase 'social distancing' abundantly used during the Covid-19 could not be given an equivalent in Hindi. Protest linguistics and protestations pleaded that the term be replaced by 'physical distancing' and dragged the issue even to the Court which dismissed the petition at the first instance. Despite WHO (World Health Organization)'s advisory, the phrase could not be substituted as desired. The linguists failed to comprehend that a term which is more in use and is more convenient to pronounce is more acceptable to the people in general. Moreover, in such cases connotational overtones become more significant. The people of the country could very well

comprehend, and were expected to practice the phrase in its intended perspective.

This drew the attention of the Bollywood, and Paresh Raval (a Bollywood Actor-Producer) responded to the call of Indian Leadership that a Hindi equivalent 'tan duri' can replace 'social distancing'. It, however, could not be popularized. The translation linguistics failed even in extending the frontiers of the native language by including the word which was more in prevalence, and in most cases, it failed to suggest a version which communicatively was acceptable and effective. Rather, their efforts ended up in giving a translated version which although adhered to the 'Purity' parameters of linguistics but invited a lot of difficulties in articulation. The excessively enthusiastic Hindi translators came out with such a difficult translation that practicing such words in colloquial contexts was almost impossible. Some such funny words- translation include Covid-19- 'ubharate shavsan for Virus' (<http://openwho.org>), 'aatam-alhadagi' for self-quarantine, etc. (<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca>)

When equivalents seem difficult in the native language, the prime duty of a translator in his/her role as a sociolinguist should be to adopt a flexible approach by giving space to the invented words and coinages belonging to a different language in the language of laity and ensure their popularization so that these words are not miscomprehended. Miscomprehension not only hinders physiological functioning but also creates mental and psychological barriers.

World over, the Sociolinguists could not succeed in connecting the epidemic Covid-19 to the concerned cultural perspective. As a result, the disease culminated into a scare-a terrible disease causing a great agitation, anxiety, affright, alarm, apprehension, dread, fright, horror, trepidation; this has further led to void, anger and frustration. We, under a well-designed conspiracy have become accustomed to poke fun at our own Scriptures which provide a narrative of such a terrible pandemic although in a different contemporaneous phraseology. We could not even learn a lesson from our grand narratives. In Ramcharitmanas, Lockdown (in Hindi 'Ekant') has very explicitly been mentioned, as a cure of the disease which kills

the humans. The two couplets of Uttar Kand (no 20 & 121) mention:

Sub ke ninda je jar karhi  
 Te chamgadur hoi avtarahi  
 Sunahu tat ab manas roga  
 Jinhe dukh pavhi sab loga  
 Moh sakal vyadhin kar mula  
 Tinh te puni upajahi bahu shula  
 Kam bat kaf lobh apara  
 Krodh pitt nit chhati jara (Couplet -20)  
 Ek vyadhi bas nar marhi  
 A asadhi bahu vyadhi  
 Peedhi santat jeev kahun  
 Sau kimi lahe samadhi (Couplet-121)

The Couplets mean that when condemnation skyrockets and sins soar high, bats will descend on the earth; it will cause an outbreak of a terrible disease (epidemic or pandemic) and people will die. This disease will kill the humans only and its cure lies in divine worship, charity and self-isolation. This self-isolation in its modern apparel has been named 'Lockdown'.

Our intellectual and cultural knowledge related to medical sciences, enshrined in our Ayurveda Scriptures, such as Charak Samhita could not be brought out and properly utilized, for the monopoly of the West and our own apprehensions and biases about our own biological and medical sciences. Smita Naram (CMD of Ayushakti) writes:

"I was surprised to find this description in the Charak Samhita. It was rather unbelievable. Charak Samhita carries specific description of Krimi, i.e., infections. It describes Sleshma Krimi. It is really fascinating the way Krimi has been described. Sleshma Krimi cannot be seen by the naked eyes as they are very small (maha sukshma). One needs a special instrument to see a Sleshma Krimi. These Krimis settle in one's respiratory system. (This was written 5000 years ago.)

The description is so close to that of Covid-19. In Charak Samhita, it is beautifully explained as to how Sleshma Krimis after settling in the respiratory system create cough, severe congestion and breathlessness. Three ways are suggested to prevent the infection and protect oneself from it- isolate yourself, don't feed the Krimis anything that strengthen them and make

them more active such as bread, sugar, wheat and dairy products, use immune- boasting herbs.” (Indiatoday.in/amp/india)

The Educated Marginalized, however, considering it their duty spread the covid awareness amongst the masses in the regional languages. The citizens can be made to take personal hygiene seriously amid the Covid-19 through catchy tunes in one's own tongue. The folk-artists (like the other ones of almost all the States) in the Udaipur, Banswara and Dungarpur districts of Rajasthan have continuously spread awareness about the 'Dos' and 'Don'ts' of living through the Covid-19. Social Media translated them into English to keep them in wider circulation. Given below is the song composed and sung (translated into English) by Laxman Lal Gurjar and Thawar Chand Khanders in Vagri:

O my friend what do I say about you  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 Coronavirus has spread in the country  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 Corona is known to be very harmful  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 Listen to what PM Modi is saying  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 Think of the country as your family  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 Whoever has a cough or fever, get it checked  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 If you have difficulty breathing, get it checked  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 Cover your nose while sneezing  
 And mouth while you cough  
 Stay at home till the 14 of April  
 Wash your hands with soap  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 Keep one meter distance between each other  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 Don't go to fairs or weddings  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 Corona's ghost needs to be erased  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April  
 I am singing to you  
 Please understand the gravity of what I am saying  
 Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April

We have to show our love for the country  
Stay at home till the 14<sup>th</sup> of April\*

Social Media has taken up the Sociolinguistic Interventionist's role and have translated the Covid-19 regional literature into English and other Indian and world languages.

The analysis makes it evident that our translation sociolinguistics must help build a bridge to fill up the divisive gap (between traditional and so called modern). Our cultural and intellectual knowledge be brought out in a suitable comprehensible linguistics to generate awareness among the people and help evolve an alternative cure system.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, communication shall never cease. There will always be a need to connect and communicate, and there will always be a need for translation to drive those connections by eliminating borders and establishing affinity. If the situation we find ourselves in has taught us anything, it's the power of language and human connection- a connection that has become ever more important. Therefore, translation in global health crisis needs improvement. Crisis Translation be accorded top priority; translation of minority languages be promoted and the project of training the translators with cross-discipline knowledge including medicine and pharmacy be undertaken. This is the first pandemic in the human history where we have acquired the power and have the responsibility to share the network of linguistic care that ultimately spans over the globe.

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\*The Government of India has declared Complete Bandh till 14<sup>th</sup> April during the COVID-19

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# **Buddhism's Role in India's Soft-power Strategy**

**Himani Kaushik**

## **Abstract**

The current administration is markedly emphasizing the incorporation of soft power strategies into India's foreign policy. A distinctive facet of these endeavours is the active involvement in what is termed as Buddhist diplomacy. Given Buddhism's inherent focus on peaceful coexistence and its extensive presence across the pan-Asian region, it serves as a conducive element for soft-power diplomatic initiatives. This concise analysis will scrutinize India's efforts to harness its historical and contemporary affiliations with Buddhism, juxtaposed against analogous endeavours by the Chinese government.

**Keywords:** Buddhism, Cultural Diplomacy, Spiritual Diplomacy, Soft Power.

## **Introduction**

India has consistently prioritized non-military approaches in its foreign policy, guided by the principles of peaceful coexistence, particularly stemming from Jawaharlal Nehru's Panchsheel principles. Despite India's evolving international role and aspirations of great power, it continues to emphasize ideas supporting non-coercive power projection in foreign-

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policy formulations. This analysis delves into a specific facet of India's soft power projection, namely its use of historical ties to Buddhism in foreign affairs and diplomacy. A notable event underscoring this approach occurred on Buddha Purnima when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Lumbini, the birthplace of Gautama Buddha, on May 16, 2022, accompanied by his Nepalese counterpart, Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba. This visit marked the foundation stone laying for the India International Center for Buddhist Culture and Heritage, exemplifying a growing use of Buddhism in India's soft power diplomacy. Buddhism's focus on peaceful coexistence aligns with international diplomatic goals and regional stability.

Joseph Nye's soft power model, advocating influence without coercion, finds resonance in India's strategy, distinct from conventional methods like the export of Bollywood and yoga. Unlike cultural exports, Buddhism places emphasis on shared cultural history rather than the promotion of specific cultural goods. Post-independence, India consciously avoided reliance on military might through initiatives such as the Panchsheel Initiative. The Panchamrit principles, with the fifth principle Sanskriti evam Sabhyata (culture and civilizational links), underscore India's intent to leverage historical ties in its non-coercive soft power strategy.

"India has actively invested in enhancing its Buddhist diplomacy, primarily by focusing on the development of the 'Buddhist tourist circuit' to boost tourism. Prime Minister [PM's Name] has consistently visited Buddhist sites during Southeast and East Asian tours, emphasizing India's commitment to preserving Buddhist culture and heritage, aiming to strengthen global ties within the Buddhist community. The recent high-profile Delhi summit underscores India's endeavor to play a leading role in shaping global discourse on Buddhist issues. Notably, against the backdrop of the Russia-Ukraine crisis, the PM highlighted India's commitment to promoting 'Buddha' instead of 'Yuddha,' aligning with the nation's stance against war in the modern era. The summit's theme, "Responses to Contemporary Challenges: Philosophy to Praxis," reflects India's effort to present an alternative to global politics, emphasizing morality as a guiding principle. With historical and cultural ties

to Buddhism, India is strategically positioned to contribute significantly to this discourse.

Buddhist diplomacy serves as a tool for regional cohesion, considering that nearly 97% of the global Buddhist population resides in Asia. India competes with China for dominance in leveraging Buddhist heritage for soft power, holding an advantage due to its historical connections with the faith. However, despite being home to key Buddhist sites, India faces challenges in attracting Buddhist tourists compared to destinations like Thailand and Cambodia. The guiding principles of India's Buddhism diplomacy align with the Panchamrit principles in foreign policy, emphasizing cultural and civilizational links. The Delhi summit, hosting a diverse group of 171 foreign delegates and 150 delegates from Indian Buddhist organizations, showcased India's commitment to peaceful cooperation and regional stability.

India recognizes Buddhism's importance in public diplomacy and aims to utilize it effectively. However, to stay ahead of China, more proactive measures are required. China's attempts to control the appointment of the next Dalai Lama pose a challenge to India's soft power projection through Buddhism, necessitating India's strategic actions. To strengthen its Buddhist diplomacy, India should continue promoting Buddhism at the government level and organize cultural events showcasing its rich Buddhist history. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) can play a pivotal role in coordinating such events both within and outside India. Strengthening ties with global Buddhist institutions and leaders, as initiated in the Delhi summit, is crucial for India to maintain its standing in the global Buddhist community."

China has concurrently adopted Buddhism to exert influence, particularly in its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), incorporating Buddhist-majority nations into its discourse. Both India and China recognize Buddhism's potential in laying the groundwork for future diplomatic, economic, cultural, and strategic ties in the post-World War II era. Despite India having a relatively small Buddhist population, its legitimacy in promoting Buddhist diplomacy is strengthened by three factors: Buddhism's origins in India, the presence of significant Buddhist sites, and

India's stance as a champion of the oppressed, exemplified by the Dalai Lama's exile in Dharamshala. Buddhism plays a pivotal role in reinforcing ties with Asian nations, aligning with broader foreign policy goals like "Act East" and "Neighborhood First." India strategically employs several avenues to implement a subdued soft power strategy through Buddhism. This includes diplomatic visits to Buddhist countries, religious tourism, and the creation of specialized Buddhist tourist circuits. The restoration of Nalanda University stands out as a significant academic endeavor to enhance India's position in the global Buddhist order.

The Dalai Lama dispute exemplifies the competition between India and China in Buddhist diplomacy. While the Dalai Lama's presence in Dharamshala has enhanced India's standing among Buddhists, it remains a point of conflict due to differing views on Chinese sovereignty. The Indian government has infused momentum into economic, cultural, and educational activities by highlighting its Buddhist history. Initiatives include a \$15 million grant for promoting Buddhist links with Sri Lanka and leveraging Buddhism to strengthen ties with Japan, a fellow regional economic power.

India's diverse soft power diplomacy, theoretically centered on shared cultural development, was underscored by hosting the international conference "Shared Buddhist History" in 2023. While there have been notable developments in areas like Buddhist tourism and Nalanda University, effective execution remains a challenge. The use of soft power, including Buddhism, is not without challenges. Nye emphasizes a nation's credibility in measuring its soft power, and issues like poor human development indices, social inequality, political violence, corruption, and inadequate infrastructure might hinder India's soft power effectiveness. Striking a balance between economic reforms and social welfare spending is crucial for optimal deployment. India's 2017 entry as a permanent member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) presents an opportunity to counterbalance China's dominance. As India assumes the SCO presidency, emphasizing cultural and historical ties with Central Asia, especially through Buddhism, can enhance its soft power in the Eurasian region. The China-

Pakistan axis within the SCO necessitates India leveraging this platform for its Eurasian strategy, focusing on food security, connectivity, and economic development. Highlighting historical and cultural connections through Buddhism becomes crucial in this context.

Over the past decade, Indian foreign policy, particularly under Narendra Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) since 2014, has strategically employed Buddhism. This is evident in Modi's promotion of an "Indian vision of Buddhism," aligning historical ties with contemporary geopolitical concerns, notably strained relations with China along the Himalayan frontier. Modi has placed Buddhism at the core of India's diplomacy, emphasizing its role in fostering civilizational bonds with Buddhist nations. Modi's initiatives include the proclamation at the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya to develop it as a spiritual capital between India and the Buddhist world. The "Samvad" initiative, a Global Hindu-Buddhist Initiative, aimed to boost Buddhist heritage across Asia and counter China's Silk Road project. India's soft power strategy involving Buddhism extends to strategic partnerships with countries like Japan, Mongolia, Vietnam, South Korea, Thailand, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka. Tibetan Buddhism has been a source of Indian soft power diplomacy, influencing relations with Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia, and playing a role in the territorial disputes with China. Notably, both China and India, non-Buddhist states, employ Buddhism for diplomatic purposes. China's "Buddhism with Chinese characteristics" serves diplomatic goals, enhancing regional relations and projecting the Chinese dream.

The BJP, rooted in Hindu nationalism, strategically invokes Buddhism, presenting it as a source of Indian greatness. Modi's emphasis on Yoga further connects with Buddhism, contributing to India's soft power religiosity. Geopolitically, India's use of Buddhism aligns with its rising power status and aims for influence in the immediate and extended neighborhood. The deployment of Buddhism in India's foreign policy is evident in various international conferences and initiatives. The International Conference on "Shared Buddhist Heritage" in March 2023, the National Conference on the Nalanda Buddhism Tradition, and the Global Buddhist Summit showcased India's

commitment to promoting Buddhist ties with Central Asia and countering China's influence. India's diplomatic efforts also include the development of the Buddha Circuit, rejuvenation of pilgrimage centers, and the establishment of cultural and heritage centers. The Kushinagar International Airport and the India International Centre for Buddhist Culture and Heritage in Lumbini, Nepal, highlight India's strategic use of Buddhism for religious tourism and outreach to Southeast Asia and East Asia.

The Global Buddhist Summit, organized by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), became a platform for India to exert soft power, countering China and expanding its influence in the Buddhist world. China's absence from IBC events contrasts with its promotion of the World Buddhist Forum (WBF). The Dalai Lama's active participation in these events and India's official acknowledgment further contribute to India's strategic deployment of Buddhism. The Dalai Lama's birthday diplomacy, marked by India's official recognition and Modi's personal greetings, reflects India's use of Buddhism as a tool of soft power. The Tibetan Government-in-Exile's celebrations, attended by a Taiwan legislative member, intensify tensions with China. The border conflicts in 2020 and 2022 contribute to India's competitive use of Buddhism. Looking forward, border friction and the eventual death of the Dalai Lama are likely to sharpen India's competitive use of Buddhism. India's control of Tibetan Buddhist zones in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, coupled with events like the Global Buddhist Summit, will continue to be instrumental in India's soft balancing strategy. As Modi approaches the next general election in June 2024, this Buddhist feature of Indian public diplomacy is expected to persist.

Over the last ten years, Indian foreign policy, especially under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led by Narendra Modi since 2014, has strategically incorporated Buddhism. This is evident in Modi's promotion of an "Indian vision of Buddhism," leveraging historical ties to address contemporary geopolitical concerns, particularly strained relations with China along the Himalayan frontier. Modi has positioned Buddhism as a cornerstone of India's diplomacy, emphasizing its role in fostering civilizational ties with Buddhist nations.

Modi's initiatives encompass a declaration at the Mahabodhi Temple in Bodh Gaya to develop it as a spiritual capital between India and the Buddhist world. The "Samvad" initiative, a Global Hindu-Buddhist Initiative, aimed to enhance Buddhist heritage across Asia and counter China's Silk Road project. India's soft power strategy involving Buddhism extends to forging strategic partnerships with countries such as Japan, Mongolia, Vietnam, South Korea, Thailand, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka.

Tibetan Buddhism has played a crucial role in India's soft power diplomacy, influencing relations with Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia, and contributing to territorial disputes with China. Both China and India, despite being non-Buddhist states, strategically employ Buddhism for diplomatic purposes. China's "Buddhism with Chinese characteristics" serves diplomatic goals by improving regional relations and projecting the Chinese dream. Despite the BJP's roots in Hindu nationalism, it strategically embraces Buddhism, presenting it as a source of Indian greatness. Modi's emphasis on Yoga further strengthens the connection with Buddhism, contributing to India's soft power in religious matters. Geopolitically, India's utilization of Buddhism aligns with its rising power status and aspirations for influence in its immediate and extended neighborhood.

The deployment of Buddhism in India's foreign policy is evident in various international conferences and initiatives. Examples include the International Conference on "Shared Buddhist Heritage" in March 2023, the National Conference on the Nalanda Buddhism Tradition, and the Global Buddhist Summit, all demonstrating India's commitment to promoting Buddhist ties with Central Asia and countering China's influence. India's diplomatic efforts extend to the development of the Buddha Circuit, the revival of pilgrimage centers, and the establishment of cultural and heritage centers. Projects such as the Kushinagar International Airport and the India International Centre for Buddhist Culture and Heritage in Lumbini, Nepal, underscore India's strategic use of Buddhism for religious tourism and outreach to Southeast Asia and East Asia.

India's utilization of Buddhism as a soft power tool reflects a calculated and theoretical approach within its foreign policy framework. The strategic deployment of Buddhism aligns with

key theoretical concepts in international relations, showcasing India's pursuit of influence, cultural diplomacy, and the navigation of geopolitical challenges. Here's a theoretical perspective on India's use of Buddhism as soft power:

1. **Cultural Diplomacy and Constructivism:** India's emphasis on Buddhism can be understood through the lens of constructivism, where the construction of shared cultural narratives and norms plays a vital role in shaping international relations. By promoting an "Indian vision of Buddhism" and cultivating civilizational bonds, India seeks to construct a narrative that reinforces shared values and norms with Buddhist nations, contributing to cultural diplomacy.
2. **Soft Power and Joseph Nye's Framework:** The deployment of Buddhism aligns with Joseph Nye's concept of soft power, which emphasizes the ability of a country to attract and co-opt rather than coerce. India strategically leverages Buddhism to enhance its attractiveness on the global stage, fostering cultural ties and projecting a positive image that goes beyond conventional political and economic realms.
3. **Religious Diplomacy and Faith-Based Soft Power:** India's focus on Buddhism exemplifies the growing significance of faith-based soft power in international relations. By positioning Buddhism as a source of Indian greatness, the BJP, rooted in Hindu nationalism, engages in religious diplomacy, seeking to influence global perceptions and build strategic partnerships.
4. **Strategic Narratives and Identity Politics:** The BJP's strategic invocation of Buddhism can be analyzed through the framework of strategic narratives, emphasizing how states construct narratives to influence domestic and international audiences. By presenting Buddhism as a core element of India's identity and greatness, the BJP aims to shape perceptions, both domestically and internationally, contributing to the construction of a strategic narrative that aligns with its foreign policy goals.

5. **Securitization of Buddhism in Geopolitics:** The incorporation of Buddhism into India's foreign policy can be viewed through the lens of securitization theory. With strained relations along the Himalayan frontier, particularly with China, India strategically securitizes Buddhism, presenting it as a tool to address geopolitical challenges and strengthen regional stability.
6. **Neoclassical Realism and Power Projection:** From a neoclassical realist perspective, India's use of Buddhism can be seen as a calculated response to its rising power status. By projecting influence through soft power, India seeks to shape the behavior of other states and secure its interests in the immediate and extended neighborhood, aligning with the principles of neoclassical realism.
7. **Competitive Soft Balancing:** India's competitive use of Buddhism, especially in the context of border conflicts with China, resonates with the concept of soft balancing. India strategically deploys cultural and religious elements to counterbalance China's influence, showcasing how soft power can be employed in a competitive geopolitical environment.

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The Global Buddhist Summit, organized by the International Buddhist Confederation (IBC), has become a platform for India to exert soft power, counter China, and expand its influence in the Buddhist world. The absence of China from IBC events contrasts with its promotion of the World Buddhist Forum (WBF). The Dalai Lama's active participation in these events and India's official acknowledgment further contribute to India's strategic deployment of Buddhism. India's use of Buddhism as a tool of soft power is evident in the Dalai Lama's birthday diplomacy, marked by India's official recognition and Modi's personal greetings. The celebrations of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, attended by a Taiwan legislative member, intensify tensions with China. The border conflicts in 2020 and 2022 contribute to India's competitive use of Buddhism. Looking ahead, border tensions and the eventual passing of the Dalai Lama are likely to intensify India's competitive use of Buddhism. India's control of Tibetan Buddhist zones in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh, coupled with events like the Global

Buddhist Summit, will continue to play a crucial role in India's soft balancing strategy. As Modi approaches the next general election in June 2024, this Buddhist aspect of Indian public diplomacy is expected to endure.

India's strategic use of Buddhism as soft power is deeply rooted in theoretical frameworks that highlight the significance of cultural diplomacy, identity construction, and the securitization of cultural elements in the realm of international relations. This theoretical lens provides insights into the motivations, objectives, and implications of India's nuanced approach to leveraging Buddhism on the global stage. The use of Buddhism becomes a component of competitive soft balancing strategies, with both nations strategically deploying their cultural and religious influence to counterbalance each other's geopolitical moves. Diplomacy around Buddhism intersects with broader geopolitical relations, especially in areas of territorial disputes, border conflicts, and regional influence. In conclusion, diplomacy around Buddhism serves as a significant tool for soft power projection and cultural diplomacy for both India and China. The interplay of historical, cultural, and geopolitical factors in their approaches to Buddhism reflects the complexities and nuances in their respective diplomatic strategies. India must harness the extensive influence of Bollywood to advance its Buddhist heritage, an aspect where it lags China's dominance in shaping the narrative on Buddhism through Hollywood. The cinematic realm remains largely unexplored by India in promoting its Buddhist legacy, unlike China's comprehensive efforts.

The upcoming G-20 presidency provides a significant opportunity for India to amplify its Buddhist diplomacy, leveraging cultural engagements, particularly in the cinematic sphere. Aligning with the theme of India's G-20 presidency, 'One Earth, One Family, One Future,' presents a strategic avenue to integrate Buddhist teachings, considering Buddha's historical role as the pioneer of peace diplomacy. In these challenging times, Buddha's principles of peace and collaboration could serve as a beacon guiding India's diplomatic approach on the global stage. Indian government's neighborhood policy is recognizing the spiritual and cultural linkages as a strong foundation for connecting and constructing a partnership with its neighboring and other Asian countries and Buddhism plays

a significant role in reviving its cultural and religious links with civilizational partners.

In the current global landscape, there is a competition between China and India to position themselves as the representatives of Buddhism. Both countries are actively engaging in efforts to attract attention, particularly from Asian Buddhist nations, showcasing their commitment to Buddhism. Xi Jinping's adoption of a role as a Buddhist guardian contributes to presenting China as a world power with a benevolent image. The globalization of Buddhism serves China's economic initiatives, and its religious diplomacy proves instrumental in securing economic and infrastructure projects in countries such as Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and others. According to P. Stobdan, China is outpacing India in utilizing Buddhism to expand its influence, with initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (OBOR) being described as the 'political geography of Buddhism.' For instance, Nepal is considering linking OBOR with Lumbini, the birthplace of Buddha, while Pakistan is reviving the 'Gandhara trail' to connect Lahore, Taxila, and Peshawar networks. Notably, relics from Taxila are being sent to Sri Lanka for public display during the Vesak month.

This strategic approach extends to cultural exchanges, as evidenced by Sri Lankan monks visiting Taxila and top Bhutanese monks visiting the Saidu Sharif monastery in the Swat Valley, the birthplace of Guru Padmasambhava (P. Stobdan, 2017). In today's world, where cultural diplomacy and soft power play a crucial role, there is a resurgence of interest in Buddhism, with both India and China asserting their claims on the central tenets of Buddhist values. Both nations aim to connect with the Buddhist world, projecting an image of peaceful and harmonious growth that contributes to global peace and harmony. Recent news reports from prominent Indian and Chinese newspapers highlight the renewed focus on Buddhist Diplomacy in the foreign policies of these countries. According to a report in *The Telegraph*, the Narendra Modi government is strategically emphasizing India's Buddhist connections as a centrepiece of its cultural diplomacy initiatives. This move follows Prime Minister Modi's acknowledgment of these religious ties while engaging with East Asian leaders in his initial

year in office. On the Chinese front, as reported by the Global Times, despite the Communist Party of China's official atheism and historical wariness towards religion, there are emerging signs of a changing attitude. The central government appears to be adopting a more inclusive approach to religion to foster unity within China and strengthen ties with its neighbors (Kasturi Charu Sudan, 2015; Chen Lijun, 2015).

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# Indian Culture and Its Compatibility with the World of Marketing

**Prateek Kanchan**

## **Abstract**

*In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, India, and its culture is experiencing a dynamism which was not there in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We were a part of Indian diaspora in the previous century also but the spread and adoption of our cultural values and ethos was not that fast as compared to the first quarter of the current century which will culminate with the end of 2025. It could be because of many factors including marketing done by the Government of India through its various endeavours specially after the NDA government took over in 2014. All this has motivated many companies, Indian as well as foreign owned to incorporate Indian culture in their marketing efforts towards all audiences. This paper aims to conceptualize some efforts of these companies across the world, thereby promoting not only their business but also Indian culture directly as well as indirectly.*

**Keywords:** Marketing, culture, diaspora, values, marketing, business.

## **Introduction**

Indian culture and marketing would have been termed as almost incompatible as late as 20th century due to a very ideal orientation of Indian culture and a logical thought process of

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marketing. However, with the advent of 21<sup>st</sup> century, we can see companies across products and services making very careful use of Indian culture and tradition in ensuring continuous success for their offerings in the markets across India as well as outside India. In such a scenario, it becomes imperative for companies to realize the importance of Indian culture among Indian consumers, within as well as outside India. Some consumers may be very particular and some may be liberal in their expectations and they may be having their own logic for it. In other words, consumers may be rigid or flexible vis-à-vis cultural norms in their lives and companies cannot take them for granted. However, it is very clear that marketing of products and services across all categories does happen with lot of cultural aspects as part of product/service development, integrated marketing communications as well as distribution function. On the one hand, certain companies make a careful use of cultural values and norms in their marketing efforts and on the other hand certain consumers do get influenced by such companies in varying degrees, thereby serving their purpose as well as the purpose of such companies. It also implies that certain companies deliberately avoid this due to reasons best known to them and there are certain consumers who do not mix their cultural values with the products/services which they buy and use. In other words, culture and marketing are related to one another in varying degrees and consumers also get influenced differently when the two are used in developing and expanding business of all types.

**Factors needing constant research on the part of companies**

Companies should constantly research certain factors and take actions in real time so that they are never late in succeeding in their endeavours constantly. These factors are as follows:

1. Beliefs, values, and norms in society
2. Social diversity
3. Historical assimilation of geographical areas with time
4. Laws protecting culture
5. Adaptability of companies

1. **Beliefs, values, and norms in society:** Certain people are having various types of beliefs, values and norms which are being followed since generations/centuries. They have taken it from their ancestors, carried on in the families as tradition since times unknown. These are so important that everything happens according to them, whether at home, or at workplace, as well as during vacations, outings, picnics as well as in transit from anywhere to anywhere else. Moreover, these beliefs, values, and norms are practiced individually as well as in a group. At the same times, there are some other people who either do not follow them or follow them partially. All these sets of people are themselves dynamic in a way that some non believers start believing after certain experiences and some believers on the other hand stop believing after certain experiences. All these offer myriad options to companies to market their offerings using or not using these beliefs, values and norms prevalent or not prevalent in Indian society. However, it is very important to use these beliefs carefully in marketing as slight mistake on the part of the marketer can hurt sentiments of certain people thereby generating unnecessary controversy. On the other hand, if this convergence of beliefs and marketing is done carefully, after thorough research, it can produce wonderful results for the company as well as the consumers. These beliefs may be related to religion, culture, lifestyle, nationalism, regionalism, status, experiences etc. When these are carefully researched and applied while marketing products and services, good results come out for companies and consumers also feel pleasant about it.. However, whenever marketing around these beliefs is done without research or analysis, controversies erupt and lot of damage to the company image takes place by the time it comes in control. Some general examples are shared below:
  - Sponsoring of religious festivals by companies making tobacco products or liquor
  - Brand endorsements by controversial celebrities

- Unhealthy products/brands promoted by otherwise health conscious and fitness freak celebrities.

This list, though not exhaustive, is enough to explain the argument that playing with the beliefs, values, and norms prevailing in society is not advisable and constantly researching them before incorporating them in marketing is the right approach.

**2. Social diversity:** As the world has become very heterogeneous with people from different geographies, cultures, languages, beliefs, values, norms etc coming together and living for a long time, and then moving again for new destinations, thereby making migration as a way of life, same is the case with India. Across every State and Union Territory in India, there is a mini India and this diversity requires companies to market their offerings with constant reflection of this dynamism. This diversity makes constant mixing and amalgamation of cultural aspects thereby making consumers learn a lot from different cultures making them qualify for marketing of all types of products, over and above products/services related to their native culture. Most common example in this direction is migration and settlement of Indians from the state of their origin to other states for jobs and mingling in the culture of their migrated state and imbibing it partially or wholly. In other words, across every state in our country, marketing related to cultural symbols of people from different states can work as in every state, every cultural symbol of different cultures have gained wider acceptance and respect. This is being done and will continue to happen in times to come. Those companies not doing it can practice it and taste success. No one can deny that respected religious and cultural festivals like Makar Sankranti, Uttarayan, Lohri Onam, Pongal, Holi, Baisakhi, Ganesh Chaturthi, Raksha Bandhan, Pateti, Janamashtami, Dussehra, Deepawali, Eid, Durga Puja, Bihu, Christmas, and numerous other are celebrated across the country as people following these celebrations are all over the country. Companies carefully integrate

their marketing efforts with these festivals and reap benefits besides earning respect as well as patronage of consumers celebrating them. In fact, lot of marketing is happening and can happen around our national festivals like Republic Day (Jan 26), Independence day (August 15), as well as Gandhi Jayanti (October 02). Add to it the overpowering presence of Valentine's Day (Feb 14), a cultural import, which gets celebrated as a culmination of Valentine's week (Feb 08-14) every year starting from Rose day and culminating with the Valentine day itself. Companies of all types across categories and specially dealing in real and artificial flowers, gifts, confectionary, chocolates, etc use the feelings of romance among young couples to market their products and services throughout the week and Indians across religions, cultures, geographies, etc are influenced and will continue to be influenced in times to come.

**3. Historical assimilation of geographical areas with time:**

It also happens that whenever geographical areas get re-organized in the form of creation of new states or merger of two states into one, cultural dimensions get realigned and new marketing opportunities emerge. In India, when Goa got assimilated with India in 1961, marketing through cultural assimilation got redefined not only in Goa but across the country. Same thing happened in the 21<sup>st</sup> century when Chattisgarh was carved out from Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand was carved out from Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand was carved out from Bihar. A whole lot of marketing has spread across these three new young states related to their unique cultural nuances. Same can be said about creation of Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir as well as Ladakh in 2019. Simple fact is that with redefining of geographic areas, cultural nuances also get identified and used in marketing and companies can turn them to their advantage regularly.

**4. Laws protecting culture:** Laws are there and these get modified from time to time to suit the cultural dynamics

of different geographies. Across India, there are laws which are uniform and laws which vary from state to state and even from city to city depending upon the cultural uniqueness as well as cultural diversity. Across the country, religious centers have certain sensitivities and local administration and state governments ensure that these are respected through proper implementation of laws applicable there. Companies which promote their products and services have to keep in mind laws applicable at all such religious places and promote their brands accordingly. It is good that companies take care of that and they will continue to flourish with this approach. This also holds good for Multinational companies operating in India. I will share one example, although there can be numerous examples to quote. During the Kumbh Mela at Prayagraj (formerly Allahabad), Nashik, as well as Haridwar, companies of all types and sizes do brisk business by smartly aligning their marketing and especially marketing communications activities with the sentiments of the participating masses, ensuring that the laws applicable at these places do not get flouted and no controversy emerges. All these three holy cities in India are located in different states i.e., Prayagraj in Uttar Pradesh, Nashik in Maharashtra, and Haridwar in Uttarakhand. Even when Kumbh Mela is not organized, these cities have an aura of cultural and religious dimension which works round the clock and companies have to take care of laws applicable there. In the same way, there are numerous other cities and towns across India which have deep cultural, religious, as well as social significance and these are fortified with laws applicable there.

5. **Adaptability of Companies:** It all boils down to the capability of companies to adapt to what the market accepts as normal or making the market or consumers adapt to the offer of the companies. Both ways, the catch word is adaptation. Modern Indian business in general and marketing in particular has numerous stories and examples where either the companies have accepted a

way of life which consumers lead and adapted to it or companies have convinced the market/consumer to their viewpoint by either changing or modifying the consumer attitudes. Certain examples in different industries are as follows:

***a. Ready to cook food:***

- i. Maggie(noodles brand from Nestle) entered India in early 1980s, and it was not easy for it to get the masses accept it as for a majority of people, eating noodles was culturally shocking as many took them like earthworms, snakes, etc. Even non-vegetarians were finding it difficult to believe it as edible because at that time, it appeared horrible for a big mass of Indian consumers. It took almost a year for Nestle to convince the edibility of Maggie noodles to a big mass of Indian consumers as it was very repulsive at that time to eat something which looked like earthworms or snakes. Compared to those times, currently Maggie is one of the leading noodle brand consumed across the country and it has motivated Nestle to come up with various options under the brand name Maggie noodles. Culturally, people have accepted it across all religions and geographies in India, although its consumption varies in different places. Moreover, it has become a staple diet for many people across ages consumed as breakfast, lunch, as well as dinner in many homes. As if this was not enough, many mothers of small kids are finding it one of the easiest and shortest solution to their kids hunger at any time of the day. In fact, Maggie noodles advertisement also promote the brand as a symbol of motherly love for their child, although many people do not agree to it. It is a classic example of a totally alien food concept in the 20<sup>th</sup> century getting transformed to an essential ready to cook food item across the Indian cultural mass.
- ii. Patanjali: An Indian brand which prides itself on traditional Ayurvedic ingredients in ready to cook foods besides cooking oils and various other types of packed foods under the umbrella brand name of Patanjali has

roared like a colossus in the first quarter of 21<sup>st</sup> century across India as well as outside India. Mere fact that its brands compete with brands in similar categories owned by MNCs like Levers, Colgate, Procter and Gamble well as a giant Indian brand ITC is a case study in itself. Its entire marketing pitch is focused on reminding Indian masses of our rich cultural heritage through Ayurvedic remedies and ingredients. Moreover, Indians across the board and especially the generation born after the year 2000 i.e., in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are getting reminded of our traditional roots along with the business objective getting served. After all, if the traditional values are getting established along with the business purpose, it is good.

***b. Ready to eat food***

Cadbury: It is a brand which many generations of Indians have consumed and for many it is a synonym of chocolate. Other brands of chocolate are there, but Cadbury has carved out a special position for itself in the category of chocolates in India by aligning with our culture. Sweet dish after a meal is a very important part of Indian culture across all religions. It is also called as 'mithai' in Hindi besides having different names in other languages. Persistently and consistently, Cadbury has promoted itself as a sweet/mithai through the slogan 'kuch meetha ho jaye' (let us have some sweet) after every traditional Indian function wherein hosts as well as guests talk to each other saying 'kuch meetha ho jaye' and offering Cadbury to one another. Apart from this, on very special festivals like Raksha Bandhan and Deepawali, it promotes itself by coming up with Bandhan and Celebration packs of assorted Cadbury chocolates. These are advertised to consumers by invoking their cultural closeness to these festivals. By coming culturally closer to Indian consumers, it has tried to redefine sweet for them across all ages. In fact, chocolate as a category is promoted not just to children but to all ages and Cadbury deserves considerable credit for it.

***c. Contraceptives***

- i. Kamasutra: Kamasutra as a male condom brand started a revolution in 1990s when very bold

advertisements on Television were shown for the first time in 1991, wherein a young couple was shown making love and not worrying just because they were using Kamasutra condoms. Off course, care was taken to not offend feelings in general by leaving a lot on the imagination of the viewers. As compared to those days of 1990s, Indian society by and large has moved to accept it as normal and many other condom brands are now being promoted on television and people not feeling offended by and large. Care is taken by all television channels that such advertisements are generally shown in late evening or night slots where it is assumed that children are fast asleep, although it is not always true. It clearly indicates that culturally, Indians by and large have moved on from being very conservative to considerably moderate.

ii.i-Pill: It is a contraceptive brand taken by a female to help prevent unwanted pregnancy in the event of unprotected sexual intercourse. It is promoted like many other brands in its category to cater to married as well as unmarried young women who are sexually active but not interested in getting pregnant. Initially, when these advertisements appeared, these were criticized for encouraging irresponsible female sexual behavior specially among unmarried girls, but were later ignored as society by and large was found to have moved on culturally and females in general have decided to take their own decisions on these matters.

#### ***d. Food Delivery industry***

In the Indian industrial scenario , app based food delivery companies have come as a cultural revolution in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Physical restaurants in different sizes and formats are there since decades in all parts of India and Indians are going for lunch, dinner as well as snacking to them since ages, but having food at home delivered from outside is certainly a cultural shift of this century. It is related to another cultural dynamics where in a nuclear family, which is a norm nowadays, both husband and wife are working whether they have kids or not. They are so physically exhausted at the end of the day, that whatever quality

time is left with them, they will enjoy on food delivered through an app. Moreover, these apps target their messages and communications so perfectly throughout the week that a young couple finds it perfect to order them almost for 5 days a week if not for all seven days. Even for bachelors, these apps are a godsend gift as it serves their purpose and money is never a problem. The market for these apps is not only growing but more and more apps are getting added to the list as overall market is growing. Earlier it was confined to metros and state capitals, but it has spread all over the country and is slowly spreading its wings even in villages. It implies a cultural shift from a traditionally home made food consumption to home delivered food consumption across the country. These apps also promote themselves as providers of food which is good, tasty, and healthy just like home cooked food, thereby coming closer to their patrons on an emotional front. Although there are numerous food delivery apps, but Swiggy, Zomato, and Uber Eats have become very prominent in the recent past.

#### ***e. Other industries***

It is impossible to list out all the industries and companies in them who have adapted their marketing to Indian culture or adapted their marketing to the change in Indian culture from time to time. However some of these industries can be mentioned viz., surrogate child birth, kitchen appliances, matrimony sites, real estate, entertainment, etc. .

#### **Conclusion**

On the basis of the observations above, it can be safely concluded that Indian culture and marketing by companies of Indian or foreign origin within India have co-existed since long and adjusted with one another from time to time. Sometimes, companies faced problems from the audiences, which they corrected and learned for the future. At some other times, consumers accepted the product/service/message of the companies with reluctance in the beginning and then wholeheartedly eventually thereby indicating a decisive shift in their cultural orientation. It also proves that culture itself is dynamic evolving with time and companies cannot ignore it,

whether they agree to it or not. It regularly gets reflected in the way people of all generations conduct themselves in their daily lives whether they are at home, work, or anywhere in between. Companies are better advised to keep tracking consumer behavior regularly so that their products, services as well as marketing communication messages are in sync always and generate positive responses from their audiences instead of controversies. Off-course, Indian market has come a long way from the protected times of early 1990s to a very competitive time of 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is also important to never forget that cultural roots among Indian consumers are very firm and most of them are willing to adapt good things from others without compromising on their own cultural values as far as possible. After all it is more BHARAT than INDIA inspite of all progresses registered till now.

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# **Analysing the Impact of Cultural Diversity on the Work Performance of IT Employees in India**

**Alpa Mehta**

## **Abstract**

In the past few years, cultural diversity in the workplace is one of the important topics that is widely discussed, especially in the globalised sectors such as IT. This research pays attention to the Indian IT sector, which is well known for its multicultural workforce drawn from different cultural backgrounds. The objective of this analysis is the cultural impact of cultural diversity on the performance of IT staff in India. The cultural diversity in India greatly impacts the performance of IT professionals, and this, in turn, brings about both good and bad. The key components of successful diversity management strategies, such as communication skills, training, and HRM policies, should be in place to provide opportunities for diversity to bring its benefits and to deal with its difficulties.

**Keywords** - Cultural diversity, Indian IT sector, Diversity management strategies

## **Introduction**

Cultural diversity in the workplace has become a critical area of focus in contemporary organisational research, particularly

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in industries like Information Technology (IT) that operate in a globalised environment. The concept of cultural diversity covers the process of recognizing and affirming the uniqueness of individuals labelled by differences in terms of ethnicity, language, religion, and socio-economic background (Hasanaj, 2024). At the workplace, cultural diversity entails the array of views, experiences, and ways of working brought in by employees from different cultural backgrounds as they perform their roles (Hampden-Turner et al. 2020). This richness brings about a wide array of options and ideas, which could add to the operational efficiency and overall performance of an organisation.

The diversity of cultures in India, which is a nation known to be culturally heterogeneous (Edensor, 2020), makes the study of such an impact on the performance of employees highly important. The Indian IT industry has been able to draw from the talent pool, not only from the local but from the other parts of the country which is a manifestation of various cultures. Thus, being aware of the principles of cultural diversity in that respect is of utmost importance for achieving desirable workforce efficiency and creating a favourable working environment. This study is targeted to analyse the impact of cultural diversity on the performance of employees and their productivity in the Indian IT sector.

Cultural diversity can either help organisations in terms of cultural enrichment or present with the challenges of cohesiveness and communication issues (Roberson, 2019). The outcomes of cultural diversity in the workplace largely depend on organisational leadership and management. The benefit of diversity is evident in the fact that it has an impact on the creativity, problem-solving, and decision-making, within teams (Wang et al. 2019). On the other hand, if not addressed appropriately, cultural differences might make the collaborative efforts questionable, leading to misunderstandings, conflicts, and barriers (Inegbedion et al. 2020). Emphasising the paramount nature of creating an environment in the workplace that celebrates divergent experiences with respect and maximises the potential of different views is vital for the success of the business, especially in knowledge-based fields like IT.

In this study, cultural diversity is proposed as a major factor driving the performance of the employees in the Indian IT sector. The association between cultural diversity and productivity can be analysed through the influence of a diverse workforce on productivity and job performance. This will lead to the discovery of the mechanisms through which diversity serves to enhance organisational outcomes. In addition, such a research will seek to pinpoint methods that can be used to adjust and optimise cultural diversity in the workplace so as to enhance the employees' performance in IT in India. Through the examination of these objectives, this study is seeking to add to the body of knowledge regarding diversity management techniques and provide useful recommendations for organisations that function in a multicultural environment.

**Research Question**

*How does cultural diversity in the workplace impact the work performance of IT employees in India?*

**Aim and Objectives****Aim**

The aim of this study is *to analyse the impact of cultural diversity on the performance of IT employees in India.*

**Objectives**

- To analyse the state of cultural diversity in the IT industry of India.
- To analyse how cultural diversity in the workplace influences the productivity and job performance of employees in the IT industry of India.
- To recommend strategies to improve the productivity of IT employees in India by optimising cultural diversity.

**Literature Review**

In order to understand the rationale underlying the topic of this study, critical understanding of the existing knowledge base, as well as the knowledge gap being addressed in this study is

necessary. In this section, a considerable body of contemporary empirical literature related to the key concepts related to the topic of this research has been critically reviewed.

### **Benefits of Cultural Diversity in the Workplace**

Research consistently supports the myriad benefits associated with cultural diversity in the workplace. One such benefit is that teams benefit a lot from the increased creativity and innovation associated with cultural diversity. Researchers like Fine et al. (2020) and Hawlina et al. (2019) have underscored the fact that having a diverse workforce results in the combination of people with different considerations, experiences, and the ways of solving problems. This mix, in turn, engenders an organisational culture that is highly accommodative of innovation. Moreover, this diversity is also linked with better decision-making processes. As identified by Gomez and Bernet (2019), the diversity of cultural backgrounds creates the possibility of more varied perspectives, resulting in more thorough deliberation of alternatives and consequently generating more high-quality decisions.

Moreover, cultural diversity helps in innovation and decision-making, and in addition it enhances organisational performance and competitiveness. Orans (2020) emphasised that companies with workforce diversity can have an advantage in market research of the requirements of the customers and better product development, thus increasing profitability and market share. On top of that, teams with diverse members are seldom complacent when faced with challenges and are often the most resilient. According to Ely and Thomas (2020), an effective team is the one that possesses a wide spectrum of skills and attitudinal differences. Such diversity allows the team to pull together more resources and hence, it performs better especially in environments which are complex and full of uncertainty.

The literature cited in this section, stresses the crucial role of multiculturalism in boosting innovation, ensuring effective decision-making, and strengthening business success. Organisations can realise the enormous potential of their human capital by creating platforms where individuals with

varying backgrounds and viewpoints can come together and share their unique strengths and insights across the board. Such a move is essential for achieving strategic objectives and staying ahead of the pack in a marketplace that is becoming more and more globalised. This shows that cultural variety is one of the most important factors which determines the superiority and sustainability of an organisation.

### **Cultural Diversity as a Potential Challenge**

Cultural diversity in the workplace, while offering numerous benefits, is not without its challenges. Cultures clash and misinterpretation creates a major obstacle. Brett *et al.* (2020) pointed out that because of the differences in the way they communicate, people may have different ways of thinking, and as a result, it causes misunderstanding and discord within teams. Furthermore, cultural stereotypes and biases may deter effective collaboration and decision-making, which in turn result in disparity in the organisations, as discussed by Tamunomiebi and John-Eke (2020).

Another threat to cultural diversity is majoritarianism, which is also known to be a dangerous issue. Samdanis and Özbilgin (2020) theorised that in diverse teams, people may be subjected to the pressure of adopting dominant culture norms or perspectives. Thus, in such teams, dissenting and creative voices are often stifled. Such conformity can play a role in hindering the quality and innovation of the executive decisions made within the organisation. Also, combining cultural diversity demands sizable time and resources. Azevedo and Shane (2019) highlighted that a strong training and development plan is vital to organisations that intend to create a culturally competent workforce. Volunteer programs thus become very important in the areas of conflict resolution and communication that is effective across cultural boundaries.

Besides, cultural diversity at the workplace turns out to be more complicated due to the dynamism of the current working environments. Nowadays, most companies are pursuing globalisation, which opens opportunities for more people to contribute to the development of the organisation (Hill, 2022). This indicates that the persistent need for policymakers and

officials to adjust their methods and strategies to the evolving demographic scenario is an unavoidable fact. If cultural diversity is not well managed, it can lead to serious threats to organisational performance and productivity. This is evident in the research findings which indicate the negative effect of diversity-related conflicts on job satisfaction and retention (Chordiya, 2022).

Thus, being the diversity of culture doubled sided, companies have to be cautious in dealing with the challenges that the diversity may bring. Organisations which encourage an inclusive and supportive work environment, through which the entire capabilities of the diverse workforce can be effectively mobilised, will be the leaders in innovation and market success in the current global marketplace. But that is just the tip of the iceberg since a cohesive and harmonious working environment requires a huge effort to promote intercultural dialogues, facilitate open communications, and encourage cultural competence among all the employees in the organisation.

### **The Research Gap**

Despite considerable contemporary research, there is a considerable difference in research on how the performance of IT staff in India is influenced by the internal work culture. Despite a large number of researches into cultural diversity as a whole in a complex business environment, there is a dearth of information about particularities of the Indian IT sector. Existing research compared to the positive benefits from cultural diversity, like being more inventive and creative, the negatives are mostly ignored (Dale-Olsen & Finseraas, 2020; Morris, 2023), as well strategies that can be employed to manage diversity successfully in this specific setting.

This lack of supportive evidence in the literature highlights the crucial need for studies that exclusively focus on the complexities of the cultural diversity-performance relationship within the Indian IT sector. This kind of research would be so important for defining the way that cultural diversity affects the organisational dynamics and results of this industry that is changing so quickly. The interaction of cultural variegation, productivity, and job performance in the workplace can be

unravelling by researchers to provide practical solutions to organisations that would like to exploit diversity as a strategic tool. Moreover, a richer comprehension of the nature of cultural diversity in the Indian IT domain may be of great assistance in the development of diversity management strategies that would be more specific and would create a base for inclusivity and conflict mitigation.

Besides, it is important for filling the gap in the research as it can contribute towards a more complete picture of the ways cultural diversity contributes to the development of organisations in the booming IT sector in India. With the industry developing and transforming, companies shall implement the concept of diversity in its full capacity to optimise the talent of their staff across the board. They will thus be omitting an important part of the literature and contribute to the development of the practices and performance of IT employees in a culturally diverse work environment on the basis of evidence.

## **Methods**

### **Research Philosophy, Approach and Methodological Choice**

This study adopts an interpretivist research philosophy, which considers the context of cultural diversity in the IT sector in India as the subjective nature of reality and focuses on the meaning that is attributed to experiences. Interpretivism, which corresponds exactly with the exploratory nature of this research, provides the opportunity for a detailed investigation of the effect of multiculturalism on job performance as seen from the viewpoint of the people involved (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Meanwhile, the selected research approach is inductive. It enables the emergence of ideas and theories that are built upon the data that is obtained (Vears & Gillam, 2022). Taking an inductive approach as the guiding principle of this study, the study tries to unravel the complex issues that arise in the context of cultural diversity in the Indian IT sector, identifying the patterns and themes from the data that may contribute to the understanding of the role played by cultural diversity in employee performance.

Additionally, this study uses a mono-method qualitative design, which allows for the collection and analysis of only secondary qualitative data (Al-Ababneh, 2020). Through the mono-method approach, the research question has been explored comprehensively within the particular context of the Indian IT sector. This leads to the generation of rich and detailed data which are an accurate reflection of the experiences and perceptions of employees on the subject of cultural diversity and performance.

### **Data Collection**

This study's data collection process involved a comprehensive search of both academic and non-academic databases and search engines alike. Some of the databases and search engines that have been searched for potential data sources included Scopus, Business Source Complete, Academic Search Premier, Google Scholar, and Google. The data sources that were considered for this study included research articles and other kinds of academic literature, government and industry reports, as well as grey literature. In order to search the databases and search engines for pertinent data sources, keywords derived from the research question have been used. These keywords included "cultural diversity," "IT employees," "work performance" and "India". The Boolean operators AND, OR and NOT were used to combine the keywords into narrow and specific search queries (Markey, 2019). The search results were screened on the basis of the inclusion and exclusion criteria mentioned in Table 1. These criteria enabled an efficient yet accurate identification of relevant data sources from a large number of search results (Cheong et al. 2023). As such, the results satisfying the exclusion criteria were eliminated, whereas the ones satisfying the inclusion criteria were included in the study.

### **Data Analysis**

Thematic analysis is the data analysis method used in this study. This method allows researchers to find out the most frequently mentioned topics (themes) in the collected dataset

*Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Data Sources*

<b>Attribute</b>	<b>Inclusion Criteria</b>	<b>Exclusion Criteria</b>
Publication Type	Research Article, government report, industry report, news articles, or grey literature based on empirical evidence	Blogs, opinion piece, or informal report without any empirical evidence base
Publisher	Peer-reviewed journal, government agency, or any other reputable authority	Any non-reputable authority
Publication Age	Published in or after 2014 (contemporary source)	Published before 2014 (outdated source)
Topic Covered	Discusses the impacts of cultural diversity on the performance of employees	Does not discuss the impacts of cultural diversity on the performance of employees
Demographic of Interest	Indian IT employees	Any other demographic
Language	English	Any other language
Access	Available in the public domain	Requires paid access or permission from the owners to access

to draw findings. This method involves going through a set of procedures that involve classifying the data, identifying patterns and themes, and finally, clarifying the underlying findings related to the themes. The present investigation by thematic analysis has analysed the various views and experiences of IT employees of India regarding cultural diversity and its impact on performance.

A data extraction table has been created in order to extract data from the included data sources and arrange them according to the prevalent themes (Cheong et al. 2023). The table is made up of columns with headings like: author/publisher, year of publication, source type, identified themes, key findings, and limitations/drawbacks which will all be explained in detail. This framework helps to consolidate the information from each of the sources in a more structured way,

which then becomes useful during thematic analysis as we can easily compare and contrast the different sources. This technique utilises the systematic extraction and categorization of data components to ease the process of frequent theme identification and finding as well as it improves the analysis throughput, which translates to more rigorous and comprehensive analysis.

### **Ethical Considerations**

As the present study is based completely on the collection and analysis of publicly available data, no major ethical considerations had to be addressed. However, the risk of plagiarism was still present and the authentic reproduction of previous research findings was a crucial goal to be achieved. According to Sharma and Verma (2020), inadequate citing of data collected from other sources without attributing proper credit to the original owners of the sources often leads to plagiarism in secondary studies, which in turn causes pseudo research that is ethically invalid.

### **Results**

Table 2 reports the major findings of the thematic analysis based on the data extraction table. Notably, all five sources included in the study were primary research articles.

### **Discussion**

#### **Positive Impacts of Cultural Diversity**

A number of studies indicate the beneficial effects of cultural diversity in multiple areas of companies' performance within the IT sector in India. Prabu & Namratha (2019) found positive cultural diversity to collective performance, and a negative age diversity to performance. Kundu & Mor (2017) confirmed this hypothesis by showing that diversity management was positively perceived by employees regardless of their cultural backgrounds; thus enhancing the organisational performance and promoting commitment among employees. Solanki (2019) also made similar sentiments, stressing the positive attitude of employees towards the cultural diversity and that it enhances

Table 2: Data Extraction Table

Author(s)/ Publisher	Year	Source Type	Theme(s)	Key Findings	Limitation(s)/ Drawback(s)
Prabu & Namratha	2019	Primary research article	Positive impact on collective performance	Through statistical analyses of data collected from a sample of IT sector employees in Bengaluru, the study found that there is a positive correlation between cultural diversity and collective performance of the workforce in IT companies. Notably, the study also found that age diversity is negatively correlated to the performance of workers.	The article does not provide the statistical results or the sample details. Due to being based on a sample of Bengaluru-based IT employees, the findings may not be generalisable to the whole IT industry of India.
Kundu & Mor	2017	Primary research article	Positive impact on employee perception	Based on the statistical analysis of primary data collected from 402 IT employees in India, the researchers found that employees, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, positively acknowledged cultural diversity and diversity management at their organisations. This in turn improved the perceived performance of the organisations to the employees, which potentially improved their dedication to their employers.	Due to being based on self-reported data, the findings were prone to biases prevalent among the participants.

Table 2: Contd...

Author(s)/ Publisher	Year	Source Type	Theme(s)	Key Findings	Limitation(s)/ Drawback(s)
Solanki	2019	Primary research article	Difference in employee perceptions	The researchers also noted that there were relatively small yet significant differences in the perceived importance and adequacy of diversity and diversity management among the surveyed employees. Thus, inadequate communication of the intent of diversity was theorised as a potential source of resentment among certain groups of employees, especially general category male employees.	The study was based on a survey of employees from only 4 IT companies in India. Thus, the findings may not be generalisable on a national scale. Culturally diverse teams were also found to demonstrate better internal communications.
			Positive impact on employees' attitude	Based on qualitative data collected from 400 IT employees in India, the researchers found that a majority of this demographic enjoyed working in culturally diverse teams. As such, cultural diversity in the workplace was concluded to improve the performance of both individual employees and the collective workforce.	
			Positive impact on learning	Culture diversity was found to improve informal learning of employees by creating a general environment suitable for learning and offering diverse knowledge-bases of employees. It also helped the employees develop global competencies, which were	

Table 2: Contd...

Author(s)/ Publisher	Year	Source Type	Theme(s)	Key Findings	Limitation(s)/ Drawback(s)
Sisodia et al.	2022	Primary research article	Positive impact on communi- cation Cross- cultural conflicts	in turn improved the performance and productivity of employees. Despite the benefits, cultural diversity was also found to be a source of conflicts among IT employees in India. Miscommunication, adjustment or adoption issues, and inadequate diversity training often resulted in cross-cultural conflicts.	The findings of this study are not exclu- sively related to cul- tural diversity, and also account for the impacts of age, gen- der, and educational diversity.
			Positive impact on individual employees' performance	Based on statistical analyses of data collected from 384 IT employees in India, the researchers found that cultural diversity in the workplace is a positive determinant of individual em- ployees' performance and explains 60% variation in employees' performance.	
Solanki & Singh	2019	Primary research article	Mediating role of acceptance	The researchers also noted that the acceptance of diversity by employees is essential for producing benefits and mitigating the challenges associated with cultural diversity in Indian IT companies. As such, the study highlights the importance of diversity training and appropriate human resource management (HRM) practices.	Due to being based on self-reported data, the study is prone to biases.
			Improved teamwork	The study found that culturally diverse team members demonstrate better communication and trust among themselves, which in turn results in higher productivity and team performance.	

their learning, communication, and individual and collective performance. In addition, Sisodia et al. (2022) further supported the latter by showing the fact that cultural diversity influences the performance of employees individually, as well as the mediating role of employees' tolerance of cultural diversity. These findings align with studies related to other industries and demographics that support the view that cultural diversity within organisations boosts creativity and problem-solving abilities, thus achieving increased performance of employees (Triguero-Sánchez et al. 2018; Ayega & Muathe, 2018). This improved performance of employees translates into better organisational performance as well.

### **Challenges of Cultural Diversity**

In addition to the positive aspects, cultural diversity poses some problems that the IT workforce in India is facing. Kundu and Mor (2017) have revealed the gap in the employees' perception regarding the effectiveness of diversity management, which has the potential to create disagreement among the groups, especially male employees from general category. Moreover, Solanki (2019) identified cross-cultural conflicts resulting from miscommunication, adjustment problems, and incompetent diversity training. Besides, Sisodia et al. (2022) also highlighted the moderating role of acceptance whereby the performance benefits of diversity are dependent on employee acceptance which will require effective diversity training and HRM practices. Other researchers have also found that diversity can lead to tensions and conflicts which can be aggravated by the inability to manage it effectively stressing the need for proactive moves to foster inclusion and mitigate intergroup tensions (Maharani et al. 2022). Hence, cultural diversity issues are dealt with most effectively by using a combination of communication skills, training and HRM policies aimed at promoting acceptance and maximising the utilisation of its advantages.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the results of this research vividly illustrate the great influence of cultural diversity on the effectiveness of

IT workers in India. Through a systematic review of the available literature, it has been proven that cultural diversity is responsible for a number of positive outcomes, such as greater teamwork and individual and collective performance, improved learning and communication processes. However, these advantages come along with challenges like disparities in employee perception, cross-cultural conflicts and the key mediating role of acceptance. Seamless diversity management strategies such as communication skills, training, and HRM policies are necessary to tackle the challenges and take advantage of the cultural diversity benefits. But this study is not without limitations despite the valuable contribution it makes to the understanding of the difficulties associated with cultural diversity in the Indian IT industry. There may be a limitation in the depth of analysis due to use of secondary qualitative data only and exclusion of primary data collection which may also result in overlooking some nuanced perspectives. Furthermore, the emphasis on the Indian IT sector may limit the external validity of the results to other sectors and other geographic regions. In this way, the future studies should use different approaches and widen the scope to provide a more integrated view of the impact of cultural diversity on organisational performance in the global context.

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## Unpaid Carework: Women in India

Arundhati Bhattacharyya

### Abstract

Women constitute 656 million population in India. But, they are less in the formal sectors. In the times of the Covid 19, women in India were the first to be unemployed. The care work of the women increased many times. With the drain of the resources, the women and girls had to face the brunt of the situation. Moreover, discriminatory social norms push women and girls into more and more unpaid care work. Patriarchy and capitalism together have created the assumption that the female body is more suitable for care work. Women are considered as 'natural' care-givers. The gender gap in unpaid care work is increasing in India. Unpaid care work has remained one of the most significant challenges for women's entry into the labour force. Unpaid care work is the 'hidden engine' that benefits the individuals, societies, communities and the economies. It remains invisible as it is conducted within the private sphere of the household. Unpaid care work has been imposed on women during the different stages of her life cycle. Women in India spend 7.2 hours on unpaid domestic work. This includes care of the child, elderly, sick and the disabled. Women suffer from 'time poverty'. Women need to be respected in India for performing care work. What is needed is the redistribution of the care responsibilities equitable between men and women in India. The four main stakeholders like State, market, household, communities should participate in care provision.

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Sustainable Development Goals have also emphasized on unpaid care work being performed by women.

**Keywords-** Unpaid care work, Women in India, Gender Gap.

## INTRODUCTION

Women in India constitute about 656 million, according to World Bank statistics. India has witnessed improvement in the education sector. It was expected that this would lead to improvement of women's participation in the workforce. It is expected that there is a shift in the societal beliefs regarding ways women want to spend their lives. However, the trend has been different. There are lesser women who are taking part in the workforce, due to several reasons. Social norms affect the social behaviours. In India, the social norms largely support the idea that women are primarily care givers. Their place is at home. They do not need to engage in any work outside if the husband earns enough. The woman passes from one subordinate role to the other. Less and less women are finding suitable jobs. Unemployment among urban women is more when compared with rural women.

The pandemic of Covid 19 has created more difficulties for women in the rural and urban areas in India (Sharma, 2021). They were the first ones to turn unemployed. They were the ones who took care of the sick, elderly etc at home. The care work of the women increased many times. The pandemic of Covid 19 supported the reliance of the society on home and in the frontline. It has deepened the pre-existing inequalities existing between men and women. It has exposed the weaknesses in the social, political and economic systems (UN Secretary-General's policy brief: The impact of COVID-19 on women, 2020). When resources are strained, women and girls face disproportionate impacts. The women and the girls have to face the brunt of the situation. Women did nearly three times the unpaid care and domestic work during the pandemic. Discriminatory social norms would increase the load of unpaid work on women and girls (How Covid 19 Impacts Women and Girls, 2021).

With the changing socio-economic, demographic and environmental aspects, the requirement for care work is

supposed to increase many times, even in the future. Care work is an essential activity (Time to Care: Wealth Inequality and Unpaid Care Work for Women in India, 2020). Women all over the world engage in more and more time on unpaid care work, compared to men. Globally, women have been assigned the role of a care giver. Patriarchy and capitalism together have created the impression that female body and personality are suited for housework. Housework has been devalued. It has been made the natural element of women. Women are considered as the 'natural' care givers. They are prevented from taking paid care services (Tasnim, 2020). Indira Hirway states that poor women in developing countries cannot afford to hire servants. Moreover, public provisioning of the basic necessities is far from better. Women in the developing countries do take up unpaid care work mainly because there is less access to paid work. This is leading to a vicious cycle, where the burden on women and girls increases.

The gender gap in unpaid care work is a manifestation of the existence of inequality between men and women around the world. Women from the marginalised sections, suffer from increasing burden of unpaid care work (Suman Tripathi, Fuhua Zhai, 2023). Another issue is that there has been poor estimation of unpaid care work. This has led to underinvestment in public policies and services (Dhar, 2020). The concept of unpaid care work is central to the discourse on women's empowerment. Unpaid care work has remained one of the most significant challenges for women's entry into the labour force (Samantroy, 2022). In order to cope with it, women have to stretch their time, energy and resources (Mubashira Zaidi, Shraddha Chigateri , 2017). Throughout the world, the unpaid care givers satisfy most of the care needs of others. They satisfy three forms of activities: Providing unpaid domestic services for own final use within households; providing unpaid care-giving services to household members; and providing community services and help to other households (Charmes, 2019). Unpaid care work is very important for living well for individuals, communities and societies. For the whole day, an individual has to spend on activities starting from cooking to looking after the children and the elderly, when they are engaged in care work. Unpaid care

work is the 'hidden engine' that benefits the individuals, societies, communities and the economies (Chakravarty, 2021). It remains invisible as it is conducted within the private sphere of the household. Unpaid care work has been imposed on women during the different stages of her life cycle. It has been normalised and routinised through patriarchal socialisation and internalisation. It is considered a female prerogative as women are engaged in it in different regions, socio-economic classes and backgrounds. The unpaid care work is a form of hidden subsidy signalling the existence of power relations in the private sphere, which has its impact on the public sphere. The Marxist-feminist debate arose in the 1960s and the 1970s where unpaid care work got attention from the theorists (Samantroy, 2022). It has remained the foundation for most societies in the world. Unpaid care work is not fully visible to the families and the policy makers. Usually, unpaid care work is kept beyond the policy agendas as the common misnomer is that it is difficult to measure. It is also considered as less relevant to policies. Women are mostly attached to unpaid care work, irrespective of region, class, caste, colour etc (Gaëlle Ferrant, Luca Maria Pesando, Keiko Nowacka, 2014). Even globally, young girls in the age group of 5 and 14 years are spending 40 per cent more time on unpaid household chores compared to boys. The gender gap increases with age. The maximum is seen for women in the age group of 25 and 44. These are the most important years for career building and employment. Less than half of the women are engaged in paid employment in this age group. Feminist researchers and advocates have been asking for better recognition and valuation of unpaid care work. It is estimated that the economic contribution of unpaid care work has been roughly \$10 trillion per year. This is not considered as "work", though it is contributing to economic growth (Dhar, 2020).

Unpaid care work is a manner in which the contribution of women to the economy is not recognized (Mitra, 2019). The report of the International Labour Organization mentions that two-thirds of the care workers are women. Women spend more time in unpaid care work than men in Asia and in the Arab states. For Asia, it is 4.1 times that women spend on the unpaid care work, compared to men. In the Arab states, women spend

4.7 times more time in catering to unpaid care work, compared to men.

## **INDIA**

Researches in India show that women in India do engage in unpaid domestic work. They spend 7.2 hours on unpaid domestic work. This includes care of the child, elderly, sick and the disabled (Deepshikha Singh, Arkja Kuthiala, 2023). Unpaid care work is part of the unpaid domestic work, which is hardly shared by others. For men, the time spent in unpaid domestic work is 2.8 hours. The Professor Namrata Chindarkar of the Ahmedabad Indian Institute of Management researched on this. The Professor mentions that women suffer from 'time poverty'. The researcher has based her study on the 'time use study' of the National Sample Survey Organization. They have less leisure time. Even women who are employed, has to start the 'double shift' of her work once she enters home (Women spend 7.2 hours on unpaid domestic work compared to 2.8 hours spent by men: IIMA prof's research, 2023). The Census 2011 shows that people who are engaged in household duties are considered as "non-workers". In India, 159.9 million women have stated household work as their main occupation (Samuel, 2019).

The first, time use study, was undertaken on a pilot basis by the Central Statistical Organization, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India during 1998 and 1999. The survey was conducted in the six states of Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Meghalaya. It consisted of more than eighteen thousand households (Samantroy, 2022). The research was conducted on the basis of stratified random sampling. N. Neetha observes that the survey on unpaid care work was not prioritized. The orientation of the survey was on improving statistics on labour use and national income.

The National sample Survey Organization has conducted a year-long household survey in 2019 (India will now count household chores as part of economy-boosting work, 2018). This survey measures time spent on paid activities, care activities, unpaid activities etc. Time use data was found by the method

of personal interview. Data was taken for a 24 hour period starting from 4:00 A.M. of the day before the interview to 4:00 A.M. of the day of the interview. (NSS REPORT: TIME USE IN INDIA- 2019 (January – December 2019), 2020).

The Time Use Survey 2019 has classified the time spent by respondents into nine groups, which included unpaid care giving services for household members, unpaid volunteer, trainee and other unpaid work, community participation and religious practices (Deb, 2021). It does have its impact of the health on women in India. Women feel drained in managing the unpaid care work. Unpaid care work restricts participation in civil, social, political and economic activities (Placing Women's Unpaid Work in Development Policy, 2015). Her needs should also be given attention. Unpaid care work refers to the unpaid services catered to the members of the household. To McKinsey, women are engaged in seventy five per cent of total unpaid care work in the world. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, unpaid care work includes care of persons, household duties and voluntary community work. These activities are considered as work as a third person will only engage in it, only when s/he is paid (Chakravarty, 2021). The survey undertaken in six states in India showed that women were suffering from less time to sleep, eat and drink. She also has time poverty taking care of her personal hygiene or exercise (Time to Care: Wealth Inequality and Unpaid Care Work for Women in India, 2020).

At the international level, efforts are made to better measure and recognise unpaid care work. One of the efforts is the inclusion of unpaid care work in the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. Target 5.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals highlights the needs for action in the public and private spheres so that there is redressal of gender balance in unpaid care work. It emphasises the need to lighten the burden of unpaid care work of girls and women in the family. Reports of International Labour Organization, UN Women, United Nations Children's Fund, etc have highlighted on the unpaid care work. The second initiative to address the issue of unpaid care work has been formal recognition of unpaid care work as "work". This took place in 2013 in the 19<sup>th</sup> International

Conference of Labour Statisticians. It was convened by the International Labour Organization. Unpaid care work is now considered as a part of “work” along employment. This focuses on emphasising on the economic considerations of women. International organizations like the World Bank, International Labour Organization and others are developing guidance and operationalizing the new definition of work. Efforts are going on to capture women’s work in the households and other labour force surveys and labour force surveys. The third effort has been advancing measurement and data collection. Time use surveys are the modes of collecting data on unpaid work. But, only 88 countries have conducted some form of time use surveys. Conducting these surveys become costly, complex and weighty (Dhar, 2020).

India needs to invest more on social care. The government at the centre and the states are engaged in several schemes for the improvement of the condition of women. But, still the patriarchal mindset is still entrenched in Indian society; which finds its reflection in the family. The enrolment of women in higher education is steadily increasing, but its impact is not seen in the female labour force participation in India. The concern is that there is continuous decline in female labour force participation of women in India. There is ‘income effect’. With the rise of income in the family, there is withdrawal of women from the employment arena. This is due to the inherent cultural and patriarchal mindset existing in the families. The family has been considered as the foothold for patriarchal socialisation. Even when the women are withdrawn from the labour market, her work and her responsibilities do not decrease. Women remain engaged in socially ascribed gender roles. Feminists complain that women act as catalysts for increasing human capital and well-being of the family. The role of the Indian women, feminists observe, is to maintain the status quo of the traditional family, where they undertake care work and try to compensate the shortcomings of men who may be unsuccessful to act as a provider. It is observed that at all levels of education of women in India, the time spent on unpaid care work remains nearly the same (Vyas, 2022).

Women in India engage in unpaid work at home can be compared to 3.1 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product. It is unrecognized and not correctly measured most of the times. Need is there to reduce it and redistribute it, according to Professor Jayati Ghosh of Jawaharlal Nehru University. The National Sample Survey Organization still does not recognize the double burden of women in India (Sanghera, 2019). Women face difficult situations due to double burden of work (Vyas, 2022). Women taking care of children below six years of age, under the Integrated Child Development Services are recognized as workers, though, there is heavy undervaluation of their services. This could be considered as the extension of the unpaid work carried out by the women in their own households (Panel Discussion on “Unpaid Care Work and Women Labour: Challenges to ‘Entitlement’ Discourse, 2023).

During the Covid 19 tenure, the women who were engaged in unpaid care services had to invest much more time and energy in the care of others (Chakraborty, 2022). Most women in the age category of 30 to 50 years are engaged in taking care of the children, household and the sick and elderly. Their contribution has been unique. Unpaid care work has been taken for granted. It is considered as an ‘act of love’. In the process, the unpaid care giver may suffer from physical, mental and emotional strains, which no one cares for (Time to Care: Wealth Inequality and Unpaid Care Work for Women in India, 2020). In the Global Gap Report of 2020, India is ranked poorly. Its rank is quite low. It is 112 out of 153 nations. Comparatively, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal have gone ahead, than India. India's report is poor in three aspects like economic participation and opportunity, health and survival and educational attainment. The only sector it has done well is in the political empowerment.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is necessary to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work on women and girls. In the developed welfare countries, they adopt policies that support care provision that cannot be said regarding majority of the governments of the world, especially those in Asia and Africa. Care policies are those

public policies that allocate resources in the form of money, resources, services or time to care givers and to people who need care. Families thrive and prosper as the unpaid care work is conducted by women. Redistributing the care responsibilities equitably between men and women is the need of the hour. Discrimination on the basis of social norms and gender stereotypes should go. Even the Global Gender Gap Report 2010 states “Countries with greater gender equality have economies that are more competitive and grow faster, as shown through research in 114 countries”. Naila Kabeer and Luisa Natali’s examination between gender equality and economic growth exposes the fact that gender equality under certain situations lead to economic growth (Cornwall, 2018). So, when women are given equal importance like men in all institutions, starting from the family, the whole country tends to benefit in the long run. Investing in women and girls has been a clarion call. “Care diamond” can be a way out. “Care diamond” refers to four main institutional stakeholders in society. They can distribute the care work within the society. The stakeholders are State, market, household, communities. In the ideal situation, four stakeholders should participate in care provision. But, the reality is that women and girls in the households perform the major share of the care work. When the care responsibilities are unequally distributed, there are gendered implications on the rights of the women and the girls. Moreover, equality in income, livelihood, health, well-being, participation, crises resilience is affected (How to Invest in the Care Economy: A Primer, 2022).

## **CONCLUSION**

Women in India remain poor and unequal due to unpaid work (Sanghera, 2019). Unpaid work is usually undervalued and unaccounted. Unpaid care work done by women of India should be noticed by other members of the family. They should not demean the type of work done by women at home. Adequate respect is due to the women who spend large amount of time in the care of others. It is also to be understood that it is the women who are engaged in care work have to sacrifice a lot for others. They make the lives of others better, by not focussing on their

own priorities. Care work should be given dignity. The target of the Sustainable Development Goal number 5 is to achieve gender equality and to ensure empowerment of women and girls. Target 5.4 recognizes and values unpaid care work and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility in the household and the family as nationally appropriate (Time to Care: Wealth Inequality and Unpaid Care Work for Women in India, 2020). This target was set up due to the discrimination and disadvantage women and girls experience due to disproportionate care responsibilities. There is the stereotype of male breadwinner and women care giver in many societies (How to Invest in the Care Economy: A Primer, 2022). Unpaid care work could be a challenge to gender equality, education and empowerment of women and girls.

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# **Integrating Traditional Wisdom and Modern Science: Shoe Smelling as a Potential the Rapeutic Practice for Epilepsy**

**Bhavin Parekh**

## **Abstract**

Epilepsy is a prevalent neurological disorder marked by recurrent seizures from abnormal electrical brain activity. While modern treatments exist, ancient Indian medicine has practiced unusual techniques like shoe smelling to control seizures. This article explores the historical context, empirical findings, and scientific rationale behind using shoe odors as a traditional epilepsy remedy. India's medicinal heritage harbors wisdom spanning generations. The practice of placing a smelly shoe near seizure patients' noses to arrest attacks surprisingly endures. Historically, spiritual ideas of battling "demonic" fits with equally unpleasant smells laid its folkloric foundations. Despite skepticism, emerging research suggests the efficacy of smelly shoes may have scientific underpinnings. Strong odors can profoundly impact brain regions implicated in some epilepsy types. The piriform cortex linking olfaction to limbic emotion/memory centers offers a target for disrupting seizures.

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Studies indicate olfactory stimulation forestalls seizures by desynchronizing abnormal firing patterns through this pathway. Like vagal nerve stimulation, shoe smells may briefly prevent epileptic synchronization. Aromatherapy studies also show certain odors have anticonvulsant properties. Though controversial, collective evidence positions the folk seizure treatment of smelly shoes as a candidate for further research. Challenges remain in conclusively demonstrating clinical efficacy, optimizing protocols, and clarifying mechanisms before acceptance. Nevertheless, validating traditional remedies through modern science expands our understanding of epilepsy and therapies.

### **Introduction**

Epilepsy is a brain disorder characterized by the occurrence of recurrent spontaneous seizures resulting from abnormal electrical activity in the brain (Banerjee et al.) (Beghi). Epileptic seizures consist of high-amplitude, often rhythmic, neuronal synchronization (Jiruska et al.). It can lead to well-known symptoms, from changes in behavior or sensations to convulsions and even loss of consciousness (Sharma et al.). It is one of the oldest known medical disorders, with records of seizures dating back to ancient Babylonian texts from 2000 BC (Chaudhary et al.). Epilepsy continues to be a common neurological disorder today that afflicts millions people globally (Banerjee et al.) It has puzzled and intrigued humanity for millennia and has been a subject of medical inquiry and treatment for thousands of years (Chaudhary et al.).

Many pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatments have been explored to manage this condition (Sharma et al.) (Mitchell et al.). The primary therapeutic interventions for epilepsy involve pharmacologic agents like anti-seizure medications, surgical removal of seizure foci in the brain, neuromodulatory devices using electrical stimulation, and metabolic therapies like the ketogenic diet. However, approximately 30% of patients have intractable seizures resistant to conventional treatments, prompting a continuous search for alternative remedies (Yilmaz et al.) (Mitchell et al.).

Among such alternatives is a practice deeply rooted in Indian tradition – the use of shoe smell as a method to control or abort epileptic seizures (Jaseja, *Shoe-Smell Application As A First-Aid*

*Interventional Measure In Controlling Epileptic Attacks In An Urban Population In India: A Fortuitous Empirical Finding*). This method, which involves bringing the sole of a shoe close to the patient's nostrils during a seizure, is reported to limit the duration and intensity of the seizures. This is an unconventional yet persistently practiced method in India (Jaseja, *Shoe-Smell Application As A First-Aid Interventional Measure In Controlling Epileptic Attacks In An Urban Population In India: A Fortuitous Empirical Finding*). This article discusses the historical context, empirical findings, and the scientific rationale underlying this ancient practice.

### **Historical Context**

India's rich mosaic of cultural heritage and traditions is a treasure trove of ancient wisdom, including medical practices that have been handed down through generations (Jaseja, *Shoe-Smell Application As A First-Aid Interventional Measure In Controlling Epileptic Attacks In An Urban Population In India: A Fortuitous Empirical Finding*). Although seemingly unconventional by modern standards, some of these practices have survived the test of time and continue to be practiced in various parts of the country. The practice of using the odor emanating from shoes as a first-aid measure to control epileptic seizures is one such remedy that has survived through ages, predominantly in rural areas, but also surprisingly in some urban settings (Jaseja, *Shoe-Smell Application As A First-Aid Interventional Measure In Controlling Epileptic Attacks In An Urban Population In India: A Fortuitous Empirical Finding*).

What could have led to the development of this traditional remedy in the past? In the past, people thought epilepsy was caused by evil spirits taking over the body. They devised a unique way to help someone having a seizure: making them smell stinky shoes! This idea most likely came from old beliefs that if something was wrong, you could fight it with something else that's bad, like using a poison to beat another poison. They hoped the strong smell would chase away the evil spirits causing the seizures (Jaseja, "Application of 'shoe-Smell' in Controlling Epileptic Attacks: Its Origin").

### **Scientific Rationale Behind Shoe Smelling: Olfactory Stimulation-induced desynchronization**

The persistence of this practice suggests an underlying efficacy with a scientific basis. Indeed, despite facing skepticism and seemingly bizarre, recent scientific discoveries suggest this traditional remedy may have a surprising neuroscientific basis. Researchers have documented instances where the onset of a seizure was successfully aborted or its severity reduced through the application of strong odors, including those from shoes (Lunardi et al.) (Ýpler et al.) (Delfino-Pereira, Bertti-Dutra, de Lima Umeoka, et al.). In fact, around 200 years ago, Gowers was one of the first to demonstrate an abortive effect of smell on seizures with the use of strong odors such as ammonia and amyl nitrite (Jaseja, “Validation of Shoe Smelling in Epilepsy: Empirical Evidence”).

Our sense of smell (olfaction) is intricately connected to the brain’s limbic system (Catani et al.) (Kay and Freeman). The Limbic system (Latin *limbus*, for “border” or “edge” as it forms a physical border between the hypothalamus and the cerebrum) includes brain parts such as the hippocampus, thalamus, and amygdala (Catani et al.) (Wyss et al.). It is a region involved in emotion, memory, and, crucially—some forms of epilepsy (Catani et al.) (Avoli et al.). Research reveals that strong odors can profoundly influence brain activity (Delfino-Pereira, Bertti-Dutra, de Lima Umeoka, et al.) (Ýpler et al.). While certain smells might trigger seizures, others could suppress them (Delfino-Pereira, Bertti-Dutra, de Lima Umeoka, et al.). This opens the door for olfactory stimulation – using smells – as a possible tool in managing epilepsy.

Shoe smell is a form of strong olfactory stimulation. The potential of olfactory stimulation in managing epilepsy is a fascinating area of neuroscience (Joshi et al.). The scientific investigation into the efficacy of olfactory stimulation, such as the smell of a shoe, in epilepsy management has revealed interesting neurophysiological dynamics (Joshi et al.). More specifically, the limbic system, which includes the piriform cortex, plays a significant role in the emotional and behavioral responses to smells (Nigri et al.) (Young, Vaughan, Nasser, et al.). It is also intricately linked to the pathophysiology of epilepsy.

The piriform cortex has been identified as a therapeutic target for seizure control (Young, Vaughan, Paolini, et al.). Animal studies have shown that olfactory stimulation can delay seizure development and reduce seizure severity by affecting the piriform cortex (Ekstrand et al.) (Joshi et al.).

The mechanism is believed to involve the disruption of abnormal, synchronized electrical activity in neurons, which characterizes a seizure (Jaseja, "Scientific Basis behind Traditional Practice of Application of 'Shoe-Smell' in Controlling Epileptic Seizures in the Eastern Countries"). Seizures are often associated with increased synchronization of neuronal activity (Jiruska et al.). In contrast, desynchronization, which strong olfactory stimuli can induce, may facilitate the interruption of this pathological synchrony, thereby halting or mitigating the seizure (Delfino-Pereira, Bertti-Dutra, Del Vecchio, et al.). This effect is akin to the mechanisms proposed for other seizure-reducing therapies, such as vagal nerve stimulation, which also aims to induce desynchronization of cortical activity (Vespa et al.). In line with this, strong odors like ammonia, which acts as a trigeminal nerve stimulator, have been shown to have a mild seizure-reducing effect in humans, supporting the therapeutic potential of certain smells (Joshi et al.).

Another line of evidence from aromatherapy supports shoe smelling as a first-aid in epilepsy. Aromatherapy, the therapeutic use of essential oils and smells, has been practiced for centuries, with some evidence suggesting its efficacy in neurological conditions, including epilepsy. The use of essential oils such as lavender, chamomile, and ylang-ylang has been shown to have a calming effect on the nervous system and may help to reduce the severity of seizures (Ýpler et al.). A notable study conducted in Birmingham, England, explored the use of aromatherapy in patients with refractory epilepsy, finding that a combination of aromatherapy and hypnosis could significantly reduce seizure frequency, with lasting effects observed in some patients (Ýpler et al.). Remarkably, in some cases, even the memory of a specific odor previously associated with seizure interruption can have a preventive effect (Jaseja, "Scientific Basis behind Traditional Practice of Application of 'Shoe-Smell' in Controlling Epileptic Seizures in the Eastern Countries").

### Challenges and Future Directions

Despite the intriguing evidence supporting the use of olfactory stimulation in epilepsy management, shoe smelling remains controversial and is not widely accepted in clinical settings. The lack of rigorous clinical trials and comprehensive studies limits the understanding of its efficacy and safety. Future research should focus on elucidating the specific mechanisms by which olfactory stimulation affects seizure activity, identifying the most effective odors for seizure control, and determining the optimal conditions for their application.

### Conclusion

The ancient Indian practice of using shoe smell to control epileptic seizures represents a unique intersection between traditional wisdom and modern scientific inquiry. While it may seem unconventional, the empirical evidence and theoretical rationale supporting its efficacy invite a deeper exploration into olfactory stimulation as a potential non-pharmacological intervention for epilepsy. By bridging the gap between traditional practices and contemporary neuroscience, we can expand our understanding of epilepsy and explore new avenues for treatment. This intriguing area reminds us that unconventional sources may yield potential breakthroughs in understanding and managing this complex neurological disorder. As we continue to investigate the scientific basis behind age-old remedies like shoe smelling, we pay homage to our cultural heritage and pave the way for innovation.

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## **Military Tactics in Kautilya's Arthashastra**

**Nidhi Rani Singh and Tanya Choudhary**

### **Abstract**

Kautilya's Arthashastra is a unique example of statecraft. It was written about 2500 years ago and presented a detailed explanation of every aspect related to the state and governance. The importance of Kautilya's political views can also be seen in modern times. He has given various policies on statecraft and international relations. The Arthashastra describes many policies of good governance, including the king's duties, the functions of multiple ministries and bureaucrats, and the arrangements for their proper inspection. Furthermore, theories like Mandal Siddhanta and Six-fold policy related to international relations are still significant in the 21st century. In addition to various policies, an analysis of the military system and its functioning is also mentioned in Arthashastra. This research paper gives a detailed outline of the military strategy of Kautilya's Arthashastra. The Kautilya explains the various forms of the army formed by the King, such as Ashvasena(Cavalry), Rathisena(Chariots), Hastisena(War elephants), and Pad Sena (Infantry). Along with this, details of their tactical formations and functioning have also been given. Illustrations of many army tactics and formations for unlike war situations show the great importance of Arthashastra. This research paper analyses the detailed description

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of Kautilya's Arthashastra about various army policies and tactics used in the battle.

**Keywords-** Kautilya's Arthashastra, Statecraft, Diplomacy, Military tactics, Vijigishu Raja

**Prelude:** Ancient Indian history has many glorious texts and literature. Arthashastra is a vital scripture written by Acharya Kautilya. His real name was Vishnugupta, but due to his supremacy in diplomacy, he was also called Kautilya. Acharya Kautilya was the prime minister of Emperor Chandragupta Maurya about 2500 years ago. His wisdom and prudence are described in his book Arthashastra. He was the most excellent scholar of his time because Kamandak describes him as his mentor in his book Nitisara<sup>(1)</sup> Kamandak's Nitishastra is also based on Arthashastra. That is why Kautilya's book is considered the best book in political science. According to rishi Shaunak in his work Charanvyuh, Arthashastra has been called Upaveda of Atharvaveda.<sup>(2)</sup> The allusion to Kautilya and his Arthshastra in various ancient and modern classics represents their importance and relevance. Arthashastra has been considered a branch of Dharamshastra, but both can be differentiated based on morals. In Arthashastra, Kautilya has given valuable knowledge of various aspects of human life. It includes a detailed description of many topics related to statecraft, foreign policy, international relations, etc. Mainly the duties of the king (Vijigishu) have been told. The Arthashastra is divided into 15 adhikaranas, 180 prakaran and 6000 shlokas. This book is written in prose as well as described in verses. Kautilya describes several subjects under 15 adhikaranas, such as statecraft, aanviksheki, heads of various departments and their duties, justice, law, dandniti, Mandal formation, multiple elements of the state, foreign policies, army, challenges before the state, local governance and strategic diplomacy, etc. Many contemporary concepts like statecraft, achieving national interest and good governance have been included. A proper description of bureaucracy, spy system, and ambassador system has also been presented in Arthashastra. Based on the explanation mentioned above, it would not be an exaggeration to ensure that Arthshastra has a unique place in the guidance from ancient

governance to modern politics. In today's world order, all nations struggle to pursue their interests by following many policies. Kautilya's Arthashastra contains the essence of all these policies, making it relevant even now. In this multipolar world order, when a country establishes relations with others, they ensure that its national security will be a priority. The provision of similar policies is contained in the Arthashastra. Today the main four elements of the state are recognized. These four elements are included in the *Sapt Prakritis* of the state. The army for national security and its operation methods have been seen since ancient times. Kautilya's epic gives the military a place in the seven organs of the state and the details of its structure, operation, and many diplomatic policies in various adhikarna. Therefore, it is self-evident that the guidelines described in the Arthashastra can play an essential role in the guidance of the states even in the present times. This research paper presents a detailed outline of policies and diplomatic strategies related to the military system.

#### **Military as an essential element of state**

Currently, four elements of the modern state have been defined as population, fixed territory, government, and state sovereignty. Only the region having these four elements can get recognition as a state. Therefore, it is determined that it is necessary to have certain elements or parts to be a state. These essential elements of the state are also mentioned in the Arthashastra. Kautilya names the elements of the state as the *Prakarti* of the state. Seven *Prakritis* of the state have been described in Arthashastra as *Saptang* theory. These seven elements have been said to be essential for the state.

स्वाम्यमात्य जनपददुर्गकोश दण्डमित्राणि प्रकृतयः ॥<sup>(3)</sup>

According to these verses, the seven *Prakritis* of the state are Swami, Amatya, Janapada, Durg, Kosh, dand (sena), and Mitra.

*Swami*- Swami (king) should have many qualities like tolerance, prudence, truthfulness, enthusiasm, and scripture intelligence. Kautilya says that the king should hold the power of dand (punishment) so that the strong cannot misuse their power and the weaker can be protected.

**Amatya-** The Council of Ministers has been called Amatya in the Arthashastra. For proper state management and advising the king, persons should be appointed to the post of Amatya and have many skills, such as perfection in every field, nationality, capability, intelligence, and tolerance.

**Rashtra-** Arthashastra divides the state into Pur and Janapada. Pur means the capital, and Janpada represents the district. Both Pur and Janpada together form the nation. Keeping the people united and being full of virtue is the best merit of the country, which makes it strong.

**Durg-** Arthashastra described the fort's importance for the state's security. For this purpose, the construction of forts on every district boundary has been said to be necessary. Four types of forts have been explained by Kautilya – Audak, Parvat, Dhanyavan, and Van Durg. Out of these four forts, the Parvat fort has been described as the best, as this fort has a significant role in protecting the state.<sup>(4)</sup>

**Kosh-** Money earned by the king in a justified way is also an essential element of the state. This wealth includes gold, silver, and various precious Ratna, and this wealth has been named Kosh, which is included in the seven prakriti of the state.

**Dand (Sena) -** Among the seven natures of the state, the army (punishment) is also essential. The king should recruit permanent hereditary army experts in every war situation. Such a virtuous army comes in the category of Dand.<sup>(5)</sup> Aanvikshi, Trayi and Varta could be maintained in the state through Dand. It is only by Dand that the state is protected from the Mtsaya Nyaya, and Dand is essential for the state's internal management and external security. That's why Dand is a part of the seven Organs of the state.

**Mitra-** A virtuous Mitra is also essential for the state. A friend should be permanent, so there is no possibility of being against him. He should be helpful when the time comes. According to Kautilya, the king is not enriched only by the army and land; a virtuous friend is more valuable than the army and land for prosperity.

Arthashastra considers these Sapt Prakarti as essential elements for the state. These Sapt Prakarti help each other to run the state. One can get more benefits by using it optimally,

but a state has been destroyed who hasn't cared about these Sapt Prakritis.

### **Dandniti in the form of armed forces**

Four knowledge systems have been included in the Arthashastra. First is Anvikshaki, which means Sankhya, Darshana, and Yoga Vidya. The Vedas and Vedanga are included in the Trayi. Varta is the knowledge related to economic activities: agriculture, animal husbandry, and trade. Dand is the fourth discipline that ensures proper observance of all three fields mentioned above. Kautilya says that the appropriate follow-up of these three types of education can be done only through Dand. Good use of this Dand Niti can provide stability to the state. The Arthashastra suggests using Dand to the king so that the four varnas continue their duties properly.<sup>(7)</sup> Army is necessary for the implementation of such a Dandniti. The king must keep an army for national security and punishment. The Arthashastra also mentions the qualities of the soldiers in the appointment of this army. The king should appoint the military on a genetic basis.<sup>(8)</sup> Complete maintenance should have been provided to his family during the war. The one who can bear suffering, one who can move forward tirelessly, and is knowledgeable in various war tactics, policies and weapons related to war. Being complete royal devotees, such soldiers prove to be the king's ally in winning the war. Along with these qualities, the Arthashastra gives priority to the soldiers of the Kshatriya varna in the army.<sup>(9)</sup> The description of the qualities and abilities of the army reflects the nature of the military system. An able army is always ready to protect the state. Through such an army, the king is victorious everywhere. Various military divisions have been shown after the different qualifications, which include the description of different types of troops. Kautilya mentions Chaturangini army under Arthashastra. Ashwasena (Cavalary), Rathisena (Chariot), Hastisena (Elephant mounted), and Padasena (Infantry) are included in the form of the Chaturangini army of the state. According to Kautilya, Hasti Sena is the most powerful and vital among these four.<sup>(10)</sup> In the Chaturangini Sena, there is

आन्वीक्षिकीवार्ताद्वन्द्वनितिश्चेति विद्याः ॥<sup>(6)</sup>

a head of each army, and the supreme leader of the entire military is known as a Senapati. Various duties of these heads had been mentioned by Acharya Kautilya in Arthashastra. It is necessary for the *senapati* to know about various weapons of every part of the army. He is also expected to drive and control the horse, elephant and chariot. It is necessary for him to have insight about the time of war, the enemy's army, how to organize his army and the methods of destroying the organized enemy's army etc.<sup>(11)</sup>

Today we see the Indian army in various forms. ITBP, BSF, CRPF, Military, Airforce, and Navy protects the state in different circumstances. These other forms of the military must have also existed in the Mauryan period in India. Just as ITBP and BSF protect India by being deployed on various Indo-foreign borders, the Shreni army, a salaried army, existed to protect the boundaries of the Mauryan state. Today the national capital has got its security force in the form of CRPF, a military unit called Maulbal is mentioned for the security of the Capital in Arthshastra.<sup>(12)</sup>

### **Kautilya's Pre-War Diplomacy**

Apart from the army, Arthashastra gives a detailed outline of the qualities needed for the victory-seeking king. There is always a need for a specific policy to win the war. The modern age, which has witnessed many wars, is an example that each war can be won only with the help of diplomatic policies. Acharya Kautilya explains the war strategy in detail. Kautilya has described three types of Shakti in war.

**Utsaah Shakti-** When the king is full of bravery and strong willpower, this indicates his utsaah shakti. Therefore, the courage of the king is a reflection of his enthusiasm.<sup>(13)</sup>

**Prabhav Shakti-** The affluence of the king is the reflection of his influence. The king's solid military power, weapons and wealth reflect his power of persuasion.<sup>(14)</sup>

**Mantra Shakti-** Acharya Kautilya gives the name of Mantra Shakti to the diplomatic education of the king.<sup>(15)</sup> The king can win the war through his Mantra, which is diplomacy.

The use of these three types of powers in war has been described in the Arthashastra. It is also mentioned in Arthashastra about the shakti, which is the most important among the three. Acharya Kautilya gives more importance to mantra shakti than utsah and prabhav shakti. With the help of his wealth and army, an influential king can conquer the valiant king. Therefore, influence proves to be more important than enthusiasm. But when it comes to the mantra shakti, Acharya Kautilya considers it the most powerful. Using diplomatic intelligence, the king can conquer other enthusiastic and influential states.<sup>(16)</sup>

एवमुत्साहप्रभावमंत्रशक्तीनामुत्तरोत्तराधिकोऽतिसन्धत्ते॥<sup>(17)</sup>

Hence Prabhav has a strong effect, and the Mantra is stronger than Prabhav. Arthashastra is a realistic book. To nurture national interests, it includes the description of many diplomacies along with war strategy. This diplomacy shows Vijigishu king different ways of getting a victory. We can see the practical side of the Six-Fold policy, which is mentioned in the Arthashastra for establishing international relations. Conquering the enemy using Sama, Daam, Dand, and Bheda separates Arthashastra from Dharmashastra. In times of peace, Arthashastra supports pursuing a policy of morality. But in an emergency, Kautilya separates ethics from politics. To avoid losses to the state, Kautilya describes several diplomatic measures. These diplomatic routes include dividing the enemy's army, spreading false rumours about the enemy's king in the enemy's kingdom by spies, creating differences between the enemy and his friend, and killing the enemy king by spies if necessary.<sup>(18)</sup>

#### **Arthashastra's Military Tactics During the War**

The description of both favourable and unfavourable circumstances of war is found in the Arthashastra in a detailed form. Vijigishu Raja should pay special attention to the time and weather conditions before the invasion. These junctures can be supporters or destroyers of power and have a notable contribution to the war. A few of these junctures are mentioned here as the strategical ways for the states. After deploying one-third of his army for the protection of the capital, the king should

attack the enemy in the month of Mangshir along with the rest of the military and weapons. The reason for the foray during Mangshir is also mentioned in the Arthashastra. During Mangshir, the food and crops of the enemy state would be about to end, and new food crops would not have been collected. When the enemy's army wouldn't receive food, it would be easy to conquer them. Marching in Mangshir can also damage the crop in fields to be produced in Hemant.<sup>(19)</sup> Therefore, along with the state's power, time also plays a vital role in achieving victory in war. The Arthashastra also gives examples of different periods for invasion depending on the climate of the particular place. According to him, the rainy season should be avoided for initiating a war. Acharya Kautilya also advises using different forms of armies depending on the geographical conditions of the battlefield. In desert areas, he supports camel mounted army. The army of elephants has been endorsed in the rains and water-logged areas.<sup>(20)</sup> In this way, the detailed description of the pre-preparations related to the war shows the reality of the Arthashastra.

Strategy is a trick through which every nation's interest can be served. It has an exceptional contribution to the policies of governance for the best statecraft, in fulfilling its interests and establishing its effectiveness in the global system and military operations before, during and after the war. Wars always prove disastrous, so every state tries to minimize the loss of its wealth. Every state desire to win the war in less time with less loss. This desire can be fulfilled through many strategic means. Till the present time, the world has witnessed too many types of wars. Achieving victory in wars is the coalescence of the military, technology, and strategic tactics. Acharya Kautilya has mentioned many such strategies in his Arthashastra. These military strategies of Arthshastra are also visible in modern wars. The following are the best policies in Kautilya's military diplomacy.

**Fortification:** If there is a possibility of war, a skandhavar, an army residence, should be constructed for the military cantonment. Vijigishu should build four types of rims in the outer part of the Skandhavar. These include large cut branches with thorns, wooden poles and wall coverings.<sup>(21)</sup> The importance

of this fortification of the military cantonment described in Arthashastra is relevant in modern times too. France built fortifications in Belgium during World War I to prevent German incursions. The system of Skandavar for its military cantonment is currently stated as a fortification.

**Obstacles in Terrain:** The route through which there can be a possibility of enemy infiltration, the enemy army can be blocked by artificial hurdles in the land. The Arthashastra thus suggests itself for digging unobtrusive wells on that route. Also, planks with spines should be given in those wells, and troops should be deployed on that route.<sup>(22)</sup> Currently, most states use this system in various forms, like fencing with wires along their borders.

**Peaceful infiltration:** Entering the enemy's territory to achieve your goal as an intruder shows the supremacy of tactics. Kautilya advises the military to travel a narrow route to achieve their goal secretly. The army can infiltrate the enemy's land through river routes with the help of ropes, wooden planks and canoes. If the enemy blocks the river ghats, then the cavalry and elephant-mounted army should enter the enemy territory through other routes in the night.<sup>(23)</sup> This way of infiltration without alerting the enemy is seen even today. The United States of America killed Osama Bin Laden in Pakistan, and the surgical strike, which India did in Pakistan, are both examples of peaceful infiltration strategy.

**Deception Techniques:** The strategic ability to reduce the enthusiasm of the enemy forces and divert their attack in a different direction is a distinguished military tactic. The Arthashastra suggests predicting the victory of vijigishu through his famous astrologers to discourage the enemy army. During the army march, a soldier should be dressed like a king so that the enemies cannot succeed in attacking the real king.<sup>(24)</sup> It is a popular strategy to mislead the hostile attack. Sending false information about the Attacking place is also a way to astray the enemy. In the modern era, the Allies adopted the policy of deviating from attacks on several occasions in World War II. Kutilya's strategy of predictions by astrologers is seen in different forms today. The way predictions affected the enemy's army is reflected in work done by media today.

**Protection:** It is the responsibility of the army to protect the state. In this defensive action, the military has used many visible and invisible diplomatic ways from ancient times until today. The Arthshastra defensive approach provides for the deployment of six types of the army with three officers each - Tvadika, Nayaka and Senapati - on the likely route of the enemy's arrival.<sup>(25)</sup> This army was forbidden to fight with each other, drink alcohol and hold unnecessary meetings. Even today, troops stationed at national borders are bound to follow strict rules. Ambush- the enemy needed to be wounded at the right time in case Vijigishu's army was weak. Vijigishu king should ambush attack on the enemy when the enemy's army is weak and tired. With the help of spies, enemy ministers should be divided from them through Sama and Dama. The Arthashastra has described the correct timing for an attack is when the enemy has an addiction and his ministers as well as friend are against him.<sup>(26)</sup> Today, many powerful countries are waging diplomatic wars in other countries through their intelligence alerts and waiting for the perfect view of the invasion.

**Flanking Maneuver:** First to engage the enemy army in battle from one direction and attack it from other sides is a strategy of flanking manoeuvre.<sup>(27)</sup> The strategy of attacking from many directions in military operations has been seen since ancient times. This action is extreme in wars; the enemy can be easily conquered. Arthashastra gives a detailed outline of this strategy. There are many examples of flank manoeuvres during the First World War and bilateral wars.

### Conclusion

Kautilya is a realistic thinker. Based on policies like Mandal Siddhanta, Six-Fold policy, Sama, Daam, Dand, and Bheda, his importance and relevance in governance, foreign policy, and army operations are perpetuated till modern times. The presented research paper analyses various types of wartime guidelines for military operations. No one, even today, can deny the importance of pre-war diplomatic measures described by Kautilya. The state should continuously increase its power and influence globally to pursue national interests through a stable economy and solid military system. The nation's priority is to

pursue national security and its interests; for this, the state should maintain its robust intelligence system followed by strong willpower and a powerful strategy for pre-knowledge of any upcoming troubles for the nation. If the state couldn't avoid war, the selection of time and the battlefield's geographical conditions should be kept in mind. By speculating the intentions of the opposing forces, using military tactics such as fortification, obstacles in terrain, peaceful infiltration, deception techniques, protection, and flanking manoeuvre can give an excellent thrust for winning the war. The operation and distribution of the army according to the conditions of war make the diplomacy of Arthashastra necessary. The modern world has seen the importance of war strategy in two world wars and many bilateral wars. Diplomacy for conquest is such a pillar that it plays a unique role in the guidance of every state.

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## **Economic Manifestations' of Kautilya's Arthashastra The Kautilian Economy**

**Parveen Kumar Garg and Rajinder Kapil**

The Arthashastra divides the economy of the state into three basic types of the activities- agriculture, cattle rearing and trade. It deals with self-sufficient economy based on indigenous ways of production; distribution and trade, and discusses monetary and fiscal policies, welfare, international relations, and war strategies in detail. Arthashastra, depicts in many ways the India of his dreams. When he wrote this volume of epic proportion, the country was ridden in feudalism and closed and self sufficient economy. The economy based on indigenous ways of production; was in a transitional phase, moving towards the advanced aspects of distribution and production. Culture and regional politics directed the way in which trade was done. The state accumulated wealth by generating resources in the form of grains, cattle, gold, forest produce, trade and labour. Because of the regime was authoritarian in nature, everything was organized in the interest of the state. A civil service existed and there were departments for accounts, revenue, mines, arsenals, taxation, agriculture, trade and navigation.

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Besides maintaining the existing productivity in forests, factories, mines and cattle herds, the king was also responsible for promoting trade and commerce by setting up market towns, ports, and trade routes, building storage reservoirs. Kautilya's work dealt with such diverse economic subjects as accounts, coinage, and commerce. The whole economic policy was regulated and controlled by the state. It was the largest employer of labor. All industrial and natural resources were possessed by the state. The state also entered the market as a trader. It engaged in selling activities at the marketplace. It had its own superintendent of commerce who would supervise the dealings in the market. The revenues earned by sale of resources possessed by the state would be directed to the treasury. Manufacturing industry gained impetus in the Maurya period, which was about the era of Kautilya.

#### **Economic Administration**

Money was used as the medium of transaction, in the form of coinage. This is indicative of the function of monetary exchange which leads to the place of marketing. The coin used was the pana, which was subdivided as follows: sixteen mashak as to a pana and four kakan is to a mashaka. The coinage in circulation was: silver coins of one, half, quarter and one-eighth of pana and copper coins of one mashaka, half a mashaka, one kakani and half a kakani. The value of coinage was sought to be maintained by stringent punishments for counterfeiting. A special official, the Coin Examiner, certified the genuineness of coins which were meant for circulation and exchange in market transactions. The state and private merchants, both local and foreign, were involved in trade. These merchants could sell their wares to customer in the market place, or to the state in bulk quantities. The state would thereafter distribute these goods for sale in the market place, while retaining back some stock as reserve/buffer. The chief controller of State Trading was responsible for the equitable distribution of local and foreign goods, buffer stocking, sale of crown commodities and public distribution. He could appoint private traders as agents for the sale, at fixed price, of crown commodities or sell them direct to the public through state-owned retail outlets. The

governance structures then projected the potentialities of centralized administration, but having adjusted to the socio economic patterns and differentiations. Urban administration had its hierarchy of officers, supporting supervision of production and exchange in urban centers, presumably to control revenues.

### **Audit**

The state, even those days, exhibited a closely controlled and orderly financial accounting system. The chancellor was responsible for collecting revenue from the whole country, along with his delegates, the Governor Generals in each city. It was his duty to prepare the budget and maintain detailed accounts of revenues and expenditures pertaining to all activities. The governors and record keepers in every city were to keep records of the number of people in each family, their gender, caste, family name, occupation, income and expenditures pertaining to all activities. Manufacturing establishments also kept a stock register showing the purchases of all raw materials, the quantities of the same consumed in production, stock changes due to materials; and a manufacturing costs register showing expenditure on the labour employed and wages paid. In the case of stores of all kinds, the record books showed the prices, quality, quantity and description of the containers in which these were stored. The procedure of year-end Audit existed even then. Thus, all individuals and establishments involved in manufacturing, trading, retailing, and all such activities which engaged in monetary transactions were subject to audits and scrutiny. The Chief Controller and auditor was responsible for the maintaining the record office where the accounts book showing, for each and every business establishments in the market place, the nature of its activity and total income received from it. On the closing day for accounts, all the accounts officers were to present themselves with sealed accounts books and with the net balance of revenue over expenditure in sealed containers. The chief controller and auditor would have the accounts thoroughly audited by the audit officers, who would check the entries to verify net balances. The king would then be informed of the audit results.

### **Accountability**

Significantly, Kautilya was concerned, at least to some extent with accountability. For example, he recommended specifically the listing of revenue collected from fines paid by government servants' and gifts'. He also wrote, Expenditure will be classified according to the major Heads, as given below: The Palace[expenditure of the King, Queens, Princes etc.], He added, "Every official who is authorized to execute a task or is appointed as a Head of Department shall communicate [to the King] the true facts about the nature of the work, the income and the expenditure, both in detail and the total.

#### **Kautilya on the Creation and Preservation of Wealth**

Kautilya identified quality of governance, human exertion, accumulation of physical capital, acquisition of land, and knowledge as the sources of economic prosperity. He observed, "Man, without wealth, does not get it even after a hundred attempts. Just as elephants are needed to catch elephants, so does wealth capture more wealth. Wealth will slip away from that childish man who constantly consults the stars. It is worth noting that Kautilya understood, by more than 2,000 years earlier than Adam Smith, that accumulation of capital enhanced labour productivity. Additionally, he emphasized productive activities. Kautilya suggested, "Hence the king shall be ever active in the management of the economy. The root of wealth is economic activity and lack of it brings material distress. In the absence of fruitful economic activity, both current prosperity and future growth are in danger of destruction. A king can achieve the desired objectives and abundance of riches by undertaking productive economic activity. Kautilya was concerned not only about the creation of wealth but also in the preservation of the existing wealth. Kautilya wrote, "In the interests of the prosperity of the country, a king should be diligent in foreseeing the possibility of calamities, try to avert them before they arise, overcome those which happen, remove all obstructions to economic activity and prevent loss of revenue to the state. In fact, he believed in the virtuous cycle of good governance, riches, knowledge and ethical conduct. Accordingly, Kautilya put a very heavy emphasis on good governance.

Kautilya's definition of good governance consisted of provision of infrastructure and national security, formulation of efficient policies and their effective implementation and ensuring clean and caring administration.

#### **Provision of Infrastructure and National Security**

He understood the importance of infrastructure to the creation of economic opportunities. Kautilya suggested, "Not only shall the king keep in good repair productive forests, elephant forests, reservoirs and mines created in the past, but also set up new mines, factories, forests [for timber and other produce], elephant forests and cattle herds [shall promote trade and commerce by setting up] market towns, ports and trade routes, both by land and water. He shall build storage reservoirs, [filling them] either from natural springs or water brought from elsewhere; or, he may provide help to those who build reservoirs by giving them land, building roads and channels or giving grants of timber and implements. He added, "A king makes progress by building forts, irrigation works or trade routes, creating new settlements, elephant forests or productive forests, or opening new mines. Kautilya wanted to maintain national sovereignty at every cost and by every means available since its loss meant misery and squalor. He believed that a country either would have both prosperity and national security or lose both.

As a political thinker, he was the first to visualize the concept of a Nation for the first time in human history. During his time, India was split into various kingdoms. He brought of them all together under the one central governance and this creating nation called Aryavarttha, which later became India. Kautilaya identified a number of issues in his Arthashastra and governance and corruption was most important in all of them. Arthashastra is concerned with the means of fruitfully maintaining and using land. Kautilya had immense knowledge about various aspect of governance such as taxation, diplomacy, trade, business, administration etc. It is said that he had a fair knowledge of medicine and astrology as well. Arthashastra deals with governance safeguards without presenting any overt philosophy or religion. It also advocates practical economics and real politics. Kautilya speaks of the way a state's economy is organized, how ministers should be chosen, war conducted, and how taxation

should be arranged and distributed. Emphasis is placed on a network of spies and informers which function as a surveillance apparatus for king, focusing on external threats and internal dissidence. He takes a holistic approach to governance and explains several areas critical to the functioning of a country in depth. The main sections deal with National security and Foreign Policy, Administration of Justice, Policies related to economic development, Taxation, Labor Management, and Financial Management. To him attainment of good governance entails that the objectives of the state are fulfilled and realized. This is possible through properly organized and guided administration. He suggests that good governance should avoid extreme decisions and actions. Decisions should be taken according to the situation. Picking up Chanakya's four-pronged approach to public finance and state planning, which was actually economics, monetarism and much more, based on "dharma, artha, kama and moksha," the experts agreed that understanding human welfare was the cornerstone of Arthashastra, said to be the oldest and most exhaustive treatise on governance and administration of state in the world, which set forth theories of statecraft and monetarism and also a code of civil and criminal law still relevant today. The Arthashastra equates political governance with economic governance. The end is economic governance while political governance is the means. But as economic objectives are not realized in the absence of political ones, then political governance becomes an end and economic governance the means. 'The end justifies the means', this is supposed to be the basis of Kautilyan philosophy. Political power and material wealth according to Kautilya are the means and ends of governance. And good governance - political or economic - depends upon justifying the ends and means as the socio, economic and political conditions. According to Kautilya, to ensure good governance there must be a properly guided public administration, where the ruler should surrender his likes and dislikes in the interest of his subjects, and the personnel running the Government should be responsive and responsible. Kautilya further emphasized that for citizen friendly good governance there should be uniformity in the administrative practices as well as competent ministers and officials possessing

qualities of leadership, accountability, intellect, energy, good moral conduct, and physical fitness, capable of taking prompt decision. According to Kaufmann and Kraay,' the concept of Governance is not new. Kautilya presented key pillars of the art of governance emphasizing justice, ethics and anti autocratic tendencies. He further detailed the duty of the king to protect the wealth of the state and its subjects, to enhance, maintain, and it does also safeguard such wealth as well as the interests of the subjects." A ruler who administers justice on the basis of four principles: righteousness, evidence, history of the case, and the prevalent law, shall conquer the earth. Kautilya implicitly suggests a linear income tax. He emphasizes fairness, stability of tax structure, fiscal federalism, avoidance of heavy taxation, ensuring of tax compliance and subsidies to encourage capital formation. He advocated limiting the taxation power of the State, having low rates of taxation, maintaining a gradual increase in taxation and most importantly devising a tax structure that ensured compliance many postulates of Kautilya's philosophy of political economy are applicable to contemporary times. Ideally, the government should collect taxes like a honeybee that sucks just the right amount of honey from the flower so that both can survive. Kautilya's scheme of taxation involved the elements of sacrifice by the taxpayer, direct benefit to the taxpayers, redistribution of income (the state took care of the poor), and tax incentives for desired investments. Kautilya did not view law to be an expression of the free will of the people. Thus sovereignty -the authority to make laws, did not vest with citizens. Laws were derived from four sources - dharma (sacred law), vyavhara (evidence), charita (history and custom), and rajasasana (edicts of the King).

In case of conflict amongst the various laws, dharma was supreme. The ordering of the other laws was case specific. Kautilya had visualized the necessity of state provision of public goods which strengthened trade and commerce. The bureaucracy was involved in the provision of three of such goods - the 'quality control machinery', the system of currency, and the system of 'weights and measures'. Quality control was a revolutionary concept for that era. Bureaucrats received a fixed pay and were also eligible for state subsidized housing. This is

an example of Kautilya's deep understanding of statecraft as officials were expected to compensate themselves by retaining a part of revenue extracted from the people. Kautilya's philosophy is based on the principles of "sam, dam, dand, bheda" (persuasion, temptation, punishment, and division) as various, different, and sequential means to achieve an end. Kautilya believed that for the prosperity of a state, the state must be devoid of internal conflicts; the king should be in the control of the state. To maintain this internal peace, he believed in a realistic rule of law. Kautilya also wrote on six types of foreign policy: treaty (sandhi), war (vigraha), marching against the enemy (yana), neutrality (asana), seeking protection from a powerful king (samsraya), and dual policy (dvaidhibhava). The rules concerning these are:

He who is losing strength in comparison to the other shall make peace,  
 He who is gaining strength shall make war,  
 He who thinks neither he nor the enemy can win shall be neutral,  
 He who has an excess of advantage shall march,  
 He who is wanting in strength shall seek protection,  
 He who undertakes work requiring assistance shall adopt a dual policy.

Kautilya said that good governance and stability go hand in hand. According to him, there is stability if rulers are responsive, responsible, accountable, removable and recallable; otherwise, there would be instability. For good governance, all administrators, including the King, were considered servants of the people. They were paid for the services rendered and not for their ownership of anything.

#### **KAUTILYA VIEWS ON CORRUPTION**

He seriously considered the problem of corruption. Corruption can be difficult to avoid as Kautilya said that it is impossible to tell that, "just as fish moving under water can not be possibly be found either as drinking or not drinking water". Kautilya lists forty kinds of misappropriation of funds by the bureaucrats. The informant giving information on corruption was entitled one sixth of the amount as a reward. There is also a fascinating description of how the departmental supervisors

should check whether expenditures have been incurred for the desired end - including the heads (labor, capital and material) of the expenditure. Kautilya admitted that some degree of corruption would always exist, and cannot be scrutinized perfectly, 'It is possible to mark the movements of birds flying high up in the sky; but not so is it possible to ascertain the movement of government servants of hidden purpose.' He therefore recommends strictest punishment, both material and corporal, as a disincentive to cheat. In the Arthashastra, stress has been given both on fraud prevention as well as fraud detection. Kautilya had listed several ways by which public funds are misappropriated. He analysed this human behavior, in the following manner: "just as it is impossible not to taste the honey or the poison that find itself at the tip of the tongue, so it is impossible for a government servant not to eat up, at least, a bit of the king 's revenue. Kautilya was well-versed with the characteristics of bureaucrats and statesmen and laid down rules to prevent misuse of power. He emphasized the importance of accounting methods in economic enterprises to properly measure economic performance. He explained that no amount of rules and regulations or auditing can prevent unethical behavior.

### **The Main Duty of the King**

Kautilya believed that the king should be well educated and disciplined in sciences, committed to good governance of his subjects and have the intention to work for the welfare of the people alike. According to Kautilya, King's maintenance of dharma in concrete terms "signified nothing but the defence of the social order based on family, property and caste.<sup>8</sup> The king should have the ability to persuade and motivate his ministers and to act as a leader for the achievement of collectively agreed upon goals in specific time. The objective of good governance is that the king should discharge his duties to cater to the interests and needs of his subjects. When the king possesses good qualities then minister and others dependent upon him for their success and failure follow his behavior, for the king stands at their apex.<sup>9</sup> The king should shoulder the responsibility of children, old,

childless women, diseased persons and above-all infirm who did not have any natural guardian to protect them. In Arthashastra alone describes the king a servant of the state who would harbour no personal likes and dislikes; it would be rather the likes and dislikes of the servants that would be followed by him.

### **Appointment of Qualified Ministers**

The ministers were appointed by the king on the basis of their quality and ability laid down for different posts. Besides, it is the king's prerogative to investigate all the qualities of the persons who were recruited for different posts. Hence, the king himself does all the important appointments on the basis of intelligence and power of experience and also being suitable for the posts. Arthashastra, thus, states that competent and qualified ministers along with highly virtuous and administratively qualified king can only provide good governance to the state. Mehta finds Arthashastra to be more a treatise on administration than on politics and statecraft.<sup>11</sup> Thus, in appointing the qualified and adroit ministers Kautilya wanted to establish that there was the sense of good governance at every step of administration. Kautilya proposed an ethical and sovereign state Kautilya suggested that the king should be endowed with amicable qualities and possessed of all the elements of sovereignty. According to Kautilya, if one follow the principles reflected in Arthashastra, one must not only preserve dharma (spiritual good), artha (material well-being) and kama (aesthetic pleasure), but also destroy unrighteousness, material loss and hatred. Both Machiavelli and Kautilya have espoused the distinction between morality of the ruler and the ruled and both of them have advised the ruler to rise above the ordinary canons of morality. According to Dunning Aristotle, "never flatly proclaimed the independence of political from moral doctrine" and in his system it was rather "an incident than an essential". Kautilya believed that a king should have the obligations to uphold custom and sacred law and to fulfill the requirements of rajadharma. It is the duty of the king to protect his people justly and maintain the sovereignty of the state. Hobbes thought

that the maintenance of an absolute sovereign was the necessary conditions for preserving peace and inculcating moral virtues among men and according to him it was also the only guarantee against the recurrence of the anarchic situation as that of the state of nature when there would be no morality, no equity and no justice. Welfare nature of the state Kautilya vouched for a welfare state where the prosperity and welfare of the people were given optimal priority. He was not only concerned about the material welfare of the people but also their moral welfare. "In the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness; in their welfare his welfare, whatever pleases him he shall not consider as good, but whatever makes his subject happy, he shall consider good". Kautilya maintained that a welfare state was the supreme concern of the ruler. He was not only interested in the material welfare of the people but also in their moral welfare. Aathashastra gives to the welfare of the citizens, the first place in all considerations of policy; the common good of the people and their sustained happiness are considered as main ends for the service of which Kautilya called out an elaborate administrative system. The ideal of his welfare centric state also had the provisions for the advancement of vulnerable and weaker sections of the society. The concept of good governance has been receiving considerable attention in recent years. A large number of philosophers, academicians and public functionaries have been discussing ways and means of governing societies. Originally the term 'State' and 'Good Governance' were considered to be synonymous as it is found in the writings of Hobbies, Rousseau, Mill, and Marx. They believed that coercive power was given to the state by men, with the hope of realizing good governance through their writings. They have advocated different forms of political and administrative systems where the interest of the citizens reconciles with the role of state and its method of governance. Governance refers to forms of political system and the manner in which power is exercised in utilizing country's economic and social resources for development. It is the art of governing associated with the exercise of authority within specific jurisdiction. Traditionally the term 'common good' was used by the state to serve the common good. The term became a symbol for the whole range

of governmental actions, and in olden times King became an embodiment of the common good for his People. In the society one of the primary concerns of the citizens is that their government must be good and for the government to be good it is essential that all the systems and subsystems of governance must be efficient, effective economical and ethical. Good governance refers to a government, which not only serves the common good but also promotes the well being of the entire society. The issue of good governance has been in the forefront for some decades now. Several studies have been taken up by various organizations in recent years. The World Bank has identified a number of aspects of good governance, which has assumed significance for the developed and the developing countries. The World Bank determinates of good governance include political accountability, transparency, democracy, an established legal framework based on the rule of law and independence of judiciary, freedom of information and expression and above all a sound administrative system leading to efficiency and effectiveness and Co-operation between the government and civil society organization. Thus it is clear that good governance is not simply something that government can achieve or do by itself. Good Governance depends on the co-operation and involvement of a large number of citizens and organizations. These requirements are considered not only essential for good governance but are also important for sustainable human development. It was the duty of the king to chasten the conduct of the people and be the promulgator of the right law and order. The King had to be morally upright and strong in order to mould the minds of his subjects. A reckless king was always disrespected by his subjects and his authority brought the risk of disintegration of the kingdom. Kautilya, in order to avoid such a situation, wanted the king to be a role model for his subjects, one who was dedicated to both the community as well as the kingdom. For Kautilya, Good Governance was not only a feature embedded within the kingdom, but also depended on actions outside the walls of its fort. He put forward an elaborate system of foreign policy, following which the king could expand his kingdom and establish supremacy over neighbouring regions. He maintained

flexibility in the political and military actions recommended for the king. He advised a weak king, perhaps one who did not possess the necessary resources to win a war, to always stay at peace, and a strong, domineering king to wage wars at the right time. He put forth a practical and systematic foreign policy for the king to emulate in order to ensure stability of his kingdom. Kautilya can be rightfully called a political-realist. He was witty but also farsighted. Perhaps it was due to his intellect and wit that the Mauryan Dynasty was able to become one of the strongest kingdoms observed in Indian history. Kautilya's policies and principles remain relevant in the contemporary world and continue to serve as a guide for establishing a just and stable societal order.

The salaries of government servants were fixed on a cash basis but could be paid in Kind or as a mixture of the two. An official could, in lieu of a part of his salary be allotted land to be farmed by him for his benefit, but such land could neither be sold nor mortgaged and could be used only as long as he held the office. The total salary bill of the state was determined in accordance with the capacity to pay and was one quarter of the revenue of the state. The salary scale of the government servants be such as to enable the accomplishment of state activities and should be adequate for meeting the bodily needs of states servants. Kautilya could visualize the concept of good and responsive governance when he made provision for giving financial relief to a government servant after his death in service. If a government servant died while on duty, his sons and wives were entitled to his salary and food allowance. On occasions such as funerals births or illness, the families of the deceased government servant was given presents of money and shown honour as a mark of gratitude to one who died in the King's Service. Personal Administration Kautilya recognizes that the personnel who man the organizations are as important as the organization, for good governance. He prescribed certain qualification for each post, which goes to prove that certain basic qualifications were necessary for entry into the service of the government. The important appointments were made by the king himself and only persons having intelligence and power of expression was considered suitable for state services. The need

for the appointment of councillors and Ministers was felt because the work of the government was diversified. It was not possible for the King to do it all by himself and so he had to appoint personnel of various categories. At the top level were ministers who were appointed by the King, who decided the work of the government taking into account, each one's ability and the nature of work assigned to them. Besides all important functionaries like the treasurer, the chancellor, the governor general of the city were appointed by the king himself on the basis of the qualifications laid down for different posts and before making the appointment the king used to investigate all the qualities of the person who were appointed. Of these qualities' nationality, family background, and amenability to discipline were examined. Intelligence, perseverance and dexterity were also evaluated by examining his past experience. Even the Ministers after appointment had to undergo four kind of test based on Dharma, Artha, Kama and fear, and after qualifying these tests they were given appropriate post. After recruitment comes training but there is very little discussion of the training of personnel manning various government departments in Kautilya's Arthashastra. Probably this may be due to the fact that before appointment the candidates had to undergo a tough and rigorous test. The qualifications and qualities laid down in Arthashastra for different functionaries and positions manning the administration clearly indicate that there was good governance at every level because of a sound administrative system. Arthashastra is a comprehensive text, it demonstrates that Kautilya, a great Sanskrit philosopher-statesman and contemporary of Aristotle, and whose work was lost for more than 1400 years, anticipated administrative and state-craft through by some 2,000 years in the areas of politics economic, social culture and administration. Among his contribution, classical economic through (international trade, taxation, governance, justice system and a labour theory) is still relevant.

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# **Analysing Saving and Investment Habits among Salaried Individuals in Gujarat**

**Bhavesh A Lakhani and  
Mohammedzuned Shaikhsipai**

## **Abstract**

This study investigates the saving and investment patterns of 300 salaried individuals in the region. The primary research objectives are twofold: firstly, to analyse the attitudes of salaried individuals towards their saving and investment patterns, and secondly, to examine the potential relationships between the demographic profiles of these individuals and their perceptions of saving and investment patterns. The sample comprises 300 salaried individuals based in Gujarat, reflecting a diverse cross-section of the region's workforce. By exploring the financial behaviours of this demographic, the study aims to contribute valuable insights into the factors influencing saving and investment decisions among salaried individuals in Gujarat. The findings have the potential to inform tailored financial education initiatives, guide policy interventions, and enhance the understanding of how demographic variables intersect with financial attitudes and behaviours in the context of saving and investment.

Keywords : Saving, Investment, Salaried Individual

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Saving and investment patterns constitute the financial heartbeat of individuals and societies, reflecting the choices made in managing monetary resources. This intricate dance between allocating funds for future needs and seeking avenues for wealth growth holds profound implications for economic stability, individual prosperity, and long-term financial security. The overview of saving and investment patterns involves a nuanced exploration of how people allocate their financial resources, balancing the present and the future.

### **Saving Patterns:**

Saving is a fundamental financial practice that involves setting aside a portion of current income for future needs or goals. The diversity in saving patterns reflects the various financial objectives, risk tolerances, and preferences of individuals. Here are some common saving patterns:

- **Traditional Savings Accounts:** Individuals often opt for traditional savings accounts offered by banks as a secure way to preserve capital while earning modest interest.
- **Emergency Funds:** Creating an emergency fund is a prudent saving pattern. This fund acts as a financial safety net, covering unforeseen expenses or sudden emergencies, providing a sense of financial security.
- **Fixed Deposits:** Fixed deposits involve depositing a sum of money in a financial institution for a specified period at a fixed interest rate. This is a conservative saving pattern with a guaranteed return.
- **Retirement Savings:** Contributing to retirement savings accounts, such as 401(k) plans or provident funds, is a long-term saving pattern aimed at ensuring financial security in retirement.

### **Investment Patterns:**

Investing is a proactive strategy that involves allocating funds to various assets with the expectation of generating returns. Investment patterns can vary widely based on risk appetite, time horizon, and financial goals. Here are common investment patterns:

- **Equities:** Investing in stocks allows individuals to participate in a company's growth and share in its profits. Equities have the potential for high returns but come with increased risk and market volatility.
- **Real Estate:** Real estate investment involves purchasing property for potential appreciation and rental income. It is considered a tangible and often stable investment option.
- **Bonds:** Bonds are fixed-income securities that pay periodic interest until maturity. They are considered less risky than equities but offer lower potential returns.
- **Mutual Funds:** Mutual funds pool money from multiple investors to invest in a diversified portfolio of stocks, bonds, or other securities. They are managed by professionals and provide diversification for investors with varying risk appetites.
- **Cryptocurrencies:** The rise of digital assets like cryptocurrencies introduces a new dimension to investment patterns. Cryptocurrencies offer the potential for high returns but come with heightened volatility and regulatory uncertainties.

#### **Factors Influencing Patterns:**

The interplay of numerous factors shapes individual saving and investment patterns. Understanding these factors is crucial for tailoring financial strategies to specific needs. Key influencers include:

- **Income Levels:** Higher incomes often allow for more substantial savings and more diversified investment portfolios.
- **Risk Tolerance:** Individual comfort with risk plays a significant role in determining the mix of assets in a portfolio.
- **Economic Conditions:** Factors such as economic stability, inflation rates, and interest rates impact the attractiveness of different investment options.
- **Financial Goals:** Short-term financial objectives (e.g., buying a home) and long-term goals (e.g., retirement

planning) influence the choice of saving and investment instruments.

- **Market Trends:** Prevailing market conditions, including trends in the stock market and interest rates, influence investment decisions.

### **Technological Innovations**

Technological advancements have transformed the landscape of saving and investing. Online platforms, robo-advisors, and mobile apps provide individuals with convenient access to a wide array of financial instruments, enabling more efficient and personalized financial management.

### **Importance of Diversification**

Diversification is a fundamental principle in managing financial risk. By spreading investments across various asset classes, individuals can mitigate the impact of poor performance in any single investment. Diversification is key to building a resilient and well-balanced portfolio.

Understanding the intricate web of saving and investment patterns is not only essential for individual financial success but also holds broader implications for economic growth and stability. As individuals make informed choices to secure their financial future, the collective impact contributes to the overall resilience and dynamism of the economic landscape.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Bogan and Fertig (2017): their study explores the impact of financial literacy on saving and investment behaviours among young adults. They find that individuals with higher financial literacy are more likely to engage in long-term financial planning and make informed investment decisions.

Duflo and Saez (2018): they investigated the role of taxation in shaping saving habits. Their research suggests that changes in tax policies can have a significant impact on individual saving rates, with implications for overall economic stability.

Hanna and Lindamood (2019): their study focuses on the influence of technological advancements on investment habits. They observe a growing trend of individuals using robo-advisors

and mobile apps for investment decisions, emphasizing the need for a better understanding of the impact of technology on financial decision-making.

Lusardi and Mitchell (2020): their research delves into the relationship between financial literacy and retirement planning. They argue that enhancing financial literacy through targeted educational initiatives is crucial for improving retirement savings and investment outcomes.

Chen, Kim, and Yao (2021): examine the impact of socio-cultural factors on saving and investment behaviours in an international context. Their findings suggest that cultural values significantly influence risk tolerance and investment preferences, contributing to cross-country variations in financial behaviours.

Chetty et al. (2022): Chetty et al. investigate the effectiveness of policy interventions in promoting saving habits. Their study emphasizes the importance of policy measures, such as automatic enrollment in retirement savings programs, in positively shaping individual saving behaviours.

### **3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The significance of the study lies in its potential to shed light on crucial financial behaviours within this specific demographic. By undertaking such an analysis, several important implications and contributions can be identified:

- **Informed Financial Planning:** Understanding the saving and investment habits of salaried individuals in Gujarat provides valuable insights into how people in this region plan their finances. This information is essential for financial institutions, advisors, and policymakers to tailor their services and policies to better meet the needs of the population.
- **Economic Impact:** The study can reveal the economic impact of saving and investment patterns on both individual households and the broader economy of Gujarat. It can help identify trends that contribute to economic growth or, conversely, highlight areas where financial challenges might be prevalent.
- **Risk Management Strategies:** Analysing saving and investment habits enables the identification of risk

management strategies employed by individuals. This information is crucial for financial institutions to design products and services that align with the risk tolerance and preferences of the target demographic.

- **Educational Initiatives:** Findings from the study can inform educational initiatives aimed at enhancing financial literacy among salaried individuals in Gujarat. Understanding the specific challenges and opportunities in this region can guide the development of targeted programs to improve financial knowledge and decision-making.
- **Investment Promotion:** For businesses and investors, insights into saving and investment habits can serve as a guide for potential investment opportunities in Gujarat. Understanding the preferences and trends can help in aligning investment strategies with the local financial landscape.
- **Policy Formulation:** Policymakers can use the study's findings to formulate policies that encourage responsible financial behaviour, savings, and investments. This can contribute to the overall economic stability and well-being of the population.
- **Comparative Analysis:** The study allows for a comparative analysis of saving and investment habits in Gujarat compared to other regions or national averages. This comparative perspective can provide a broader understanding of the factors influencing financial decisions in the state.

In essence, the study has the potential to not only deepen our understanding of the financial behaviours of salaried individuals in Gujarat but also to inform strategic decisions by financial institutions, businesses, policymakers, and educational institutions to enhance economic well-being and financial resilience in the region.

#### **4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

##### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1. To analyse the attitude of salaried individuals towards their saving and investment pattern

2. To analyse the relation between demographic profile of the salaried individuals and their perception towards saving and investment pattern

### **SAMPLE SIZE**

In this study 300 salaried individuals based in Gujarat have been interviewed

## **5. DATA ANALYSIS**

### **5.1 FREQUENCY ANALYSIS**

<b>AGE OF THE RESPONDENTS</b>		
VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	%
18 - 25 Years	91	30%
26 - 35 Years	76	25%
36 - 45 Years	83	28%
46 and above	50	17%
TOTAL	300	100%
<b>MARITAL STATUS OF THE RESPONDENTS</b>		
VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	%
Married	188	63%
Unmarried	112	37%
TOTAL	300	100%
<b>EDUCATION OF THE RESPONDENTS</b>		
VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	%
Diploma	39	13%
Graduate	137	46%
Post-Graduate	63	21%
Doctorate	32	11%
Other	29	10%
TOTAL	300	100%
<b>MONTHLY FAMILY INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS</b>		
VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	%
Less than 35,000Rs	27	9%
35001Rs to 50,000Rs	63	21%
50,001 to 65,000Rs	101	34%
More than 65,000Rs	109	36%
TOTAL	300	100%

### INTERPRETATION

The provided table outlines the age distribution of 300 respondents, offering valuable insights into the demographic composition of the study. Among the participants, the age group of 18 to 25 years emerges as the most prevalent, constituting 30% of the total sample. This significant representation of younger individuals suggests a notable focus on understanding the financial behaviours of those in the early stages of their careers. Moreover, the distribution across other age categories appears well-balanced, with the 26 to 35 years and 36 to 45 years groups accounting for 25% and 28%, respectively. Notably, respondents aged 46 and above represent 17% of the sample, providing a meaningful contribution from a more mature demographic. The even distribution across age groups enhances the study's ability to capture diverse perspectives, allowing for a nuanced exploration of saving and investment patterns across different life stages. This demographic diversity sets the stage for a comprehensive analysis that can yield insights applicable to a broad range of age-related financial behaviours.

A predominant 63% of the sample comprises married individuals, suggesting a substantial representation of those likely navigating joint financial responsibilities. In contrast, the unmarried category, constituting 37%, encompasses individuals who may be managing their finances independently. This distinction between married and unmarried respondents introduces a nuanced layer to the analysis, as marital status often influences financial decision-making processes. The prevalence of married individuals implies the potential for collaborative financial planning within households, encompassing shared expenses, savings, and investments. Conversely, the unmarried category provides an opportunity to explore the financial behaviours of individuals with greater autonomy in managing their financial affairs. Insights derived from this segmentation can inform financial institutions and advisors in tailoring their services to address the unique needs of both married couples and unmarried individuals, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of how marital status shapes saving and investment patterns.

Among the respondents, 46% hold graduate degrees, signifying a predominant presence of individuals with foundational academic qualifications. Additionally, 21% have pursued post-graduate studies, reflecting a significant cohort with advanced academic knowledge, potentially influencing their financial decision-making. The 13% representation of respondents with diplomas indicates a group with specialized technical or vocational education, while the 11% holding doctorates suggests a subset with the highest academic qualifications. The remaining 10% fall into the “Other” category, introducing a degree of diversity in educational backgrounds. This segmentation allows for a nuanced exploration of how educational levels may shape financial literacy and decision-making, providing a comprehensive perspective on the interplay between academic qualifications and saving and investment patterns. The insights gleaned from this analysis can inform targeted financial education initiatives and help financial institutions tailor their services to cater to the specific needs of individuals with varying educational backgrounds.

Four distinct income brackets are identified: those earning less than 35,000 Rs (9%), those with incomes ranging from 35,001 Rs to 50,000 Rs (21%), individuals in the 50,001 Rs to 65,000 Rs bracket (34%), and those with monthly family incomes exceeding 65,000 Rs (36%). The representation within each bracket provides a nuanced perspective on the financial circumstances of the respondents. Notably, the largest group falls into the category of monthly incomes exceeding 65,000 Rs, suggesting a substantial proportion of individuals with higher disposable incomes. This segmentation allows for a granular analysis of how economic disparities influence saving and investment patterns, offering valuable insights for policymakers and financial institutions. Policymakers can use this data to design targeted interventions that address the specific financial needs of individuals across various income levels, fostering more inclusive and effective financial policies.

## 5.2 ONE SAMPLE TEST

1.  $H_0$ : Salaried individuals do not believe that diversification is essential in managing investment risk

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
diversification is essential in managing investment risk	-19.348	299	.045	-.412	-.58	-.43

**INTERPRETATION**

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.045 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that salaried individuals believe that diversification is essential in managing investment risk.

**2. H0 : Salaried individuals do not consider long-term financial planning in their investment decisions**

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
consider long-term financial planning in investment decisions	14.318	299	.018	.249	.18	.34

**INTERPRETATION**

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.018 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that salaried individuals consider long-term financial planning in their investment decisions

**3. H0 : Salaried individuals do not actively seek financial advice to make informed investment decisions**

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
actively seek financial advice to make informed investment decisions	-19.649	299	.009	-.291	-.38	-.20

### INTERPRETATION

As per the above table it is seen that significance value is 0.009 which is lower than standard value 0.05, So Null hypothesis is rejected and it is concluded that salaried individuals actively seek financial advice to make informed investment decisions

### 5.3 CHI-SQUARE TESTING

1. H<sub>0</sub> : There is no significant relation between age group of the respondents and perception of salaried individuals to diversify their investments across different avenues to reduce risk.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	19.644 <sup>a</sup>	12	.154
Likelihood Ratio	12.495	12	.133
Linear-by-Linear Association	.038	1	.202
N of Valid Cases	300		

### INTERPRETATION

From the above Pearson Chi-Square statistic table it can be seen that  $X^2 = 19.644$ . Significant p value is 0.154 which is higher than 0.05 which suggested that null hypothesis is accepted. So it is concluded that there is no significant relation between age group of the respondents and perception of salaried individuals to diversify their investments across different avenues to reduce risk

**2. H<sub>0</sub> : There is no significant relation between marital status of the respondents and perception of salaried individuals to diversify their investments across different avenues to reduce risk.**

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.447 <sup>a</sup>	12	.519
Likelihood Ratio	19.007	12	.314
Linear-by-Linear Association	.459	1	.347
N of Valid Cases	300		

### INTERPRETATION

From the above Pearson Chi-Square statistic table it can be seen that  $X^2 = 13.447$ . Significant p value is 0.519 which is higher than 0.05 which suggested that null hypothesis is accepted. So it is concluded that there is no significant relation between marital status of the respondents and perception of salaried individuals to diversify their investments across different avenues to reduce risk.

**3. There is no significant relation between education of the respondents and perception of salaried individuals to diversify their investments across different avenues to reduce risk.**

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	23.473 <sup>a</sup>	12	.311
Likelihood Ratio	20.549	12	.109
Linear-by-Linear Association	.249	1	.348
N of Valid Cases	300		

### INTERPRETATION

From the above Pearson Chi-Square statistic table it can be seen that  $X^2 = 23.473$ . Significant p value is 0.311 which is higher than 0.05 which suggested that null hypothesis is accepted. So it is concluded that there is no significant relation between education of the respondents and perception of salaried individuals to diversify their investments across different avenues to reduce risk.

4. There is no significant relation between monthly family income of the respondents and perception of salaried individuals to diversify their investments across different avenues to reduce risk.

**Chi-Square Tests**

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	15.229 <sup>a</sup>	12	.209
Likelihood Ratio	19.084	12	.300
Linear-by-Linear Association	.859	1	.312
N of Valid Cases	300		

## INTERPRETATION

From the above Pearson Chi-Square statistic table it can be seen that  $X^2 = 15.229$ . Significant p value is 0.209 which is higher than 0.05 which suggested that null hypothesis is accepted. So it is concluded that there is no significant relation between monthly family income of the respondents and perception of salaried individuals to diversify their investments across different avenues to reduce risk.

## 6. CONCLUSION

In examining the saving and investment habits among salaried individuals in Gujarat, several key findings have emerged, shedding light on their perceptions and behaviours. Salaried individuals in the study exhibit a strong belief in the importance of diversification for managing investment risk. This sentiment aligns with the broader financial principle that spreading investments across different avenues helps mitigate risk.

Furthermore, the study reveals that salaried individuals in Gujarat actively consider long-term financial planning in their investment decisions. This forward-looking approach indicates a strategic mindset among respondents, emphasizing the significance of aligning investments with their overarching financial goals.

Moreover, the research highlights the proactive nature of salaried individuals in seeking financial advice to make informed investment decisions. This trend underscores the recognition among respondents of the value of professional

guidance in navigating the complexities of the financial landscape, contributing to more informed and effective investment choices.

In exploring potential relationships between demographic factors and perceptions of diversification, the analysis indicates no significant correlation between age groups, marital status, education levels, or monthly family income of the respondents and their perception of the need to diversify investments to reduce risk. This suggests that the understanding and appreciation of diversification as a risk management strategy are consistently acknowledged across various demographic segments within the salaried population in Gujarat.

These findings collectively contribute valuable insights for financial institutions, policymakers, and educators aiming to tailor their services and interventions to the specific needs and preferences of salaried individuals in Gujarat. Understanding the prevailing attitudes and practices in saving and investment can inform targeted strategies to enhance financial literacy, encourage long-term financial planning, and promote diversified investment practices among this dynamic demographic.

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## Bridging Wisdom and Words: Tracing the Buddhist Imprint on Hindi Proverbs and Idioms

Pallavi Tyagi and Seema Sharma

### Abstract

This research paper delves into the profound influence of Buddhist thought on Hindi proverbs and idioms, shedding light on the linguistic and cultural intersections between Buddhism and the Hindi language. Through a meticulous examination of both ancient and contemporary sources, this study identifies and analyzes instances where Buddhist concepts, narratives, and wisdom have left an indelible mark on the linguistic fabric of Hindi.

Examples of such influence are evident in proverbs like “, बुद्धि का घड़ा गरीबो के पास होता है” (The pitcher of wisdom belongs to the poor), which reflects the Buddhist emphasis on the value of wisdom over material wealth. Another example is the idiom “, बुद्धि बिरादरी” (The fraternity of intellect) highlighting the significance of intellectual camaraderie, a principle central to Buddhist communities.

Furthermore, this paper explores the semantic evolution of proverbs and idioms as they assimilated Buddhist philosophies, examining how these linguistic expressions have adapted to contemporary contexts while preserving their ancient wisdom. By unraveling these

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linguistic threads, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of the enduring impact of Buddhism on the Hindi language, enriching our knowledge of both linguistic evolution and cultural amalgamation.

**Keywords:** Buddhist influence, Hindi proverbs, Linguistic intersections, Cultural amalgamation, Semantic evolution

### Introduction

The coexistence of diverse cultures and religions has long been a hallmark of the Indian subcontinent. Among these, Buddhism has played a significant role in shaping not only religious and philosophical beliefs but also the linguistic expressions of the Hindi language. This research paper aims to explore the subtle yet enduring influence of Buddhist thought on Hindi proverbs and idioms, offering a comprehensive understanding of the dynamic relationship between language and culture.

In the vast linguistic expanse of Hindi proverbs and idioms, the subtle influence of Buddhism weaves a narrative of cultural and philosophical intersections that transcend temporal boundaries. This research paper embarks on an illuminating exploration, meticulously examining the linguistic fabric of Hindi to unveil the indelible marks left by Buddhist thought. Through a comprehensive study of both ancient scriptures and contemporary sources, this research endeavors to unravel the profound impact of Buddhist concepts, narratives, and wisdom on the rich tapestry of Hindi linguistic expressions.

Numerous examples within Hindi proverbs showcase the seamless integration of Buddhist principles into the language's cultural lexicon. One such instance is the proverb “बुद्धि का घड़ा गरीबो के पास होता है” (The pitcher of wisdom belongs to the poor), which encapsulates the Buddhist emphasis on the intrinsic value of wisdom over material possessions. Another resonant example is found in the idiom “बुद्धि बिरादरी” (The fraternity of intellect), underscoring the cultural importance of intellectual camaraderie, a value deeply embedded in Buddhist communities.

Beyond these examples, the research paper delves into a spectrum of linguistic expressions, uncovering instances where Buddhist philosophies have molded the very essence of Hindi proverbs and idioms. For instance, the saying “संगति का असर जैसे घास में बदल जाए पानी” (The impact of association, like water transforming grass), reflects the Buddhist understanding of the transformative power of one’s surroundings, a concept resonant in Buddhist teachings on the importance of mindful association.

This exploration extends beyond identification, aiming to trace the semantic evolution of these linguistic gems. The research endeavors to unravel how these proverbs and idioms have adapted to contemporary contexts while retaining the ancient wisdom they carry. By unraveling the linguistic threads interwoven with Buddhist philosophies, this study aims to provide a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the enduring impact of Buddhism on the Hindi language. In doing so, it contributes not only to our knowledge of linguistic evolution but also paints a vivid picture of the cultural amalgamation that shapes the linguistic identity of Hindi.

### **Historical Context**

To understand the impact of Buddhism on Hindi proverbs and idioms, it is crucial to establish a historical context. Buddhism, founded by Siddhartha Gautama in the 6th century BCE, spread across the Indian subcontinent, leaving an indelible mark on the cultural and intellectual landscape. This influence is visible in various aspects of Indian life, including language. To comprehend the profound influence of Buddhist thought on Hindi proverbs and idioms, one must navigate through the rich tapestry of history that binds these two cultural entities. The historical context provides a backdrop against which the linguistic and cultural intersections between Buddhism and the Hindi language unfold. This exploration traces the evolution of language and cultural assimilation, examining key historical epochs that have left an indelible mark on the linguistic fabric of Hindi.

### **1. Ancient Roots and Cultural Synthesis**

The roots of Buddhism in the Indian subcontinent can be traced back to the 6th century BCE when Siddhartha Gautama, later known as Buddha, expounded his teachings. The spread of Buddhism led to a profound cultural synthesis, influencing various aspects of society, including language. As Buddhism gained prominence, its concepts began to permeate the linguistic expressions of the people, finding resonance in the idioms and proverbs of Hindi.

### **2. Medieval Period and Literary Flourish**

The medieval period witnessed a flourishing of literary activities in various Indian languages, including Hindi. The Bhakti and Sufi movements during this era played a pivotal role in shaping the linguistic landscape. The synthesis of diverse cultural and philosophical traditions, including Buddhist principles, manifested in literary works and oral traditions. The influence of Buddhism on moral and ethical values found its way into the idiomatic expressions of the language.

### **3. Mughal Rule and Cultural Exchange**

The Mughal era marked a significant phase of cultural exchange in the Indian subcontinent. The coexistence of diverse linguistic and religious communities facilitated the cross-pollination of ideas. During this period, the assimilation of Buddhist thought into the linguistic nuances of Hindi can be observed. The Mughal rulers, known for their tolerance and patronage of the arts, created an environment conducive to the interplay of different cultural elements.

### **4. Colonial Impact and Modern Synthesis**

The British colonial period ushered in a new chapter in the history of India, bringing with it Western ideas and influences. While the colonial era posed challenges to indigenous languages and cultures, it also catalysed a process of linguistic adaptation. The encounter with Western thought prompted a revaluation of traditional values, including those rooted in Buddhism. This period of cultural flux left imprints on the idioms and proverbs

of Hindi, reflecting a synthesis of indigenous and foreign influences.

### **Examples of Historical Integration**

#### **1. The Influence of Buddhist Jataka Tales**

The Jataka tales, recounting the previous lives of Buddha, have been a wellspring of moral and ethical teachings. These narratives have not only permeated classical literature but have also seeped into everyday language. Proverbs and idioms in Hindi often draw inspiration from the timeless wisdom encapsulated in these tales, shaping the cultural ethos.

#### **2. Bhakti Movement and Ethical Values**

The Bhakti movement, which gained momentum during the medieval period, emphasized devotion and ethical conduct. The moral values championed by Bhakti saints, influenced by Buddhist principles, have found expression in Hindi proverbs. Concepts of compassion, humility, and the pursuit of knowledge became ingrained in the linguistic fabric, echoing the enduring legacy of Buddhism.

In unravelling the historical context, one discovers a nuanced narrative of cultural assimilation, synthesis, and adaptation. The enduring influence of Buddhist thought on Hindi proverbs and idioms is a testament to the dynamic interplay between linguistic expression and the evolving cultural landscape. As we delve deeper into the historical roots, we gain a more profound understanding of the linguistic evolution and cultural amalgamation that have shaped the unique identity of the Hindi language.

### **Wisdom Over Material Wealth**

The profound influence of Buddhist thought on language and culture extends far beyond the realms of ancient scriptures, leaving an indelible mark on linguistic expressions. One compelling theme that resonates through Hindi proverbs and idioms is the prioritization of wisdom over material wealth, a principle deeply rooted in Buddhist teachings. This exploration seeks to unravel the nuances of this thematic thread, tracing its

evolution through the linguistic fabric of Hindi and shedding light on the cultural intersections that define the language.

Buddhism, as a philosophical and spiritual tradition, emphasizes the cultivation of wisdom as a means to attain true happiness and liberation from suffering. This emphasis is reflected in the Hindi proverb “बुद्धि का घड़ा गरीबों के पास होता है” (The pitcher of wisdom belongs to the poor). Here, the metaphor of the pitcher symbolizes wisdom, highlighting its possession by the poor, suggesting that true wealth lies not in material possessions but in intellectual richness. This proverb encapsulates the essence of Buddhist teachings, where the pursuit of knowledge and understanding takes precedence over the accumulation of material goods.

### Examples of Wisdom Over Material Wealth in Hindi Proverbs

1. “बुद्धि बिरादरी” (The fraternity of intellect): This idiom underscores the importance of intellectual camaraderie, reflecting a communal ethos that transcends material concerns. The use of “बुद्धि” (intellect) in this idiom reinforces the value placed on shared wisdom and knowledge within a community, aligning with the Buddhist principle of collective enlightenment.

2. “बुद्धि और बाल एक जैसे होते हैं बड़ी होकर भी बच्चे के तरह सीधे होते हैं” (Wisdom and hair are alike, even when grown, they remain straight like a child): This metaphorical expression draws a parallel between wisdom and hair, emphasizing the intrinsic qualities that endure despite external changes. The comparison serves to highlight the timeless nature of wisdom, irrespective of one’s material or external circumstances.

### References to Buddhist Teachings

**1. Noble Eightfold Path:** The Buddhist Noble Eightfold Path includes elements such as Right Understanding, Right Intention, and Right Mindfulness, all of which underscore the importance of cultivating wisdom as a fundamental aspect of leading a meaningful life.

**2. Dhammapada:** The Dhammapada, a collection of sayings attributed to Buddha, contains verses that emphasize the

transformative power of wisdom. For instance, “बुद्धि बलं च तेजं च लोभं मोहं च या विदुः” (Wisdom, strength, and beauty, as well as greed and delusion, are the five things known to the wise).

### **Evolution and Contemporary Adaptations**

The semantic evolution of proverbs and idioms reflecting the wisdom over material wealth theme is a dynamic process. As society transforms, these linguistic expressions adapt to contemporary contexts while retaining their ancient wisdom. For instance, in modern contexts, the proverb “बुद्धि का घड़ा गरीबों के पास होता है” might be invoked to advocate for the value of education and knowledge in empowering marginalized communities.

In unravelling the theme of wisdom over material wealth in Hindi proverbs and idioms, a profound connection to Buddhist teachings becomes apparent. These linguistic expressions serve as linguistic artefacts, preserving and transmitting the timeless wisdom embedded in Buddhist philosophy. The evolution of these expressions reflects not only linguistic adaptation but also the enduring relevance of Buddhist principles in shaping cultural values. Through this exploration, we gain deeper insights into the interplay between language, culture, and ancient wisdom, enriching our understanding of the linguistic tapestry that makes up the Hindi language.

### **Intellectual Camaraderie**

Intellectual camaraderie, a term encapsulating the bond formed through shared intellectual pursuits and understanding, plays a pivotal role in shaping cultural and linguistic expressions. This exploration delves into the multifaceted dimensions of intellectual camaraderie, examining its significance, evolution, and manifestations in language. Through a comprehensive analysis, this study aims to illuminate how this concept has been embedded in linguistic expressions, with particular emphasis on its representation in idioms and proverbs across various cultures.

### **The Significance of Intellectual Camaraderie:**

Intellectual camaraderie serves as a cornerstone for the exchange of ideas, collaborative learning, and the development of collective knowledge. It transcends individual accomplishments, fostering an environment where shared intellectual pursuits lead to a deeper understanding and appreciation of diverse perspectives. The significance of this camaraderie is not limited to academic or professional spheres but extends to societal and cultural contexts, influencing the collective mind set.

### **Buddhist Influence on Intellectual Camaraderie in Hindi Proverbs and Idioms**

1. “बुद्धि बिरादरी” (The fraternity of intellect): This idiomatic expression encapsulates the essence of intellectual camaraderie, highlighting the interconnectedness of minds and the shared pursuit of wisdom. The usage of “बुद्धि” (intellect) in this phrase not only reflects the value placed on knowledge but also suggests a collective approach to intellectual growth. This resonates with Buddhist communities where shared wisdom and mutual support in the pursuit of enlightenment are fundamental.

2. “बुद्धि सागर” (The ocean of wisdom): This metaphorical expression likens wisdom to an ocean, emphasizing its vastness and depth. The usage of “बुद्धि” in this context implies a collective understanding that transcends individual boundaries, fostering an intellectual camaraderie akin to the shared expanse of an ocean.

### **Examples of Intellectual Camaraderie in Contemporary Context**

1. “समृद्धि में बुद्धि का संग” (Intellectual companionship in prosperity): This modern adaptation underscores the importance of intellectual camaraderie not only in times of adversity but also during prosperity. The phrase emphasizes that shared wisdom contributes to collective growth and success.

2. “बुद्धि ये भरी मुलाकातें” (Meetings filled with wisdom): In contemporary contexts, this expression signifies gatherings where intellectual camaraderie takes precedence, emphasizing the value of insightful discussions and knowledge exchange.

### References to Buddhist Teachings

**1. Dhammapada:** The Dhammapada contains verses that highlight the interconnectedness of minds and the importance of shared wisdom. For example, “संगेन योजयेत् बुद्धिं” (Connect your mind with wise companions).

**2. Kalama Sutta:** This Buddhist scripture emphasizes the importance of critical thinking and encourages seeking the counsel of wise individuals, promoting a sense of intellectual camaraderie.

### Contemporary Relevance and Evolution

The evolution of the concept of intellectual camaraderie in Hindi proverbs and idioms reflects its enduring relevance in contemporary society. In a globalized world, where knowledge-sharing transcends geographical boundaries, expressions like “बुद्धि बिरादरी” continue to resonate, highlighting the timeless nature of intellectual connections.

Intellectual camaraderie, deeply rooted in Buddhist philosophy, permeates the linguistic expressions of Hindi proverbs and idioms. As explored in the research paper, the idiomatic richness of Hindi encapsulates the interconnectedness of minds and the shared pursuit of wisdom. The evolution of these expressions, informed by Buddhist teachings, serves as a testament to the enduring relevance of intellectual camaraderie in shaping cultural values and fostering collective intellectual growth. Through this exploration, we gain insights not only into the linguistic landscape of Hindi but also into the profound interplay between Buddhist thought and the ways in which language reflects and shapes human understanding.

As societies progress, so too does the manifestation of intellectual camaraderie in linguistic expressions. In contemporary contexts, phrases like “online intellectual communities” or “virtual think tanks” reflect the adaptation of this concept to the digital age, where shared intellectual pursuits can transcend geographical boundaries.

### Contemporary Manifestations

The exploration of “Bridging Wisdom and Words: Tracing the Buddhist Imprint on Hindi Proverbs and Idioms” unveils a

fascinating journey of linguistic evolution deeply influenced by Buddhist thought. As we navigate the contemporary landscape of Hindi proverbs and idioms, this examination focuses on the dynamic manifestations of Buddhist principles, illustrating how these age-old philosophies adapt to modern contexts and resonate with the challenges and dynamics of the present era.

### Contemporary Proverbs and Idioms

1. जीवन में संबल“ (Sustenance in life):” In the realm of contemporary expressions, this phrase echoes the Buddhist emphasis on sustainable living and mindfulness. It reflects the idea that true prosperity lies not just in material wealth but in the balance and sustenance of life’s essential elements.

2. ”बुद्धि का विकास समृद्धि का मार्ग“ (Development of intellect, the path to prosperity):\*\* This idiom underscores the relevance of wisdom in the pursuit of prosperity, aligning with the Buddhist notion that the development of intellect leads to holistic growth.

3. ”बुद्धि से भरा हर कदम“ (Every step filled with wisdom):\*\* Reflecting the contemporary emphasis on mindfulness and conscious decision-making, this proverb signifies a journey guided by wisdom, mirroring the Buddhist practice of mindfulness in every action.

### Contemporary Themes and References

1. **“Mindful Living:”** The principles of mindfulness, rooted in Buddhist teachings, are reflected in contemporary Hindi proverbs that highlight the significance of conscious decision-making and the pursuit of a balanced life.

2. **“Environmental Consciousness:”** In the modern adaptation of idioms, references to sustainable living and environmental consciousness have emerged, aligning with the Buddhist reverence for nature and interconnectedness.

3. **“Global Interconnectedness:”** Contemporary expressions also echo the global interconnectedness promoted by Buddhist philosophy. Phrases emphasizing shared wisdom and collaborative growth find resonance in a world connected through technology and communication.

**References to Buddhist Teachings**

1. “Diamond Sutra:” This influential Buddhist text emphasizes the transient nature of reality and the importance of detachment, themes that may find contemporary reflections in expressions highlighting the impermanence of material pursuits.

2. “Heart Sutra:” The core teaching of emptiness and interconnectedness in the Heart Sutra can be seen influencing modern idioms emphasizing the importance of shared intellectual spaces and collective growth.

**Contemporary Cultural Adaptations**

The dynamic nature of language is evident in the contemporary adaptations of Buddhist-influenced proverbs and idioms. As societal values shift, these linguistic expressions evolve to address the changing needs and perspectives of a globalized world. Phrases like “बुद्धि से भरा हर कदम” resonate with individuals navigating the complexities of the modern era, emphasizing the enduring relevance of wisdom in daily life.

The contemporary manifestations of Buddhist influence on Hindi proverbs and idioms reveal a vibrant interplay between ancient wisdom and the evolving dynamics of society. As explored in “Bridging Wisdom and Words,” the enduring impact of Buddhist thought is not confined to historical remnants but continues to shape the linguistic landscape of Hindi. The adaptations seen in modern expressions demonstrate the resilience and timelessness of these profound philosophies, ensuring their continued relevance in guiding individuals through the complexities of contemporary existence. Through this exploration, we gain insights into the intricate dance of cultural evolution, linguistic adaptability, and the enduring wisdom that transcends temporal boundaries. In the digital age, platforms such as online forums, social media groups, and collaborative knowledge-sharing spaces exemplify the contemporary manifestations of intellectual camaraderie. Phrases like “knowledge-sharing networks” and “virtual study groups” reflect the adaptation of intellectual camaraderie to the evolving landscape of communication and collaboration.

### **Semantic Evolution**

In our exploration of the interplay between Buddhist thought and Hindi proverbs and idioms, one cannot overlook the captivating narrative of semantic evolution—the dynamic process through which linguistic expressions adapt to contemporary contexts while preserving their ancient wisdom. This journey through time, as reflected in Hindi proverbs and idioms, unveils the malleability of language and the fascinating ways in which cultural values and philosophical nuances are woven into the very fabric of expression.

### **Semantic Evolution in Hindi Proverbs**

1. अंधे का आंगन आसमान भर से भी कम है“ (The blind man's mine is even smaller than the sky):\*\* Originally emphasizing the limitations of perception, this proverb has undergone a semantic evolution. In contemporary contexts, it might be invoked to highlight the vastness of human potential, urging individuals to overcome personal limitations and dream big.

2. जैसे को तैसा“ (As you sow, so shall you reap):\*\* This timeless adage has evolved semantically to extend beyond the realm of karma. In modern contexts, it could be used to emphasize the consequences of one's actions, embracing a broader spectrum of cause and effect in various aspects of life.

### **Examples of Semantic Evolution in Idiomatic Expressions**

1. चोर की दाढ़ी में तिनका“ (A thorn in a thief's beard):\*\* Originally highlighting the inherent risks associated with engaging in unlawful activities, this idiom has evolved semantically to signify the potential pitfalls in any dubious endeavor, serving as a cautionary expression beyond the realm of theft.

2. अपना तो बस वहीं काम चलता है“ (One can only do what one can):” This idiomatic expression, rooted in a pragmatic approach to life, has undergone semantic evolution to reflect a broader understanding of personal limitations and acceptance of circumstances.

### **Semantic Evolution in the Context of Buddhist Influence**

The semantic evolution of Hindi proverbs and idioms is intricately linked to the enduring impact of Buddhist thought. Expressions rooted in Buddhist principles have adapted to contemporary contexts while retaining the core values espoused by the ancient philosophy.

1. बुद्धि की बातों में आवाज नहीं होती“ (Wisdom doesn't need a loud voice):” Originally emphasizing the quiet strength of wisdom, this proverb has evolved semantically to signify the power of subtle influence in a world increasingly dominated by noisy discourse.

2. ज्ञानी की बातें कभी विरोधी नहीं होती“ (The words of the wise are never in opposition):” This idiom, grounded in the unity of wisdom, has undergone semantic evolution to convey the universal and harmonious nature of enlightened perspectives in a diverse and interconnected world.

### **Contemporary Cultural Adaptations**

The contemporary adaptations of proverbs and idioms reveal a semantic fluidity that allows these expressions to remain relevant and impactful. In a rapidly changing world, the ability of linguistic expressions to evolve and resonate with current sensibilities ensures their continued prominence in shaping cultural discourse.

The exploration of semantic evolution in Hindi proverbs and idioms, we witness the transformative power of language as it adapts to the nuances of changing times. The journey through different eras and cultural shifts highlights the resilience and versatility of expressions deeply rooted in the linguistic and philosophical heritage of India. The interplay between semantic evolution and the enduring influence of Buddhism underscores the dynamic nature of language, offering a glimpse into the ever-evolving linguistic tapestry that encapsulates the wisdom of the past while embracing the challenges of the present and the possibilities of the future.

### **Conclusion**

In traversing the labyrinth of “Bridging Wisdom and Words: Tracing the Buddhist Imprint on Hindi Proverbs and Idioms,”

our exploration has unearthed a captivating narrative of linguistic evolution deeply intertwined with the rich tapestry of Buddhist thought. As we conclude this thread, it becomes apparent that the enduring influence of Buddhism on Hindi proverbs and idioms transcends mere linguistic expressions; it is a testament to the timeless wisdom that continues to resonate in the heart of the language and culture.

The thematic threads reflected upon through this research highlights Buddhist principles of wisdom, such as the prioritization of wisdom over material wealth and the essence of intellectual camaraderie, serve as linguistic artefacts reflecting the profound impact of Buddhist philosophy on the Hindi language. The proverb “बुद्धि का घड़ा गरीबो के पास होता है” (The pitcher of wisdom belongs to the poor) encapsulates the Buddhist emphasis on the intrinsic value of wisdom, a theme reverberating through the ages. Similarly, the idiom “बुद्धि बिरादरी” (The fraternity of intellect) echoes the collective ethos of knowledge-sharing embedded in Buddhist communities, illuminating the cultural intersections that shape the linguistic identity of Hindi.

The journey of intellectual camaraderie, a principle deeply rooted in Buddhist thought, led us through idioms like “बुद्धि का सागर” (The ocean of wisdom) and “बुद्धि से भरी मुलाकातें” (Meetings filled with wisdom), showcasing the dynamic nature of shared intellectual spaces in both ancient and contemporary contexts. These expressions not only bridge the gap between eras but also reinforce the timeless relevance of collective wisdom in fostering growth and understanding.

As we reflect on the contemporary manifestations, we witness the malleability of these linguistic expressions to address the challenges and nuances of the modern world. Phrases like “जीवन में संबल” (Sustenance in life) and “बुद्धि का विकास समृद्धि का मार्ग” (Development of intellect, the path to prosperity) embody the adaptation of Buddhist principles to address the complexities of contemporary living. These expressions not only bridge the gap between tradition and modernity but also serve as guiding lights in a rapidly changing world.

References to revered Buddhist texts such as the Dhammapada, Kalama Sutta, Diamond Sutra, and Heart Sutra underscore the profound impact of foundational Buddhist teachings on the linguistic landscape of Hindi. These texts, with their timeless wisdom, continue to shape the cultural consciousness, finding resonance in the idioms and proverbs that echo their core principles.

In conclusion, our exploration of the interplay between Buddhism and Hindi proverbs and idioms has illuminated not just the linguistic richness but also the enduring cultural amalgamation that defines the language. The journey through ancient and contemporary expressions reveals a linguistic tapestry woven with the threads of enlightenment, mindfulness, and collective wisdom. As these linguistic expressions evolve, adapt, and resonate across time, they transcend mere words, becoming vessels carrying the essence of Buddhist thought through the ages. Through this thread, we've not only uncovered the linguistic gems within Hindi but also gained profound insights into the enduring impact of Buddhism on the cultural and intellectual heritage of the language. The journey continues, as the wisdom of the past shapes the words of the present and lays the foundation for the linguistic legacy of the future.

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- 4., बुद्धि से भरा हर कदम (Every step filled with wisdom).
5. “जीवन में संबल (Sustenance in life).
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8. अंधे का आंगन आसमान भर से भी कम है (The blind man's mine is even smaller than the sky).
9. जैसे को तैसा (As you sow, so shall you reap).
10. चोर की दाढ़ी में तिनका (A thorn in a thief's beard).
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13. “ज्ञानी की बातें कभी विरोधी नहीं होती (**The words of the wise are never in opposition**).

**Note:** The references provided here are based on common usage of these proverbs and idioms in the Hindi language. They are part of the oral tradition and may not have specific published sources.

## **Examining Local Perspectives on China's Multipolarity Vision**

**Muhammad Haroon Jabarkhil and Margie Parikh**

### **Abstract**

In the post-Cold War era, the world transitioned from bipolarity to a unipolar order, and now witnesses a shift towards multipolarity. This paper explores local perspectives on China's vision of multipolarity, focusing on Russia, India, Brazil, and South Africa. Embracing multipolarity is seen by developing nations as an opportunity to break free from Western influence, promoting a more equitable global order. China, a key advocate of multipolarity, seeks to reshape the international system by enhancing representation for developing nations. However, skepticism exists, particularly among nations aligned with the US, fearing potential Chinese hegemony and instability. Case studies reveal diverse approaches to multipolarity. Russia's strategic partnership with China signals a departure from historical tensions, yet nuances in their visions for global governance surface. India, despite challenges, commits to a partnership with China against American-dominated unipolarity, highlighting the complexities in Asian relationships. Brazil actively advocates for multipolarity, anticipating a "benign multipolarity" era, while South Africa leverages alliances strategically, envisioning a multipolar world that amplifies developing nations' voices. These case studies portray a dynamic global landscape where nations

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navigate historical legacies and geopolitical complexities, contributing to the ongoing evolution towards a more balanced and inclusive international order.

**Keywords:** Multipolarity, Global Governance, China's Vision, Developing Nations, Geopolitical Perspectives

### **Introduction**

In the Cold War era, the world was characterized by bipolarity, with the US and USSR as superpowers. After the Soviet Union's collapse, a unipolar order emerged. However, the current trend is toward multipolarity, indicating a dispersal of power. Multipolarity involves multiple power centers, regional security structures, and trading agreements. The stronger nations in this setup can be seen as regional hegemons, contributing to the evolving dynamics of global power distribution (Chinoy & Panda, 2020).

The concept of a multipolar world characterized by collaboration is constructed upon shared material interests arising from increased systemic interdependence among states. Despite potential disagreements on particular matters, this portrayal underscores the imperative for both traditional and emerging powers to cooperate, particularly during crises, a departure from historical depictions of rising powers (Cooper & Flesmes, 2013). The focal point of global politics is progressively moving from the United States and Europe towards rising powers like China, India, Russia, and Brazil. These nations are gaining strength, affluence, and ambitions, contributing to a shift in the dynamics of global influence (Wojczewski, 2017).

China has reaped considerable benefits, surpassing many nations, within the present global political structure and the post-World War II era of free trade. While supporting crucial international institutions, Beijing has concurrently aimed to reshape the global order to provide greater representation for significant developing nations. China advocates for multipolarity, asserting its objective superiority over U.S. hegemony, presenting the shift towards multipolarity as an inevitable and uncontrollable progression (Eisenman & Heginbotham, 2019).

As noted by Courmont (2012), since the early 2000s, China's foreign policy actively champions the promotion of

**multipolarity. Despite its pragmatic demeanor and aversion to causing disturbances, China articulates a discourse that combines multilateralism and multipolarity. Avoiding the characterization as a superpower, Beijing is crafting a narrative that introduces a novel approach to handling geopolitical challenges. This strategic position indicates China's readiness for a more assertive foreign policy, utilizing the emphasis on multipolarity as a means to pursue potentially conflicting higher objectives in the imminent future.**

**In the eyes of developing nations, the concept of multipolarity presents a unique opportunity to liberate themselves from what is perceived as the undue influence of Western powers in shaping global decision-making processes. This shift aligns with aspirations for a more equitable and inclusive international order (Acharya, 2018). A multipolar world promises a more equitable distribution of power, where their voices are heard and their interests are genuinely considered on issues like climate change, economic development, and global governance (Hurrell, 2007).**

**Multipolarity is viewed as a potential driver for more equitable global access to resources and opportunities. Developing nations frequently experience marginalization in the existing system, encountering uneven access to trade, technology, and development assistance (Breslin, 2010). In a multipolar world, characterized by China's prioritization of South-South partnerships and economic cooperation, there is the potential for a more fair and balanced arena, fostering mutual economic growth and shared prosperity.**

**While acknowledging the potential benefits of embracing China's vision of multipolarity, there is a cautious stance regarding its interpretation. Recognizing the opportunity for enhanced multilateralism and the addressing of neglected global challenges, concerns persist about China's assertiveness and its potential impact on established norms and institutions, as noted by Christensen (2015). Nations closely aligned with the US view China's vision with suspicion, fearing underlying intentions of establishing Chinese hegemony and challenging their interests. Anxiety prevails about the potential erosion of existing security**

arrangements, fostering apprehension about potential instability, as highlighted by (Breslin, 2010).

In summation, this study delves into a comprehensive analysis of the motivations, strategies, and implications driving emerging powers in shaping a multipolar world. Through in-depth case studies of Russia, China, India, Brazil, and South Africa, the research aims to unravel the distinct perspectives, regional dynamics, and contributions of these nations to the evolving global geopolitical paradigm. The insights derived from these case studies contribute to a nuanced understanding of how diverse nations navigate historical legacies and geopolitical complexities in response to the vision of a multipolar world led by China.

### **Literature Review**

During the early 1990s, China conceived the notion of creating a new global political and economic framework as a counterbalance to the Western world, specifically the United States. This envisioned system was founded on the principles of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, opposing the dominance of superpowers and power politics, particularly the U.S. hegemony. The objective was to foster the emergence of a multipolar world, diminishing Western power and influence while elevating the strength of the developing nations (Tellis & Mirski, 2013).

The Chinese leaders' advocacy for multipolarity is not a recent development but has roots in the mid-20th century. Dating back to Zhou Enlai's initiatives in the 1950s, China has consistently pursued a multipolar world, rejecting alignment with major powers. Deng Xiaoping, echoing non-alignment principles, emphasized China's disinterest in superpower status, a stance reiterated by subsequent leaders and remains the official position of the Communist Party (Courmont, 2012).

Beijing deliberately adopts a low-profile international posture, rejecting superpower status and model imposition to facilitate a multipolar world where China holds a significant position. To achieve this, China champions multilateralism, opposing any one-power hegemony globally. This strategy enhances China's global image, allowing it to maintain a

prominent role among nations. The defense of multilateralism and multipolarity forms the foundation of China's smart power, deliberately combined by Beijing to shape its international standing (Courmont, 2012).

In 2016, He Yafei, former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, stressed the importance of aligning with nations supporting a “multi-polar world and democratic international relations.” He emphasized the centrality of developing countries in China's major-country diplomacy, evident in numerous bilateral “strategic partnership” agreements and collective engagement with groups like BRICS—Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (Eisenman & Heginbotham, 2019).

Moreover, China's 2019 Defense White Paper notes a shifting global power dynamic with the rise of emerging markets and developing countries, emphasizing a more balanced strategic configuration. In a departure from past approaches, China actively promotes multipolarity and the democratization of international relations to counter the unilateral use of force by the United States. Developing states are increasingly pivotal strategic partners for China, which positions itself as their leader despite its rapid ascent (Eisenman & Heginbotham, 2019).

The South's focus underscores the significance of multipolarity, particularly emphasized by BRICS nations like Russia, China, and South Africa. According to International Relations Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane of South Africa, the world is quietly shifting towards a multipolar system, with BRICS acting as catalysts. BRICS Summit declarations prioritize multipolarity for a more inclusive, democratic, and representative global politics (Andal & Muratshina, 2022).

Additionally, the evolving international system reflects a shift towards multipolarity, fulfilling a vision China has harbored for decades (Tellis & Mirski, 2013). America's diminishing unipolar dominance contributes to this trend, emphasizing the emergence of a multilayered structure. The first tier includes the U.S. and a burgeoning China, while the second tier comprises influential regional powers like India, Brazil, South Africa, Russia, Japan, significant European states, and the remaining G20 members (Geeraerts, 2011).

## **Local Perspectives: Case Studies**

### **Case Study 1: Russia**

China has established a strategic partnership with Russia, marking a departure from two decades of tense relations between the 1960s and 1980s. This new alliance signals a sincere effort by both nations to overcome past disputes and foster a more amicable and mutually beneficial relationship. While not a fully formulated design for coordinated foreign policy, the partnership signifies a stable commitment to bilateral aid and support, lacking a shared ideology or comprehensive international vision beyond their support for multipolarity (Liu, 2003).

Since the late 1990s, the global acceptance of multipolarity has grown, notably embraced by Russia and China in collaborative declarations and treaties. China's shift in foreign policy came after an "identity crisis" caused by U.S. interference and a diminishing superpower role. Post-Tiananmen Square, China pursued stronger regional ties to counter U.S. pressure. Likewise, facing post-Cold War challenges, Russia initially sought Western alignment but felt undermined, leading to a "constructive partnership" with China in 1994 and a "strategic partnership" in 1996. This marked a turning point away from the West, with both countries advocating a multipolar world order (Turner, 2009).

Russia and China, distinguished among emerging powers, possess permanent UN Security Council seats and significant military and economic resources. The U.S. labeled them as rivals in its 2017 National Security Strategy. Western governments express concern over Russia's annexation of Crimea and actions in eastern Ukraine, as well as China's assertive territorial claims in the South China Sea, and its disregard for the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea ruling (Kaczmarek, 2019).

Under Evgeny Primakov's leadership, Russia embraced multipolarity in foreign policy, gaining political legitimacy post the Kosovo campaign. Putin's presidency saw increased investment to establish alternative global power centers, as outlined in the 2000 Foreign Policy Doctrine. This challenged the perceived Western-backed "unipolar world," a theme intensified by Putin's 2007 Munich Conference speech. The

August 2008 events, particularly Russia's military victory over Georgia, accelerated the shift towards a multipolar world, solidifying the country's commitment to a diversified global power structure (Makarychev & Morozov, 2011).

As per the findings of Chebankova (2017), supporters of multipolarity contend that this global structure fosters dialogue, in contrast to the normative monologue of liberal democratic states prevalent in a unipolar world. Advocates argue that the multipolar ideology aims to reshape international discourse by incorporating ideas of particularity, cultural-historic context, diverse political forms, and unrestricted independent development. These themes, embraced by Russian intellectuals and foreign policy ideologues during Putin's later years, position Russia's insistence on multipolarity as a call for a fairer and universally inclusive "world order," rejecting forms of "crusading universalisms".

Russian and Chinese perspectives on world order both converge and diverge. Their shared resistance to Western dominance fosters cooperation, fueled by mutual distrust of the West and opposition to U.S. and European policies. Yet, Moscow and Beijing differ in their visions for alternative norms. Joint declarations mask this divergence, though distinctions surface in practical global governance engagements and attitudes towards globalization. China seems genuinely committed to political and economic stability, while Moscow prioritizes symbolic affirmation of its great-power status, occasionally adopting a spoiler role (Kaczmarek, 2019).

Moreover, Russia and China demonstrate differing views on multipolarity in their foreign policies. Russia's approach, shaped by liberal, realist, and nationalist elements, prioritizes nation-states and hard power, opposing Western interventions. Meanwhile, China, while endorsing multilateralism in rhetoric, strategically utilizes it to serve its interests, displaying caution in areas like arms control. The two nations vary in their global governance strategies, with Russia adopting a more cautious stance, and China exhibiting assertiveness driven by economic growth and strategic considerations (Grant, 2012).

**Case Study 2: India**

India, with its economic potential, is viewed as a crucial partner for the West amidst global uncertainties. Despite shared values, India has proven a challenging ally for the European Union and the West, displaying limited enthusiasm for promoting the liberal world order. As a member of potential counter-hegemonic coalitions like BRICS RIC trilateral, SCO, EAS, etc., India resists Western dominance and aims to pursue an independent world-order policy. It envisions a polycentric future world order with diverse powerful actors in interdependent relations. Moreover, India's primary focus is to preserve the autonomy of its foreign policy and independence in international relations. The country opposes forming military alliances with any other nation (Wojczewski, 2017; Chinoy & Panda, 2020).

Despite existing challenges between India and China, both nations seem dedicated to overcoming historical tensions. The Beijing summit in June 2003 marked a transformation in their relationship, establishing a new path that involved burying the past conflicts, particularly the 1962 war. A joint declaration, the Declaration on Principles for Relations and Comprehensive Cooperation, was signed, committing both parties to a long-term constructive partnership, aiming to enhance regional peace, positive globalization, and strengthen multipolarity on the international stage. Both nations expressed their opposition to American-dominated unipolarity in the lead-up to the summit (Ambrosio, 2005).

Core concepts shaping China and India's regional and global political perspectives, enhancing their current bilateral relations, include their identification with a "multipolar world order." Both nations consider themselves "developing countries," with "populist societies" and status as "emerging economies." Additionally, they recognize each other as "immediate neighbors" and assert their roles as "Asian Powers" in the geopolitical landscape (Panda, 2013).

China and India are emerging as key players in global governance, reshaping world politics and the relationship between industrialized and developing nations. The current global governance, with its American bias, is expected to be a

fleeting historical moment. The ascent of China and India is establishing a de facto multipolar power structure, challenging the existing architecture and fostering a more balanced international order (Humphrey & Messner, 2006).

While India has yet to achieve true global power status, it plays a significant role in the Asia-Pacific regional power balance alongside the US, China, and Japan. The United States National Intelligence Council's report, "Mapping the Global Future," anticipates confronting the military, political, and economic dimensions of China and India's rise by 2020. Drawing parallels to Germany's 19th-century rise and America's 20th-century ascent, the CIA designates India as the pivotal "swing state," predicting it to be the fourth most influential power in the international system by 2015 (Pant, 2007).

The structural dynamics in which India and China participate in multilateral settings, particularly at the regional level, pose challenges. Despite efforts to address boundary issues and establish new institutional mechanisms, both nations, aiming for 'primacy in Asia,' grapple with geopolitical complexities, rising power rivalry, and energy challenges. The bilateral engagement seeks to shape regional discourse but is hindered by limitations, fostering a strategic rivalry rather than genuine multilateral collaboration at the Asian level (Panda, 2013).

### **Case Study 3: Brazil**

Brazil holds a position as a regional power in South America, meeting established criteria for such a status. According to various authors, a regional power must be geographically confined, willing to take on leadership, possess the necessary capabilities for regional power projection, and exert substantial influence in regional affairs. Brazil aligns with these fundamental prerequisites, affirming its role as a significant player in South American regional dynamics (Flemes, 2009).

Likewise, in the past decade, Brazil has internationally emerged, addressing domestic challenges, influencing its neighborhood, and contributing to global governance changes. Despite a small share of world GDP (7th largest economy), limited exports (1.1% of global exports), and compared to the EU, Brazil

holds significant industrial diversity, abundant natural resources, and an active role in shaping global debates on key issues (Vaz, 2013).

Brazil, under Lula's leadership, adopted a diverse strategy utilizing gradual diplomacy to impact the international order. Despite gaining advantages from Pax Americana's stability, Brazil believed U.S. hegemony hindered its economic, social, and diplomatic progress. The core objective was to expedite the transition from American dominance to a multipolar power balance, ensuring global institutions better served Brazil's interests. Highlighting regional leadership, Lula aimed to challenge American hegemony and establish South America as a key pole in the evolving multipolar landscape (Leatherman III, 2012).

According to Vaz (2013), Brazil, strongly advocates for multipolarity and its corollary, multilateralism, based on four key assumptions: 1) Multipolarity and multilateralism accurately represent the intricate power dynamics across diverse issues in an interdependent world. 2) They offer a conducive environment for negotiating tensions arising from power disputes, diverse perspectives, and responses to global challenges. 3) They are more effective in promoting and sustaining global and regional stability. 4) They create a favorable political context for countries seeking to boost their international standing.

Brazil, with a long-standing tradition of foreign policy independence, seeks greater autonomy, especially amid the U.S.-China rivalry and its own growing political and economic influence. Brazil aims to evade a world order dominated by great power competition, advocating for a multipolar structure that grants states of its magnitude more influence in international institutions. It anticipates a "benign multipolarity" era, envisioning reduced Western power and heightened influence for emerging nations, notably China (CHIVVIS & GEAGHAN BREINER, 2023).

Moreover, China and Brazil established diplomatic ties in 1974, elevating their relationship to a strategic level in 1993. Although the 1990s upgrade fell short, recent years witnessed a significant strengthening of economic and political ties.

Currently, Brazil is China's key partner in Latin America, surpassing the USA as Brazil's top trading partner in 2009. Over 18% of Brazil's exports now go to China, reflecting a shift in economic relations. The strategic partnership aims at international system reform, empowering fast-growing economies in global governance, and promoting a multipolar world where developing countries play a substantial role (Cardoso, 2012).

In 2009, Brazil and China strengthened their relationship through the formation of BRICS, a pivotal element in Brazil's foreign policy. Despite BRICS adopting a more anti-Western stance, Brazilian leaders perceive it as a platform to enhance the Global South's influence and create alternative structures to Western financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank (CHIVVIS & GEAGHAN BREINER, 2023).

Lula's April 2023 visit to China underscores Brazil's independent foreign policy, aligning with the assumption that Brasilia is a pole in a multipolar world. With roots laid in the early 2000s during Lula's first presidency and Hu Jintao's leadership in China, Brazil-China relations are firmly established, experiencing two decades of steadfast and autopilot-like bilateral ties (CARVALHO, 2023). Additionally, Brazil and China achieved numerous results in President Lula's visit, engaging in extensive discussions covering a wide range of topics. Both nations possess the potential to contribute significantly to the establishment of a more multipolar world, characterized by decentralized power and the absence of hegemony (Wenting & Yunyi, 2023).

#### **Case Study 4: South Africa**

As Africa's most industrialized economy with abundant natural resources, investments across the continent, and diplomatic influence, South Africa stands as a prominent leader. Having overcome apartheid, it possesses moral authority, advocating for an international order amplifying the voices of developing nations. South Africa welcomes the rise of BRICS and seeks alternatives to Western dominance, viewing China and Russia as friends. The country envisions a multipolar world, desiring greater influence for developing nations and

considering counterweights to U.S. power favorably (Chivvis et al., 2023).

Like other emerging powers, South Africa leverages alliances not just for self-interest but strategically to reshape global governance. Advocating for multipolarity, it seeks inclusiveness and a voice for developing nations. This stance, evident since the collapse of the Soviet Union, reflects a desire for alternate poles to construct trade, aid, and strategic relations. South Africa aims to use collective statecraft to transform the global system and create platforms supporting the interests of developing countries (Ishmael, 2023).

South Africa views the BRICS as its most crucial alliance, offering a platform to engage with major emerging powers. Despite its medium size, BRICS enables South Africa to gather support for key foreign policy goals, especially global governance reform. BRICS, emphasizing South-South cooperation, aligns with South Africa's aim to shift from hegemony to multipolarity in global financial and economic governance. The pivotal role of China, the central economic player, strengthens South Africa's ties within BRICS and beyond (Sidiropoulos, 2023).

Since 1998, the China-South Africa relationship has flourished, aligning with the broader trend of increased cooperation among emerging countries. The bond has strengthened amidst China's growing engagement with Africa and enhanced collaboration among India, Brazil, and South Africa. In August 2010, both nations elevated their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership, reaffirming and elaborating on previous diplomatic commitments. President Zuma and President Hu emphasized future strategic dialogue, featuring annual ministerial meetings and bi-national commissions held every two years (Xiong, 2012).

Moreover, the ANC leadership, in affirming the China-Africa relationship, suggests a preference for engaging with China over Western powers. President Zuma, in a 2014 Beijing speech, portrayed China as an opportunity for African nations to escape colonial constraints, signaling a move toward a multipolar order. The ANC's 2015 National General Council document positions China as an alternative to the U.S. in a perceived new 'Cold War,' lauding China's economic model and leaders as influential in

shaping a multipolar world (Anthony et al., 2015). Likewise, secretary-General Fikile Mbalula of the African National Congress emphasized that the relationship between South Africa and China is grounded in shared principles of anti-imperialism, a commitment to multipolarity, and robust economic ties (Huaxia, 2023).

In seeking Chinese support, South Africa focuses on key areas in Africa, including integrating China's FOCAC process with NEPAD for economic development. Strong Chinese backing for the African Union's programs is seen as vital for Africa's resurgence. China's peacekeeping efforts in the DRC and Liberia are praised, emphasizing the need for continued contributions to promote stability. In a broader global context, South Africa seeks Chinese support for UN restructuring, global trade system reform, and enhanced South-South cooperation, aligning with common foreign policy objectives established in 2001 (Shelton, 2005).

### **Policy Implications**

The evolving strategic partnership between China and Russia signifies a substantial reconfiguration of global power dynamics. Policymakers must deftly navigate potential geopolitical tensions stemming from Russia's assertive actions in Eastern Europe and China's territorial claims, ensuring a delicate balance in international relations. This shift requires a nuanced understanding of the intricacies involved, demanding diplomatic finesse to foster cooperation while managing potential conflicts.

India's pursuit of an independent world-order policy presents a unique opportunity for constructive collaboration with China. Policymakers need to address historical tensions between the two nations, fostering a conducive environment for positive regional discourse. By acknowledging shared interests and promoting dialogue, there is potential for these emerging powers to contribute significantly to regional stability and global cooperation.

Brazil's strong advocacy for multipolarity aligns seamlessly with China's vision, forming a substantial alliance that shapes the global power landscape. Policymakers should vigilantly

monitor and actively support initiatives that contribute to the establishment of a more diversified global power structure. The collaboration between Brazil and China holds the potential to influence the trajectory of global governance, underscoring the importance of strategic engagement to foster mutual benefits.

South Africa's commitment to multipolarity, exemplified through alliances like BRICS, underscores the significance of inclusiveness in global governance. Policymakers must carefully consider the implications of these relationships on global stability, recognizing the potential for positive contributions to a more balanced and equitable international order. By embracing multipolarity, South Africa contributes to the ongoing transformation of global power dynamics, emphasizing the need for comprehensive policy considerations to navigate this complex landscape

### **Conclusion**

The case studies of Russia, India, Brazil, and South Africa illuminate the complex and varied ways in which nations engage with China's vision of multipolarity. In Russia, the strategic partnership signifies a departure from historical tensions and a shared commitment to multipolarity, driven by a rejection of Western-backed unipolarity. While both nations share a resistance to Western dominance, nuances in their visions for alternative norms and global governance strategies reveal divergences. Likewise, India, positioned as a crucial partner for the West, displays a nuanced approach to multipolarity. Despite challenges and historical tensions, the joint commitment with China to a constructive partnership and opposition to American-dominated unipolarity underscores the emergence of a de facto multipolar power structure in Asia. However, the strategic rivalry and limitations in genuine multilateral collaboration at the Asian level highlight the complexities inherent in this evolving relationship.

Brazil, as a regional power, actively advocates for multipolarity and multilateralism, seeking autonomy amid global power competitions. The Brazil-China strategic partnership within BRICS reflects a commitment to shaping a decentralized and multipolar world, challenging Western

dominance. Brazil's long-standing tradition of foreign policy independence and the anticipation of a "benign multipolarity" era underscore its unique role in fostering a more inclusive international order. Also, South Africa, as a prominent leader in Africa, leverages alliances strategically to reshape global governance and amplify the voices of developing nations. The preference for alternative poles and the pivotal role of China in the BRICS alliance align with South Africa's vision of a multipolar world. The commitment to South-South cooperation and the emphasis on inclusiveness highlight the country's efforts to transform the global system in favor of developing nations.

In conclusion, these case studies depict a dynamic landscape where nations navigate historical legacies, geopolitical considerations, and strategic priorities in shaping their responses to China's vision of multipolarity. The convergence and divergence observed across these diverse perspectives underscore the intricate nature of global relations and the ongoing evolution towards a more balanced and inclusive international order.

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## **The Origin of the Indian Taxation System in Ancient India**

**Pooja Kishore**

### **Abstract**

*Tax is the money you pay to the government for the use of state services. It is a source of revenue for the government which is used to provide you with better infrastructure and other facilities. Since an efficient and just tax system leads to the provision of top-notch services for the citizens, increase in GDP, and boost in the economy it is of vital importance to the country. The origin of the taxation system in India can be traced back to the ancient times, way before independence. References to tax can be found in renowned Indian scriptures like the Manusmriti and Arthashastra the books of law and economics. Respectively, both lay down methods of imposing taxes as well as the importance of a fair taxes system for the welfare of the state and its beings. Even in ancient time the detailed analysis given in Manusmriti and Arthashastra on the subject shows the existence of a well-planned taxation system. In Manusmriti, an ancient legal text, also sheds light on taxation in ancient India, it outlines the duties and responsibilities of kings, including the imposition and collection of taxes. This article discusses, sources of revenue, its significance, methods collection and its applications as stated in the ancient Indian texts like Manusmriti, Shantiprava,*

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*Shukra-Nitisara, Arthashastra, thereby giving the reader an insight into history of taxation in India in ancient period.*

**Keyword:** Indian tax structure, Tax evolution, Revenue, Vedic Manuscript, Manusmriti and taxation, Shukra -Nitisara.

### **Introduction**

The taxation system in India dates back to the Manusmriti and Arthashastra eras. The present taxation system in India is based on this ancient tax system, based on the ideas of maximum social welfare. Epigraph evidence suggests that taxes on the farming sector of the economy were more in number. Sulka and customs were significant financial for the commercial sector. In ancient India, taxation was not a means to generate revenue for the state but also served various other purposes. The texts from that era reveal that taxes were levied to fund public infrastructure, welfare programs and the defense of the kingdom. Additionally, taxation was seen as a duty of the citizens to contribute to the welfare of society and uphold the Dharma (righteousness) of the land.<sup>1</sup> Kautilya discussed the origin of income tax. He described it as when there was no order in society and only the law of the jungle prevailed people (were unhappy and being desirous of order) made Manu, the son of Vivasvat, their kings; and they assigned to the king one-sixth part of the grains grown by them, one tenth of other commodities and money. The King then used these to safeguard the welfare of his subjects. Those who do not pay fines and taxes take on themselves the sins of kings, while king who do not look after the welfare of the people take on themselves the sins of their subjects. Attention may be drawn to some significant features of this approach. First, income tax was found more natural than a lump-sum tax. Secondly, the income tax rate itself was decided directly by the individuals. The rationale for income tax was based on benefit approach. It is also significant to point at that time too compliance could not be taken for granted.<sup>2</sup>

In ancient time, after every war a new political order would set in the king (usually leader of the winning group) needed financial resources to carry out his functions and wage a new war. Apart from war booty the ruler had to look for alternative ways, for assuring steady flow of revenue king would persuade

citizen to forego a part of their earnings for state activities, people had to be motivated to do so.<sup>3</sup> Vedic Manuscripts reveal that it was the business of the state to promote Dharma (religion), Artha (finance), Kama (social wellbeing in a wider perspective) and Moksha (liberation from birth cycles). In fourth century B.C the system of public finance was quite developed, as is evident from kautilya's Arthashastra. Brahmanical, financial planning was acknowledged by Manu, Kautilya and Shukra as the life breath of the state. These ancient texts provide details descriptions of the ways and means of creating an abundant treasury (kosha), as an inseparable part of the seven organs of the state machinery (Saptanga) these texts describe the modes of taxation with specifications for levying normal and additional taxes, in different conditions and for different categories of citizens.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Taxation in Ancient Vedic Time**

There was peace, goodwill, tranquility and prosperity in ancient India. The rulers were never being found exercising self-imposed restraint and in this way they ensured rule of law, civil liberty and welfare of the state. It was also an efficient system of governance which had a very well knit economy designed to ensure welfare of the subjects, in fact there was the rule of wisdom emanated from some treatises, authored by some eminent saints and statesmen. It is interesting to note that the importance and the necessity of a sound financial structure for the emergence of a stable and prosperous state, was well visualized by the ancient Indian political thinkers. Besides kautilya's Arthashastra, reference is found in *Baudhayana-dharmasutra*, *Gautamadharmasutra*, *Vasissthadharmasutra*, *Apastambadharmasutra*, *Manusmriti*, *Yajnavalkyasmriti*, *Sukraniti*, *Nitiprakashika*, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* with regards to Sulka (tax). But they are stray and not detailed, however complete and mindset analysis on ancient system of tax is found only in the Arthashastra of kautilya. Kautilya, an economist, recognized the importance of accounting methods in economist enterprises. There were different kinds of taxes prevail in ancient period, Bali (religious sacrifice) in Rig Veda means a gift or religious offering. Kalidas defines the term as a

tribute to the king. Kautilya used this term as one of the sources of revenue from the kingdom. Another term, Bhaga has been interpreted as duty and land tax and share of produce payable to the state. The term 'Kara' did not figure in Vedic literature, it usually meant a general tax on land in shape of a fixed proportion of the crop and on movables. The Shulka was more like a toll tax or a customs duty levied at ferries passes roads etc. In Shantiparva (Mahabharata) quotes of Manusmriti and Smriti of Yajnavalkya to give an insight into the administration of taxes at that time.<sup>5</sup>

The ancient scholar advised to king that taxes should be related to the income and expenditures of the subject. They also know the negative effect of excessive taxation that is why they suggested to a king that there should neither impose high rate of tax which effects the system. There was a very general consensus in ancient India that tax should be in such manner as nobody feel to hurt. As Mahabharata in Shantiprava reported the king should gather the tax from the state in the manner as the bees collect honey without hurting the flower. Kautilya's concept of taxation emphasized on two basic cannon of taxation i.e.-equity and justice. The affluent had to pay higher taxes as compared to the poor. The arrangement of the collection of taxes should be in such a manner that the tax payer did not feel bothered as according to Manusmriti, is basic of current tax administration. A rule was laid down that traders and artisans should pay  $1/5^{\text{th}}$  of the produce in silver and gold, while the agriculturists were to pay  $1/6^{\text{th}}$ ,  $1/8^{\text{th}}$  and  $1/10^{\text{th}}$  of their produce depending upon their circumstances.<sup>6</sup> The great political economist of ancient India, Kautilya has also described in detail the system of tax administration in the Mauryan period, it is remarkable that the today's tax system in India is similar in some extent as it was third century Arthashastra mentioned that each tax was specific and there was no scope for arbitrariness. Tax collectors determined the schedule of each payment and its time, manner and quality being all pre-determined like modern sophisticated tax system. Taxes were fixed as  $1/6^{\text{th}}$  share of total produce in the form of land revenue. Import and export duties were determined on ad-valorem basis. The import duties on foreign goods were roughly 20% their value were all fixed.<sup>7</sup>

As Kautilya mentioned in Arthashastra that during any kind of disaster like war or natural calamities the taxation system should be made more stringent and the king could also raise war loans. The land revenue could be raised from  $1/6^{\text{th}}$  to  $1/4^{\text{th}}$  during the emergencies. The people engaged in commerce were to pay big donations to war efforts. In Vedic period, there existed a regular system of taxation. The technical terms like *Kar*, *Kalpita*, *Bhog*, *Prataya*, *Bali*, *Shulka*, *Bhaga-Udaja* and *Niraja* are frequently mentioned in the literature of this period which reasonably and legitimately lend support to the views that taxation had evolved from voluntary to compulsory and regular in nature that were almost common across ancient India in the era of *Maurayan*, *Shak*, *Satvahan*, *Kushan*, *Gupta*, *Gurjara*, *Pratihara*, *Rashtrakuta*, *Pal*, *Pallava* and *Chola* etc. The king had the authority to frame rules of taxation and tax collection, as described in Shantiprava. Apart this, it also provides a theoretical framework of taxation in ancient India. In the earliest period of Indian history, the early Vedic period, the state probably depended for its support on the voluntary contributions of the people. But some method of compulsory contribution must have been found necessary in India as soon as a more improved form of government had come into existence. the early tax system, however, was a very advanced stage of development, as is evident in kautilya's Arthashastra and the Brahmanical and Buddhist texts.<sup>8</sup>

### **Manusmriti and Taxation in Ancient Period**

The ancient theory of taxation is of immense importance from the constitutional point of view. The taxes themselves were regarded in Hindu politics as wages of the king for the service of administration. It is generally recognized to be one of the most ancient texts on the principle of governance in India. Kautilyas himself acknowledge having drawn from it extensively. The overall principle of taxation in Manusmriti are given in chapter 7. Taxation should enable the king to perform his functions and should enable the traders an economic agent to produce the retain adequate fruits of their trades. The basic principle of taxation is most summarily stated in the second line of Sloka

127 which says: “Considering the protection of that which is already there, and that which is to be increased, the king should levy tax on his traders” (7.127). The tax should be annual, and that it should be collected by reliable functionaries. In collecting the tax the king should be fair. Thus, the protection of the tax base and its augmentation become the first principles of taxation. As it is said; the one sixth Bali (tax), import and export duties, fine and forfeitures collected from offender-gathered in accordance with the Shastra (law and constitution) as your wages (Ventana), shall constitute your revenue, “Chapter 12<sup>th</sup> of Manusmriti deals with Raja dharma and incidentally makes a few provisions about taxation and revenue administration. The subject of Raja dharma treated in chapter 6<sup>th</sup> of Manu - Samhita is most valuable. It not only deals with the duties of the king but also lays down the principles of taxation and points out the importance of the coercive authority symbolized by the term ‘Danda’.

We find that taxation revenue, public finance and overall financial administration in Manusmriti is largely humane, compassionate and considerate, but at the same time strict, rule-bound, hierarchical and systematic. Taxation should enable the king to perform his function and should enable traders and economic agents to produce and retain adequate fruits of their traders. The king should never overtax. Taxation should never be detrimental to the spontaneous growth of the tax base. According to both Manu and Shukracharya, economy or Arth is part of the four principle activities of human life – *Dharma* (duty), *Arth* (economy), *Kama* (fulfillment of desires) and *Moksha* (spiritual activity). It thus has an integrated approach for the whole life and duly regard ethnics, morality and system of consumption also as part of overall consideration. Finally, prosperity in this world and preparation for happiness in next world as well as next birth are also part of the overall activity.<sup>9</sup>

### **Public Finance in Shukra-Nitisara**

Period of Shukra -Nitisara is rather uncertain only sage Shukra has prescribed the judicious percentage of the state income, to do spent on different items. According to Shukraniti, work is not merely a tool of production but is required for the

welfare of society as well as the health of individuals. Human beings are not merely economic tools but have all round ability with maximum stress on spirituality. This can be achieved by treating work as a duty and as worship of God. Also, use of large implements (machine) should be discouraged as it leads to monopoly conditions and wealth gets concentrated in only a few hands. It also reduces the importance of human efforts as endeavor. According to him, the king should take away the wealth of a miser who only hoards wealth without spending or only spends on himself. Details of Army administration, recruitment, their training salaries, identification of material types of elephants, horses and manufacturing of weapons are also found. Shukracharya is highly respected for his treatise Shukrasniti. In Shukraniti, Brihaspati's principles are accepted that happiness can from dharma and dharma comes from wealth. However, he is explicit that without wealth life has no meaning, and hence advises to use every second of life pursuit of knowledge and wealth, and then use it to get a good life as well as for charity. He has laid extensive rules for keeping employees happy by paying pension for old age and bonus for good work, but he is equally demanding for faithful work and provides for deterrent punishment for wrong work, corruption, procrastination and delays.<sup>10</sup>

According to Shukra- Nitisara, the king should also carefully preserve the wealth that has been collected. There is great trouble in the earning and a fourfold difficulty in the maintenance (of wealth). It is the earner who gets pain when the accumulated wealth is destroyed, even wives and children do not feel that, so how could others. The king should give receipt of the collection of tax with royal stamp. One person should be appointed to collect the tax and to submit it into royal fund. He should be a rich person; he should appoint assistants to collect the tax periodically from the farmers. A king should give 1/6 part of his share to them. No tax should be collected from domestic use of milk, food, fruit and dresses. A king should take 1/32 part of the benefit of businessman and one who takes interest tax from land which is used to construct house should be equal to that land for crop. Tax should be collected from merchants on their shops and for the cleaning of roads the footers are supposed to

pay road tax. People get tired of various new taxes and duties (Sulka). Though Shukra- Nitisara does not specify any structural arrangements of revenue collection, yet it lays the principles of taxation. The taxation prescribed in Shukra -Nitisara is traditional but humane, generous and compassionate.<sup>11</sup>

### **Concluding Remarks**

Taxation and tax administration have a rich history in ancient Indians texts, offering a glimpse into the economic social and ethical dimensions of tax systems. The texts emphasize the importance of fair taxation and responsible governance principles that continue to resonate in contemporary societies. Exploring the historical context of taxation allows us to appreciate the evaluation of tax policies and their impact on societal development. Thus ancient Indian texts contain several valuable guiding principles of governance and tax administration. Kautilyas's Arthashastra contains many essential ingredients of a sound fiscal structure, such as a linear income tax, stability of tax structure, maximization of net tax revenue, making payable at the right time and fiscal federalism. His observation is congruent with the new institutionalists approach. It is truly an independent piece of evidence since he could not have anticipated the debate between the new and the old institutionalists regarding the origin of institutions.<sup>12</sup> Thus it is observed from the above analysis that the ancient Indian taxation system was centered at the welfare of the people and not at enriching of the royal fund. Every class of people were taken care of ultimate aim of collecting the tax was the well-being of individual as well as nation as a whole. The wisdom of our ancient thinker is really far reaching and today's government should also review its taxation system keeping in view the welfare of people.<sup>13</sup>

India had a system of taxation since the ancient periods. Its reference can be found in many ancient books and epics such as Ramayana, Mahabharata, Manusmriti and Arthashastra, but a well- established systematic tax structure was developed during the Maurayan's period. The taxation policy was indeed very selective and tended to focus on areas with higher agriculture potential with the aim of greater revenue generation.<sup>14</sup> The land

revenue was the major source of revenue which was not returned in the form of public goods or services. Tax administration in ancient India was well organized and systematic. The responsibilities of tax collection and administration rested with appointed officials who held key positions in the administration, these officials were accountable for ensuring fair collection, and utilization of tax revenues. The above discussion clearly brings forth the fact that ancient Indian law makers and economic planners had great wisdom and foresight and that the nuances of collection and administration of public funds were so fine-tuned that they matched the most advanced taxation and accounting systems of the modern world. The concept of a welfare state originated in other countries much later, but in India from the beginning the Dharma -Shastra and the Arthashastra laid down these principles in clear terms even in the matter of tax collection. Added to this was the fact that as per Dharma -Shastra, the kings in India did not have any law making powers and they had to scrupulously follow the rules laid down in Dharma- Shastra and this ensured observance of Dharma- path of righteousness all through the recorded history of India. This ensured that no taxes were levied unreasonably and no expenditure from state funds other than the authorized ones were incurred. The study of taxation and tax administration in ancient Indian texts provides valuable insights into the evolutions of modern tax systems, the principles of fairness, accountability and equitable distribution of resources remain relevant to this day.<sup>15</sup>

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## **Understanding *Dharma*-Based Political Order in Ancient India**

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### **Introduction**

The misinterpretation and misrepresentation of Indian cultural heritage by colonial scholars during British Raj has deep repercussions for future discourse on ancient Indian cultural heritage. This misinterpretation was not without purpose. In fact, this was the part of larger project of 'White Man's Burden' as articulated by Rudyard Kipling and other Western scholars such as Charles Grant, James Mill, JS Mill, and Macaulay to justify an exploitative colonial rule as the civilizing mission. Grant in his book, '*Observations*' published in 1797 'painted a dark picture of the moral depravity of the people of India and attributed this to the uniformly despotic governments that shaped their morals. According to Gant, the despotism, which was the intrinsic character of their religion (Guha: 2023). Gant and others did not care to understand how Indian Dharma is distinct from Indian religion. Though the cultural misinterpretation had instrumental value in British design, it inflicted seep scare on India's body culture. Even British are gone but cultural wounds are difficult to heal for generations.

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Perhaps one of the greatest disservices to Indian cultural tradition during British Rule is the translation of Indian concept of *Dharma* as 'Religion' and propagation of the same as such. On the face of it, this may appear a trivial affair, but it had generated deep misunderstanding of ancient Indian political traditions. This is because Dharma is not just a word, but had been a foundational principle of Indian social and political order since ancient times. Some recent examples of this innocuous looking linguistic lapse need to be mentioned. If Dharma is treated as synonymous to 'religion', 'secularism' becomes '*dharmnirpekshata*', which has been debated in many ways in modern Indian political discourse. It is painful to note that in modern educational political and social discourse in India, the dharma is used loosely as synonymous to religion. Gandhi wanted spiritualization of politics. He said 'politics bereft of religion (dharma) are like a death-trap as they kill the soul' (Gandhi: 1924). Gandhi wanted to impart sense of moral duty in politics, but his idea was misconstrued because the Dharma was taken as synonymous with religion by the critics. However, the most disturbing outcome of the linguistic lapse was misrepresentation of ancient Indian political tradition, which was denied any independent existence other than the reflection of religious order. This resulted in denial of many modern elements like democracy, rule of law, secularism in the ancient political order. The western scholars argued that these ideas originated in the western ideological tradition and subsequently transported to other parts of the world. This debate has received new vigor as India as an emerging soft power has claimed in last few years that India is the mother of democracy. This was echoed in PM Modi's address to UN General Assembly in 2021, Summit of Democracy in March, 2023 and again during G-20 summit, hosted by India in September, 2023 and other forums. (MEA: 2021; PIB: 2023; Ali: 2023). The debate around the roots of democratic elements in India essentially involves the understanding the nature of ancient Indian polity based on the foundational principle of *Dharma*. In this background, this paper seeks to analyze the nature of *Dharma*-based ancient Indian polity and compare it with western notion of political order. Accordingly, this paper is divided into three parts: Part

One unravels the essence of notion of Dharma in ancient India; Part Two explains the *Dharma*-based ancient polity; and Part Three compares the same with western idea of political order, while locating the political values underlying the ancient Indian polity. This may further add in the ongoing debate on India being the mother of democracy.

## PART I

### Essence of Indian Notion of *Dharma*

Before you go to elaborate the concept of *Dharma* in Indian knowledge tradition' two points need to be stated. **First**, the Dharma is not synonymous with any English words like virtue, religion, morality or duty, yet it may contain some elements of all these and still more (Mckengie: 1971; Gautam: 2016). This position is accepted by scholars but yet to be popularized to underline the distinct *worldview* of Indians through this unique contribution. **Second**, *Dharma* defies precise definition, because it has many dimensions applicable to individual, social, political and spiritual life as well as local and cosmic fields (Aiyangar: 1952).

Conceptually, the concept of Dharma is derived from Veda, mainly Rig-Veda. Manu says, *vedo akhilo dharmamula*, which means the *Vedas* are the root-source of entire *Dharma* (Doniger: 1999). The Rig Vedic notion of *Rta* is said to be conceptual parent of Dharma. *Rta* comes from root 'R' which denotes movement and order. It is fundamental element of Indian philosophy and moral order. Originally, it meant the principle underlying the cosmic order. However, over the years, it has extended to the human world. Thus, scholars have assigned three distinct dimensions of the term *Rta*: as a Cosmic order; as a spiritual order; and as a moral or ethical order. Here *Zta* or ordering law is considered not only as embracing principle of universe but also as the path of righteousness or *dharmā*. In the *Vedas*, *Zta* stands for the principle of good and opposite of *Zta*, is *adharmā* (Tiwari: 2014). Thus, the essence of Dharma as ordering principle in both spiritual and human world is derived from *Rta*.

Etymologically, the word Dharma comes from Sanskrit *dhatu* root 'Dhr', which literally means 'to hold' or 'to support'. Another Sanskrit phrase, '*Dharyati Iti Dharmah*' also supports this root meaning. This phrase is subject to two interpretations. First, it is the principle or regime which holds or supports something; and second, it is the essence which one should always retain and keep (*Dharan*) with oneself. In other words, in the first sense it is a universal principle which holds, supports or regulates the man and universe both, whereas in the second sense it is the essential quality, which one should always retain and practice.

The uniqueness and importance of this concept arises from its three elements: *necessity*, *comprehensiveness* and *dynamism*. The root meaning of 'Dharma', 'to hold' or 'to support' is the basic necessity of any human society, its institutions and even order in the universe. This is the first requirement of human society and universal order both in order to survive and sustain. The holding principle of *Dharma* is however silent on two aspects: First, what are the areas of human or natural life where Dharma is applied to hold or to support. Thus, the holding and supporting element of Dharma is open to be applied to all aspects of human life from physical to spiritual as well as beyond it. Second, Dharma is also silent on the 'way' or 'process' or 'conditions' through which the holding or supporting functions takes place. Thus, ancient scholars were free to determine the human quality and process through which *Dharma* will be effective. These two aspects make the concept of *Dharma* all comprehensive as no aspect of human or universe is beyond its reach and application. That is why we often hear the terms like *Rajadharma*, *Prajadharma*, *Varnashram Dharma*, *Pitru Dharma* and so on. Further, *Dharma* is not a static concept. It is a dynamic concept, which takes into account the changing conditions. Thus, we talk of *Desh-Kal Dharma*, which is conditioned by changing conditions at different times and places.

Thus, Dharma is a multidimensional term. Varma (1959) has identified three distinct meanings of *Dharma* in ancient Indian discourse: as a social duty, as moral law, and as civil law. On the basis of the above discussion as well as the uses of the

term in Vedic and *Dharmshastra* texts, we identify the four distinct yet interrelated dimensions of *Dharma* in Indian knowledge tradition:

**A. *Dharma* as an essential or core element of an object-** Here *Dharma* is treated as the essence or *guna* or nature of something-human and other objects. For example, sweetness is the *Dharma* of Sugar as stinging is the *Dharma* of scorpion. It is inherent in the very nature of the things. Humans are divided into three categories as per their essence or dominating *guna*- *Sat, Raja, and Tama*. The psychological disposition of person would be according to predominance of *guna* (Suda: 1970). Ancient Greek philosopher Plato has also used three-fold classification of human beings on the basis of three elements: Reason, Courage and Appetite.

**B. *Dharma* as underlying principle of Human Order-** *Dharma* is also used in many places as underlying principle of Human and universal order. In this sense *Dharma* sustains the entire human order in all times. The following couplet of Mahabharata related to Yaksha Prashna to Yudhisthir uses the *Dharma* in the sense of essential element:

*'Dharma eva hato hanti dharmo rakchati rakchita'*<sup>hA</sup>  
*tasmâddharmo na hantavyo mâ no dharmo hato'vadhî*<sup>tAA</sup>

It means if *Dharma* is vitiated it will vitiate (us). Protected *dharma* protects.

Therefore *dharma* must not be vitiated, lest vitiated *dharma* vitiate us. The much quoted following couplet of Gita conveys the same meaning:

*yadâ yadâ hi dharmasya glânirbhavati bhârata*<sup>A</sup>  
*abhyutthânamadharma-sya tadâtmanam sr jâmyaham*<sup>dAA</sup>

It translates as, whenever there is a decline in righteous order and an increase in unrighteous order, oh Arjuna, I manifest myself. Another phrase, also from Mahabharata, *Yato dhramas tato jayah*, also uses the word *Dharma* in the sense of righteous order (Re Sanskrit: Retrieved 2024).

**C. *Dharma* As an Ordained Duty as per one's specific position in life-** *Dharma* has been frequently used in Indian

*Dharmashastra* and *Nitishastras* as one's primary duty as per one's position in life and society. The most dominant expression of *Dharma* in this sense is found in the framework of *Varnashramdharma* and other such ideas like *Raj Dharma*, *Praja Dharma* and so on. Varna order classifying people in four *varnas* namely- Brahman, Kshatriya, Vaishya, and Shudra in modern times has been subjected to many criticisms due to its alleged link with the birth of a person. But this was a later interpolation. Gandhi supported *varna* order which is based on *gunas* and qualities not birth. If a person born in any caste acquires the attribute of *Brahman varna*, his duties would be according to that *varna*. Thus, the concept of *Dharma* was used to order different fields of human activities as per the desired duties and responsibilities. Indian political and social order has used this dimension of *Dharma* for order, stability and progress in society.

**D. *Dharma* as a set of Qualities for all human beings (Sadharan Dharma):** The concept has also been used to identify certain universal norms of human conduct, which are found essential for the development and growth of individual and society. It is called *Sadharan Dharma*, because it is applicable to all human beings irrespective of their position in society. It was in this sense that Manu has identified ten qualities of human conduct, which are ten attributes of '*Dharma*'. Manu says:

Dh[iti% kchamâ damo'steyaA úauchaA indriyanigrahah A  
dhîrvidyâ satyamakrodho daúakaA dharmalakcaGamAA

It means the ten characteristics of *Dharma* are: *Dhriti*- Steadfastness, *Kshama*- Forgiveness, *Dama*- Self-control, *Asteya*- Non-stealing, *Shaucha*:-Cleanliness of mind, body and surroundings, *Indriya Nigraha*- Control of senses, *Dhi*-Intellect, *Vidya*- Knowledge, *Satya*- Truthfulness, *Akrodha*- Non-anger (Sarkar:1979).

Similarly, another couplet attributed to Chanakya uses the term *Dharma* in this sense:

jîvantaC m[tavanmanye dehinam dharmavarjitamA  
m[to dharmema saCyukto dîrghajîvî na saCœayah II

This is translated as 'one who is devoid of *Dharma*, I consider them to be dead even when they are living; one who is endowed

with *Dharma*, they indeed live long, even when they are dead' (Re Sanskrit: Retrieved 2024).

These four meanings of *Dharma*- as core element of an object, as underlying principle of social and political order, as specific set of duties, and as a universal code of human conduct- may appear distinct, but they are interrelated. The order prevails and when each element performs its designated duties as per its designated position and natural element. Since human beings are at the centre of this order, they must follow certain code of conduct to sustain and maintain this order. When this order is vitiated due to any weak link, *Adharam* prevails. This was this all comprehensive and dynamic notion of *Dharma* which was used for organizing social and political order in ancient India. This is a unique contribution of India to the global knowledge tradition, though it is yet to find a rightful place in the modern academic and intellectual discourse. Annie Besant once said that when countries were born, the God gave each word to each- it was religion to Egypt, purity to Persia, beauty to Greek, law to Romans and *Dharma* to India. *Dharma* is India's world to the world (Soda, quoted in: 1970).

## PART II

### ***Dharma*-Based Political Order in Ancient India**

The political thought in ancient India is broadly divided into two traditions; *Dharmashastra* Tradition and *Arthashastra* Tradition. *Dharmashastra* Tradition of political thought is found mainly in Mahabharata, Ramayana, Manusmriti, Yagyvalkyasmriti, and Katyayan Smriti. The *dharmashastra* writers concentrated on exploring the dharma of individuals and social groups, including the government. What they did was to provide a code of conduct covering the entire human life. Politics was just one aspect of human life to uphold the *dharmic* order. In contrast to this approach, the authors of *Arthashastra* Tradition were interested in the organization and mechanics of *danda* (Chastisement by state to uphold *dharmic* social order). The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya gives us a detailed account of the nature and organization of government, the nature and method of exercising coercive power, how power could be acquired,

strategies and mechanics of retaining power, the possible threat to the *varnas, prakritis* or the elements of state and the best way to deal with them. The other main ancient treatises in *Arthashastra* tradition are Kamandak's *Nitisar*, and Sukrachrya's *Sukruti*.

The two approaches of *dharmasastras* and *arthashastra* differed mainly in their subject matter- one choosing to explore political life from the stand point of dharma, the other from that of *danda*. The *dharmasastras* were legalistic and all comprehensive in orientation, whereas the *arthashastras* concentrated on institutions and politics as an independent and specific subject. However, in spite of subject matter difference, both traditions followed the same worldview because the both accepted *Dharma* as the foundational principle of organizing and sustaining social and political order. Even in the Buddhist tradition, the idea of *Dhamma* denotes a compressive code of conduct for collective and social life including political order in Sanghas. In other words, the ancient Indian political order was ideologically based on the principle of Dharma.

This holistic worldview of ancient Indian political thought, based on concept of *Dharma* can be understood under the following points:

**1. *Dharma* as Foundation for Duty-Based Political Order-** In fact, ancient Indian scholars devised a *Dharma* or duty based political order, which rested on the presumption that if each element of society fulfils its duty, there would be no occasion for demand of separate political rights. The main aim of the state was to protect this duty based order from deviation. Ancient Indian believed that it is within the framework of duty based order that individual can attain happiness which is the higher material goal of life. This political order is in stark contrast to the western notion of right based political order. The western political thought is based on the assumption that individual and state are in conflict with each other; hence individual should be protected by the provision of certain legal rights. Ancient Indian political world view treats individual, society and polity as complementary to each other. Thus, the concept of *Dharma* is the unique contribution of Indians to a harmonious and democratic political order. Unfortunately, the western scholars translated

*Dharma* as religion and distorted the nature of this political order as based religious order. However, Gandhi tried to revive the notion of *Dharma* in its original sense when he talks about politics to be based on dharma or moral duty.

**2. *Dharma* as Comprehensive Rule of Law-** Dharma was also Indian version of rule of law and everyone-ruler and ruled were subject to it. However, this rule of law based order was comprehensive as the idea of Dharma provided for rules in each sphere of human life from material to spiritual. It provided a code of conduct to individual both as an individual, as member of society as well as member of political order. In present day, political discourse, rule based order is necessary for equality and liberty in both national and international political order. Dharma also guided citizens to support the political order for their welfare. This was known as *prajadharama*.

**3. The Idea of *Rajadharm*- A Potential Limitation on Political Power-** All ancient scholars like Kautilya, Manu, Shukracharya, Veda Vyas, Kamndak, Yagyvalky supported the idea of *Rajadharm* or the duty of the kings or rulers. The very reason for the origin of kingship for these scholars is to restore social order, which was disrupted without ruler and *Matsyanyaya* or disorder prevailed in society. Thus *Rajadharm* of the king was to seek security of social order and welfare of citizens or *Praja*. Kautilya supports Monarchy but links the fate of the king with the welfare of people. If a king failed to follow *Rajadharama*, it will lead to its destruction. This was potential limitation on the powers of king. The practice of *Rajadharama* was supplemented by other similar means of limiting the powers of state in ancient India.

**4. *Dharma* as A Code for Peaceful Political Means-** Modern democratic polities adopt only the peaceful means for political change. However, Indian concept of Dharma was comprehensive as it propagated positive idea of peace through the notion of Ahimsa not just in political life but in all sphere of life. It was not just non-injury to other human beings but also to all human creatures. It was not just act of non-injury, but also the avoidance of evil feelings. Manu identified Ahimsa as one of the ten characteristics of *Dharma*. Mahabharata proclaims at many places that Ahimsa is the highest *Dharma* (duty) and *Himsa* (Violence) is permitted only for the protection of *Dharama*-

*'Ahimsa parmo Dharma, Dharma himsa tathaiv cha'* (Sanskriti: 2024)

This *Sanatana* Dharma principle of Ahimsa was so much accepted as it was given highest place in Buddhist and Jain code of conduct also. Jainism elevated at highest level this idea and its practice into day to day life of their followers. It was in this comprehensive sense that in modern times Gandhi tried to revive the ideal of Ahimsa in political process.

**5. *Dharma* as Integrating Link between Individual, Society and Polity with due Autonomy-** The idea of *Dharma* runs as a thread linking individual, society and political order. *Dharma* prescribes duty and good conduct as essential principle for the integration between the three. However, this ideological integration between Individual, society and polity was unique in nature, in the sense that each simultaneously enjoyed structural autonomy. Individual was also free to pursue its happiness within the given order. N.C. Bandyopadhyaya: (1927; 325) remarks, 'the crude political discipline never came to be regarded as the summum bonum of existence. Man was not means as in the speculation of Europe, but as he was the highest end in himself. It was for his self-realization that the state was conceived as a means to that higher end. The state and its discipline extended over whole of man's economic or material activity, but, beyond that, the self discipline individual was left to himself to work for his own salvation'. Also, unlike western societies, State was never allowed to politically overcome the social domain. Society remained autonomous from the control of formal power structure of state. This was the reason that in spite of many external aggressions against Indian State, Indian society continued to function with *Dharma* principle sustaining its social network institutions. The famous poet Iqbal said, '*Kuchh baat hai ki hasti mitati nahing hamairi, sadiyon raha hai dushman duare jahan hamara.*' This something which sustained the Indian society and culture for 5000 years is nothing but the unique idea of *Dharma*, which ideologically linked society and state yet kept them separate in their respective domains. Even in modern times, in spite of urbanization and industrialization the ideological bonds of joint family remain intact, though its members may be living physically apart.

The above discussion reveals that in spite of differences in details about the structure of political order, the ancient Indian scholars share a common point on *Dharma*-based political order. *Dharma* has an architectonic value in Indian political order. It provided an organizing principle in policy through network of obligations and duty for all, it was a rule of law to which all were subjected, it limited the misuse of political power and at the same time it was viewed as an ideal to realize the goal of human happiness. Sukracharya, the writer of *Nitishastra* states, 'the activities of all creatures are known to have happiness as their end. There cannot be any happiness without *Dharma*. So, one should be devoted to *Dharma*. (Basu: 1914) This political order is distinct from the one conceived by western scholars. We turn to this discussion in the next part of this paper.

### **PART III** ***Dharma*-based Political Order (India) Vs** **Rights-based Political Order (West)**

Apart from the colonial scholars, the other western political scholars such as Barker, Dunning, and Willoughby etc also denied the existence of any independent political discourse in the oriental countries as the same was imbued with metaphysics and religion. Barker (*Greek Political Theory, Plato and His Predecessors*, 1951, p.1) finds that political thought begins with Greek as the oriental Aryans lacked this ability because they were predominantly metaphysical and religious in their outlook. W. A. Dunning (*A History of Political Theories, Ancient and Medieval*, 1902) also holds the similar view as he opines that the Oriental Aryans could never free their political thinking from theological and metaphysical environment. Even, after the discovery of Kautilya's *Arthashastra* in 1909 by Shamasastri, the Western opinion on ancient Indian political order could hardly change.

Indian response to such allegation came in two phases. First phase was the revival of ancient Indian culture and ideas during Indian renaissance led by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Vivekanand, Aurobindo, Dayanand Saraswati and others. The second phase was Indian scholars who effectively countered Western notions

about ancient Indian political order though their research. Some of these researches about India's political past are: R C Majumdar (*Corporate Life in Ancient India*, 1919), K P Jaiswal (*Hindu Polity*, 1918, 1936), B. K Sarakar (*The Political Institutions and Theories of Hindus*, 1922), N. C Bandyopadhyaya (*Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories*, 1927) A S Altekar (*State and Government in Ancient India*, 1949), UN Ghoshal (*A History of Indian Political Ideas*, 1959). These scholars tried to prove with evidence that independent political thought tradition, institutions and practices existed in ancient India. Altekar (1949) strongly supports the view that local government institutions in ancient India were autonomous and democratic in their functioning. He finds popular elements in the functioning of village councils since ancient times. According to Jayaswal (1943), the *Samiti* the national assembly of the whole people or 'Visha' during Vedic period and that its function was to elect or reelect the *Rajan* or the King. It was the duty of the king to attend its meetings. We are well aware of republican forms of government in 6<sup>th</sup> century BC in the form of 16 Mahajanpadas. Also, the Buddhists text *Aghanna Sutta* (Sutta Pitaka) mentions democratic election of *Mahasammata* (King). According to Bandyopadhyaya (1927, 149-150), the *Mahavagga* and *Culavagga* texts (Vinay Pitaka) mention the many rules for the democratic functions of Sanghas.

However, these responses were largely selective in nature and focused on the institutions and practices in ancient India to prove that the allegations of the west are not valid. And that all that is considered desirable in political order by the west are located in ancient India. However, the debate became circular and tardy in endless search for western political ideas in ancient Indian political tradition.

The fact is that the western and Indian political worldview on political order. On the basis of above discussion, we find the following key differences in these two approaches.

1. The western worldview is based on the heightened sense of distrust between individual and state. For them state was created because people are selfish. But at the same time people are given certain rights as state is likely to abuse its power. On

the other hand, India political order was evolved on the sense of integrated view of individual, state and society. Dharma bound each with a set of duty and obligations. There was no occasion for separate legal rights of individual against State.

2. Western thinkers created artificial wall between society and state as far as application of morality is concerned. For them politics is struggle for power to realize interests of different groups. Morality has no place in it. Indians believed that moral code of conduct is as important to political life as it is important to social life. The Dharma's comprehensive reach regulated morality in both spheres.

3. The relationship between state and society assumes binary matrix-either state should encompass society or both would be separated. But for Indian mind, state and society co-exist in continuity, while maintaining their autonomy in their respective field. Dharma provided a not only a link between the two but also preserved their autonomy.

4. The western political worldview gives predominant position to the force and coercion used by state, whereas Indian view focuses on self-restraints and limitations of both individual and state.

5. The western political history is replete with examples of use of violence for political goals. But non-violence has been a cardinal principle in all domain of Indian life. Even if there are incidences of violence in political life, they were always condemned on the ground of adherence to non-violence.

6. Western political traditions have taken highly individualistic view of man seeking self interest in isolation from society and state both. In India, the individual is well integrated with state and society and even global society.

In the light of these differences, if we view the some developments in recent times, Indian world view has gained credence. For example the idea of *sustainable development*, much in currency since 1987 is nothing but the Indian idea of self restraints and individual's duty towards nature. This idea is ingrained in Indian worldview. After all we have also some Dharma (duty) towards nature and environment. It was not a chance that India presented the idea of **LiFE (Lifestyle for**

**Environment)** in 2022 for addressing the crisis of climate change. This idea focuses on self-restraint by citizens as well as their duty towards nature. It was also not a chance that Gandhi's birthday 02 October was declared as International Non-violence Day by the UN General Assembly amidst growing phenomena of violence at all levels. These incidents show that Indian political world view is vindicated by the recent developments. This gives rise to the need for joining the third phase of debate between the Western worldview and Indian worldview. In this phase, the resurgent India should not be defensive, but assertive and forthcoming. The West has denigrated Indian achievements only because they were in position to set the standards of evaluation. If there are two different things, it should not become ground for assigning them lower and higher position. The debate on India being the mother of democracy is just another indication of this assertive phase. All modern and useful ideals had their roots in ancient India. After all Indian genius was not sitting idle for last 5000 thousands of years.

### **Conclusion**

The concept of Dharma is the unique contribution of India to the global intellectual tradition. It is dynamic, comprehensive and essential concept for organizing and maintaining a sustainable political and social order. However, great disservice was done to this concept as well India when it was reduced as synonymous with religion by Western scholars during colonial encounters. The efforts to retrieve its gist are yet to succeed in full measures. In ancient India, *Dharma* too was used as a foundational principle in organizing, maintaining and administering political order. *Dharma* is not just a form of duty but it is also a code of conduct and rule of law and even much more. This gave rise to what we call *Dharma*-based political order. This order rested on a worldview characterized by integrated view of individual, state and society, focus on duties rather than rights, emphasis on non-violence and peaceful means and a dharma based moral code of conduct in all walks of life. Indian political worldview is distinct from the one developed by the west. This difference was used to deny the achievements of Indian tradition as the standards were set by

the colonial rulers. India's response to this narrative has been initially revivalist and defensive. But now the idea of sustainable development and felt need of non-violence has vindicated Indian political worldview. Thus, India needs to be assertive to its glorious past and ancient wisdom reflected in the concept of *Dharma*. India is not just the mother of democratic principles, but also all relevant political ideas have their roots in India's 5000 year old continuous civilization. We need to explore and present it before the world.

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# **Achieving People-Centric Administration in India: Constitutional Democracy is the Key**

**Sudhanshu Tripathi**

## **Abstract**

*Indeed, the democracies in the world are catching up fast with the rapid changing scenarios leading to emergence of new perspectives in Public Administration throughout the world including India. This is so perhaps due to inbuilt flexibility and dynamism of the political societies demanding new roles for administrative officials in all over the world. Further Constitutions - written or unwritten - are extending their mandate to suit the changing times thus help-contributing citizens to maximize their potential for themselves and also in common interests of the whole community. And for that purpose Public Administration in India is being revamped to transform its role from the earlier ruler mind-set to citizen-centric Public administration for serving the masses honestly and efficiently so as to finally achieve the goal of Good Governance in the country.*

**Keywords:** Democracy, Constitution, Constitutional Democracy, Citizen-centric Administration, Good Governance.

### **Introduction**

While making out a clear conception of Constitutional Democracy, it is necessary to understand the terms Constitution and Democracy separately and then their close connection and interaction that essentially works in most of the Constitutional Democracies in the world. Constitution in very simple words may be termed as the basic law of the land which is mostly a written document, with a few exceptions like England and Israel and until a few decades back New Zealand. The very purpose of this law is to ensure that government of the day must not cross its limits to encroach upon the basic or fundamental rights and other legal rights of the people. Because that would be disastrous for the people and their individual liberties, as such encroachment would interfere into the scope and purview of their personal freedom which is essential for their best possible development in all respects. As regards democracy, it stands for the “government of the people, for the people and by the people” in famous words of a former US President Abraham Lincoln. Hence Constitutional Democracy essentially becomes a form of democracy which is encompassed by the Constitution - whether written or unwritten. In a democracy, people at large happen to be sovereign and are the ultimate source of power or authority but there is a fear that the majority may establish their predominance over the minorities to convert democracy into an arbitrary majority rule or in other words tyranny of majority (James, 1981). In a Constitutional Democracy, the authority of majority is limited by the legal and institutional means so that the rights of the minority-communities are respected as well as protected. However that makes Constitutional Democracy a paradoxical union of contradictory principles because the modern conception of democracy differs from the classical one as regards nature of law in a republic. While in the classical conception of democracy, unrestricted will of united citizens reflects in the laws of a republic, it is substituted by positive, individualistic and compulsory form of law in the modern conception of democracy (Habermas and Rehg, 2001). Thus Constitutional Democracy manages a reasonable balance between the above-mentioned opposite principles and becomes a government of the entire society, but

essentially promotes public good and public welfare (Barthwal, 2003), wherein all people, rather than favoured individuals, have the right and opportunity to share political power equitably. While people stand-out as an epitome of liberty or freedom, a government as an integral part of a state symbolises authority to be exercised over them. That obviously raises a fundamental question as regards two antithetical elements of a state to coexist in a democracy and work for each other harmoniously. Because without people's willingness, no government will come to exist, and without a government, there will be no peace, order and security in a state which are essential preconditions for the very survival and progress of the people living therein. This is why the basic question of political thought or political philosophy has always been as to how to reconcile two diametrically opposite poles in a state *ie.* the liberty of individuals against the authority of a state. Although people always desire ever-more freedom to realise their best selves, but that is not possible in a democracy due to similar desires of other individuals. Hence a genuine balance between the two is the only option to come out of this dilemma whereby neither the people nor the government crosses their limits to misuse freedom or authority respectively. Evidently, constitutional democracy becomes the most reasonable form of government to accomplish the much needed harmonious balance between the human rights or freedom of people and the authority of state thereby promoting development and good governance in the democratic-states (Sharma & Sharma, 2014). And this form of democracy may be found to be successfully working in states *viz.* England, France, Germany, Italy, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Japan, Israel and many more including India, which is of course, the largest successful democracy in the world.

The paper here deals with emerging dimensions of constitutional democracy in the world with particular reference to India. The introduction part elaborates the characteristics of constitutional democracy in detail. The second part discusses about Constitution as an organic instrument to protect the salient features of a constitutional democracy. The next one highlights democracy as the most popular form of government including few important features of digital democracy in India

which may be found in other democracies as well because Information Technology has revolutionised the entire world to land into a new dimension characterized as the Cyber World. The fourth section details the important role of Public Administration in India followed by New Public Administration in the particular context of citizen-centric administration leading to Good Governance in the country. The next part then discusses about those challenges that most of the constitutional democracies in the world are confronted with including India and also the hurdles on the way towards attaining the goal of citizen-centric administration therein. The fifth section outlines the hindrances and obstructions in the working of public administration and the next one presents a few possible solutions including innovations and reforms in administration to make it truly citizen-centric thereby ensuring good governance in India. Lastly, the paper concludes in favour of greater devolution of powers to make Public administration friendly and caring towards the citizens and strongly advocates for collective actions of the united mass public to make democracy truly meaningful by underscoring 'Nation First' and 'Nation Supreme' as the goal to be accomplished while evolving a harmonious balance between authority of state and freedom of people.

### **Salient Features of Constitutional Democracy**

The essential attributes and principles of Constitutional Democracy may be categorised as all those philosophical foundations and institutional measures which restrict and restrain all unlawful actions by a government. Thus it is the very antithesis of arbitrary rule and is largely characterised by the following attributes *viz.* popular sovereignty, majority rule and minority rights and limited government having essential features of people-oriented administration in a state. The philosophical foundations or fundamental values of the constitutional democracy may be described as protection of basic or fundamental rights, freedom of conscience and expression, privacy and civil society, justice, equality, transparency or openness and accountability and responsibility. The institutional and procedural limitations on a government may

highlighted as separation of powers including well-defined power-sharing mechanisms, checks and balances, rule of law and due process of law and succession of political leaderships through peaceful and fair elections. Evidently all the above-mentioned attributes of the constitutional democracy can pave way for coming up of a people-friendly government and citizen-centric Public administration in a state to legitimately realise the goal of Good Governance (Pierre, 2000). Thus the role of Constitution assumes considerable significance for this end.

### **Constitution as an organic testament**

In fact, Constitution may be considered as the basic law of the land and an organic testament because it evolves with evolution of the state and that makes it a living instrument to ensure protection and preservation of popular freedom for all citizens in the political society and the state. This synchronicity between Constitution and freedom of the masses simultaneously grows mostly in a democracy in its best form where both constitution and the state (with its people) are supposed to interplay to their highest potential in the common interest of the people so as to suit the changing dynamism in the society and also to avoid a popular uprising or revolution or any such crisis. Obviously a Constitution works as a safety valve in a state. While the Constitution limits and checks the arbitrary policies or rule of a government causing infringement into popular freedom, it also facilitates state action in common interest of the masses, thereby strengthening democracy in the best possible manner. Since popular aspirations are fast changing with changing times all over the world, the Constitution has to amend itself to adapt to the changing social, economic, political and cultural changes. This way, Constitution works as a bridge between the people and the government in a state, or in other words as a bridge between freedom and authority. The greater the synchronism between the Constitution and government, the healthier will be the democracy in a state. This synchronicity between the Constitution and government has been fast turning around throughout the world to take new forms during the recent past due to speedy waves of globalisation, liberalisation and also the

emerging satellite-based communications and monetary transaction - technology. Resultantly the world is fast taking new dazzling forms where time and space have considerably shrunk to change it into a global village and where society has evolved as society 5.0 wherein Cyber world has emerged as a new inescapable reality. Now space travel and space tourism along with human settlements in space are the new highly ambitious goals for scientists and affluent countries in the world wherein Elon Musk is a new icon. Evidently the world is fast jumping towards cosmos to make inter-planetary journeys possible for human beings. In this fast-moving world the role of government as well as administration is becoming stupendously cumbersome and multitasking with rising popular desires. Thus, in the evolving scenario, the closer the proximity between the people and the government, the greater vibrant and more successful will be the democracy and more people-friendly will become the public administration. In fact, different provisions of a Constitution operate as mandatory and also as advisory rules in a few respects, thereby guiding the government on the one hand, and securing and protecting people's rights and freedoms, on the other. Thus a Constitution protects the very spirit of democracy when it reflects all common interests of the community by encompassing the government in a state to respect and observe the fundamental and legal rights of the people especially minorities and weaker sections, rule of law, justice, equality and the popular socio-cultural conventions rooted therein, hence justifying the term Constitutional Democracy. Indeed, all these restraints equally apply on the people as well because any success of democracy inevitably relies upon the aforesaid interplay or interaction between the government and the people wherein Constitution plays its key role. Thus a Constitution truly characterises the salient features of a Constitutional Democracy as a limited government so as to safeguard the universal values of liberty, equality, justice, transparency and rule of law etc. in the common interest of all citizens in a state.

### **Democracy as popular government**

While democracy is the most accepted and most popular form of government in all over the world because it accomplishes

the aforesaid aspirations of people in reality, its scope is rapidly increasing due to rising popular awareness about their rights and duties and also about the actual working of governments in the present era of booming Information Technology (IT). Indeed the IT, facilitated by aforesaid satellite-based communication system, dynamic electronic media and other social media platforms, is leading to ever-fast dissemination of information regarding government policies and programmes and also about different services being provided by the state, apart from huge bunch of so accessible data available in digital form. In fact, IT has considerably facilitated innovations in administrative activities besides improving delivery of services by administration (Gupta, 2004) for betterment of the masses. Again the IT in India has further led to speedy digitalization of almost all government and administrative records and that has facilitated easy access by people to the required information and action taken over their genuine grievances. And to further accelerate this popular drive, the Indian Government has also launched Digital India Programme with the objective of transforming public services so that India may become a digitally-empowered democracy for public welfare. The prominent Digital India initiatives include Aadhaar, Direct Fund Transfer, eTAAL, Paygov India, Public Financial Management System, Public Financial Management System and many more upcoming have genuinely made India as a leader among digital democracies in the world (Sengupta, 2022). Thus all these continuing innovative measures in India along with such ongoing process in other democracies as well, are truly meant for making the political system citizen-centric because it provides politico-administrative awareness to all citizens and also offers them considerable opportunities to share responsibilities into governance of the state. Almost similar developments are clearly visible in most of the democracies in the world. Resultantly the people-friendly government and citizen-centric administration is leading towards good governance to realise the dream of Aapki Sarkar: *Aapke Dwar ie.* your government is at your doorstep into reality with assured and quick disposal of their (people's) demands and grievances, which had mostly been very difficult for them in the past due to illiteracy or ignorance and prevalent colonial

mind-set of political leaders and administrative officials. In fact, political thinkers and philosophers have all along been contemplating since the dawn of civilization to find out reasonable solutions to persisting problems and challenges in different states wherein governments play a very crucial role to accomplish peace, order, security and welfare of the entire masses. Hence the entire working of a government has got to be very pertinent with a view to realise the aforesaid objectives thereby actualising the goals of constitutional democracy, or in other words fulfilling the popular wishes and aspirations including minority and weaker sections of population, with its consistently expanding and penetrating role in a state. Indeed, the expanding role of democratic-governments eventually causes encroachment into personal freedom of individuals. If, for example, curfew is imposed by a government to maintain law and order in the state due to riots or turmoil, it ultimately causes infringement into people's freedom to go outside of their houses for their livelihood or any other genuine requirements. While law and order has got to be restored and maintained by the government, people's livelihood - especially of weaker-sections and daily wage earners - and their other routine necessities must also be made available to them by that very government. Otherwise a state loses its legitimacy when it fails to perform its primary duty of maintaining, nurturing and improving the condition of its citizen (Axtmann, 2004). Evidently such precarious situations, though rare, do test the very spirit of democracy as that largely depends on successful performance of public administration therein to deliver essential goods and services to all during crisis periods.

### **Challenges before Constitutional democracy**

Despite all these accomplishments achieved by most of the democracies in the world, the aforesaid landmarks are still far away from actual realisation especially for weaker and vulnerable sections of society, who are still living below poverty line in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In fact, shrewd politicians, rich business tycoons enjoying political patronage, media-magnets, police as a tool of repression, self-gratifying bureaucracy, economic mega-

cartels, mafia and muscle-power, powerful high-ups and other affluent sections of society etc. are easily grabbing the fruits of development for themselves and the really needy population remains largely deprived and neglected - all contrary to the spirit of democracy. Further the system has become so much powerful that constitutional democracies have turned into sham democracy in many developing democratic-states. The role of money has become so dominant that an ordinary educated person cannot win an election in the so-called people's government. Indeed the money-media-police nexus is perhaps the determining factor for a prospective leader to shine in political domain in most democracies of the world. Although democracies in the world are expanding both horizontally and vertically - in large numbers in terms of independent countries but qualitative improvement may be found only in few countries of Europe, America, Scandinavia and Asia including India - yet they are falling short of people's expectations who are supposed to be actual beneficiaries of growth and development. Though democracy stands for the government of the people at large but this ancient dictum is not feasible in today's large to very large nation-states, comprising of millions or billions of population wherein everyone can't get equal share into government. Hence democracy today has taken the form of representative democracy in which people exercise their will through their elected representatives.

But this theoretical presumption remains far from true in most cases due to rampant cancer of corruption, red-tapism, nepotism and the ruler-minded arrogance among the elected representatives including the companion bureaucracy which mostly remains busy in pleasing their political masters in India. Against this backdrop, unfortunately the very purpose of the constitutional democracy continues to be defeated in many countries in the world including India where the masses continue to remain a hapless and frustrated lot (Dwivedi and Mishra, 2007) vis-à-vis powerful centres in government as well as administration. In fact, the popular leaders are enjoying cream of power and fulfilling their self-serving interests on the very foundation of political power which is meant for service towards common people and unto nation. Indeed, these

malpractices are continuing due to still-persisting feudal-monarchic tendencies in India and in other developing democratic-states as well because the governing institutions and administrative machinery in these former colonies are still functioning contrary to the spirit of service towards the masses. These besides, dynastic rule, insensitive attitude of political leaders and public servants, impersonal administration lacking ethics and accountability and crisis of character are some of the major challenges in the way towards citizen-centric administration. Apart from many legal and judicial complexities due to diversity of constitutional challenges before the apex court in India during the post-globalization and liberalization era (Sinha, 2009), irresponsible social media platforms and mounting human insecurity etc. are additional challenges before citizens as well as constitutional democracy in India. Altogether these challenges put considerable strain over constitutional democracies in the world. Instead of strengthening and promoting people for whom this democracy is meant to work, the political system has become so powerful that it, on the contrary, prevails over them in many cases.

#### **Important role of Public Administration**

Since a government operates through its administrative machinery in a state, the role of public administration obviously becomes very important to accomplish the above-mentioned important features of constitutional democracy to realise the goal of citizen-centric administration and ultimately good governance. While good government is not simply produced by ethical conduct in itself, still some forms of conduct considered as ethical are supportive of good governance and may be justified as prerequisites to it (Congleton, 2020). And for that the Public administration has to have its reach in every nook and corner so as to serve the entire society with all due commitment, sincerity and honesty. That obviously demands accountability, responsibility and transparency apart from utmost honesty and blotless character on the part of administrative officials as well as political leaders. This kind of extraordinary zeal to serve people with devotion, responsiveness and sensitivity is sine-qua-non for an expanding and penetrative administration to be

properly characterized as people-friendly or citizen-centric institution of governance. Indeed, the citizen-centric administration aims to provide for good governance as it lies on that very, as common practice goes in almost all constitutional democracies in the world. In fact, the concept of good governance may be found in ancient India during Chanakya's times as he had vividly described it in his classical work *Arthashastra* (Kangle, 2006). Thus good governance in India today aims at delivering public services and goods effectively, efficiently and equitably to all citizens and that needs comprehensive reforms in the development-oriented government and capacity-building for ensuring the citizen-centric administration (Ray, 2001) as well. It aims to providing an indigenous environment in the country as preconditions wherein all citizens irrespective of caste, class, and gender can develop to their fullest potential. These preconditions may be accomplished by evolving indigenous policies as well as politics in India (Mathur, 2008: 133) and may be characterised as viz. ethos to serve the citizens; ethics ensuring honesty, integrity, and transparency; equity for treating all citizens alike with empathy for weaker sections; efficiency regarding speedy and effective delivery of goods and services sought by public (Mathur, *ibid*: 6-7) without harassment, and e-governance (Saxena, 2005) with increasing use of modern technology particularly ICT and computer science. In fact, e-governance is a comprehensive concept and acts as a catalyst for change (Bhatnagar, 2004) for development of society and administration. Thus these preconditions manifesting innovations and reforms may help-realize the goals of good governance by observing the salient features of citizen-centric administration, which indeed lays focus on overall welfare of citizens as the core concern of the new public administration in India. These attributes of good governance have been characterised as the government incorporating following specificities viz. catalyst; community-based; competitive; consumer-oriented; result-oriented; entrepreneurial; prediction-oriented; decentralized; and market-oriented government (Osborn and Gaebler, 1992). Evidently all these attributes are supplemented by few most pertinent features recommended by the Second Administrative

Reforms Commission (ARC) in its series of Reports which are here as below: efficiency, sensitivity, empathy, effectiveness, responsiveness, impartiality, accountability, transparency, openness, participatory, consensus-oriented, adherence to rule of law, conflict-resolution and crisis-management capacity, including equitable and inclusive approach in public administration.

### **New Public Administration in India**

In fact, the fast changing world today, characterised by new inventions and innovations in life-styles and thinking-patterns, has led to rapid rise in social, economic and political demands in all over the world including India. Consequently the public administration in India is under immense pressure to redefine its role from earlier colonial times to present day and that requires indigenous intellectual inputs and structural changes (Chakravaty, 2007) to cope with new emerging challenges in the country. While maintaining law and order and revenue collection were the two core concerns for hitherto Public administration in India coming down since colonial days, the recent ongoing trends of globalisation, liberalisation, privatization, apart from recognition of human rights as norms that require adherence within all states irrespective of their internal laws in all over the world, growth of global capitalism, proliferation of global and transnational threats and creation of a global communications network (Bobbitt 2002) etc. have altogether been exerting heavy pressure on the very legitimacy of nation-state. These developments are leading towards a new constitutional order, defined as modern state. This is why several new trends are emerging today in the field of Public administration in India wherein aforesaid citizen-centric approach for good governance is the new focus which may enable it to effectively handle multi-faceted challenges as well as threats and that obviously demands multi-tasking (Express News, 2009) capability on the part of administrative officials of all cadres and ranks. And the Public administration today must uphold the aforesaid essential features besides few more like time-bound performance, integrity, sagacity, maturity etc.. In fact, E-governance, Right to Information and Citizen's Charter

etc. have considerably empowered the citizens and have simplified their daily routines going like paying bills, depositing taxes, availing banking and life insurance services, downloading different proforma, tracking documents and files in government offices, prior booking of reservations for hassle-free travels, and almost all necessary requirements being available online anytime and anywhere. Now, E-sampark centres are making available the much needed 28 services to the Indian citizens for 12 hours per day. All these provisions have really turned the human life easy going and many more such facilities are to follow soon (Express News, *ibid*).

### **Hindrances and obstructions**

Despite these achievements by the new public administration in India, several hurdles still remain to be overcome and they may be outlined as attitudinal problems among civil servants, unaccountability, red-tapism, poor awareness about the rights and duties of citizens and ineffective implementation of rules and regulations. Despite having a large number of laws to protect the rights of citizens and vulnerable sections of society, the weak and delayed implementation of these laws continue to erode the trust of the citizens in the government machinery. Although the administration has to abide by rules and procedures which are important for good governance, but sometimes these rules and procedures prove to be ill-conceived and cumbersome and thus lose the very reason of their existence. Further, prevailing ignorance among masses about their legal rights and claims are other grave concerns which make them lose their genuine interests.

### **Reforming Public Administration in India**

That obviously demands much-needed meaningful innovations to 'act as an institution for governance & policy reforms, cutting across social, economic, administrative and financial spheres and work as a national-repository of information on best practices, initiatives and methodologies that promote good governance, e-governance, innovation & change management within the government' (Alexander, 2019) so as to reform public administration to actualise the spirit of citizen-

centric administration in India. Unfortunately the earlier over-dominant political structure of governments had mostly failed to achieve the required goals set for public administration even in the most developed democracies in the world. Hence the focus has now shifted from government to governance so as to make administration truly performing, accountable and responsible and also help-providing popular participation with onset of massive awareness and tremendous desire among people to share responsibilities of public services in their own interests. It is here that a democratic government encourages popular participation in governance and hence devolves power down to grass-root levels by decentralising over-concentration of power. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments of the Indian Constitution, providing for Panchayati Raj System in rural India and Municipality System in urban India respectively stand as shining examples of devolution of powers both at rural and urban levels, thereby encouraging popular participation to strengthen democracy in the country. Of course media, especially electronic, has contributed much to arouse awareness and zeal among all to know and give direction to bunch of public services being provided by the government. Hence a new political culture characterised by accountability, transparency, sensitivity and responsiveness, altogether creating innovations and reforms with human face, has emerged in many democracies in the world and also in India where governments are providing all essential commodities and services at the door-step of common man so as to accomplish the goal of Good governance. Also the Right to Information and Citizen's Charter together are emerging as an effective tool of administrative accountability in India with a view to strengthen the links between agencies and citizens by defining the rights of the citizens. Each department offering various services is required to publish its own charter thereby outlining its standards of performance, fixing of time-schedules and setting up the grievance-redressal mechanism. Unfortunately, it has been found that most of the times the employees of the departments concerned are unaware of the significance and purpose of the *Citizen Charter* pasted in their departments.

Against this backdrop, the journey of constitutional democracies towards good governance obviously sets a new perspective by building an environment wherein administrators and political leaders may remain committed and accountable towards liberal-democratic values (Reddy and Appleby, 2007) in their decision-making and policy-formulation exercise. While modernity arouses increased awakening towards temporal world resulting into rising consumerism, the penetrating wave of liberalisation, globalisation and privatisation, globalised-economy and markets have opened doors for all, rich or poor, towards immense opportunities to exercise their unrestrained freedom to secure pleasure in their own way. Obviously the role of magnificent-shining markets and expanding mall-culture has turned an ordinary man spell-bound to land into a self-assumed chimera of his own creation where he considers himself his own destiny maker. This appears to be the background behind upcoming civil-societies in modern states wherein, inter-alia, traditional moorings and religious rituals and also socio-cultural relations are transforming into money-oriented material pleasures to which almost everyone wishes to enjoy throughout one's life-journey. Although this is perfectly in tune with the spirit of democracy, yet this has fundamentally changed the entire landscape of public administration today because rising literacy, education facility and opportunities of employment among people have accelerated their demand for good governance as their due claim (Bhattacharya, 2014). In fact, the aforesaid fast changing aspirations and rising popular demands of all sections of society are putting huge strain upon new public administration (Jain, 2002) and that need to cope with them effectively and efficiently in tune with the spirit of citizen-centric administration. And that demands massive overhauling of hither existing colonial mind-set of administrative officials and archaic rules and regulations of government in India. Hence the administrative officials must be consistently trained through orientation and refresher courses to make them well-versed to face the emerging challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century public administration in the country besides consistently evolving new paradigms and fresh alternatives leading to new values of public service in administration to better-help the masses. For this end,

therefore, the following measures may enhance the capacity of public administration and help-improve the performance of administrative officials in India:

1. Launching massive awareness programmes throughout the country with particular emphasis over rural areas to make administrative officials and citizens aware of all government policies and programmes so as to better serve and facilitate the masses;
2. Continuous training of administrative officials to inculcate service-oriented approach in Public administration;
3. Seeking global standards in Public Administration to improve administrative functioning and achieving the targeted goals;
4. Evolving best performance techniques for administrative officials and continuous appraisal of their performance;
5. Continuous update of government rules and regulations and Constitutional procedures so that officers may remain well-acquainted with them and can better-help the masses;
6. Simplifying complicated laws and governing procedures to facilitate officials as well as public;
7. Enhancing capacity-building in administration to successfully deal with emergent crises and succeed in conflict-resolution and crisis-management;
8. Speedy disposal of all public cases and grievances;
9. Providing leadership in unusual and unforeseen situations;
10. Ensuring genuine expenditure of public money and closing wasteful expenditure at all levels etc..

### **Conclusion and solutions**

Hence to prevent such unhealthy practices to continue further in entire public domain in India, all government policies and welfare programmes be properly framed and launched in common interest of all citizens, especially minorities and weaker sections. And those must be well-coordinated and effectively executed by ensuring greater synchronism between government

and public administration so as to make democracy as ideological basis for reforms to realise Good Governance. And progressive innovations in governance be ensured to make it more efficient, legitimate, creditable, sensitive, caring and citizen-friendly as well. This can be achieved in a constitutional democracy that India today shines to be. Though constitution provides the required safe-guards to restrain government as well as administration from misusing powers but that considerably depends upon the wishes of powerful high-ups who easily violate government laws and succeed in encroaching upon rights of common people to serve their vested interests, just due to absence of united and collective force of the masses. In fact, rights are indispensable for everyone in a democracy but that must not interfere into freedom of others (Munshi, 2000). Hence people in India must unite against all forms of aforesaid evils in the state and malfunctioning in public administration creating hurdles in achieving Good Governance, while overcoming their narrow and selfish interests. Hence Nation First and Nation Supreme must be the pious goal for all citizens and saner people in modern democracies today who must collectively act to strengthen democratic institutions by adhering to rule of law, natural justice, respecting freedom of minorities, women, children and other neglected sections of society, observing principle of equality and equity among themselves, launching campaign against illiteracy, and poverty etc.. Also there is an urgent need to simplify rules and regulations, ensuring easy and speedy justice available especially for weaker sections and disseminations of all information by the government and administration in India. The Administrative Reforms Commission in India has already spelled out the above-mentioned objectives to be achieved by the Public administration for overall progress and well-being of all countrymen. Further the government must ensure greater devolution of powers at all levels by increasing decentralization to encourage greater public participation at different stages of administration in the country. Thus India immediately needs to evolve a broad-based fulcrum of national policy-building institution and dedicated service-oriented professional administrative structure involving accumulated native experience and fresh inputs from all over the world

manifesting global standards, so as to ensure speedy socio-economic and scientific-technological growth, besides overcoming narrow sectarian interests, organised-violence, terrorism and religious-fundamentalism and all forms of corruptions etc.. All these progressive steps may genuinely lead towards ensuring the much-desired harmonious balance between freedom of individual and authority of state so as to accomplish citizen-centric public administration and ultimately good governance in India and elsewhere.

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# Decoding Ayurvedic Bhasma: The Nanomedicine of Ancient India

**Rupal Patel**

## **Abstract**

Ayurvedic Bhasma, an ancient medicinal preparation originating from India, has brought in increasing interest in modern nanomedicine. This paper examines its preparation methods and explores its potential applications in nanotechnology. By integrating traditional wisdom with contemporary scientific understanding, the aim is to reveal the nano-scale attributes and therapeutic mechanisms inherent in Ayurvedic Bhasma. Through a thorough analysis of traditional Ayurvedic texts, recent scientific investigations, and clinical studies, this paper illuminates the promising prospects of Ayurvedic Bhasma in addressing diverse health conditions within the realm of nanomedicine. Additionally, it examines the challenges and opportunities in maximizing the potency of Ayurvedic Bhasma in the growing field of nanomedicine. By combining ancient insights with modern scientific innovations, this paper underscores the transformative potential of Ayurvedic Bhasma, positioned at the coming together of traditional wisdom and modern nanotechnology, offering a pathway towards novel advancements in healthcare and personalized medicine.

**Keywords:** Ayurvedic Bhasma, Nanomedicine, Therapeutic mechanisms.

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**Introduction**

Ayurvedic Bhasma, a unique therapeutic formulation derived from metals, minerals, and herbs, has been an integral part of traditional Indian medicine for centuries. The process of Bhasma preparation involves complex procedures such as purification, calcination, and trituration, aimed at enhancing the therapeutic efficacy and reducing toxicity. (Pal et al.)

Bhasmas are categorized based on their appearance and color, with scientific classification dividing them into herbal, mineral, and metal types. Examples of common bhasmas include Loha Bhasma, Swarna Bhasma, Rajata Bhasma, Praval Bhasma, Tamra Bhasma, Godanti Bhasma, Heerak Bhasma, Trivang Bhasma, Varatika Bhasma, Shankh Bhasma, Vanga Bhasma, Mandoor Bhasma, Jasad Bhasma, Shuddha Parada, Tankan Bhasma, Mukta Bhasma, Shukti Bhasma, Manikya Bhasma, Kapardika Bhasma, and Abhrak Bhasma. Depending on the primary drug and other substances used during processing, bhasmas typically exhibit a range of colors including white, black, grey, dark black, and reddish tones. These preparations are commonly stored in airtight containers to maintain their integrity.

Central to Ayurveda is the discipline of Rasashastra, a branch dedicated to the preparation of metallic and mineral formulations that have transformative medicinal properties (Kumar Pal). The hallmark of Rasashastra lies in its innovative pharmaceutical techniques, including processes bhasmas involves several sequential steps:

**Shodhana**

Bhasma is derived from meticulously purified metals, minerals, marine, and animal products, a process known as Shodhana. This step serves to eliminate any harmful impurities present in the substance, thereby enhancing its potency and therapeutic efficacy.

**Shodhana is of two types**

1. **Visesa Shodhana:** This method involves purifying metals by immersing them in specific mediums such as milk, buttermilk, and cow urine.

2. **Samanya Shodhana:** This process focuses on the general purification of metals.

**Bhavana**

This phase entails wet trituration using a mortar and pestle to produce a fine powder, thereby enhancing the therapeutic properties of the substance.

**Jarana**

Small pellets are formed, dried under sunlight, and then placed in an earthen tray, covered with a lid, sealed, and further dried.

**Putapaka**

Bhasma undergoes continuous heating in an earthen tray until the metallic luster is completely eliminated.

**Marana**

This step involves calcination, or the burning process, with the objective of reducing the substance to its finest particle form, facilitating easy absorption by the body.

In recent years, the integration of nanotechnology into healthcare has provided novel insights into the mechanisms of action and potential applications of Ayurvedic Bhasma. The nanoscale properties and therapeutic implications of Ayurvedic Bhasma position it as a cornerstone of nanomedicine in ancient India, serving as a testament to ancient nanotechnology wherein particles are reduced to nano-sized dimensions during the production process, representing an innovative approach deeply rooted in tradition.

**Nanoparticle Characterization and Therapeutic Mechanisms**

Nanotechnology, the study and manipulation of objects at the nanometer scale, stands poised to revolutionize various facets of the medical field. Mostly defined, nanotechnology involves the precise control of matter at dimensions smaller than 1 micrometer, typically ranging from 1 to 100 nanometers. This field encompasses a wide array of materials and structures

within this size range, holding immense promise, particularly in drug delivery applications (Kaushik et al.).

Recent strides in nanotechnology have revolutionized the understanding of nanoparticles within Ayurvedic Bhasma. Employing diverse analytical methods such as transmission electron microscopy (TEM), dynamic light scattering (DLS), and X-ray diffraction (XRD), researchers have deciphered the size, shape, and crystalline architecture of Bhasma nanoparticles. Moreover, investigations have unveiled the presence of bioactive compounds and trace elements within Bhasma formulations, bolstering their therapeutic potential (Vakte et al.).

The miniscule dimensions of bhasmas particles facilitate heightened cellular absorption and bioavailability, amplifying their pharmacological efficacy. Over the past few decades, material science advancements have propelled the utilization of nanomaterials, distinguished by their unique properties stemming from their minute size. This characteristic sets them apart from conventional bulk materials, rendering them promising candidates for pioneering applications.

Within the realm of medicine, nanotechnology has garnered considerable attention, driven by its ability to interact intricately with molecular components of the human body.

### **Applications of Ayurvedic Bhasma in Nanomedicine**

Ayurvedic Bhasma exhibits diverse therapeutic properties, including anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, immunomodulatory, and anti-cancer activities. Through the principles of nanomedicine, Bhasma formulations can be tailored to target specific cellular pathways and disease processes (Valikarimwala et al.). Nanoscale Bhasma particles have shown promise in the treatment of various health conditions, including metabolic disorders, neurodegenerative diseases, and infectious ailments. Moreover, the synergistic interactions between Bhasma nanoparticles and traditional Ayurvedic herbs potentiate their therapeutic efficacy, offering a holistic approach to health and wellness (Surendiran et al.).

Bhasma, with a size of  $27 \pm 3$  nm, have been found effective in alleviating symptoms of arthritis, while those at 4 nm size aid in increasing apoptosis in B-chronic lymphocytic leukemia.

Other frequently used examples of Bhasma include Mukta Shukti Bhasma (pearl-oyster calx), which is effective in acidity, pyrexia, tuberculosis, cough, asthma, and increasing bone mineral density at a size of  $22.52 \pm 0.45 \mu\text{m}$ . Mandura Bhasma (iron calx) is used in microcytic anemia and hemolytic jaundice, Tamra Bhasma (copper calx) serves as a hepatoprotective and antioxidant, and Yashad Bhasma (Zinc calx) is employed in treating myopia, diabetes, leucorrhea, among other conditions (Sharma et al.).

Table-1: Bhasmas and its therapeutic effect

Bhasma (Ashes)	Application/Indication
Swarna Bhasma	Used in Ayurveda for rejuvenation, anti-aging, and improving immunity.
Rajata Bhasma	Prescribed for various disorders including tuberculosis, fever, and respiratory ailments.
Vanga Bhasma	Used in treating diabetes, urinary disorders, and nervous system disorders.
Tamra Bhasma	Beneficial in anemia, jaundice, respiratory disorders, and skin diseases.
Abhraka Bhasma	Utilized in treating chronic respiratory conditions, digestive issues, and anemia.
Yashada Bhasma	Applied in conditions like chronic fever, diabetes, skin disorders, and eye diseases.
Mandura Bhasma	Effective in anemia, jaundice, liver disorders, and menstrual irregularities.
Shilajit Bhasma	Known for its rejuvenating properties, used in various age-related disorders.
Mukta Pishti	Utilized in conditions like acidity, gastritis, and urinary disorders.
Praval Bhasma	Beneficial in treating calcium deficiency, acidity, and skin disorders.

Challenges and Future Perspectives

Despite the potential benefits of Ayurvedic Bhasma in nanomedicine, several challenges remain to be addressed. The standardization of Bhasma preparation methods, quality control measures, and safety assessments are paramount to ensuring the efficacy and safety of Bhasma formulations.

Additionally, regulatory frameworks governing the production and distribution of Ayurvedic Bhasma need to be harmonized with modern scientific standards. Moving forward, interdisciplinary collaborations between traditional Ayurvedic practitioners, nanotechnologists, and healthcare professionals hold the key to unlocking the full potential of Ayurvedic Bhasma as a nanomedicine (Farooq et al.).

### Conclusion

In conclusion, Ayurvedic Bhasma represents a unique paradigm of nanomedicine in ancient India, representing the principles of precision medicine and personalized healthcare. By harnessing the nanoscale properties and therapeutic mechanisms of Bhasma formulations, we can cover the way for innovative approaches to disease management and wellness promotion. Through continued research and collaboration, Ayurvedic Bhasma has the potential to revolutionize healthcare delivery and contribute to the global advancement of nanomedicine.

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# **The Psychosomatic Imprint on Prisoners Awaiting Trial: The Role of Intellectual Psychopathic and Affective Traits**

**Sruti Bansal and Prachi V. Motiyani**

## **Abstract**

As a sovereign nation, India is obligated to provide their fundamental human rights to every citizen. Undertrials are those who are kept in a judicial custody or remand during investigation. Article 21 of the Indian Constitution; however it has long been observed that undertrials are not provided with the fundamental human rights necessary to exist in society. Article 21 of The Constitution of India, 1950 provides that the information that they are held alongside Convicted Prisoners itself generates inequity and questions the existence of various rights provided in the Legislations. Numerous legal cases are still outstanding, and it should be noted that undertrials are imprisoned for excessively long periods of time which harass them psychologically and physically. Their minds are negatively impacted by being housed alongside criminals, and they develop ludicrous behaviours as a result of picking up their bad habits. One old proverb states "As the country is, same should be the guise". Additionally, when they are freed on

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bail after a protracted period of time, society treats them like prisoners even though they have not been found guilty, because due to the lack of a speedy trial, the thin line between undertrials and convicts is not maintained. This research paper focuses on the psychological problems that the Undertrials are facing due to prolonged delay in their trial and their hostile conditions which make bad impact on their minds and create issues when releases after trial to live in society.

**Keywords:** Undertrials, Judicial custody, Psychological, Behaviours, Speedy trial, Prison, Investigation

### Introduction

Prison has always been a place for the reformation of the accused. It has never been a place to keep undertrials for such a long period of time which results in sizeable portion of Undertrials in Prison. However, it is seen in reports that 70% of the prisons are occupied by Undertrial prisoners. The study of Law and therapy focuses about the wellbeing of the participant of the entire judicial system and there comes the term “Wellbeing of Undertrials”. (National Crime Records Bureau (Ministry of Home Affairs) Government of India, 2022) The term “Undertrial” is not defined in Law but the term was initiated in 1979 in the newspaper of the “Plight of Undertrials” for the first time. Undertrials are basically those who are kept in custody during investigation or waiting for trial and in bearing pure sense of Undertrial they face lot of problems in surviving in the society. Undertrials are arrested and kept in prisons on the basis of mere suspicion and for which they might not be charged guilty afterwards. Just on the basis of mere suspicion they are traumatized, physically harmed and kept with convicts which ultimately makes a bad impact on their psychological strength which helps them to confront the situation. (Zimak, E. H., Suhr, J., & Bolinger, E. M., 2014)

Wellbeing is not defined anywhere but metaphorically includes everything irrespective of physical or mental attributes and focuses upon the quality of life that is the general sense of contentment needed by every human being. (Shamay-Tsoory, S. G., Harari, H., Aharon-Peretz, J., & Levkovitz, Y., 2010) Wellbeing tends to be the goal of World Health Organization “Healthy mind in a healthy body in a healthy Environment” despite of this it is noticed none of the specific word is accomplished as the goal

mentioned by WHO. There are various rights provided in The Prison Act 1894 and Model Prison Manual 2016 but every time the question arises on the implementation of various legislations. There is a lacuna which can be seen over ages in the enforcement of the Laws. Human Rights are those important rights which cannot be taken from any person irrespective of their behavioral attributes. (Orjiakor, C. T., Ugwu, D. I., Eze, J. E., Ugwu, L. I., Ibeagha, P. N., & Onu, D. U., 2017)

### **Mental Health of Undertrials**

Generally, Undertrials are arrested and kept under Judicial Custody on the basis of mere suspicion or preliminary inquiry and which will lead to the collection of evidence against them to prove their guilt. Also, it is seen that Trial proceedings takes lot of time to come to the conclusion. Moreover, it is also to be looked upon that trial proceedings starts in the stipulated time period and if not then the delay that takes place during pendency of trial leads to various psychological health problems with the Undertrials. (Ajah, B. O., Nnam, M. U., Ajah, I. A., Idemili-Aronu, N., Chukwuemeka, O. D., & Agboti, C. I., 2022) As per the analysis of few reports the major psychological problems are poor sanitary conditions, living in isolation with unknown people and most importantly low self-esteem to survive due to delay in the trial process. Loosing hope for release from prison or initiation of trial timely impacts on their mental state which leads to traumatic ill-risk experience and makes them impatient to deal with the psychological health issues which somehow leads to their aggressive mind set and instigate to do offence inside the prison too apart from the liability of offence due to which they are kept in custody. They are stressed about their survival in the outer world and the changes in the perception. (Ansari, S., Verma, A., & Dadkhah, K. M., 2015)

The Study related to the after effects of releasing from Prison due to noncompliance on timely trial also leads to disparity in the thinking skills of the same human being and is somehow an uncovered truth by the Prison authorities. The psychological thinking about acceptance in the society results in stress or mental trauma to a certain extend. It is further noticed that assimilation of the released Undertrial becomes difficult even when

they are in prison and also after the release from Prison which makes them feel depressed, disturbed and isolated again. (Janetius, S. T., & Govindarajan, P., 2017)

### **Psychiatric Morbidity**

Psychiatric Morbidity is a mental disorder or disease, frequently known as a mental illness or psychiatric morbidity, is a behavioral or intellectual pattern that significantly impairs private functioning or causes great depression. The characteristics may persist continuously, recur occasionally, or manifest as a single experience. As per the reports it is been seen that psychiatric morbidity is found amongst Prisoners at a very large scale. Many a times with most of the Prisoners it happens that the cause of committing an Offence is any of the Psychiatric disease such as impaired judgment, lack of impulse control, suspiciousness, disinhibition, paranoia, inability to trust others, delusions and hallucinations which is not treated as a defence everywhere in all the Offences. Also, it becomes difficult to undermine the effect of offence on Public at large which leads to the punishment without any defence. It is noticed that due to the delay in the trial process by the Criminal Justice System Undertrials takes stress in awaiting for the trial procedure and undergo with these types of diseases which somehow makes them act different from a normal Human Being. Undertrials are arrested on the basis of mere suspicion in pursuance of the case and the delay in the procedure leads them to suffer from Psychiatric morbidity. (Kaur, N., & Roy, S., 2022)

### **Cognitive Traits**

Individual variations in how people think, process information, and solve issues are referred to as cognitive characteristics. An individual's conduct, judgment, and general cognitive functioning are greatly influenced by these characteristics. Different cognitive qualities can affect how convicts perceive and react to the judicial system while they are awaiting trial. (Freckelton QC, I., 2014) It is imperative to comprehend the cognitive characteristics of those who are awaiting trial in order to customize legal interventions and support services to meet their unique needs. Education,

correction of cognitive distortions, and provision of mental health resources can all help to create a more fair and efficient legal process for these people. People who are awaiting trial frequently feel more stressed and anxious since they don't know what the future holds. The cognitive effects could include ongoing anxiety, fear, and foreseeing possible consequences. Resilience and coping skills are important cognitive traits. While some people may find it difficult to handle the stresses involved in the legal process, others may have useful coping skills that enable them to do so. (Butt, A., Abdi, S. K., Hamid, A., Dogar, F. A., & Fatima, J., 2019)

### **Affective Traits**

Individual differences in the experiences, expression, and regulation of emotions are referred to as affective characteristics. These characteristics greatly influence how someone feels about certain things, such as the strain and uncertainty that come with being a prisoner awaiting trial. In order to provide appropriate mental health care and legal measures, it is imperative to comprehend and address affective features in people who are awaiting trial. For those navigating the legal system, mental health services, psychotherapy, and interventions that support emotional well-being can lead to more favorable results. Furthermore, fostering an atmosphere that acknowledges the psychological effects of the pre-trial phase and encourages emotional forbearance can improve the general wellbeing of individuals concerned. Pretrial detention can intensify or precipitate mood problems, such as despair or rage, particularly when people think back on the events that led to their arrest. Those who feel powerless and hopeless may have affective qualities, particularly if they think the judicial system is unfair or intimidating. (Thekkumkara, S. N., Jagannathan, A., Muliya, K. P., & Murthy, P., 2022)

### **Legal Aspects for Wellbeing of Undertrials**

78<sup>th</sup> Law Commission of India defined the term "Undertrial" for the first time as someone who is arrested or kept under remand or custody during Investigation. Initially the term "Undertrial" were not defined in any Legislation of India. There were 2

Committees formed to work upon the issues faced by the Undertrials. In 1969 Mulla Committee came and the main objective was to keep separate Undertrials from the Convicted ones following the judgment provided in the case of (*Jugal Kishore v. State of Bihar*, 1973) mentioned in Probation of Offenders Act, 1958 and the justification was to find the difference in the mindsets of Undertrials and the Convicted ones. Since Indian Criminal Justice System works upon the reformatory theory so as per the findings of Mulla Committee it was initiated to protect the wellbeing of Undertrials so that they should not get influenced by the Convicted ones to commit any offence. In 2000 Malimath Committee came which initiated Victim Compensation Scheme needs to be given in the violation of basic rights of the "Victim" as per Section 40 of the Indian Penal Code which is a narrower approach. (Mansoor, M., Perwez, S. K., Swamy, T. N. V. R., & Ramaseshan, H., 2015)

There has been a series of case studies which deals with the violation of rights of the Undertrials. The plight of violation of rights began from Hussainara Khatoon v. State of Bihar in which Hon'ble High Court deemed protective custody to be a blatant breach of Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, which deals with an individual's life. Also, as per further interpretations a new perspective was given in the case (*Rudal Shah v. State of Bihar*, 1983) relation to providing compensation to the prisoners who are detained even after 10 long years of the completion of their punishment.

In the renowned case, (*Bhim Singh v. Union of India*, 1997) the Hon'ble Supreme Court delivered a series of directions to state authorities to ease the release of Undertrial Prisoners who has served half of their credible maximum prison term as per Section 436 A of the Criminal Procedure Code 1973. Similarly, regaining the same perspective in Nilabeti Behera v. State of Orissa Hon'ble High Court discussed about the broad perspective of Article 21 for the Under Trial Prisoners and it should not be denied to convicts or undertrial except according to the Procedure established by Law which is also an intrinsic matter in relation to wellbeing of the Prisoners. After the era of 2000, lot of Interventions came to improve the wellbeing of Undertrials specially FTC's for the early release of Undertrials and somehow

presumed to reduce their mental sufferings but the implementation is still questionable in the Court of Law. (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2023) Thereafter in the time of Corona virus, the right to bail was construed as part of an Undertrial's right to life and wellbeing under Art. 21 of the Constitution of India, 1950. In furtherance to same, 3 member High Powered Committee was formed in 26 states and the Hon'ble Supreme Court issued guidelines for their release and also to release maximum Undertrials for the smooth functioning of Prisons in pandemic. But it is noticed as per the reports of NCRB 2021, the number of Undertrials have increased from 4, 88,511 in 2020 in 5, 54,034 in 2021 which depicts a great concern and having a bad impact on the psychological state of the Undertrials. (National Crime Records Bureau (Ministry of Home Affairs) Government of India, 2021)

#### **Gaps in Law and the way forward**

In addition to violating the inmates fundamental rights, prison staff members victimization of those who are awaiting trial denies them opportunities to establish their innocence in court's legal tribunal. Additionally, this breach triggers a variety of psychological even after he is released from prison, he still has issues. (Somasundaram, O., 1997) The criminal justice system needs to undergo significant adjustments in order to provide for impartiality, prompt justice, and decent living conditions in prisons. There are so many legislations to improve the conditions of Undertrials and focus upon the mental health of Undertrials and even for the same Psychologists and Mental Healthcare Practitioners under Chapter IV of Mental Healthcare Rules under Mental Healthcare Act 2017 (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2015) are sent to Prisons but the questions is on statistics and the enforceability of the said rules and how many problems are actually taken into consideration by the prison authorities perhaps no data is available in the said issue. (Sekhri, D. G., & OSD, N., 2020)

Secondly, due to delay in speedy justice Undertrials are suffering from mental trauma which is affecting their wellbeing in every possible manner for which laws are there but the proper implementation is not there which is still a grey area till date

and needs to be worked upon. There is a huge difference in forming laws and implementation of laws and they both should work together hand in hand but the statistics by NCRB doesn't verify the same. (Amnesty International, 2020)

There is a need a process of re-engineering to be done for the speedy disposal of cases for the Undertrials in the form of proper functioning of Lok Adalats. As per data shared with NALSA, the State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs) of 28 States and Union Territories organized E- Lok Adalats since June, 2020. The details of the cases taken up and disposed in both pre- litigation and pending cases in E-Lok Adalats during the period from June, 2020 to Sept., 2022 is provided below (National Informatics Centre, n.d.) :-



Chart 1: Cases took by E-Lok Adalats took on and resolved before going to trial between June 2020 and September 2022.

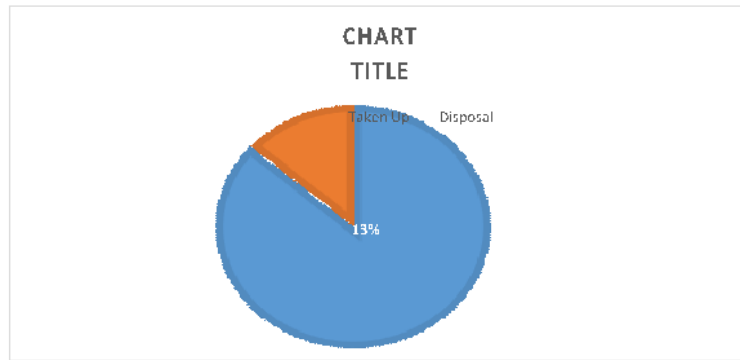


Chart 2: The specifics of the issues that were taken up and resolved in E-Lok Adalats outstanding cases between June 2020 and September 2022.

As per the analysis made by NALSA the SLSAs provided the survey report of E-Adalats the number of Pre Litigation cases taken up 1, 63, 78,857 and out of which only 38,39,258 were disposed off and in the case of Pending cases 96,13,800 taken up and out of which only 14,99, 042 cases were disposed off and these numbers depicts the great concern and questions the enforcement of E-Lok Adalats.

### **Mental Health Services and Legal aid and Education**

Mental Wellness of the Undertrials is a big concern which needs attention in order to ensure overall well-being of individuals and provide them free and fair treatment to all. It is important to conduct regular Health checkups for Undertrials and there should be no discrimination amongst Prisoners on the mere basis of less tenure in Prison or their offence yet to be decided. There should be formation of intervention teams and proper mechanisms to treat the disease. It is crucial to offer mental health services and education to all Undertrials. To ensure compliance, NGOs, mental health professionals, government agencies, and—most importantly—the community at large must contribute or collaborate. (Johns, R., & Jones, L., n.d.)

It is important to establish legal awareness programs to educate undertrials about their rights, legal procedures, and available resources and monitor the legal process and act as an

advocate for the rights of undertrials and intervenor in cases of potential injustice. This may entail providing free or subsidized legal services through public defenders or legal aid organizations. To make sure that undertrials have access to both basic education and vocational training, educational programs must be offered within detention institutions and collaborate with academic establishments to provide undertrials with educational resources or remote learning opportunities. The main aim must be to provide life skills training to assist undertrials in acquiring necessary skills that will aid in their reintegration back into society. (Smith, J., 2020)

### **Conclusion**

India follows an Adversarial form of criminal Justice System due to which the victimological perspective of Undertrials is somehow an untouched or ever neglected area till date and moving toward the betterment of the undertrials it is found that their lacunas in implementation of the laws. As from the era of 2000 Fast Tracks Courts came into existence but the people or the authorities sitting for operating or functioning the Fast Track Courts are not having training to operate so they keep the case on hold saying that the some of the document is incomplete of that Undertrial due to which Virtual hearing cannot be done. So, there is a need of the proper training given to the authorities governing FTCs for the smooth functioning and speedy disposal of cases and it will ultimately result in wellbeing of the Undertrials. There are many Legal Rights which are provided to the Undertrials but ironically they are not having awareness of their rights and the status of their case and the reason behind is that they are not communicated by the authorities regarding the same. (United Nations, 2015)

There must be a mechanism or legal counselling on weekly basis in which they should be legally aware of their cases by the Legal Counsels and also the legal services or aid to be provided to them for their betterment and easy disposal of cases and their release. There must be a committee formed to enquire about the problems they are facing in Prison intrinsically so that the positive steps can be initiated for the wellbeing of the Undertrials.

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## **The Therapeutic Legacy of Beal in Ancient Indian Healing Systems**

**Trivima Sharma**

### **Abstract**

Bael, an indigenous plant to India, holds multifaceted significance within the context of ancient Indian healing practices. It is scientifically known as *Aegle marmelos*, encompasses a rich repository of nutrients and bioactive compounds, rendering it invaluable in various nutritional, medicinal, and non-edible applications. Furthermore, its utility extends beyond consumption, finding applications in biodiesel production, and bio-adsorption of pollutants. With its commercial potential, Bael emerges as an economically significant tree species in South Asia. Beyond its culinary allure, bael is deeply entrenched in Ayurvedic medicine, with its fruits, bark, leaves, seeds, and roots harboring bioactive compounds with diverse medicinal properties including anti-diabetic, anti-cancerous, anti-microbial, immunogenic, and insecticidal activities. Despite its underutilization, extensive research underscores the medically significant properties and industrially vital characteristics of bael in India. This paper elucidates the therapeutic potential of *Aegle marmelos* highlighting its constituents and their diverse biological activities in treating a spectrum of ailments. As India boasts one of the most expansive plant-origin medical traditions globally, bael emerges as a promising candidate

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for further exploration in both traditional healing practices and modern scientific inquiries.

Keywords: Bael, *A. marmelos*, Vilvam, Marmelosin

## Introduction

*Aegle marmelos* is characterized as a deciduous shrub or small to medium-sized tree, reaching heights of up to 13 meters. It is a subtropical, deciduous tree that thrives in a diverse range of soil-climatic conditions and exhibits remarkable resilience in alkaline soil environments (A Shashank *et al.*, 2018). Bael, scientifically referred to as *Aegle marmelos* (L.) Correa, holds a revered status among medicinal tree species, standing out among the 250,000 terrestrial plant species on the planet. In India, Bael is alternatively recognized as begal-quince, golden apple, and stone apple, and holds sacred significance in regions inhabited by Hindus (C K Pathirana *et al.*, 2020). It is distributed throughout India. On average, a bael fruit contains a spectrum of macronutrients, complemented by various water-soluble vitamins in its ripe state. Notably, its riboflavin content surpasses that of other fruits. Additionally, the ripe fruit harbors numerous bioactive functional compounds such as marmenol, marmelosin, marmelide, alloimperatorin, marmin, rutaretin, aeglin, fagarine, anhydromarmelin, marmelin, limonene, marmelin, luvangentin, and auroptene. The sensory quality of bael fruit hinges upon the optimal balance of mucilage, sugars, and total phenolics. Bael fruit's palatability is enhanced by its higher proportion of sugars, especially non-reducing sugars, coupled with lower levels of phenolics and mucilage (A Shashank *et al.*, 2018). Bael trees are commonly planted in proximity to temples dedicated to Lord Shiva, where they are regularly revered and worshipped by devotees (V. K. Singhal *et al.*, 2011). Extensive research has been conducted on the Phytochemistry of *Aegle marmelos*, revealing a diverse array of biologically active compounds present within the plant. Historically, *Aegle marmelos* has been documented in Vedic texts as a remedy for diverse ailments, and its traditional application extends to treating a variety of diseases.

### **Historical and spiritual Context**

In historical and spiritual contexts, the *Aegle marmelos* stands as one of the most revered plants, often thriving in the vicinity of Hindu temples. It holds a special place of devotion to Lord Shiva, with beliefs suggesting that Lord Shiva himself resides beneath the Bael tree. Additionally, this plant is renowned for its significant medicinal properties, extensively documented in ancient scriptures such as the Vedas, Puranas, Charaka Samhita, and Brihat Samhita. Its cultural significance is further evidenced by its portrayal in the paintings of the Ajanta caves (Shailja Choudhary *et al.*, 2021). In India, where a population of 68 million individuals belonging to 227 ethnic groups (573 tribal communities) resides in close proximity to forests or villages, there exists a profound connection to nature, with communities actively conserving the biodiversity of their local environments. This reverence for nature extends to the belief that herbal medicines derived from plants are not only healthier but also safer than synthetic alternatives (Abhijit Dutta *et al.*, 2014). The term “bilva” commonly denotes the sacred bel tree, often referred to as “bilva-patra” or the leaf of the bel tree, which holds significant sacrificial importance. The leaves of this revered tree typically grow in trifoliate clusters, symbolizing various spiritual concepts such as Trikal (Brahma, Vishnu, and Mahesh), the three eyes of Lord Shiva, Trishakti (Volition, action, and knowledge), the three lingas, and the three syllables of Omkar. The bilva tree itself is considered profoundly holy and auspicious, with its worship and significance intricately woven into numerous Puranas and scriptures on various occasions (Abhijit Dutta *et al.*, 2014).

### **Role of Beal in ancient traditional healing practices of India**

Beal leaves are employed for alleviating soreness, spinal pain, eye discomforts, stomach issues, vomiting, cuts and wounds, ulcers, cholera, diarrhea, cardiac tonicity, diabetes, animal wounds, neurological disorders, hair revitalization, and acute bronchitis. Additionally, in veterinary medicine, they are used for wound treatment in anesthetized cats, as feed for sheep, goats, and cattle, to stimulate breathing, and to reverse denervated nictitating membranes (Savita *et al.*, 2021). The fruit

of beal serves as an astringent and is utilized for addressing diarrhea, gastric problems, constipation, purging, as a tonic, and for digestive and stomachic purposes. It is also employed for treating diarrhea, as a tonic for the mind and heart, for ulcers, as an antiviral, for intestinal parasites, managing gonorrhea, and addressing epilepsy. The root of beal is employed for dog bites, gastrointestinal issues, heart ailments, intermittent fevers, as an anti-amoebic agent, and for hypoglycemia and stiffness. The bark is utilized for stomach problems, intermittent fevers, and heart issues. Beal seeds act as an antipyretic, while its flowers are used as an expectorant and for managing epilepsy. The entire Beal plant finds application in alleviating stomach pain, sores, acting as an astringent, relieving back pain, addressing dog bites, breast pain, cholera, constipation, seizures, cramps, diabetes, diarrhea, fever, eye discomforts, gastric issues, stomach problems, jaundice, serving as a purgative, managing nausea, night fever, heart problems, snakebites, stomach troubles, vomiting, as a tonic, and for cuts and wounds. The root and bark are utilized in fish poison. Seed mucilage is employed in wall plastering, while seed oil acts as a laxative. The gum surrounding the seed enhances the adhesion strength of water paints. Unripe fruit and bark are utilized in yellow dye. The stem is used in oil and sugar mill pestles ((Savita *et al.*, 2021).

### Conclusion

This article provides a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted significance of *Aegle marmelos*, commonly known as Bael, in the ancient healing practices of India. Through an extensive examination of its nutritional, medicinal, and cultural importance, the paper underscores the diverse roles that Bael plays in traditional Indian medicine and society. *Aegle marmelos* emerges as a botanical treasure, boasting a rich repository of bioactive compounds and nutrients that contribute to its therapeutic efficacy. Its fruits, bark, leaves, seeds, and roots harbor a myriad of medicinal properties, including anti-diabetic, anti-cancerous, anti-microbial, immunogenic, and insecticidal activities. Moreover, the sacred symbolism attached to Bael in Hindu culture underscores its profound spiritual significance

and cultural heritage. The paper highlights the historical and spiritual context surrounding Bael, illustrating its association with Lord Shiva and its portrayal in ancient scriptures and artworks. Furthermore, the paper sheds light on the traditional healing practices wherein Bael is utilized to address a spectrum of ailments, ranging from digestive disorders to skin conditions, demonstrating its versatility and efficacy as a therapeutic agent. Overall, this paper underscores the importance of *Aegle marmelos* in ancient Indian healing systems and advocates for further exploration of its therapeutic potential in both traditional and modern medical practices. As India boasts a rich legacy of plant-origin medical traditions, Bael emerges as a promising candidate for continued research and integration into healthcare systems, thereby preserving and harnessing the wealth of botanical knowledge embedded in ancient Indian wisdom.

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## **Encountering the Other : Levinasian Ethics in Indian Context**

**Dyuti Yajnik**

### **Abstract**

This research paper explores the philosophical contributions of Emmanuel Levinas to the understanding of "The Other." in the context of moral philosophy as well as from Indian perspective. Levinas, a prominent 20th-century French philosopher, developed a unique ethical framework that places a profound emphasis on the encounter with the Other as the foundation of human subjectivity. The paper delves into Levinas's key concepts, such as the face-to-face encounter, ethics as first philosophy, and the infinite responsibility toward the Other. Additionally, it examines the implications of Levinas's ideas for contemporary ethical discourse and their potential impact on social relations and global responsibility. The noteworthy part of this research is that this Levinas's concept is compared here with general Indian traditional belief, knowledge and principles in which it is shown that the Indian knowledge is far more wider and universal than western tradition in general and Levinas's philosophy in particular.

**Keywords** - Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethics, Existentialism  
Responsibility, Run, Dharma, Indian Knowledge Tradition, Alterity.

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**Introduction**

Emmanuel Levinas, a Lithuanian-born philosopher, emerged as a prominent figure in phenomenology and existentialism, offering a distinctive perspective on ethics that centres around the concept of “The Other.” Emmanuel Levinas’s Philosophical Background: Tracing Roots in Phenomenology and Existentialism. Emmanuel Levinas, a distinguished 20th-century philosopher, made significant contributions to phenomenology and existentialism, shaping a unique ethical framework that revolves around the concept of “The Other.” To comprehend Levinas’s philosophical insights, it is crucial to delve into his intellectual roots, exploring the intersections between his thought and the broader philosophical traditions of phenomenology and existentialism.

**Phenomenology**

Levinas’s engagement with phenomenology, particularly Edmund Husserl’s phenomenological method, played a pivotal role in shaping his philosophical trajectory. Phenomenology, as conceived by Husserl, seeks to investigate the structures of consciousness and the ways in which phenomena appear to the subject. Levinas embraced phenomenology’s commitment to the direct examination of experience, emphasizing the significance of subjective consciousness in understanding the world.

In the phenomenological tradition, Levinas found a method that allowed him to explore the nature of subjectivity and its relation to the external world. However, he eventually departed from the Husserlian approach, criticizing its inherent subjectivism and its tendency to prioritize the self. Levinas’s departure paved the way for his ground breaking work in developing an ethics grounded in the encounter with The Other.

**Existentialism**

Existentialism, another influential philosophical movement of the 20th century, also left an indelible mark on Levinas’s intellectual journey. Existentialism, with figures like Jean-Paul Sartre and Martin Heidegger at its forefront, centres around the individual’s existence, freedom, and responsibility in an absurd and indifferent world.

Levinas engaged with existentialist themes, including the examination of human existence and the quest for meaning. Here we can relate this idea with Sartre's concept of Choice, when Sartre talked about freedom, he says that we have the freedom of choice, which is relatively similar to Levinas's concept of prioritisation of self. However, he sought to transcend the individualistic tendencies inherent in existentialism, especially the emphasis on personal freedom, by shifting the focus to the ethical dimension of human relationships. The concept of The Other became central to Levinas's departure from existentialism and the development of his distinctive ethical philosophy.

### **Influences on Levinas's Thought - Jewish Thought**

Levinas's Jewish background significantly influenced his philosophical perspective. Drawing from Jewish traditions and teachings, he incorporated elements of Jewish ethics and spirituality into his philosophical framework. The ethical imperative of responsibility, deeply rooted in Levinas's thought, reflects his engagement with Jewish ethical traditions that emphasize the ethical relation to the Other.

Levinas's in general philosophy was considered as a spiritual and he was called a theologian, In response to this, he said that, "My point of departure is absolutely non-theological. This is very important to me; it is not theology which I do, but philosophy." In a conversation of 1 May 1975 on the occasion of his receiving an honorary doctorate in Leiden, Levinas repeated: "I have never even thought that I was doing theology. Whatever my experiences and prephilosophic sources may have been, I have always had this idea (a bit mad perhaps): that I was doing or was endeavouring to do philosophy, even in commenting on the biblical text which called this forth." This conversation has been published under the title "Questions et reponses," in DDVI 128-57." (Peperzak, 1993:210)

### **Hegel and Heidegger**

Levinas engaged critically with the works of G.W.F. Hegel and Martin Heidegger, two towering figures in Western philosophy. From Hegel, Levinas drew insights into the dialectical nature of relationships, while simultaneously challenging Hegel's

tendency to subsume individuality within a universal system by his theory of concrete monism. Heidegger's exploration of ontology and being-in-the-world influenced Levinas's reflections on existence and the ethical encounter.

Levinas's encounters with these thinkers were not passive appropriations but involved a critical dialogue that allowed him to carve out a unique philosophical position. The synthesis of these influences shaped Levinas's distinctive philosophy, one that emphasizes the irreducibility of the Other and the ethical responsibility that arises in face-to-face encounters.

### **The Face-to-Face Encounter - Ethics as First Philosophy - Reconfiguring Philosophical Priorities**

Levinas posits ethics as the primary philosophy, challenging traditional philosophical paradigms and placing the encounter with "The Other" at the center of human subjectivity. Through an analysis of the face-to-face encounter, this article elucidates the ethical dimensions, the challenges posed to traditional philosophy, and the notion of infinite responsibility that emanates from this encounter.

Levinas's assertion of ethics as the first philosophy constitutes a radical departure from conventional philosophical approaches. Traditionally, metaphysics or epistemology held the position of primacy. He says, "The metaphysical desire has another intention; it desires beyond everything that can simply complete it. It is like goodness-the Desired does not fulfill it, but deepens it." (Levinas, 1969:34) However, Levinas contends that our ethical responsibilities, particularly in the face-to-face encounter, precede and exceed any metaphysical or epistemological considerations.

Ethics, for Levinas, is not a derivative discipline but the very foundation upon which all other philosophical inquiries rest. The face-to-face encounter becomes the locus of ethical significance, demanding a re-evaluation of philosophical priorities. This shift challenges the assumption that the abstract pursuit of knowledge or understanding precedes our ethical engagements.

### **The Other as a Challenge to Traditional Philosophy - Critique of Totalizing Philosophies**

Levinas says that “The true life is absent.” But we are in the world. Metaphysics arises and is maintained in this alibi. It is turned toward the “elsewhere” and the “otherwise” and the “other.” (Levinas, 1969:33) Levinas’s philosophy challenges totalizing systems that attempt to subsume individuality within overarching frameworks. Traditional philosophies often prioritize universality and attempt to categorize individuals into predetermined categories. In contrast, the face-to-face encounter disrupts such totalizing tendencies, emphasizing the irreducible singularity of The Other.

Levinas critiques philosophies that risk erasing the uniqueness of individuals, arguing that true ethical engagement requires recognizing and respecting the alterity of The Other. By presenting The Other as an ethical challenge, Levinas redirects philosophical inquiries toward the concrete, immediate, and irreducible aspects of human relationships.

### **Infinite Responsibility**

The face-to-face encounter, according to Levinas, is not merely a physical meeting but an ethical event where the face of The Other commands a response. The face unveils a vulnerability and nakedness that transcends physicality, prompting a moral responsibility to respond to the ethical call it presents.

Infinite responsibility emerges as a central theme in Levinas’s ethics. The encounter with The Other places an infinite demand on the self, exceeding any calculable or finite ethical obligation. This infinite responsibility signifies an ongoing commitment to respond to the needs of The Other, acknowledging the boundless nature of ethical obligations that extend beyond the self. Levinas prefers to think of philosophy as the “wisdom of love” rather than the love of wisdom (the literal Greek meaning of the word “philosophy”). By his lights, ethics becomes an entity independent of subjectivity to the point where ethical responsibility is integral to the subject; hence an ethics of responsibility precedes any “objective searching after truth”. (<https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/252782>)

The face, as the locus of ethical significance, invites an unbounded responsibility, challenging individuals to go beyond self-interest and embrace the ethical imperative of responding to the vulnerability and needs of The Other. This infinite responsibility marks the distinctive character of Levinasian ethics and shapes its enduring impact on contemporary ethical discourse. Thus, Emmanuel Levinas's concept of infinite responsibility toward The Other, positioned at the core of his ethical philosophy. This notion emerges from the face-to-face encounter, emphasizing the priority of the face, the uniqueness of The Other, and the profound ethical call that emanates from this encounter.

### **The Priority of the Face as ethical significance**

In Levinas's philosophy, the face is not merely a physical aspect but a symbol of ethical significance. The encounter with The Other's face is a moment of revelation, where the ethical imperative becomes palpable. The face, as the "epiphany of the Infinite," demands immediate attention, transcending the material and inviting a response that goes beyond conventional moral considerations.

Levinas contends that the face is not an object to be scrutinized or categorized but an ethical summons that necessitates an authentic engagement. The priority of the face establishes the groundwork for infinite responsibility, highlighting the immediacy and urgency of ethical obligations.

### **The Uniqueness of The Other - Irreducibility of Alterity**

Levinas emphasizes the irreducible uniqueness of The Other, challenging any attempt to assimilate or objectify individuals. He says that "Their alterity is thereby reabsorbed into my own identity as a thinker or a possessor. The metaphysical desire tends toward something else entirely, toward the absolutely other. (Levinas, 1969:33) The Other resists categorization, existing in a singular, unrepeatable manner that defies generalization. This uniqueness underscores the ethical demand to approach each encounter with a profound openness, recognizing the infinite depth of The Other's subjectivity.

Infinite responsibility, according to Levinas, is grounded in this acknowledgment of alterity. To respond ethically means to embrace the singular existence of The Other, respecting their individuality without imposing preconceived notions or reducing them to predetermined categories.

The face-to-face encounter brings forth the ethical call of The Other, an appeal that transcends linguistic expression. Levinas describes this call as a silent demand that communicates a vulnerability and need for ethical response. The call is not a mere request but an imperative that imposes a moral duty upon the self. Responding to the call involves recognizing the vulnerability of The Other and assuming the infinite responsibility that arises from this recognition. Levinas argues that this ethical demand disrupts any self-contained existence, urging individuals to extend themselves in response to the needs and concerns of The Other.

Cohen rightly put that, "*Totality and Infinity* is primarily concerned to establish the radical and ethically compelling transcendence of the other person. *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, on the other hand, is primarily concerned to show the repercussion of this transcendence in the ethical constitution of moral subjectivity. We have already seen these two emphases, transcendence and the impact of transcendence on the self, in the ethical expression "for-the-other before oneself". The sequence of Levinas's two major works mimics the very priority of ethics itself, namely the moral height and precedence of the other before the self, and the radical alteration of selfhood in the face of the alterity of the other." (Cohen, 2001:145-160)

### **Critique of Totalizing Philosophies - The Pitfalls of Universalism**

Levinas's ethics of alterity serves as a powerful critique of totalizing philosophies, particularly those emphasizing universal principles and homogenizing perspectives. Totalizing philosophies, Levinas argues, risk erasing individuality and uniqueness, suppressing the alterity of The Other in the pursuit of overarching principles. By exposing the limitations of universalism, Levinas challenges philosophers to acknowledge the irreducible alterity of individuals. The ethics of alterity asserts

that ethical responsibility arises precisely from recognizing and respecting the singularity of The Other, dismantling the tendency of totalizing philosophies to subsume diversity under universal categories.

Levinasian ethics carries profound implications for social and political ethics by reorienting our understanding of human relations. In societal contexts, the recognition of alterity demands a departure from hierarchical structures that often marginalize certain groups. (Blacs, certain cast or certain religioun etc.) The ethical imperative is to create spaces for dialogue, acknowledging diverse perspectives and fostering inclusivity.

This approach challenges prevailing social norms and political systems, urging a re-evaluation of power dynamics and the distribution of resources. Levinasian ethics encourages the construction of social structures that embrace alterity, promoting justice and equality in interpersonal and institutional relationships.

### **Levinasian Ethical Responsibilities Beyond Borders**

Levinas's philosophy extends beyond individual or societal realms to encompass a global perspective. In a world marked by interconnectedness and interdependence, Levinasian ethics emphasizes the responsibility of individuals bear for The Other irrespective of geographical, cultural, or national boundaries. With this reference, regarding the highest moral value in Indian society, it is said in Indian tradition that,

अयं निजः परो वेति गणना लघुचेसाम् । (Ayam Nijah Paro Vet  
Ganana Laghucetasam)

उदारचरितानां तु वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम् ॥ (Udaracaritanam Tu  
Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam)

(Maha Upanishada : VI) and

“यत्र विश्वम् भवति एक नीडम्” (Yatra viswam bhabati ek needam) (Shukla Yajurveda, Mandhyandin Samhita : 32.8) which means “Where the world becomes a nest”. This way, Levinas is talking about universal responsibility can be seen in Indian traditional moral philosophy. Global challenges such as poverty, climate change, and displacement necessitate a collective ethical response. Levinasian ethics, with its emphasis

on alterity, posits that ethical responsibility extends to those beyond one's immediate community. This globalized understanding of ethical obligations challenges individuals and nations to address global issues with empathy, solidarity, and a commitment to the well-being of all.

### **Levinas and Contemporary Ethical Discourse - Dialogues and Recognition of the Feminine Other**

Bernasconi, Robert, and Simon Critchley, editors of *The Cambridge Companion to Levinas* rightly put this way that, "For 'the feminine' is a term that has attracted vastly different – indeed diametrically opposed – responses from feminists, ranging from the wholly affirmative to the absolutely dismissive. Reading the feminist responses to Levinas within the terms of a debate over the meaning of the feminine, (I will) conclude with a suggestion for an alternative contemporary feminist reading." (Bernasconi and Critchley, 1972:1339-160)

Levinasian ethics opens up meaningful dialogues with feminist ethics by redefining the ethical encounter to include a deep recognition of the feminine Other. Traditional philosophical frameworks often marginalize or overlook the experiences of women, reinforcing patriarchal structures. Levinas challenges this by emphasizing the ethical significance of the face-to-face encounter with The Other, transcending gendered norms.

Feminist scholars engage with Levinas's philosophy to explore the possibilities of an ethics rooted in relationality, care, and the unique ethical demands presented by women. This intersection fosters a dialogue that enriches both Levinasian thought and feminist ethics, encouraging a more inclusive and nuanced understanding of ethical responsibility.

### **Environmental Ethics - Nature as The Other**

Levinasian perspectives extend their influence to environmental ethics by reimagining nature as The Other. Traditional environmental ethics often objectify nature, treating it as a resource to be exploited for human benefit. Levinas challenges this anthropocentric view by positing nature as an ethical Other, deserving of respect and care. The face-to-face

encounter with the environment demands a responsibility that goes beyond human interests. Levinasian environmental ethics encourages a shift in perspective, urging us to recognize the inherent value of nature and embrace sustainable practices that honour the alterity of the natural world.

### **Intersectionality and The Other - Beyond Binary Categories**

Levinas's philosophy resonates with the framework of intersectionality, challenging binary categories and acknowledging the multiplicity of identities within The Other. Intersectionality, as a theoretical lens, emphasizes the interconnected nature of various social categories such as race, gender, and class. Levinasian ethics aligns with this perspective by recognizing the complexity of individual identities and the unique ethical demands arising from intersecting social positions. This intersectional approach enriches Levinasian thought by emphasizing the need for an inclusive ethical framework that considers the diverse experiences of individuals. By engaging with intersectionality, Levinasian ethics becomes more attuned to the nuanced dynamics of power and privilege that shape ethical encounters.

### **Critiques Essentialism in Levinas's Notion of The Other**

One prominent criticism directed at Levinas's philosophy is the accusation of essentialism in his conception of The Other. Critics argue that by assigning a set of inherent characteristics or qualities to The Other, Levinas falls into the trap of essentialist thinking. This critique questions whether Levinas truly allows for the radical alterity he espouses or inadvertently imposes certain attributes on The Other, undermining the very uniqueness he seeks to uphold.

By scrutinizing the essentialist tendencies within Levinas's framework, scholars engage in a dialogue aimed at refining and clarifying the concept of alterity. This critique prompts a reevaluation of how Levinasian ethics navigates the tension between acknowledging the alterity of The Other and avoiding essentialist pitfalls.

### **Levinasian Clash with Utilitarian Calculations**

Levinasian ethics, with its emphasis on the face-to-face encounter and infinite responsibility, stands in stark contrast to

utilitarian ethics that often prioritizes the greatest good for the greatest number. Critics argue that Levinas's ethical framework, rooted in the singularity of The Other, clashes with the utilitarian approach that relies on calculable outcomes and aggregated well-being.

The tension between Levinasian ethics and utilitarianism prompts a broader discussion about the compatibility of deontological and consequentialist ethical perspectives. Scholars engage in debates about whether Levinas's emphasis on individual responsibility can be reconciled with utilitarian calculations or if the two ethical frameworks are fundamentally irreconcilable.

### **Cultural Relativism and Levinas**

Levinas's philosophy, while advocating for a universal ethic grounded in the face-to-face encounter, faces criticisms related to cultural relativism. Some argue that Levinasian ethics might be insufficiently attuned to the diverse cultural contexts that shape ethical norms and values. The question arises: does Levinas's emphasis on an absolute ethical responsibility account for the cultural variations in moral perspectives?

This debate delves into the tension between universal ethical imperatives and the cultural specificity of moral frameworks. It challenges Levinasian scholars to consider how his philosophy accommodates cultural diversity without compromising the foundational principles of alterity and responsibility.

### **Comparison with Indian Knowledge Tradition**

- (1) Levinas is eradicating metaphysics and epistemology from ethics. In Indian tradition, Dharmat Arthashch Kamashch which leads to Moksha, that is the interpretation of Chatvari Purusharthas. So, In Indian tradition, what Levinas emphasises is included and also further, lead humans upto Moksha, the highest metaphysical position or the highest goal of human existence. This way, for India, Ethics is a first philosophical principle, as Levinas also believed, and in

addition to this, ethics is a last philosophical principle, in culmination of human life also.

- (2) Levinas says about the moral responsibility. Connecting this concept with Indian view of life, there is a concept of Run and this Bhavan includes all types of responsibility as a part of Run which any human is supposed to pay during his or her whole life.
- (3) While talking about 'The Other', basically Levinas is talking about other human beings. While in Indian tradition, all, including other inmates, micro sects, as well as nature as a whole, water, land – all the five elements are in a way 'other' towards whom all humans have some responsibility. But here it is noteworthy, that when talking about 'sarvam khalu idam brahman', there is not only feeling of responsibility as an outsider, but these are not even 'the other' than 'me'. That is in performing responsibility, or paying Run, the feeling of empathy or oneness is existent in great Indian tradition. Yes, it is somewhat included in Levinas's philosophy regarding environment, not to objectify it.
- (4) Indian thinking and philosophy is not only an armchair thinking. It is abstract and pure logical as well as very much practical also. In general, in western way of thinking the life and ethics related thoughts are separate from pure abstract thinking. So, principles and practice are all together separate in western tradition. Whereas, in Indian tradition, without praxis part, only theoretical thinking is not the least important. In west, thinking related to life and ethics are concerned with Bishops and with Churches, and speculative philosophical pursuits are related to philosophical tradition. So, for this, it was a need of an hour to think ethics, morality, responsibility etc. And as Hegelian dialectical method, it can be said that the antithesis of Levinas as putting metaphysics and epistemology aside or ignoring these while putting emphasis on Ethics, whereas in India, these two – ethics and metaphysics and epistemology are considered as a complementary to each other, which shows a holistic approach of Indian knowledge tradition.

### Conclusion

The face-to-face encounter in Levinas's philosophy redefines the landscape of ethical thought. By establishing ethics as the first philosophy, challenging traditional paradigms, and emphasizing infinite responsibility, Levinas invites a profound reconsideration of our ethical duties. "That is not at all to say that Levinasian ethics is unrelated to the tradition of moral philosophy or to the concrete questions of justifiability of human action...Levinas sometimes speak of distinction in term of the difference between the ethical and the moral, ...where the later refers to the socio-political order...which is itself founded upon the prima philosophia of an ethical responsibilities towards the other." (Critchley, 1992:3-4) Levinas crafted a philosophical framework that has left an enduring mark on ethical theory, inviting us to reconsider the nature of subjectivity, responsibility, and the ethical imperative to respond to The Other. Further, Levinasian ethics reveals its adaptability and relevance in addressing complex ethical challenges. As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, Levinas's philosophy offers a rich terrain for ethical reflection and action, fostering inclusivity, environmental stewardship, and an appreciation for the multiplicity of identities within The Other. "In Levinas's later thought following "Totality and Infinity", he argued that our responsibility for the other was already rooted within our subjective constitution." ( <https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/252782>) As Vivekananda says that Each soul is potentially divine. All through it is discussed how Indian traditional moral philosophy emphasises wider and subtle perspective of 'the other' in universal sense. Regarding moral conduct, we can conclude with quote from Manusmriti that, "Activity, according to orthodox tradition, is of two kinds : pravrtti and nivrtti, The first kind of activity leads to progress (abhyudaya), and the second, to perfection (nihsreyasa)." ( *Manusmriti*: 12.88) Thus, in India, all responsible persons, who are considered as world citizens are concerned with material progress as well as the real perfection of self as their moral principles.

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# **Impact of Buddhist Values on Bhutanese Society and its Governance**

**Neerja A Gupta and Kavita Joshi**

## **Abstract**

Bhutan is a country that uses Vajrayana Buddhism as its primary religious practice. As a result, the country incorporates religious ideas into its everyday life and national policy, which results in a distinctive socio-political landscape. Bhutanese culture is heavily influenced by Buddhist principles, which place an emphasis on feelings of compassion, mindfulness, and communal togetherness. The notion of Gross National Happiness (GNH), which was derived from Buddhist teachings, places an emphasis on the well-being of the community as opposed to the accumulation of worldly prosperity. Stewardship of the environment, social peace, and the preservation of cultural traditions are all encouraged under this social framework. A strong foundation in Buddhist philosophy underpins Bhutan's political system. The Buddhist values are incorporated into the monarchy and other political institutions, which helps to promote ethical leadership, transparency, and concerns for the general people. In accordance with the holistic approach that GNH takes, policies are formulated with the intention of striking a balance between economic progress, spiritual growth, and environmental

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sustainability. The incorporation of Buddhist principles into Bhutanese culture and government results in the formation of a unique national identity that places a higher emphasis on happiness and well-being than on economic measures. The insights that this model provides into alternative government models that bring spiritual and material pursuits into harmony.

**Keywords:** Buddhist principles, Governance, Ethical leadership, GNH.

### **1. Introduction**

Bhutan, which is referred as the “Land of the Thunder Dragon” is well-known for its distinctive approach to administration and the development of society, which is profoundly inspired by Buddhist principles. Vajrayana Buddhism, which is the official religion of Bhutan, is deeply ingrained in every facet of Bhutanese society, from individual actions to the policies of the government. The identity of the nation, its guiding principles, and its overall well-being are all significantly influenced by this theological and philosophical framework. GNH is a notion that is considered to be one of the most remarkable expressions of Buddhism in Bhutan. It places an emphasis on the significance of striking a balance between the advancement of the economy and the well-being of society, the environment, and the spiritual realm. This viewpoint stands in sharp contrast to traditional theories of development, which place a greater emphasis on economic metrics and gross domestic product (GDP). Within the context of Bhutanese society, Buddhist teachings promote the values of compassion, mindfulness, and social responsibility. Cultural preservation, environmental care, and a feeling of community are all supported by these principles, which also encourage environmental responsibility. The extensive impact of Buddhism guarantees that the values of non-violence, empathy, and interconnectivity are linked with the standards of society as well as the actions of individuals. When it comes to governance, Buddhist ideas are included into the political structure as well as the decision-making processes. The integration guarantees that government is not primarily focused on economic achievements, but also takes into consideration the wellbeing of the population in terms of their spiritual and emotional well-being. The purpose of this introduction is to lay the groundwork for a more in-depth investigation into the ways in which

Buddhist beliefs influence the social configuration and political system of Bhutan. The purpose of this research is to emphasize the distinctive qualities of Bhutan's development model and its implications for larger conversations on ethical and sustainable governance.

### **1.1. Historical Context: Buddhism's Arrival and Integration into Bhutanese Culture**

The origin of Buddhism in Bhutan can be traced back to the era of the Tibetan monarch, King Songtsen Gampo, who played a crucial role in the propagation of Buddhism throughout the Himalayan domain. During the 7th century AD, King Songtsen Gampo oversaw the construction of temples in Bumthang and Paro, signifying the establishment of Buddhism's historical roots in Bhutan. However, the advent of the Indian guru Padmasambhava, recognized by the Bhutanese as Guru Rinpoche, during the 8<sup>th</sup> century signified the formal introduction of Buddhism to Bhutan. Guru Padmasambhava, alias Guru Rinpoche and the Lotus from Oddiyana, emerged as a prominent Indian tantric Buddhist Vajrayana master who journeyed to Tibet between the eighth and ninth centuries to propagate Vajrayana Buddhism. Through his teachings, he succeeded in converting numerous Bhutanese individuals to the Buddhist faith, thereby laying the groundwork for the enduring influence of Vajrayana Buddhism in Bhutanese society.

The teachings of Guru Rinpoche served as a cornerstone for the evolution of Buddhism in Bhutan, deeply intertwining the religion with the cultural and spiritual essence of the nation. The promulgation of Vajrayana Buddhism heralded a significant shift in Bhutan's religious panorama, emphasizing the direct encounter with enlightenment and the utilization of ceremonial practices to attain spiritual objectives. Gradually, these teachings became deeply entrenched in Bhutanese societal norms, not only shaping religious observances but also molding the cultural ethos and principles of the country. (Rai, 2020)

## **2. Study of the Impact of Buddhist Ethics**

### **2.1. Bhutanese Society**

Since the 8<sup>th</sup> century, The Buddhist faith in Bhutan has persisted unaltered. Buddhism exerts a significant influence on

Bhutanese education, administration, culture, and daily life, playing a crucial role in shaping the fabric of society. Buddhist ethics profoundly shape Bhutanese society, guiding values such as compassion, non-violence, and respect for all living beings. These principles influence social behavior, governance, environmental conservation and community interactions, fostering a harmonious and sustainable way of life.

The art, architecture, festivals, and literature of the nation are intricately connected with Buddhist themes, where dzongs and monasteries function as religious, administrative, and societal centers. Individually, the emphasis on spirituality, mindfulness, and overall well-being in Buddhism impacts daily existence, contributing to psychological well-being and inner tranquility. Bhutanese spirituality is predominantly influenced by a trio of individuals: the Buddha, Guru Rinpoche, and Zhabdrung Rinpoche. The profound spiritual legacy they have left on the nation is truly incomparable. Guru Rinpoche is often regarded as the second Buddha, credited with proliferating Buddhism from India to Bhutan and the Himalayan region during the eighth century. In the 17th century, the revered monk Zhabdrung Rinpoche undertook this task to ensure that the principles of Buddhism would shape Bhutanese governance and bestow its advantages upon the populace. Presently, numerous Buddhist institutions, both public and private, are still prevalent in contemporary society. Conversely, the government and lay individuals extend considerable patronage to monks and clergy. The citizens of Bhutan exhibit a profound allegiance to the Vajrayana Buddhist doctrines that have been transmitted through generations, rendering the nation a sanctuary of spirituality. Approximately 80% of the population in Bhutan adhere to the Buddhist faith, while the remaining majority predominantly practice Hinduism. The presence of monasteries and hermitages is notably prominent, engaging in extensive religious practices. Furthermore, Buddhism is incorporated into the educational curriculum within schools, indicating its significance in the society. Individuals in Bhutan allocate a considerable amount of their daily routines towards engaging in spiritual pursuits. (Tobgay, 2018)

The traditional Monastic education in Bhutan has been an integral component of the nation's spiritual and cultural fabric ever since the introduction of Buddhism. The educational system within monasteries has historically played a fundamental role molding the cognitive and ethical framework of Bhutan. The main purpose of monastic education was the advancement of spiritual growth. The skills acquired and imparted in monastic establishments aim to supplement the spiritual development of the student. In addition to receiving training in various practical disciplines, the student is expected to undergo instruction in fundamental teachings, such as the acknowledgment of the perfect human existence, impermanence and mortality, the concept of karma, the suffering of samsara, cultivation of Bodhicitta, ethical values and principles, mental cultivation, and various other forms of instruction. Buddhist education focuses on nurturing the internal disposition and external demeanor of individuals. Essential human virtues like affection, empathy, shared joy, composure, benevolence, steadfastness in faith, allegiance, devotion, collaboration, comprehension, and optimistic outlook are qualities that flourish through Buddhist education. These attributes are rooted in the welfare, advancement, liberty, and well-being of all sentient beings. They establish a robust ethical framework upon which a Buddhist can construct his or her spiritual journey. (Dargye)

The commencement of school education in Bhutan was initiated by the establishment of the first modern school in Haa by Gongzin Ugyen Dorji in 1914 under the directive of Gongsar Ugyen Wangchuck, the inaugural monarch of Bhutan (reign-1907-1926). The year 1914 witnessed the advent of contemporary education as 46 male students embarked on a journey abroad to enroll in a mission school in Kalimpong, India. Concurrently, Ugyen Dorji founded Bhutan's primary modern educational institution in Haa District. Subsequently, in 1915, another educational facility was founded in Bumthang District to provide education to the Crown Prince and the offspring of individuals employed in the King's court. (Takehiro, 2015)

In the 1960s, Bhutan underwent notable advancements in the modernization of its educational system under the insightful

guidance of King Jigme Dorji Wangchuck. Through the initiation of the First Five-Year Plan in 1961, significant resources were allocated towards education with the goal of reshaping the predominantly monastic education system into a more inclusive and extensive framework. This era marked the establishment of numerous primary and secondary schools nationwide, thereby enhancing the accessibility of formal education to a wider segment of the populace. (Gyeltshen, May, 2020) The transition from monastic to contemporary education in Bhutan reflects the nation's endeavor to harmonize age-old principles with the requirements of current society, fostering the development of both spiritual and cognitive faculties. At present, there exist three distinct forms of education within the country, specifically English medium education, Dzongkha medium education, and monastic education. The education provided in the Dzongkha medium as well as through monastic institutions is of significant importance in the conservation and advancement of Buddhism, a religion deeply ingrained in the cultural and societal fabric of Bhutan. (Ueda, 2003)

Bhutanese society places a high value on compassion, happiness, and encourages individuals to demonstrate kindness and empathy towards others. This spiritual framework cultivates a sense of equality, as the core tenets of Buddhism highlight the intrinsic value of all beings, promoting just treatment and consideration for all. The well-being of the community is enhanced through shared practices and ceremonies that reinforce social connections and cultivate a supportive atmosphere. GNH pioneered by Bhutan, is closely intertwined with Buddhist philosophy, incorporating moral and spiritual principles into national policies and strategies for development. GNH advocates for a comprehensive approach to progress, giving precedence to happiness and well-being over mere economic advancement, and guaranteeing that advancements benefit all segments of society. Through harmonizing national objectives with Buddhist ideals, Bhutan aims to establish a kind, fair, and peaceful society, demonstrating the profound influence of Buddhism on the country's character and governance. (Givel, 2015)

## **2.2. Governance and Leadership**

Bhutan is renowned for its distinctive approach to governance and leadership, which bears a strong influence from Buddhism. The foundation of this approach is deeply rooted in Mahayana Buddhism, and has significantly influenced the nation's governance frameworks and policies across many centuries. The Bhutanese embrace of GNH perfectly illustrates this influence by emphasizing the importance of the well-being and spiritual satisfaction of its populace over mere economic advancement. In Bhutan, leaders utilize Buddhist teachings to establish a community where values such as compassion, ethical leadership, and environmental conservation take precedence, constructing a governance system that serves as a model of comprehensive development in the contemporary era.

### **2.2.1. Ethical Governance- The Chakravartin and Bhutanese Monarchy**

The impact of the Buddhist leadership model on Bhutan's leaders and monarchs has been profound, influencing the governance of the nation through spiritual and ethical doctrines. The concept of Chakravartin, originating from the Sanskrit terms "chakra" and "vartin," signifies an ancient Indian notion of a worldwide ruler. Essentially, a Chakravartin can be perceived as a sovereign whose chariot wheels traverse all domains or whose actions encounter no hindrances. Chakravartin denotes an ancient Indian expression denoting an exemplary global leader governing with morality and kindness across the entire world. This ruler's dominion is known as "sarvabhauma," a bahuvrīhi term symbolically suggesting unfettered chariot movement. Buddha present a method of governing the emotions and thoughts of individuals that was not reliant on greed, ambition, self-centeredness, and aggression. This approach was founded upon empathy, tranquility, insight, and the well-being of all by means of a framework resembling that of more participatory, compassionate, and peaceful-non-coercive societies or Sanghas. (Dokras, 2023)

Chakravartin known an exemplary ruler characterized by wisdom, compassion and justice. Beyond a mere political figure, the chakravartin serves as a moral and spiritual mentor,

dedicated to ensuring the well-being and contentment of the populace while upholding Dharma, the universal principles of justice. Within Bhutan, this framework has served as a pivotal wellspring of motivation for its monarchs, who are perceived as embodiments of the chakravartin archetype. The monarchs of Bhutan are venerated not only for their political roles but also as spiritual guides who epitomize the tenets of Buddhism in their governance. (Tobgay, 2018)

The Bhutanese monarchs have endeavored to live and rule with an enlightened attitude, closely aligning their governance with the Buddha's teachings, specifically the original "Ten Duties of the King." These ten duties serve as a guiding framework, emphasizing values and virtues essential for righteous leadership. The duties include liberality, generosity, and charity (dana), encouraging leaders to be selfless and giving. They uphold a high moral character (sila), ensuring ethical conduct and virtuous living. The willingness to sacrifice everything for the good of the people (pariccaga) is paramount, demonstrating a deep commitment to public welfare. Honesty and integrity (ajjava) are cornerstones of their leadership, fostering trust and transparency. Kindness and gentleness (maddava) reflect their compassionate approach, while austerity in habits (tapa) emphasizes simplicity and modesty. They are committed to freedom from hatred (akkodha), promoting a harmonious and peaceful society. Non-violence (ahimsa) is a fundamental principle, ensuring that their governance is marked by peace and respect for life. Patience, tolerance, and understanding (khanti) guide their interactions, promoting empathy and resilience. And non-opposition and non-obstruction (avirodha) underscore their commitment to inclusivity and support for positive initiatives. By embodying these ten duties, Bhutanese kings have nurtured a governance model that is compassionate, ethical, and deeply rooted in Buddhist principles. (Rahula, (1959/2001)) Buddhist ethics have had a significant impact on Bhutan's government style, which places an emphasis on moral leadership, openness, and accountability measures. Not only are members of the monarchy, and especially the kings, seen to be political leaders, but they are also considered to be moral models.

According to Tobgay, in Vajrayana Buddhism, leaders were traditionally expected to embody three essential qualities: compassion, strength, and knowledge. The knowledge required of a leader involved understanding various forms of suffering and knowing how to alleviate them. Without the guiding principles of compassion and wisdom about suffering, other forms of knowledge and strength are not as valuable. Compassion is crucial as it drives leaders to act for the benefit of all beings, both human and animal. In today's world of growing specialization, it's impractical for leaders to be experts in many fields. However, regardless of their other skills, the most important trait for any leader is compassion. Compassionate leadership, which focuses on the welfare of all sentient beings, is at the core of Buddhist leadership. This quality, visible in Bhutan's monarchs, has contributed to the enlightened governance of the country.

### **2.2.2. Gross National Happiness- A Buddhist Philosophy of Development**

The GNH is a crucial factor in Bhutan's leadership, guiding the country's development and governance approaches with an emphasis on comprehensive well-being. GNH was introduced by His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Fourth King in 1970, to prioritize the overall happiness and satisfaction of Bhutanese individuals rather than just focusing on economic advancement. The GNH framework is organized around four primary pillars and nine domains, which have deep roots in Buddhist principles and play a crucial role in guiding the nation's development and governance. The four pillars of GNH consist of good governance, sustainable socio-economic development, preservation and promotion of culture and environmental conservation. They establish a comprehensive structure that is consistent with Buddhist values such as compassion, moderation and responsible stewardship. The nine domains nested within these pillars offer a more intricate analysis: time use, education, good governance, living standards, community vitality, psychological well-being, cultural resilience, health and environment. The GNH index incorporates conventional economic indicators like the significance of economic security

and fair living conditions, while also encompassing additional social, cultural, and environmental factors that are often disregarded in GDP assessments. Each domain undergoes thorough assessment to guarantee that developmental initiatives contribute positively to the overall happiness and welfare of the people of Bhutan, embodying the Buddhist emphasis on complete well-being and moral conduct. This multi-faceted strategy guarantees that all spheres of life are taken into account, spanning from economic circumstances and environmental well-being to cultural diversity and governance effectiveness. (Tideman, 2016)

Several instruments are utilized to assess and advance objectives related to GNH. These tools encompass a policy screening tool for incorporation in policy formulation, a draft project screening tool, GNH committees, and a GNH check for utilization in the planning and execution of policies, as well as a GNH Index for the assessment of policy outcomes-

- i. **Draft Project Screening Tool-** The policy and project screening mechanisms necessitate governance actors to collectively prioritize draft policies and projects based on a series of screening inquiries tied to the GNH domains. It ensures that new projects are aligned with GNH principles and do not negatively affect the well-being of the population or the environment.
- ii. **GNH Committees-** GNH Committees are organizational structures designed to be present in each governmental ministry and agency at the central level, as well as in sub-national administrations. These committees are established at various levels of government and within organizations to oversee the implementation of GNH principles. They ensure that policies and projects are designed and executed in a way that promotes overall happiness and well-being.
- iii. **GNH Check-** The GNH check is purposed to empower communities to prioritize and design local development initiatives in alignment with GNH standards.
- iv. **GNH Index-** The GNH Index serves as an evaluative tool for policy outcomes, utilizing the nine domains

(psychological well-being, health, education, time use, cultural diversity and resilience, good governance, community vitality, ecological diversity and resilience, and living standards) which further unfold into 33 variables encompassing over 120 indicators. The comprehensive nature of the GNH Index guarantees that policy outcomes are evaluated in a manner that reflects the holistic integration of the nine domains.

These diverse GNH frameworks and mechanisms embody a distinctive array of policy tools that prioritize the numerous facets of GNH in the governance and policy formulation in Bhutan. The official establishment of GNH as a national strategy deeply rooted in its cultural heritage has resulted in the characterization of the Bhutanese state as a “GNH state”. The foundation of the four pillars and nine domains of GNH is explicitly grounded in Buddhist cultural principles. Fundamental values such as balance, harmony, sustainability, respect for all life forms, moderation, adaptability, and the interconnectedness of all sentient beings serve as the ethical groundwork on which the pillars and domains of GNH are built. These values intricately link Gross National Happiness to its cultural context, with Buddhist-inspired values significantly influencing the behavior of governance actors in policy implementation. Despite challenges such as variable applications of power, underutilization of GNH policy tools, and inconsistent understanding of GNH, policy outcomes have generally aligned with the intentions of GNH. (Schroeder)

The present king, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, has continued the legacy of his predecessor by consistently endorsing the GNH ideology. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan, which was enacted in 2008 under the reign of the present monarch, reflects a notably advanced and postmodern vision for the role of the State. It says- “The State shall strive to promote those conditions that will enable the pursuit of GNH.” And, “The Government shall protect and strengthen the sovereignty of the Kingdom, provide good governance, and ensure peace, security, well-being and happiness of the people.” (GNH Survey Report, 2015)

In the keynote speech delivered at the 15<sup>th</sup> UN Day of Vesak Celebration held at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU) in Ayutthaya, Thailand, on May 25, 2018, the Prime Minister of Bhutan, Tshering Tobgay, emphasized the significant influence of Vajrayana Buddhism on Bhutan's governance and human development. Tobgay highlighted the essential role played by Buddhist principles in shaping the societal structure of Bhutan. The Prime Minister stressed that the impact of Buddhism on governance and leadership in Bhutan is crucial for human development. Tobgay emphasized that Buddhist values have played a substantial role in the formulation of Bhutan's GNH framework, particularly in terms of maintaining ecological balance. He mentioned, "Buddhism has significantly influenced how our citizens perceive the environment and treat animals." Despite being a small nation, Bhutan is dedicated to conservation efforts and is acknowledged as a biodiversity hotspot.

Buddhist principles greatly influence many facets of Bhutanese culture and public policy. Compassion, mindfulness, and interdependence are social principles that are deeply ingrained in the community's everyday activities. An outstanding illustration of the evident representation of Buddhist ideas in administration is the GNH framework, which prioritizes well-being over economic success alone. This new paradigm for integrating ethical principles into public policy is based on a more comprehensive view of government that prioritizes the emotional and spiritual health of the people. Drawing upon an ancient tradition of Buddhist political theory while also incorporating modern, western political values and governance practices, Bhutan is actively propelling the tradition of Buddhist political theory towards a new direction. By restructuring the governance framework of the kingdom for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and elucidating the development philosophy of GNH, Bhutanese leaders, political theorists, and public servants are formulating a Buddhist theory of governance that combines elements of antiquity and contemporaneity, rooted in Buddhism yet influenced by Bhutan's interactions with the discourse and implementation of modern political liberalism.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Buddhist principles are firmly ingrained in the infrastructure of Bhutanese society and governance, directing the country in the direction of a path that leads to comprehensive growth and peaceful life. The maintenance of this synergy between Buddhist ideals and contemporary government will be essential in order to successfully navigate future problems while safeguarding the essence of Bhutan's identity as the country continues to undergo growth and development. There is a substantial and varied impact that Buddhist ideals have had on Bhutanese society as well as on the government of the nation. By incorporating Buddhist concepts into the national culture, Bhutan has built a model of development that places a premium on happiness, sustainability, and ethical governance. This goal was accomplished by adopting Buddhist ideals. This innovative approach provides essential insights into the ways in which spiritual and moral frameworks may aid in the establishment of contemporary governance and development paradigms, as well as boost the efficacy of these paradigms. From Bhutan's experience, which serves as an encouraging example, other nations that are striving to strike a balance between economic advancement, the well-being of their people, and the health may learn a great deal. Bhutan's experience serves as a model. The incorporation of moral and spiritual values into the process of governance may result in a society that is more compassionate, equitable, and sustainable.

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## Maritime Marvels: Exploring Seafering Narratives in the Indian Epics '*Ramayana*' and '*Mahabharata*'

Bhavna P. Gajera

### Abstract

This research paper investigates the portrayal of seafaring narratives within the Indian epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. It delves into the significance of maritime themes, particularly the depiction of ships and maritime activities, in these ancient texts. Through a meticulous examination of relevant passages and episodes from both epics, supplemented by insights from historical and archaeological sources, this paper aims to elucidate the roles of ships in facilitating trade, travel, and warfare in the ancient Indian context. Additionally, it explores the cultural, social, and symbolic dimensions of maritime narratives, shedding light on their broader significance within the literary and cultural landscape of ancient India. By analysing the portrayal of maritime marvels in the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of seafaring traditions and maritime heritage in Indian literature and history.

**Keywords:** Indian epics, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, seafaring narratives, ships, maritime activities, trade, travel, warfare, cultural significance.

## I

The Indian epics, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, stand as monumental works of literature, reflecting the cultural, social, and historical fabric of ancient India. Among the myriad themes woven into these epics, seafaring narratives hold a distinctive place, offering glimpses into the maritime traditions of the time. This research paper endeavours to delve into the portrayal of maritime marvels in the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, analysing the significance of ships and seafaring activities within the epic narratives. Through a comprehensive examination of relevant passages and episodes, alongside scholarly interpretations and historical evidence, this paper aims to unravel the roles played by ships in facilitating trade, exploration, and warfare in the ancient Indian context. Furthermore, it explores the symbolic and allegorical dimensions of maritime narratives, probing into their deeper meanings and cultural resonances. By contextualizing seafaring narratives within the broader socio-cultural milieu of ancient India, this research contributes to a nuanced understanding of maritime heritage and seafaring traditions in Indian literature and history. In *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, the great Indian epics, there are several passages, which indicate Indian shipbuilding activities.

## II



There are great differences in opinion on the date<sup>1</sup> and extent of various incidents narrated in *Ramayana* but it is

undisputable that the text reveals a great deal of information about the contemporary social, political, economic and religious life of the people. Among these mentions are also made of boats on various occasions in *Ramayana*. The systematic study of the various descriptions of boats in *Ramayana* provides very useful information to study and reconstruct the history of ancient Indian shipping.<sup>2</sup> Several types of boats and ships are mentioned in *Ramayana*. Vessels mentioned in *Ramayana* were, interestingly, river crafts. Ram also used boats to cross the rivers when in exile. Based on their description these crafts can be divided in various classes.

There are several references of boats in *Bal kand* and *Ayodhya kand* of the *Ramayana*. While going with Vishwamitra and during his exile Ram crossed river Ganga<sup>3</sup>, Shonabhadra<sup>4</sup>, Vedashruti<sup>5</sup>, Gomati<sup>6</sup>, Syandika<sup>7</sup>, and Yamuna<sup>8</sup>. Bharat also crossed river Ganga with his army at Sringeripura.<sup>9</sup> They used different types of boats to cross these rivers. Among these, five references are important for the study of ancient watercrafts.

ततः प्रभाते विमले कृताह्निकमरिन्दमौ ।  
विश्वामित्रं पुरस्कृत्य नद्यास्तीरमुपागतौ ॥ ११-२४

*Sarga 24 of Balakand*<sup>10</sup> mentions that the Rishis residing on the bank of river Ganga arranged a good boat for Ram and Laxmana at their arrival with sage Vishwamitra.<sup>11</sup>

ते च सर्वे महात्मानो मुनयः संश्रितव्रताः ।  
उपस्थाप्य शुभां नावं विश्वामित्रमथाब्रुवन् ॥ १२-२४

All three crossed the river Ganga, near the confluence of Saryu and Gand to reach the southern bank.<sup>12</sup> In this short incident no description or detail of the boat is given, except its good characters (*shubham navm*). From the reference it can be inferred that it could be a small canoe. These sages residing in the *ashramas* located on the banks of river Ganga might be using such small boats to cross the river. *Sarga 52 of Ayodhya kand*<sup>13</sup> informs that while Ram was going to forest in exile, with Laxman and Sita, at Sringeripur, Nishad king

Guh asked his minister to bring a boat with good qualities (*uttam*) for them.<sup>14</sup>

अस्य वाहनसम्युक्ताम् कर्णग्राहवतीम् शुभाम् ।  
सुप्रताराम् दृढाम् तीर्खे शीघ्रम् नावमुपाहर ॥ २६-४२

The boat and its navigators are better described here, Ram, Laxman and Sita crossed the river in a fast-speed boat, which was driven, by rowers (*mallah*) and steersman (*karngrah*). This boat of good characters (*shubham*) was strong built (*dridham*) and easy to row and steer (*suprataram*). It was propelled by oars (*vahana*) which were pulled by boatmen (*navikan*).<sup>15</sup>

In *sarga* 55 of *Ayodhya Kand*<sup>16</sup> the use of raft is mentioned. Ram and Laxman had to build a raft<sup>17</sup> to cross the river Yamuna. They used dried wood in the forest for preparing the raft. Not much detail of its construction is given but probably dried wooden logs would have been tied together with the help of creepers etc. The raft was covered with bamboo and *kusha* grass. It also had seats made of cane and *Jamun* tree wood. Ram, Laxman and Sita crossed the river on this raft.<sup>18</sup> It, probably, would have been propelled with the help of a long bamboo and the river might have not been very deep.

ततः प्लवेनांशुमतीम् शीघ्रगामूर्मिमालिनीम् ॥ २२२-५५-  
तीरजैर्बहुभिर्वृक्षैः सम्तेरुर्यमुनाम् नदीम् ।

The incident in *sarga* 84 of *Ayodhya kand* is particularly Important from naval point of view being one of the earliest references of use of boats for military purpose. When Nishad king Guh heard about arrival of Bharat with his army, he ordered Kevats to board on 500 boats to keep vigil and protect river Ganga, at Sringeripur.<sup>19</sup> Each of the 500 boats are said to be carrying 100 soldiers.

नावाम् शतानाम् पञ्चानाम् कैवर्तानाम् शतम् शतम् ।  
सम्पद्भानाम् तथा यूनाम् तिष्ठन्तु अत्यभ्यचोदयत् ॥ २८-८४

Exaggeration of number of boats and soldiers (500 boats with 100 soldiers each = 50,000 soldiers) is clear here but it

suggests to the large size and carrying capacity of boats. It also indicates to the large number of boatmen (*kevats*) at Srīngaverpur and also tells about various uses of the boats, including for military purpose.

The most detailed description of boats is found in *sarga* 89 of Ayodhya kand.<sup>20</sup> This long description throws important light on the types of boats, their size, carrying capacity and also their navigation. At Srīngaverpur, Guh the chief of Nishad's, ordered his men to collect 500 boats to enable Bharat to cross river Ganga, along with his army.<sup>21</sup>

ते तथा उक्ताः समुत्थाय त्वरिताः राज शासनात् ।  
पन्च नावाम् शतान्य् एव समानिन्युः समन्ततः ॥ २१०-८९-

Here it is clear that all these boats were not of same shape or sizes but of different types and dimensions. Bharata's army boarded these boats and rafts with cavalry, carts, animals etc. and crossed the river.<sup>22</sup> Guh himself called a boat called *Swastika* for the royal family members.<sup>23</sup>

अन्याः स्वस्तिक विज्ञेया महा घण्डा धरा वराः ।  
शोभमानाः पताकिन्यो युक्त वाताः सुसम्हताः ॥ २११-८९-

This description of boats gives important information about contemporary boat building and navigational activities. Careful analyses of these descriptions reveal useful technical information and facts about boat building during that period. Various names of boats like Nava<sup>24</sup>, Nau<sup>25</sup>, Plava<sup>26</sup>, Nauka<sup>27</sup> and Swastika<sup>28</sup> are used.<sup>29</sup>

ततः स्वस्तिक विज्ञेयाम् पाण्डु कम्बल सम्वृताम् ।  
सनन्दि घोषाम् कल्याणीम् गुहो नावम् उपाहरत् ॥ २१२-८९-

Based on the information given in *Ramayana* the boats can be classified in two broad groups *Plava* (Raft) and *Nauka* (Boat). *Nauka* can further be divided in two groups on the basis of their construction and use - *Samanya* (Ordinary) and *Vishesha* (Special). Ordinary boats may further be sub-divided according to their size and carrying capacity.

Word *Plava* is used in *Ramayana* for the rafts.<sup>30</sup> Ram, Laxman and Sita used *Plava* to cross the river Yamuna.

Bharat's army also used *Plava* to cross the river Ganga at Sringaverpura. *Plava* is also referred in the Rgveda.

नावः च आरुरुहुः तु अन्ये प्लवैः तेरुः तथा अपरे |  
अन्ये कुम्भ घटैः तेरुर् अन्ये तेरुः च बाहुभिः || २२०-८९-

Construction of the rafts was simple and tying dried wooden logs and bamboos together made them. Ram and Laxman also made a raft in the forest by themselves. This square or rectangular platform was covered with bamboo and *kusha* grass. It also had provision to sit. The rafts might have been propelled and steered with the help of a long bamboo or pole.

The term Nauka is probably used for both, dugouts and plank built boats. They are also called *Nava* or *Nau* at some places. All these terms are used in same sense. In *sarga* 52 of *Ayodhya kand*, *Nava*<sup>31</sup>, *Nau*<sup>32</sup> and *Nauka*<sup>33</sup> are used for boats in various verses.

These terms were used for ordinary boats of different sizes. Some of the boats were quite small but on the other hand some of them were of considerably large size. The boat used by Ram while crossing river Ganga with Laxman and Vishwamitra would have been a small canoe or dugout used by the sages living in the jungle. These sages living on the banks of river Ganga would have used it to cross the river. Its small size is also suggested by the description where there is no mention of any boatman to propel it. It suggests that the users themselves rowed these small canoes.

The boat used by Ram to cross the river Ganga at Sringaverpur can be kept in *Madhyam shreni*. It was a strong built (dridham) passenger boat of good characters with boatman (mallah) to propel and helmsman (*karnadhar*) to steer the boat. The boats used by Nishad's to protect the river Ganga and later by Bharat's army to cross the river can be kept in *Dirgha shreni*. These boats are said to be strong enough to carry 100 soldiers. Poetic exaggeration cannot be ruled out here but at the same time it indicates towards the large size of the boats. It is noteworthy that these boats were also used for military purpose. Use of the boats for protection in the river indicates their stability and strong construction. It also tells about the navigational skills of the Nishads.

Besides these *samanya* boats of different sizes, there were also some more boats, which were known by their specific names. These names were given because of their special construction and decorations. Such boats were very few and not much detail of these boats are available. Brief descriptions identify them simply as Royal boats or luxury boats.

One such boat bearing the *Swastika* was called *Swastika*.<sup>34</sup> It was fitted with bells and flags. The floor of the boat was covered with white carpets. They were rowed by trained boatmen (*mallah*) and steered by helmsman (*karnagrah*). Chiefs and royal personage used these boats for their journeys through river.<sup>35</sup>

अन्याः स्वस्तिक विज्ञेया महा घण्डा धरा वराः ।  
शोभमानाः पताकिन्यो युक्त वाताः सुसम्हताः ॥ २११-८९-

It is interesting to note that the boats are mentioned at several places in *Ramayana* but Tulsi Das mentions use of boat only at one place in the *Ramacharit Manasa*.<sup>36</sup>

पद कमल धोइ चढ़ाई नाव न नाथ उतराई चहों ।  
मोहि राम राउरि आन दसरथ सपथ सब साची कहों ॥  
बरु तीर मारहुँ लखनु पै जब लगि न पाय पखारिहों ।  
तब लगि न तुलसीदास नाथ कृपाल पारु उतारिहों ॥

Besides literature, boats in *Ramayana* were also popular theme for the artists who represented them in various kinds of arts in various medium. The scene of Ram crossing river Ganga with Laxman and Sita is the most popular and has been found depicted at several places.<sup>37</sup> These descriptions of boats, in various episodes and their specific characteristics also shed some light on the ancient boat building technology. Boats were carefully built and were strong (*dridham*) having good carrying capacity. They were well designed and therefore were able to cut the water efficiently and move fast (*ashuga*). Some of them were decorated with flags (*patakinya yukto*), which must have flown on the sternpost.

The users themselves rowed small canoes and dugouts but the bigger boats were rowed by the rowers (*dash, kaivarta, navika, vahah*). There were also helmsmen (*karnagrah*) to steer these boats. Since rudder was not used in ancient Indian

boats they might have been steered by the way of long steering oars. The shape, number and size of such steering oars are not mentioned in any description. The boats were made in such a fashion that they could have also been used for military purpose. It is difficult to believe that each boat would have carried 100 soldiers (*yunam*) but it indicates towards the large number of boatmen.

All the boats referred in *Ramayana* are river-going crafts. It is very important that there is no mention of sea going vessels in the *Ramayana*. Not only that all the crafts mentioned in *Ramayana* were rowed by oars (*vahan, sphya*) and none of them had mast or sails. Interestingly, there is no mention of a boat when Ram reaches the seashore and has to construct a bridge to cross the sea.

### III

The *Mahabharata* mentions ships and seafaring activities. These flood legends include fascinating geographical descriptions of seas, continents, and islands. The accounts of Digvijaya indicate a familiarity with numerous Indian ports as well as distant seas, lands, and peoples, though the geographical details are not very precise. Bhima departs from Tamaralipi and conquers several ports, which can be identified with ancient sites on both the east and west coasts of India. Similarly, Sahadeva, during his Digvijaya, reaches coastal sites and ports on the west coast. In another instance, Arjuna storms a prosperous town situated on the distant shore of a vast sea, filled with thousands of ships carrying immense wealth.

In the *Mahabharata* the accounts of the Râjasûya sacrifice and the Digvijaya of Arjuna and Nakula mention various countries outside India with which she had intercourse. There is a passage in its *Sabha Parva* which states how Sahadeva, the youngest brother of the five Pândavas, went to the several islands in the sea and conquered the Mlechchha inhabitants thereof.<sup>38</sup>

सागर द्वीपवासांश्च नृपतीन् म्लेच्छयोनिजान् ।६६।  
 निषादान् पुरुषादांश्च कर्णप्रावरणानपि ।  
 द्वीपं ताम्राह्यं चैव पर्वतं रामकं तथा॥६८॥  
 तिमिगिलं च स नृपं वशे कृत्वा महामतिः।

The well-known story of the churning of the ocean, in the *Mahabharata*, in the boldness of its conception is not without a significance. In the *Drona Parva* there is a passage alluding to shipwrecked sailors who “are safe if they get to an island.”<sup>39</sup>

भिन्ननौका यथाराजन द्वीपमासाद्य निर्वृताः ॥  
 भवन्ति पुरुषव्याध्र नाविकाः कालपर्यये ॥

In the same *Parva* there is another passage in which there is a reference to a “tempest-tossed and damaged vessel in a wide ocean.”

विष्वगिवाहता रूभा नौरिवासीन्महार्षे वे ।

In the *Karna Parva* we find the soldiers of the Kauravas bewildered like the merchants “whose ships have come to grief in the midst of the unfathomable deep.”<sup>40</sup>

निमज्जतस्तानथ कर्ण सागरे  
 विपन्ननावो वनिजो यथार्णवात् ।  
 उद्दधिरे नौभिरिवार्णं वाद्रयैः  
 सुकल्पिते द्रौपदीजाः स्वमातुलान्॥

There is another *sloka* in the same *Parva* which describes how the sons of Draupadi rescued their maternal uncles by supplying them with chariots, “as the shipwrecked merchants are rescued by means of boats.” In the *Santi Parva* the salvation attained by means of Karma and true knowledge is compared to the gain which a merchant derives from sea-borne trade.<sup>41</sup>

बनिक यथा समुद्राद्वैयथार्थम् लभते धनम्  
 तथा मत्स्यार्णं बेजन्तोः कर्मविज्ञानतो गतिः ॥

But the most interesting passage in the *Mahâbhârata* is that which refers to the escape of the Pandava brothers from the destruction planned for them in a ship that was secretly

and specially constructed for the purpose under orders of the kind-hearted Vidura.<sup>42</sup>

ततः प्रवासितो विद्वान् विदुरेण नरस्तदा।  
पार्थानां दर्शयामास मनोमारुतगामिनीम्॥  
सर्वव्यातसहां नावं यन्त्रयुक्ताम् पताकिनीम्।  
शिवे मागीरथीतीरे नरैर्विश्रन्तिभिः लक्ताम्॥

The ship was of a large size, provided with machinery and all kinds of weapons of war, and able to defy storms and waves.<sup>43</sup>

#### IV

This research paper has explored the rich maritime traditions encapsulated within the Indian epics, the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, revealing a sophisticated portrayal of seafaring activities and shipbuilding practices in ancient India. By examining key passages and episodes from these texts, supplemented by historical and archaeological insights, this study has illuminated the multifaceted roles ships played in facilitating trade, travel, and warfare.

The analysis of the *Ramayana* has shown how various types of boats and rafts were not only vital for transportation across rivers but also for military operations, as evidenced by the detailed descriptions of boats used by key figures like Rama, Laxmana, and Sita during their exile. Similarly, the *Mahabharata* offers a broader perspective on maritime activities, highlighting significant naval engagements and the strategic importance of sea routes and ports during the epic's era.

Moreover, this research has underscored the cultural and symbolic dimensions of maritime narratives in these epics. Ships and seafaring are not merely depicted as utilitarian tools but are imbued with deeper cultural significance, reflecting the ingenuity, resilience, and adventurous spirit of ancient Indian society. The depiction of maritime activities in these epics also serves as a testament to the advanced state of maritime technology and navigational skills possessed by the people of that era.

In conclusion, the portrayal of seafaring narratives in the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* provides valuable insights into the maritime heritage of ancient India. These epics, through their vivid descriptions of ships and nautical activities, reveal a society deeply engaged with its waterways, utilizing them for economic, military, and cultural purposes. The study of these narratives not only enriches our understanding of ancient Indian literature but also highlights the significant role of maritime practices in the historical and cultural development of the region. By integrating literary analysis with historical and archaeological evidence, this research contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the maritime traditions that shaped the ancient Indian world.

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# **Tobacco Prevalence Betwixt Unregulated Exposure and Tobacco Control Law Among Youths in Nagaland**

**P. Akumsenla Kichu and S.T. Akilan**

## **ABSTRACT**

The World Health Organization reported tobacco as a global epidemic, claims over 8 million lives annually, with 80% of these deaths occurring in low and middle-income countries. India is the home of 1.35 million tobacco related death annually, for which the Indian government has responded with various initiatives, becoming one of the first nations to sign the WHO FCTC and passing the COTPA in 2003. Additional laws like the Food Safety and Standards Regulation 2011 and Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act 2019 aim to reduce tobacco-related health hazards and promote public health, aligning with Article 47 of the Indian Constitution.

Despite these efforts, India remains the world's second-highest tobacco consumer, particularly notable in the Northeastern region. Nagaland, ranking 7th highest in tobacco consumption and

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experiencing high rates of cancer, including nasopharyngeal carcinoma cases. This paper aims to analyse the accessibility of tobacco products among young people and evaluate the efficiency and compliance of existing tobacco control laws, especially COTPA 2003. The study uses the GATS 2020 questionnaires as a research tool and the three highest rural populated villages from Kohima district were selected using purposive sampling technique as the study area. Snowball sampling method was used to select the respondents with the inclusion criteria of tobacco consumer during the data collection period and of aged between 15 to 24 as per UN definition of youth. The study emphasises the importance of proper monitoring and adherence to underlying provisions for laws and initiatives to be effective.

**Keywords:** Tobacco, Health hazards, Tobacco Laws, Young people, COTPA-2003.

## INTRODUCTION

Tracing back to the ground-breaking report on smoking and its health impact, on 11<sup>th</sup> January 1964, Surgeon General, the U.S. Public Health Service released smoking and its relations to lung cancer in both men and women and laryngeal cancer among men and chronic bronchitis, much research has been conducted to reduce the health impact as a result of tobacco (CDC. 2020). According to World Health Organization, the death caused as a result of smoking and other tobacco use has escalated from 3.5 million death to an estimation of about 10 million deaths by 2030 (WHO FCTC. 2009). The Framework Convention Alliance (2014) reported that tobacco use was one of the major causes of preventable death in the United States with approximately one in every five deaths, but since the 1964 report, there has been a shift, once the disease of the rich world is now shifted to the developing and poor nations. Today, tobacco use is considered a global epidemic with an annual death of 5.4 million people and 80% of that death was from the developing world (WHO MPOWER. 2008).

### Tobacco-related laws in India

India has initiated several laws to curb the spread of tobacco-related incidence. The Drug and Cosmetic Act 1940 aimed to regulate the manufacturing, importing, distribution

and sale of drugs and cosmetics through licensing (Singla. 2018). Drug and Cosmetic Act (Amendment) 1992, prohibited the use of tobacco as an ingredient in manufacturing dental products (Kaur & Jain. 2011). In the year 1975, the Cigarettes Act was introduced as a tobacco control legislation in India, which focuses on regulating the trading and commercialisation of tobacco products by monitoring the production, supply and distribution, yet the act failed to address the non-cigarette products like beedis, gutka, cigars etc. (Mehrotra, R. Mehrotra, V. Jandoo, T. 2010).

Prevention of Food Adulteration Act (Amendment) 1990, focuses on constitutional warnings of the harmful health effects of tobacco for paan masala and chewing tobacco products (Shaik. Doshi. Bandari. et.al. 2016). PFA control and focuses on food adulteration to protect the consumer and later The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare enacted the Food Safety and Standards Act in 2006 to monitor and ensure safe and wholesome consumption for people (FSSAI. 2006). Chapter XIV of the Indian Penal Code deals with offences disturbing public health, section 272 and 273 prohibit food or drink adulteration and punishment for failing to adhere (Pleaders. 2018). Cinematograph Act 1952, (Amendment 1991) 5B (2) appeals to the Central Board of Film Certification to ensure the viewers by not showing the scenes that encourage and glamorize the consumption of tobacco (CBFC, GoI). Cable Television Network (Amendment) Act 2000, barred tobacco advertising in state-controlled media, and publications including cable television (Thakore. Chavda. et.al. 2020).

The ineffectiveness of existing efforts and traditional public health approaches were futile to curb the global tobacco epidemic and tackling the alarming increase in tobacco-related death on a global scale (WHO, FCTC. 2009), the World Health Organization initiated a global public health treaty called Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) in the year 2003 on which India, being the second-highest tobacco consumer and third-largest producer was one of the first signatories in the convention. The government of India have taken several initiatives to control

the effects of tobacco, making it one of the first nation to be the signatories to the WHO, FCTC (Goel, Sardana. Et.al. 2019).

As a response to the WHO FCTC, the parliament passed the Cigarette and Other Tobacco Product Act in 2003 (Goyal, Mathur. et.al. 2016). During the 11<sup>th</sup> Five Years Plan in the year 2007-08, National Tobacco Control Programme was launched to ensure the efficiency of COTPA implementation which will function through three-tiered structures i.e., central level, National Tobacco Cell, at the state level State Tobacco Control Cell and district level District Tobacco Control Cell (CHI, NHP, MoHFW, GoI). As per the constitution of India, Article 21 protects life, without deprivation and personal liberty and Article 47 affirms the state involvement in maintaining public health, Article 304 (b) also provides power to the Union to levy reasonable restrictions on trade and commerce with or within the state (Choudhary. 2015). In the year 2019, the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act was implemented to ban the trade, production, storage, transport and advertisement of any form of electronic nicotine delivery system (PEC. 2019).

### **Socio-economic menace of tobacco uses in India**

Despite all aged old processes of implementing laws and acts to tickle the tobacco-related problem, India is still one of the highest tobacco consuming nation, World Health Organization have reported that in India 267 million adults aged 15 and above i.e., 29% of adults consume tobacco. In 2017-18 according to WHO estimation, the economic cost of treating tobacco-related disease among 35 years and above was INR 177 341 crores i.e., 27.5 billion USD and nearly 1.35 million deaths annually. In 2021 WHO reported that the direct medical cost for tobacco-related treatment was INR 37 344 crores i.e., USD 5.8 billion, non-medical cost INR 1364 corers i.e., USD 211 million and household income cost for hospitalization was INR 6 181 corers i.e., USD 957 million along with billions of premature deaths attributing to tobacco-related diseases.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

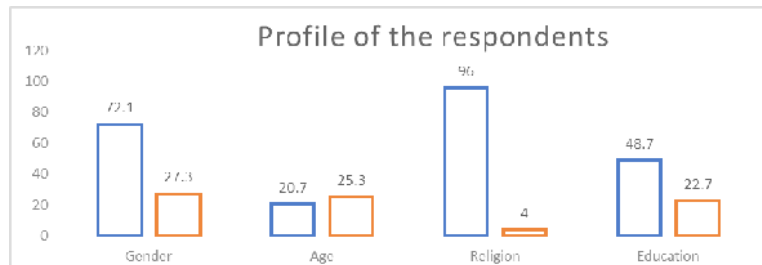
**Methods:** The study used the Global Adult Tobacco Survey 2020 questions focusing on the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA) 2003 as it was enacted as a comprehensive tobacco control law compared to other tobacco-related laws. The three highest rural populated villages i.e., Tesophenyu, Kidima and Viswema villages were selected from Kohima district as the study area and the purposive sampling technique was used in selecting them. The respondents for the study consist of 150 young people i.e., 15-24 years as defined by United Nations which was selected using the snowball sampling technique and the study included only those tobacco users and non-tobacco users were excluded even though they were on the same age group.

### *Objectives:*

- ♦ To analyze unregulated tobacco exposure among young people in Nagaland.
- ♦ To evaluate the efficiency and compliance of the existing tobacco control law, particularly the COTPA 2003 and awareness of tobacco cessation measures.

## FINDINGS

**Profile of the respondent:** From the total sample (n= 150), it was observed that 72.7 per cent were male and 27.3 per cent were female and 20.7 per cent of the respondents were 15-17 years, 25.3 per cent were 18-20 years and 54 per cent were 21-24 years. The vast majority of the respondents i.e., 96 per cent were Christian whereas 4 per cent was belonging to other religions like Hindu, Muslim and others. The distribution of respondents based on their educational qualification found that 48.7 per cent were above their UG, 22.7 per cent were doing their higher secondary and 28.7 were below high school (Fig. 1).

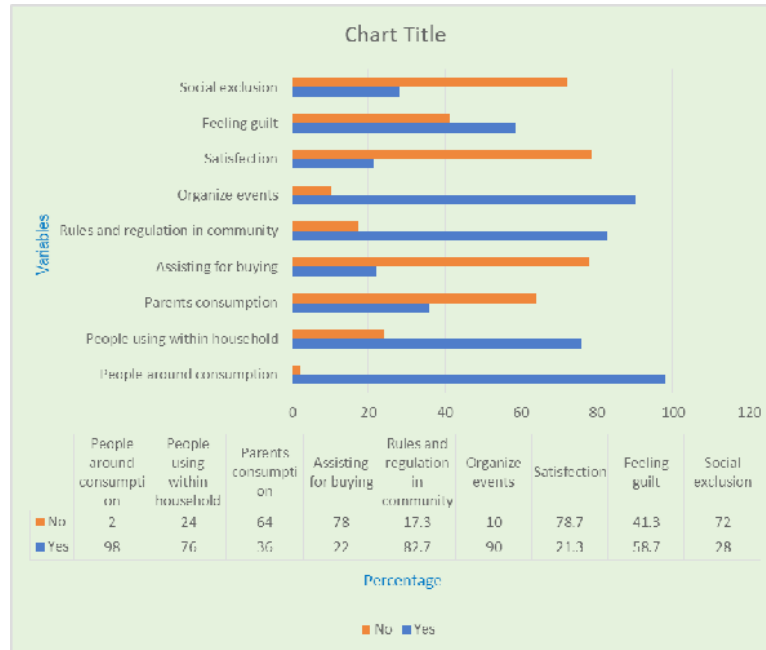
**Fig. 1: Gender, age, religion and education spectrum of the respondents**

**Source:** Computed from primary data

### **Exposure to tobacco products among young people in Nagaland**

The study found that young people are exposed to tobacco use even within their households. It is found that the vast majority i.e., 98 per cent of the respondents were surrounded by tobacco consumers and 76 per cent of them were exposed within their household. 36 per cent of the respondents' parents were tobacco consumers of which 22 per cent of them were assisted by their parents to buy tobacco products for their consumption.

It was also found that 82.7 per cent of the respondents agree that there are tobacco-related rules and regulation in their community and 90 per cent agrees that the community organises tobacco-related events yet only 21.3 per cent of them were satisfied by the community's initiation and effort to tackle tobacco problems. More than half i.e., 58.7 per cent of the respondents were consuming tobacco with guilt feeling yet addiction is difficult to overcome and only 28 per cent of the respondents feel socially excluded for tobacco consumption and the remaining 72 per cent do not feel the exclusion which shows the societal acceptance of tobacco consumption (Figure 2).

**Figure 2: Exposure to tobacco products among young people in Nagaland**

Source: Compute from primary data

### Efficiency and compliance with COTPA 2003 and awareness of tobacco cessation measures

The study shows that there is a positive significant association ( $p < 0.05$ ) between the two variables i.e., awareness of COTPA 2003 and awareness of its provisions of the study ( $n = 150$ ) showing  $r = .832$  and  $p = .000$  and thus, increase in one variable will increase the other or vice versa (Table 3.1)

**Table 1: Awareness of COTPA 2003 and its provisions**

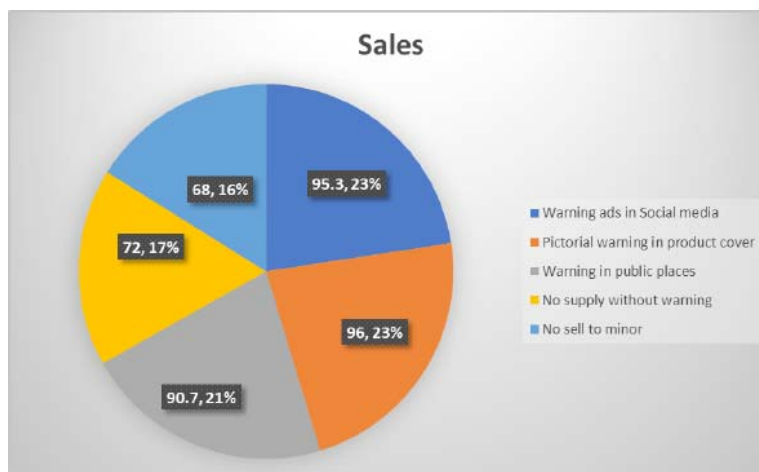
		Aware of COTPA provisions
COTPA aware	Pearson correlation	.832**
	Sig.	.000
	N	150

*Note:* Level of significance:  $p < 0.05$  was considered statistically significant

Source: Compute from primary data

**Compliance with COTPA 2003:** The study found that compliances with COTPA 2003 were high with 95.3 per cent of the respondents seeing tobacco warning ads on social media, 96 per cent seeing pictorial warnings on tobacco product covers and 90.7 per cent seeing tobacco warnings in public places. It was also found that 72 per cent of the respondents were aware that no supply and distribution should be undertaken without a warning and 68 per cent of them were aware that no tobacco product should be sold to minors (Figure 3.1).

**Figure 3: Compliances with COTPA 2003**

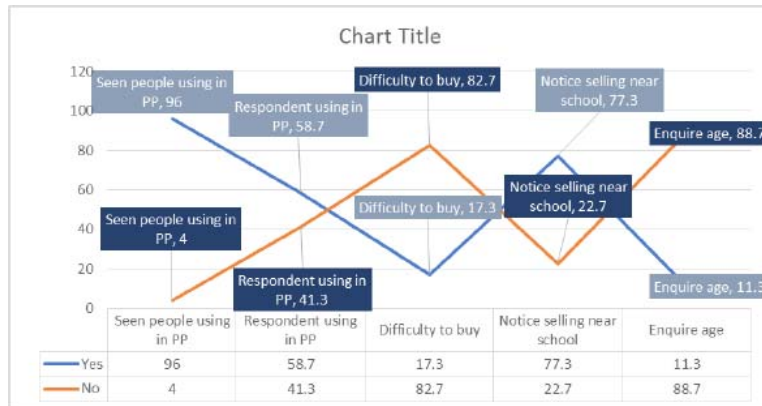


Source: Compute from primary data

From the about it has been seen that there is a constructive result relating to compliances, yet it is important to understand the effectiveness of those compliances and it has been found that 96 per cent of the respondents have seen tobacco use in public places and also 58.7 per cent of them were also using it in public places. It was also found that only 17.3 per cent were finding difficulty to buy tobacco products whereas 82.7 per cent can easily buy tobacco. 77.3 per cent of the respondents have noticed selling tobacco products

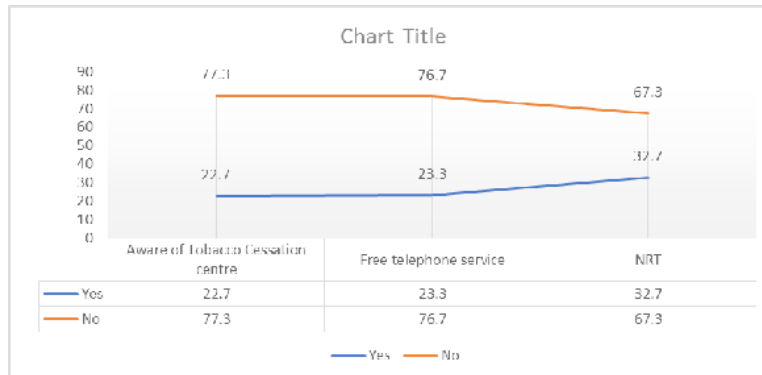
near the educational institutions and only 11.3 per cent agree that the shopkeeper enquires about age before selling the products but 88.7 respondents that their age is not enquired before selling the products (Figure 3).

Figure 4: Efficiency of COTPA 2003



Source: Compute from primary data

Figure 5: Awareness of tobacco cessation measures



Source: Compute from primary data

The above Figure 5 illustrates the awareness of tobacco cessation measures, it was found that out of the total sample (n = 150), the vast majority of the respondents were unaware

of the cessation measures provided under the COTPA- 2003. It was found that 77.3 per cent were unaware of Tobacco Cessation Centre, 76.7 were unaware of Free telephone services and 67.3 per cent were unaware of NRTs. COTPA intend to make cessation facilities feasible, but the data shows that there is negligence in implementing and making people aware of its provisions.

### **DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS**

The study area i.e., Nagaland is a Christian dominant state and has a high literacy rate with 87.93 per cent and 79.55 per cent simultaneously according to the 2011 Indian census and the current study also have found that 96 per cent were Christian and 48.7 per cent of the respondents were pursuing their UG and above degrees and all of them have formal education, but the schools fail to impart students about the hazards of tobacco use (Sinha, Gupta & Pednekar. 2003). Young people think that nothing can hurt them, but the matter of fact is that many tobacco-related problems are visible only in their middle age (CDC. n.d.). Understanding the vulnerability of the young people, educational institutions can impose tobacco-free policies as exposure during this period of development will prolong the rest of their life (Morung Express. 2019).

### **Exposure to tobacco products among young people in Nagaland**

A study conducted in Northeast India found that between youth tobacco users and non-users, parental tobacco consumption was reported to have a relation with youth tobacco use (Sinha, Gupta & Pednekar. 2003). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have stated that young people are more likely to use tobacco products if their parents are using tobacco (CDS. n.d.). Parents and child communication about tobacco is multidimensional and the content and timing of communication are important considering the effect on young people's behaviour (Ennett, Bauman, et.al. 2021).

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, young people are more likely to use tobacco if they see their age people and parents using the products. The current study also found that 98 per cent of respondents were surrounded by tobacco consumers and 76 per cent were exposed within the household. The current study also found that 36 per cent of parents consume and 22 per cent of parents assist. The Lancet (2019), reported that safeguarding and responsible parenting practices emphasized the necessity of curbing tobacco use among youths.

The present study found that 82.7 per cent of the respondents agree that there are rules and regulations related to tobacco in their community, 90 per cent agree community organize events, but only 21.3 per cent were satisfied with the community effort. At this juncture, laying down rules and regulations and organizing events is not sufficient to curb the problem. The Lancet (2019) stated that community strategies facilitate tobacco use among youth and thus, effort needs to be made sagaciously from the community level. The Lancet (2021) prohibition of tobacco in school institutions will shift to using at other places and time, increase in price will only affect the monetary income rather than declining in consumption and denying permission to buy will let them involve in other social networks to ensure access, thus accessing their opinion, experience and responses should be assessed in the measures to curb the problem.

The study also found that 58.7 feel guilt and 72 per cent do not feel socially excluded. Social norms also play an important factor in influencing young people like causally using in public places (CDS. 2012). Local authorities need to be guided by experience and knowledge, cognizant and be contextually informed to implement strategies and measures to tackle the problem (The Lancet. 2019). Efforts should be made to make tobacco less visible to young people and make them aware that it is not a norm to use tobacco (2012).

#### **Efficiency and compliance with COTPA 2003 and awareness of tobacco cessation measures**

There is a positive significant relationship between awareness of COTPA 2003 and awareness of its provisions.

Displaying a pictogram creates an emotional impact and it is also a cost-efficient measure for the government in creating awareness as the tobacco industry pays for the printing cost (Jain. 2012). It has been found that 95.3 per cent of respondents have seen tobacco warning ads on social media, 96 per cent pictorial warnings on product covers, 90.7 per cent in public places and 72 per cent were aware of no supply without warning and 68 per cent were aware of no selling to a minor. From the data, it has been observed that there is compliance with COTPA sections 4 (prohibit using in public places), section 5 (prohibit both direct and indirect supply without warnings), sections 6 prohibit the sale to minor and near educational institutes and section 7, 8 and 9 (health warning on product covers) by displaying signage boards in public places selling pictorial warnings on the cover and making people aware about no supply without warning and no sell to minors. Nevertheless, a study conducted in Educational Institutions in Noida found out that there is a difference between government and private schools in compliance with signage display and selling near the institutions and thus further emphasis is in need (Sayeed, Labani and Asthana. 2017). A study in schools in Dakshina Kannada District, Karnataka found that compliance with the law depends on the location (Mathias, Jena, et.al. 2019). Thus, though the present study from three villages in Kohima districts provides high compliance, an in-depth and comparative study can provide a better understanding.

A study conducted in the Alwar district in Rajasthan has also found that there are compliances in displaying signage yet proper enforcement of law can play a major role in banning tobacco use in public places (Jain, Chauhan and Singh. 2016). With regard to compliance, the data from the current study shows a significant result, but with regard to efficiency, it was found that almost all the respondents i.e., 96 per cent have seen people using tobacco in a public place and 58.7 per cent of them also use it in public places. Absolute compliance can never be imposed, it needs to be a mindful decision by a responsible citizen (Singha. 2009). This shows that fulfilling the compliances by displaying signage is not

enough to curb the problem. A study in Bangalore city recommended that implementation of the act should be checked across the country and a fool-proof approach to overcome the drawback should be verbalized and along with sensitization, larger public awareness about secondhand should also be created for effective law enforcement (Habbu & Krishnappa. 2015).

Under the initiative of the government, proper implementation is in need, after years of enactment of COTPA, it is effective only to some degree (Ali, Patthi, Singla. 2020). Habbu and Krishnappa (2015) have also stated that COTPA has been comprehensively drafted but the implementation is only to a certain level and to achieve full-fledged implementation of the act, leading from the ministry level to the state level needs to coordinate. The current study found that 82.7 per cent can easily buy tobacco products, 77.3 per cent have seen selling near educational institutions and only 11.3 per cent of them were enquired their age by the shopkeepers before selling. There is in need of assessing the shops and strengthen the enforced law at the school level (Mathias, Jena, et.al. 2019).

Regular reinforcement of policies and measures are needed to reduce the sale and use of tobacco by minors, educational institutions, local bodies, district health authorities etc. can play as stakeholders in implementing tobacco control policies, particularly among the minors (Sayeed, Labani and Asthana. 2017). It was also found in the current study that the majority of the respondents were unaware of cessation facilities provided under the COTPA-2003 which shows inadequate implementation of the act.

## **CONCLUSION**

The tobacco menace in Nagaland is palpable, and efforts from every aspect are prerequisites at this juncture. The current study shows that young people's exposure to tobacco is high in the study area, starting from their acquaintance in their household to their society at large has the tolerance of tobacco use. When a habit is accepted as normal behaviour, it is difficult to eradicate it. Globally and in the Indian context government is initiating measures and implementing rules

related to tobacco but it remains futile until the same effort is made at the micro-level.

Under the umbrella of the WHO initiative to curb the tobacco-related problem, the Indian Government have drafted comprehensively the COTPA- 2003 after several acts and laws prior to this. The present study observed that there is a huge gap between the compliance and the effectivity implementation of the act. Displaying signage and sensitization, an effort needs to be made in creating larger public awareness not only about the active users but also the secondhand users in such a way that individuals voluntarily comply with the regulations (Habbu & Krishnappa. 2015).

Exacerbating the situation, the current study shows that the provisions of tobacco cessation facilities is not been made aware to the vast majority and thus, though young people want to quit the habit of tobacco use, they were left unattended. Many studies found that the act is implemented only to a certain level and in order to achieve its maximum potentiality, enforcement should be made feasible by sensitizing the cessation provisions too. Times of India (2009) reported that checking or seizure of tobacco products among the vendors and tobacco distributors needs to be taken seriously and they should also be made aware of the tobacco hazards. Ignorance from the community level will hinder the implementation, commitment from parents, leaders, teachers, and government officials can ensure a long-term constructive result in implementing the law.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Exposure to tobacco products among young people in Nagaland**

- ♦ Efforts should be made starting from the family and community at large to minimize young people's exposure to tobacco.
- ♦ Parents should be aware of the impact of their addiction behaviour on their children.
- ♦ Community needs to actively participate in strengthening and adhering the existing rules and regulation.

**Efficiency and compliance with COTPA 2003 and awareness of tobacco cessation measures**

- ♦ Stakeholders should focus on the effectivity/ quality of the act rather than the quantity of its work. The data shows that as high as its effort in spreading awareness, the violation equals. Focus on effectiveness rather than compliances.
- ♦ The act needs to be modified according to the community as India as a nation is vary from community to community thus applicability in some places may not be suited for other.
- ♦ The act have to be constantly monitored and violation of its provisions has to be strongly condemned and impost strict action against them.

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