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2017

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- Birinder Pal Singh** *Mapping Identities: Tradition and Change in North West India*
- Kirtpreet Kaur** *Social Construction of Femininity in Punjabi Literature*
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Department of Sociology
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Editor

Gurpreet Bal



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EMERGING CHALLENGES OF FAMILY IN INDIA

J. P. Singh

ABSTRACT

There has been significant rise in the level of education, degree of urbanization, per capita income, expectancy of life at birth, diversification in occupation and profession, opening of new means of livelihood, and modernization during the period following India's Independence. At the same time there has also been marked increase in the incidence of separation and divorce, conflict between parents and sons and also between siblings, dowry, freedom of marital choice, dissolution of joint or extended family, child labour and prostitution in cities and decline in intergenerational solidarity within the family in this country. With further industrial development and rural to urban migration, nuclearization of families and rise in the divorce rate and the proportion of single member household are likely to enlarge steadily on the line of the industrial West. All these problems have been brought to a focus here using the secondary data from various sources, as they need to be addressed both by people themselves and the state as well.

Introduction

The Indian society is characterized by considerable cultural contrasts at regional or sub-regional level and also at the caste and community levels within the same region. Since India is a vast country with long chequered history, there has always been plurality of family types with varied local problems. However, it should not deter us from considering the subject at the macro level recognizing the fact full well that— it is hazardous to offer a generalized view of the nature and problems of the Indian family. Evidence abounds that there has been substantial rise in the level of both male and female education, degree of urbanization, per capita income, expectancy of life at birth, diversification in occupation and profession, opening of new means of livelihood, modernization and population redistribution during the last five-six decades. At the same time there has also been simultaneously marked rise in the incidence of separation and divorce, conflict between parents and sons and also between siblings, dowry, freedom of marital choice, dissolution of joint or extended family, child labour and prostitution in cities and decline in intergenerational solidarity within the family. Continuing massive poverty, illiteracy, bad governance of state and rapid rise in the total

population are possibly the most potential contributors to persistence and intensification of problems of family in varying forms and degrees.

For long the Indian society was characterized by preponderance of joint and extended family, but the nuclear family, same as elsewhere, is now the predominant feature of the Indian society. According to the Census of India (2001) reports, of all the households nuclear family constitutes 70 percent and single member or more than one member households without spouse (or eroded families) 11 percent. The extended and joint family or households together claim merely 20 percent of all households. This is the overall picture about the entire country, whereas in the case of urban areas the proportion of nuclear family is somewhat higher still. The available data from the National Family and Health Survey-1 of 1992-93 (henceforth NFHS) suggest that joint family does not make up more than five percent of all families in urban areas (Singh, 2004:137). With further industrial development and rural to urban migration, nuclearisation of families and rise in the divorce rate and the proportion of single member household are likely to increase steadily on the line of the industrial West. The transition of family from joint or extended type to nuclear type has led to waning of some old problems and emergence of new ones. Now let us briefly dwell on the major problems that the contemporary Indian family is confronting. For obvious reasons, the problems of modern family are largely different from the traditional family system of joint or extended type.

Child Marriage and Polygamy

Marriage, especially among Hindus, has been a universal institution propped by the system of religious belief. It is viewed as a sacrament, and not as a contract. Besides being universal it is also an inevitable institution. Hindu marriage is a life-long commitment of one wife and one husband, and is the strongest social bond that takes place between a man and a woman. The matter of concern is not that the universality or inevitability of the intuition has got religious overtone, but the practice of pre-puberty marriage has been coming through the ages. It is indeed an archetypal institution of India. The young girls lived with their parents only till they reached puberty. Early marriage led to the problem of high fertility and also early widowhood because of high incidence of death rate. True, child marriages have been prevalent in many cultures throughout the human history, but they have gradually diminished with the rise in the level of urbanization, spread of secular education and modernization. Both the British Government and the subsequent Governments of free India have taken several legislative measures to eliminate the practice which was potentially detrimental to the life and health of a girl child, yet the child marriages are still widely practised in different parts of the country (Singh, 2014: 289-304).

According to the 2001 Census of India, out of 593 districts in the country there are 190 districts where the singulate mean age at marriage of females is less than 18 years, which is legally the lowest prescribed age at marriage for females in India. Of all the marriages child marriage accounted for 6.5 percent in urban areas and 21 percent in rural areas at the 2001 Census. While the median age at marriage for both Hindus and Muslims is 16.7 years which is lower than all other communities by two-three years (NFHS-3, 2005-06: 165). The National Family Health Survey-3 (2005-06: 165) has also recorded that “more than one quarter (27 percent) of the Indian women age 20-49 married before age 15; over half (58 percent) married before the legal minimum marriage age of 18, and three quarters (74 percent) married before reaching the age 20.” The persistence of child marriages implies that laws prohibiting such marriages are not so effective. The state machinery is not so efficient or successful in tackling such a serious social evil through legislative means. The law provides certain positive initiatives for the intervention of courts to prevent child marriages through stay orders. According to the ‘National Plan of Action for Children 2005’ (published by the Department of Women and Child Development, Government of India), a goal has been set to eliminate child marriage completely by 2010. A new law banning child marriage was passed in December, 2006. It is hard to speculate for sure as to what extent such a piece of legislation would be really effective in tackling the problem of child marriage. Traditions do not die so soon, especially in a society where illiteracy is quite widespread. Since more than one third of the total population of India is still illiterate, the chances of elimination of child marriage seem to be remote.

The most potent reason behind the perpetuation of child marriage is the fact that virginity is considered to be the most essential consideration for marriage. In conservative Hindu societies, any form of premarital sexual intercourse is still frowned upon and is considered an act destined to bring great dishonour and disrespect to the family. It is practically impossible for a known non-virgin girl to find a partner from a traditional family, though there is no legal statute that explicitly requires virginity as a requirement for marriage. Hindus, especially of rural India, still strongly believe in the practice of endogamous marriages arranged by parents and other close kinsmen.

In addition to the practice of child marriages, polygamy— polygyny in particular— has also been one of salient features of the Indian society. The polygamous males often derive support from age-old scriptures and mythological stories. Those who have no son from the first wife tend to practise such marriages. The preference for son has been so strong because in a patrilineal society the son alone can continue the line of the family. Adopted son

is no substitute. But the practice of polygamy, especially among Hindus, is on gradual disappearance with some exception of scheduled castes. Singh (1997: 7) has reported that out of 471 '265 of the scheduled castes (35.2 percent) allow polygyny'. It does not, however, mean that all of them essentially practise polygyny. Under the Hindu Marriage and Divorce Act, 1955 and its further amendment in 1976 polygamy has been declared void in law. The scheduled tribes are somewhat different from others with respect to polygamous marriages. While monogamy is the predominant form of marriage among them, there are a large number of tribes practising sororal polygyny and non-sororal polygyny (Singh 1997: 8). Currently polygyny is more frequent among Muslims than Hindus. Under the Muslim personal laws a male can have three living wives at a time. With the rise in the level of literacy the incidence of polygyny is, however, on decline even among the Muslims. This trend is likely to persist in future.

Dowry and its Dragnets

Dowry has become the most essential consideration for marriage of girls in recent years.¹ Initially it was prevalent in North India only, but in course of time it has gained social legitimacy all over the country cutting across boundaries of caste, community and region. Dowry has become such an essential consideration for marriage that rarely any marriage can take place without it. It may be regarded as a functional imperative for family formation in contemporary India. In a very rare case the demand for dowry is really eschewed. Marriage negotiations tend to break down if there is no consensus between the bride's and bridegroom's families regarding the mode or amount of payment of dowry.

The menace of dowry has become so severe over the years that the Government of India had to enact the Dowry Prohibition Act in 1961, which was further amended in 1986 to make the laws more stringent. The Dowry Prohibition Act applies not merely to Hindus but to all communities like— Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and others. Giving, taking and demanding dowry is a criminal offence under the Dowry Protection Act as well as the Indian Penal Code. Where any person is prosecuted for taking or abetting the taking of any dowry or the demanding of dowry, the burden of proving that he has not committed an offence shall rest on him. The giving, taking or even abetting to give or take dowry amounts to an offence punishable with imprisonment for not less than 5 years and with fine which shall not be less than Rs.15,000/- or the amount of value of the dowry, which even is more. Despite such stringent laws dowry is being increasingly practised throughout the country. It has assumed such an alarming proportion that the number of cases of bride-burning and bride-torture, both mental and physical, in law courts is rising, and the media are agog with ever-increasing

number of such instances. Dowry has posed the most potent economic threat before the Indian family. The incidence of crime and corruption in public gets encouragement from the practice of dowry. Dowries often force parents to go into debt, and the amount that families must pay has been increasing over the years.

When the dowry amount is not considered sufficient or the expected demands are not easily met, the bride is often harassed, abused and tortured. The discontented husband takes recourse to violence to show his displeasure with the marriage in order to extract additional transfers from the wife's family by threatening her with separation if new demands are not complied with. The woman, as a bride, is subjected to humiliation and brutal behaviour, because she is the softest and the surest means of extracting maximum amount of money or wealth from her parents to enhance one's economic position in society. Since the bride is helpless in her new home and physically so powerless that she cannot retaliate against the coercive tactics or actions of others (Singh 2005: 212-213).

The disturbing fact about dowry related violence is that it is not confined to any particular group, social stratum, geographical region or even religion. Rather, it is regarded as a universal phenomenon, cutting across all sorts of socio-cultural and geographical boundaries. The most disturbing aspect of it is that it is on continuous rise in the country. It has been often reported that like clockwork every 12th hour a dowry related death claimed to have taken the lives of over 20,000 women across the country between 1990 and 1993. It has also been reported that at least three girls are burnt for dowry related demands every day in the State of Karnataka. This may be taken as a matter of grave concern, since the incidence of dowry death is one of the typical problems of the Indian society (Singh, 2005: 199-220). It is not a matter of surprise that those who have got sons or greater number of sons than daughters tend to have developed vested interests in the perpetuation of such a harmful practice.

Dissolution of Marriage and Remarriage of Divorced and Widowed

The dissolution of marriage has been quite uncommon and rare in India for a long time. Divorce rates in India are among the world's lowest— only around one marriage in 100 fails, compared to every second marriage in the U.S.A. In case of any crisis or threat to stability of marriage, caste, community, kinsmen, tended to have played a dominant say. Despite all these there has been a significant change in the views and attitude towards sanctity of marriage in the recent past, especially in cities. Marriage is no longer held to be a 'divine match' or a 'sacred union'. Now it is more like a transfer of a female from one family to another, or from one kinship group to another. The marriage is no longer sanctified as it was believed to be in the past, and is viewed only as a bonding and nurturing life-long relationship and friendship (Singh 2016: 24-44). Anyway, Indian marriages are still largely resilient and lasting, whereas in many developed countries they seem to break up for seemingly trivial reasons. Only one out of 100 marriages ends up in divorce here. These days divorce rates in urban India are, however, slowly mounting. Rising individualism, resulting from modern industrial development, causes break-down in the traditional institutions of marriage and family.

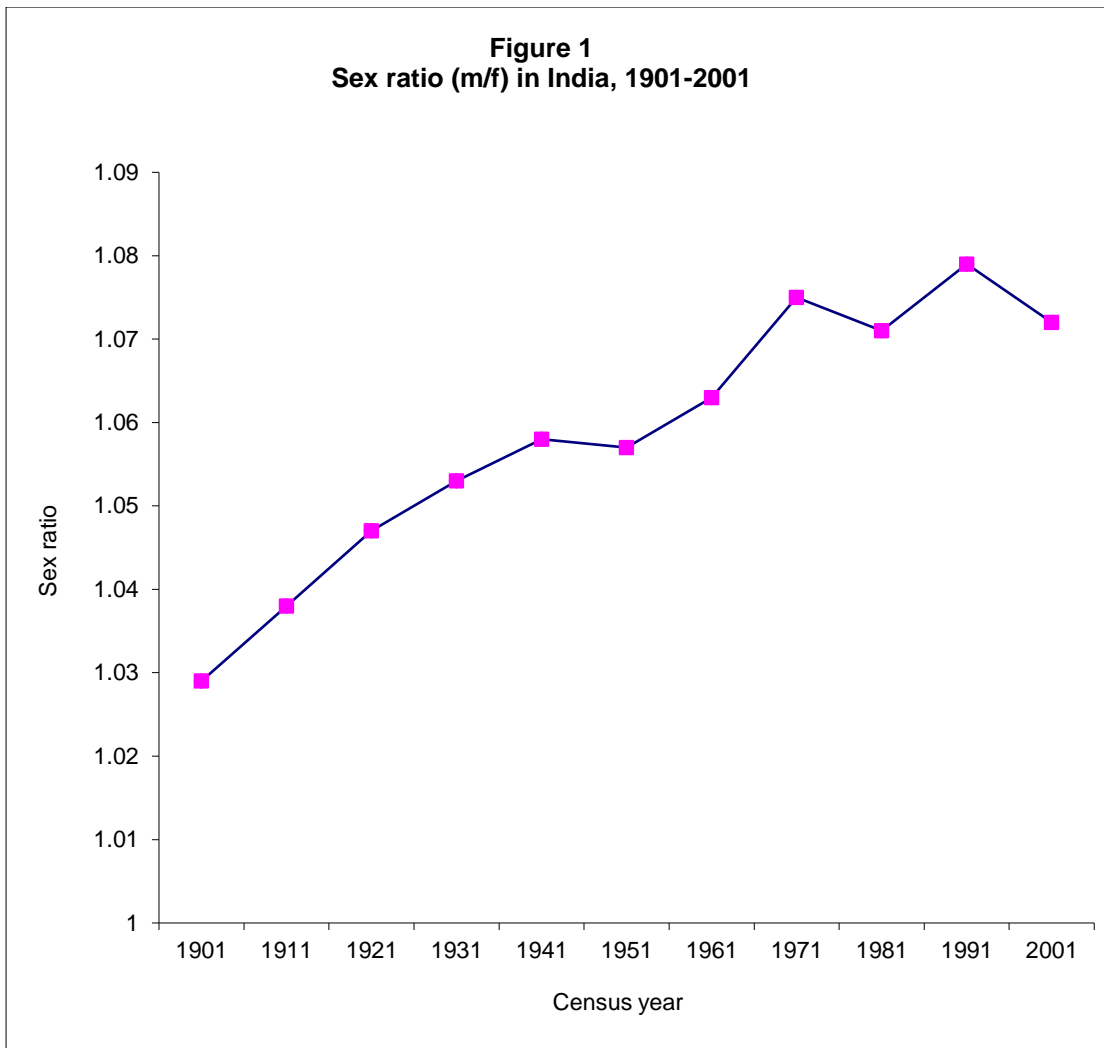
The Indian family is faced with a new kind of social and psychological constraints. The women, however, tend to be more concerned about their marriage than men and in case of a problem they are expected to go for counselling. They are expected to take the lead to resolve conflicts and when they give up the effort, the marriage is generally all over. Let me quote my own observation made elsewhere in some other context, "Remarriage of divorced or separated women are quite difficult. Morality relating to sex is so highly valued that every male wants to marry a virgin girl only. In the past Hindus demanded pre-nuptial chastity on the part of both, but now it is by and large limited to female only. In fact, both boys and girls try to know secretly about each other's pre-marital sex life. Virginity is regarded as the girls' greatest virtue and symbol of respectability. To the surprise of many, a married woman is described as a 'second-hand-stuff'— an expression covertly pejorative of women. Under the circumstances remarriage of women is so difficult that annulment of marriage is a very hard choice or option" (Singh 2016: 40).

For long Hindus believed that widows once married were incapable of contracting a second valid marriage, and the offspring of such widows by any second marriage were held to be illegitimate and incapable of inheriting property. The Government of India legalised and encouraged through legislative measures like the Widow Remarriage Act, yet the problem of young widows in India has not vanished. Currently widows account for nine per cent of the

female population and only 40 per cent of them are over 50 years of age. This suggests that despite laws 60 per cent of widows do not contract second marriage for one reason or the other. Dreze (1990) has contended that the overall incidence of widow remarriage is as low as 1 in 5 or 6. Chen (2000) has reported that only few widows remarry in India. Within her sample of 562 widows, she has argued that the widow remarriage rate is about nine per cent. The Census data, however, have revealed that widow remarriage rate has been on the gradual rise, especially in towns and cities. Anyway, the problem of remarriage of widows continues to be serious one. When women are not treated as equal to men, such a marital pattern is not really unusual.

Son Preference and Female Foeticide

The sex ratio of India's population, unlike most societies in the world, has been appreciably tilted in favour of males since long, which is clearly apparent from the available Census data from 1871-72 onward. Census data have revealed that there had been a continual rise in the masculinity ratios for the whole of the twentieth century with some minor fluctuations (see Figure-1). Recognizing the fact that sex ratio is one of the important indicators of equity between sexes in society, low status of women, as reflected in poor care for female children and sex selective abortion, female infanticide and higher incidence of female mortality (Miller, 1981; Singh, 2010). The fact is hardly disputed that unfavourable masculinity ratios are due to excessive female mortality during pregnancy, infancy and childhood and maternity. The women in Hindu culture have been placed at a very high pedestal in traditional scriptures, but in practice they seem to be quite marginalized in a real life situation. The recent National Family Health Survey-3 (2005-2006: 183) has recorded a higher rate of mortality for females (58) than males (56). Female children are often said to be subjected to discriminatory practices in matters of preventive and curative health care, more particularly in economically weaker sections of society. Such discrimination has led to an unexpectedly higher rate of mortality of female infants and children in major parts of the country.

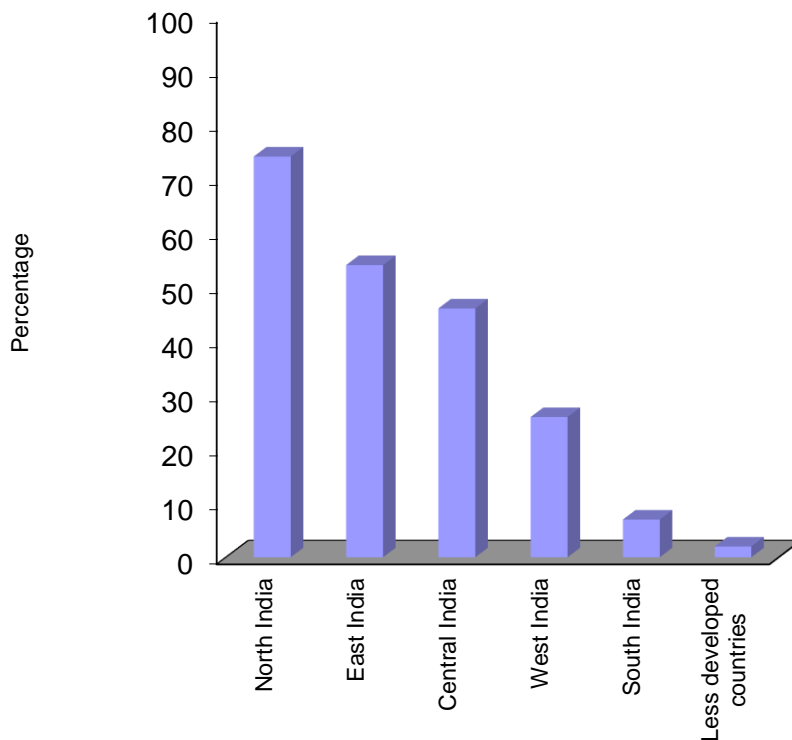


Source: Census of India (2001: 90).

Disregard for females obviously implies special regard or preference for males in society. In several studies it has been reiterated that Indian society tends to have a stronger preference for sons than daughters (Miller, 1981; Caldwell *et al.*, 1982; Singh, 2010). The patterns of sex preference, however, vary appreciably across the country or regions due to variations in culture, socio-economic condition, local conditions or historical circumstances (see Figure-2). Families in India attach a very special value to sons because sons usually live with their parents after marriage and contribute to the family income. Sons provide vital support to the elderly or parents in case of illness, who often have no other source of sustenance or survival in their old age. Besides offering economic and social supports to the ageing parents, sons not only help their parents in improving their social image but also their ancestral line through their special attainments in life. Many parents try to realize unfulfilled ambitions of their life through their sons. This is a kind of familial mechanism of attaining a new social identity under the lately emerging scenario. As daughters tend to move away at

marriage and transfer their allegiance to their husbands' families, parents can expect little financial or emotional support from daughters after they leave their natal home (Singh, 2001: 229-248). Daughters mean an additional disadvantage to parents—the obligation of paying her prospective husband's family a huge dowry. The rising practice of dowry and costs of wedding has greatly undermined the value of daughters in Indian society in recent years (Singh, 2005: 199-220).

Figure 2
Son preference in India based on National Family Health Survey-
3



The financial liability of having a daughter prompts educated women with poor economic means to abort their pregnancies, if they are carrying a daughter. With the introduction of new technology such as amniocentesis and ultrasonography for the detection of sex of the foetus, the practice of sex selective abortion, especially in northern and western regions of the country, has got further boost. Though the Government of India has passed laws prohibiting sex-selective abortion, it has not been possible for the state to control the practices effectively, as laws are poorly enforced in India. Inheritance practices that favour sons, better old age security from men than women and expensive marriage practices all contribute to the devaluation of female children. There is a whole range of variations in gender discrimination depending on education of parents, income, occupation, caste, religion,

family size, birth order by sex, level of modernization, etc., which have been dealt with at great length elsewhere (Singh 2010).

Gender inequality

On the one hand, Hindus boast of worshipping women as goddesses and their scriptures certainly bear enough testimony to the fact that women have always been worshiped here as goddesses, but, on the other hand, there has also been ample evidence of killing women through the practice of female infanticide in the country since long. Commenting on imbalance in sex ratio, various Census reports of the British India have drawn our attention to this fact. As pointed out before, with the introduction of new technology such as amniocentesis and ultrasonography for the detection of sex of the foetus, the age old practice of female infanticide is being replaced by sex selective abortion. The incidence of female foeticide is more common in towns than villages. This is a clear case of gender inequality within the family. Inequality between men and women can take many different forms. The issue of gender inequality is one which has been publicly reverberating through the society for decades. The problem of inequality in employment is one of the most pressing issues today. Several legal reforms have taken place since Independence, including law relating to equal share of daughters to property, yet gender equality with respect to succession or right to property remains elusive.

Females of all ages are subjected to gender based discrimination. Discrimination against women starts the day she is born. There are numerous laws against gender discrimination and protection of women from the domestic violence, but the laws hardly operate in letters and spirit. There is a massive and clinching evidence of gender bias in different walks of life. With respect to the degree of prevalence of gender bias, India ranks 10th out of 128 countries of the world. The sense of insecurity, humiliation and helplessness always keep a woman mum. Our whole socialization process is such that for any unsuccessful marriage, which results in such violence or divorce, it is always the woman, who is held responsible. Cultural beliefs and traditions that discriminate against women may be officially discredited, but they continue to flourish at the grassroots levels. Family relations in India are governed by personal laws. The three major religious communities are—Hindu, Muslim and Christian each have their separate personal laws. They, as said before, are governed by their respective personal laws in matters of marriage, divorce, succession, adoption, guardianship and maintenance. In the laws of all the communities, women have fewer rights than that of men in corresponding situations. It is really distressing that women of the minority communities, especially the Muslim women, in India continue to have

unequal legal rights and even the women of the majority community have yet to gain complete formal equality in all aspects of family life. This is basically the problem of gender inequality.

Patriarchy and Domestic Violence

Violence within family settings is primarily a male activity. The prime targets are women and children. The women have been victims of humiliation and torture for as long as we have written records of the Indian society. The increasing incidence of break-down of joint family has provided greater space for domestic violence than before. Despite several legislative measures adopted in favour of women during the last 150 years, continuing spread of modern education and women's gradual economic independence, countless women have continued to be victims of discrimination and violence in the country (Singh 2002: 168). Domestic violence is a kind of assertion for the dominance of values of patriarchy. Women are subjected to violence to concede the superiority of men in society.

The recent survey data have shown that in India 33.5 per cent of women age 15-49 have experienced violence. Data have also shown that 85 per cent of ever-married women who have received violence since the age 15 have experienced it from their current husbands (NHFS, 2005-06: 498-500). These stark figures underline the fact that, although the home and community are places where women provide care for others, these are also places where millions of women experience coercion and abuse. A study of five districts of the State of Uttar Pradesh has revealed that 30 per cent of currently married men acknowledge physically abusing their wives. Similarly, the multi-sectoral survey done by the International Clinical Epidemiologists Network (INCLIN) has reported that two out of every five married women reported being hit, kicked, beaten or slapped by their husbands. About 50 per cent of the women experiencing physical violence also reported physical abuse during pregnancy (UNC 1997).

With the rise in the level of education, recognition of the notion of gender equality and legislative measures against domestic violence, there is some sign of abatement in gender related violence. Differentials in prevalence of violence by women's education are quite sizeable. The proportion of women experiencing violence declines steadily with education (NHFS-3, 2005-06: 498). Cases of domestic violence, like wife-battering and forced incest with the women of the household, are so personal and delicate that they are seldom reported to the police or law courts. Modernization has created dilemmas for family life. Under the new socio-economic urban milieu there has been a tremendous increase in the family violence.

With a view to tackling increasing violence in the family, the Government of India introduced a very useful Domestic Violence Act in 2005. This legislation is well placed in the Indian context and social scenario, clearly reflective of the mindset of the Indian men. The Act deals with various forms of abuse that were either not addressed earlier, or that were addressed in ways not as broad as done here. The Act is a very vital piece of legislation from the feminist point of view. Domestic violence is one among several factors that hinder women in their progress, and this Act seeks to protect them from this evil.

The Domestic Violence Act (2005) is an extremely progressive one not only because it recognizes women who are in a live-in-relationships but also extends protection to other women in the household, including sister and mother thus the Act includes relations of consanguinity, marriage, or through relationships in the nature of marriage, adoption, or joint family thus, 'domestic relationships' are not restricted to the marital context alone. In addition to physical violence of beating, slapping, hitting, kicking and pushing, the Act also covers sexual violence like forced intercourse, forcing his wife or mate to look at pornography or any other obscene pictures or material and child sexual abuse. Another good thing about the Act is the fact that it deals with domestic violence regardless of the religion of the parties, as many a time wrongs are perpetrated (ab)using the protection offered by personal laws. It is thus secular in outlook in protecting women's rights. The new law also addresses sexual abuse of children and forcing girls to marry against their wishes. This certainly proves that the new Act has been formed keeping the current relationship practices in India and the shortcomings of the previous domestic violence laws in mind. It is, however, too early to predict the usefulness of this legislation to its target beneficiaries and the society as a whole.

Large Family Size Economic Hardships

Available data on reproductive behaviour of the Indian people from differing sources have shown that there has been steady and appreciable decline in fertility during the last three-four decades, yet fertility rate of India continues to be quite high from the standard of not merely developed countries but from other standards too. The NFHS-3 (2005-06) data have recorded that the current TFR of India is 2.66, varying from 1.79 for the State of Goa to 4.00 for the State of Bihar. Hence, the rate of population growth at the national level and more particularly of all the Hindi speaking North Indian states, which claim a major share of country's population, is quite fast because of a relatively quicker rate of decline in mortality than fertility rate. Continuing rapid rise in population has generated serious kinds of problems for the people relating to health, hygiene, education and general well-being both for the

family as well as for the state. Rising pressure of population has encouraged crimes and corruption in public life too. In rural areas, the large family size has caused agrarian violence and extremism, further subdivisions of homesteads and land holdings among the siblings, leading to family feud and litigations in courts of law in many cases. With the rise in the family size the interests of elderly and female members have generally received some setback, particularly in the case of families where poverty was already at hand.

Yet another area of still greater concern is that people who have needed bigger reduction in fertility rate for their uplift have unfortunately recorded the highest level of fertility. Certain marginalised castes and communities such as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes along with Muslims have always recorded a higher level of fertility than the national average of 2.66. For instance, scheduled tribes have recorded TFR of 3.12 as against 3.09 for Muslims and 2.92 for scheduled castes according to the NFHS-3 (2005-06: 78-84). As poverty and high fertility provide sustenance to each other, it is a matter of real concern for poorer families of such segments of society. The underprivileged families are embroiled in vicious circles of poverty and high fertility regime and a matter of still greater distress is that it is very difficult for them to get out of such an impasse. This not only causes threat to peace and prosperity of family generally but also creates hurdles in the process of development with equity, since they together comprise over one-third of the total population of the country. It is recognized that the transition from higher to lower fertility is indispensable for giving impetus to the process of gender equity within the institution of family. Sustained lower fertility in any society has always led to fundamental changes in the nature of women's lives and the general well-being of the family as a whole. The cost of irresponsible parenthood may loom very small at the familial level but definitely quite large at the national level.

Problems of too many Children and Child Labour

Children (persons aged 0-14), who comprise a little over 30 per cent of the total population of the country according to the 2001 Census of India, are increasingly becoming more vulnerable despite more proactive role of the state because of rising vulnerability of the institution of family. The manifestations of these violations are very varied, ranging from child labour and child trafficking to commercial sexual exploitation and many other forms of violence and abuse. With an estimated 12.6 million children engaged in hazardous occupations (2001 Census), for instance, India has the largest number of child labourers under the age of 14 in the world. Although poverty is often cited as the cause underlying child labour, other factors such as discrimination, social exclusion, as well as the lack of

quality education or existing parents' attitudes and perceptions about child labour and the role and value of education need also to be considered.

The problems of children are so serious that thousands of children roam the streets of all the major cities around the country and do not receive education, proper food, clothing, not even a bed to sleep at night. Why are these children roaming and begging in the streets? What should be done and who is willing to do something to help these poor children? A mind and heart that care, awareness presentations through multi-media, contributions, talking and sharing information among friends, education, self-help initiatives and good old fashion kindness are all that is needed to get these kids off the streets. Vagabond children numbering in millions in Indian cities who, in a true sense, neither belong to any family nor do they form any household.

While systematic data and information on child protection issues are still not always available, evidence suggests that children in need of special protection belong to communities suffering disadvantages and social exclusion such as scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, and the poor. It has been estimated that 46 per cent children from scheduled tribes and 38 per cent from scheduled castes are out of school. The lack of available services as well as the gaps persisting in law enforcement and in rehabilitation schemes also constitute a major cause of concern. The children of poor families, especially those of artists, craftsmen, and other professions are trained by their parents and elders of the family in their vocations such as weaving, tanning, sweeping, dyeing, hairdressing, painting, carpentry and agriculture. A vast number of children grow up lending a helping hand to elders in their home-industries. The practice of intergenerational transfer of traditional callings more or less is still continuing because of massive unemployment. Such kids who lack formal schooling, but working and specializing in some craft or their traditional callings help them build a career for their survival.

The demands of city life are such that both wife and husband tend to remain outside their home for work even at the cost of interests of their children. Working couples are unable to give proper care and affection to their children. Obviously, latchkey children of working couples are strangers to the sense of security enjoyed by their own parents. The system of surrogate mothers or the Montessori and Kindergarten systems of schooling has proved to be a very poor substitute for family as an agent of socialization. With the diminished role of family as an agent of socialization juvenile delinquency is on the increase. Because of the rapid rise in population and consequent shortage of employment opportunities, children are

put under great stress and strain to score high marks at schools to be able to meet the ever-increasing challenges of fiercely competitive world of education and employment.

Despite significant decline in fertility or lesser burden of children on the family, there is no improvement in the quality of care of children especially in rural areas. There hardly exists any pre-school or community centre in villages. There also does not exist even a basic facility of play ground for children. The older children have to mind the younger children at home and sometimes they are also expected to lend helping hands to their parents in the household chores as and when necessitated. The poor children learn the expected roles of life of their own with the passage of time, while the well-off peasantry send their children to private schools (also called public schools in the Western world) in towns and cities for better schooling.

The problem of child labour is quite conspicuous to the naked eyes in India.² Its prevalence is clearly evident in the form of high workforce participation rate among children, which is higher than that of any other developing country. Poverty is the prime reason behind child labour in India. Unfortunately enough, whatever the meagre income they are able to generate is absorbed by their families. Child labour is extensive with children under the age of fourteen working in carpet making factories, glass blowing units and making fireworks with bare little hands. There are at least 44 million child labourers in the age group of 5-14. More than 80 per cent of them in India are employed in the agricultural and non-formal sectors and many are bonded labourers, too. Most of them are either illiterate or dropped out of school after two or three years (Saini, 1994: 2; ILO, 1996: 7).

The exploitation of little children for labour is an accepted practice and perceived by many as a necessity to alleviate poverty. Carpet weaving industries, for instance, pay very low wages to child labourers and make them work for longer hours in unhygienic conditions. Children working in such units are mainly migrant workers, who are shunted here by their families to earn some money and send it back to them. Their families' dependence on their income forces them to endure the onerous work conditions in the carpet factories. The situation of child labourers in India is desperate. Children work for eight hours at a stretch with only a small break for meals. The meals are also frugal and the children are ill nourished. Most of these migrant children, who cannot go home, sleep at their work place, which is very bad for their health and development. About 70 per cent of India's population still resides in rural areas and are very poor. Children in rural families who are ailing with poverty perceive their children as an income generating resource to supplement the family

income. Parents sacrifice their children's education to the growing needs of their younger siblings in such families and view them as bread-winners for the entire family.

Children are also compelled to work as bonded labourers. They are trapped to grow in a hostage like situation for years. The importance of formal education is also not realized, as the child can be absorbed in economically beneficial activities at a young age. Moreover, there is no access to proper education in the remote areas of rural India for most people, which leaves the children with no choice. There are thousands of bonded child labourers in India. They are also mostly the children of parents who belong to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Young children are sold to employers by their parents to pay back small loans that they have borrowed. Such children are made to work for many hours a day over several years. Often, child labour is considered to be a 'necessary evil' in poor countries such as India for the maintenance of the family. In that context, some consider it virtuous to give a job to a child. In fact, some academics and activists campaign not for the reduction of child labour but only for a reduction in the exploitation of children.

Bonded labour or slave labour is one of the worst forms of labour not only for children but also for adults. In India, bonded labour has been declared illegal since 1976 when the Parliament enacted the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act. However, the practice is still widespread. Children or adults are bonded in order to pay off debts that they or other members of their families have incurred. They toil all their lives and endure physical attacks that often amount to torture. The government has tried to take some steps to alleviate the problem of child labour in recent years by invoking a law that makes the employment of children below 14 illegal, except in family owned enterprises. However, this law is rarely adhered to due to practical difficulties. Factories usually find loopholes and circumvent the law by declaring that the child labourer is a distant family member. Also in villages there is no law implementing mechanism, and any punitive actions for commercial enterprises violating these laws is almost non-existent.

Increasing Population of Elderly

The family has started facing a new kind of problem of ageing which has resulted from a relatively faster pace of demographic transition. The incredible increase in life expectancy may be a big triumph of the 20th century, but it has posed one of the toughest problems before the 21st century India. Census reports have recorded that the Indian population approximately tripled during the last 50 years, but the number of elderly people had in fact increased more than fourfold. Based on the continuation of the trend, the United Nations has predicted in one of its reports that the Indian population would again grow by 50

per cent by the middle of this century, whereas the elderly population is likely to have another fourfold increase in its size (UN, 2008).

It is estimated that during the next five decades the size of total population would grow by about 50 per cent, while the number of older people would increase fourfold. The proportion of older people in the population would grow at a higher pace than the other groups. It is estimated that the elderly people (60+) would constitute 20 per cent of the total population which would be quite huge in terms of absolute number— 316 million (Table-1). The Indian policymakers must take a critical note of the rising trends of incoming age wave of older people and the declining trend of the proportion of younger people. Such developments would cause strain on the resources, following increase in more inactive people.

It is apparent from Table 1 that the Indian population would be gradually swinging to a greyer one by the next few decades. It is estimated that the median age of the population would increase gradually from 25 years in 2010 to 31.7 years in 2030 and, finally, to 38.4 years in 2050. Hence, every three working Indians may have to take care of one elderly person by 2050 as compared to about eight working persons at present. It has been estimated that an Indian of age 63 today is likely to survive about a decade more in 2050.

Table 1: Projected Age Composition of India's Population in Million, 2010-2050
(Medium variant)

Age groups	Year				
	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
0-14	374 (30.8)	364 (26.7)	338 (22.8)	309 (19.7)	294 (18.2)
15-59	749 (61.6)	868 (63.5)	962 (64.8)	1011 (64.7)	1004 (62.2)
≥60	92 (7.4)	135 (9.8)	185 (12.4)	245 (15.6)	316 (19.6)
Total population	1,215	1,367	1,485	1,565	1,614
Median age (Yrs.)	25.0	28.1	31.7	35.3	38.4
Dependency ratio- Total	56	49	45	44	47
Dependency ratio- Child	48	40	33	28	27

Dependency ratio- Old	8	9	12	15	20
Life expectancy at birth	64.0	67.0	70.0	72.0	73.0

Figures in parentheses refer to percentages.

Source: UN, 2008, *World Population Prospects: The 2008 Revision*, Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, <http://esa.un.org/unpp>.

Longer life expectancy and incremental dependency ratio will possibly strain the family and the state support system for the older people. Increase in individuals' age is usually followed by increased prevalence of chronic diseases and disability and hence the elderly population may become a big burden for the family, community and ultimately the entire nation.

In the past the joint family system not only provided a suitable umbrella to manage personal risks, such as risks of premature death and excessive longevity, but also laid down the norms of intergenerational relationships as well as the role of each member. The elderly played a significant role in decision making regarding household matters, while the younger people were entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring well-being of their ageing parents. But these days in smaller families, they are gradually marginalized in the decision-making process. Hence, the family that traditionally took care of the elderly or sick, widows and orphans is beginning to rely on society as a whole. As the number of old persons is rising and the social environment is changing, the proportion of the destitute among them may also be increasing (National Human Development Report, 2001).

It is clearly evident from the NFHS-2 data that over 80 per cent of the elderly people live with their sons, daughters or other kinsmen. An elderly person living alone does not constitute more than five per cent, while the elderly couples living independently of any young person in the household is not more than 10 per cent of the total households at any age between 60 and 80 years. However, this scenario may not last very long because a similar set of data derived from the NFHS-3 has recorded slightly lower percentages for elderly people living alone or independently of others in a household. As a consequence of the breakdown of traditional joint and extended families the elderly people are being steadily marginalized in society generally. Moreover, due to some habits and unhealthy lifestyles, the elderly people tend to suffer from tuberculosis, asthma, cancer, cardiovascular problems, etc., apart from the other gerontological problems. But the healthcare facilities for the aged people are not satisfactory.

It is high time that the Indian policy makers assess the impact of the forthcoming age wave. The process of pension sector reforms should be accelerated, suitable steps should be undertaken to build the required healthcare facilities and a suitable social security system should also be designed. If change is not effected, the family support system as well as the state-sponsored facilities may crash in the near future, thereby jeopardizing the well-being of elderly people. It may cause the emergence of a gigantic number of penniless, sick and elderly people in the streets and public places, as it has been observed in the Project Old Age Social and Income Security (OASIS) Report (Ahluwalia, 2001; Bhattacharya, 2002).

To sum up, the rise in number of single member household, break-down of the traditional joint family system, increase in incidence of divorce, attrition of certain traditional family values, increase in number of working mothers and single parents in cities, rise in domestic violence and practices of dowry, neglect of children and elderly, and poor regard for family laws are enough indications of the danger that the family and ultimately the society are progressively facing in India. In any case, because of rising individualism, competitiveness and openness in society and ever-increasing aspirations for higher attainments in life coupled with greater autonomy of individuals in society, Indian family has to encounter such problems. Most of the challenges the Indian family, stated as above, are confronted with now have emanated largely from the persistence of high fertility and transition of society from tradition to modernity. Indian families may be beset with so many problems, but there is no perceptible threat to the institution of marriage and family as such. The age-old cultural values system is so well embedded in the way of life here that family as an intuition is going to survive all such odd threats. This, however, does not mean that we should remain unworried about the problems of our family. Now the family undoubtedly needs greater state support in the areas of child care, social services, income generation and health services than ever before.

Notes

(This is the revised and updated version of the paper which was presented at the Conference on 'Empowerment of the Family in the Modern World- Challenges and Promises Ahead' at the *Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development, Qatar, 27-28 January, 2010.*)

1. The practice of dowry has become the archetypal institution of modern Indian society. Being an important precondition, the process of dowry-giving or taking commonly precedes the actual ceremony of marriage, and in some cases dowry and its problems also continue in one form or another

beyond the actual event of the ceremony. To be capable of offering or meeting a big amount of dowry to marry one's daughter or sister, or to be eligible to ask for a hefty dowry for the sake of marrying one's son or brother is a matter of social pride. In these days dowry is taken as an important indicator of the social honour of family in the community. The dowry has become a status symbol in view of the rising economic prosperity of the people (Singh, 2005: 199-220).

2. Child labour is not child work. Child work can be beneficial and can enhance a child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development without interfering with schooling, recreation and rest. Helping parents in their household activities and business after school in their free time also contributes positively to the development of the child. When such work is truly part of the socialization process and a means of transmitting skills from parents to child, it is not child labour.

Child labour is the opposite of child work. Child labour hampers the normal physical, intellectual, emotional and moral development of a child. Children who are in the growing process can permanently distort or disable their bodies when they carry heavy loads or are forced to adopt unnatural positions at work for long hours. Children are less resistant to diseases and suffer more readily from chemical hazards and radiation than adults. UNICEF classifies the hazards of child labour into three categories, namely (i) physical; (ii) cognitive; and (iii) emotional, social and moral.

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MAPPING IDENTITIES: TRADITION AND CHANGE IN NORTH WEST INDIA

Birinder Pal Singh

ABSTRACT

The article is based on Author's inaugural address of the 19th North West Indian Sociological Association's conference that proposes to examine the issue of mapping identities in the North West part of the Indian subcontinent in the context of tradition and change. The concept of identity raises a range of issues involved in its definition which have been dealt in detail. The identity issue which is highly debatable has been mapped particularly, in the context of Punjab. A number of issues on identity formation, assertion of identities and conflict over identities have been raised by referring to empirical situations.

Introduction

We all know that this region has experienced tremendous change due to the unleashing of the forces of modernisation particularly in agriculture and horticulture. This land of the five rivers called Punjab touching the boundaries of Delhi in the east and Afghanistan in the west was suitable for the development of agriculture even if the best lands remained in the West Punjab after 1947. The lush green forested hills of Jammu and Kashmir and of Himachal Pradesh with rich sources of fresh water stand like a crown on the plain lands below. The primacy given to agriculture in the first five year plan of the Government of India and setting up universities of agriculture and horticulture in each state set the ball rolling for modernisation of agriculture through machine technology, hybrid seeds and extraction of ground water.

History has its role in the adoption of new means of development. Constant exposure to the invading armies and other expeditions since millennia, made cultural and demographic encounters that added to the diversity of this region. The range of identities and listing of people in the North-West region is made quite comprehensive by Ibbetson and Rose (1883). These encounters generated a syncretic culture that was further given a this-worldly orientation by the Sikh religion with its philosophy of *kirat karna* (doing labour) and *wand chhakna* (sharing) though *wandana* (sharing/distribution) has become a casualty over time. The Brahmanic ideology of non-manual work was upturned, thus making the Sikhs in particular and the Punjabis in general hard working and thrifty. The culture of *khada peeta*

lahe da, baqi Ahmad Shahe da [whatever you consume is yours, remaining shall be taken away by Ahmad Shah (Abdali)] remains the mainstay of Punjabi life style until today. This orientation to life and work in Punjab made the peasantry adopt the novel methods in agriculture thus making Green Revolution a success. With neighbouring Haryana, the two states became the granary of India and set an example to the peasants elsewhere to follow suit.

The formation of canal colonies, shifting people of the east to the western part and then their uprooting from there in 1947, the recruitment of soldiers in the world wars etc. etc. prepared the ground for ready acceptance of new innovations in agriculture. The development of agriculture in the rural hinterland and growth of small and medium industry in urban centres made people taste the fruits of income generation through modern technology. The experience of the soldiers on the European and other lands desiring to lead 'good life' had also sown the seeds for immigration preferably to England and Canada initially. The demand for labour there following the Second World War provided ample opportunity for migration from Punjab. The NRI (non-resident Indian) identity has become a status symbol with people. It is a qualification in itself matching a professional degree. The Punjabis are desperate to obtain this identity. The traditional institutions and values have started experiencing change rapidly over the last three to four decades. The Sikh NRIs have also contributed to the formation of Khalsa identity over this period. The Sikh militancy was neutralised by the Government in the early 1990s but the Khalsa identity and idea of Khalistan are still strong amongst the Sikhs settled abroad.

The question of mapping identities is situated in this context.

What is identity and why there is need to map it?

As sociologists, we know well that identity relates to the development of self. The animals too have identity though limited given the limits of their consciousness and requirements in their networking but as we move up the ladder of human evolution, we find its development to the extreme. By extreme, I mean acute sense of identity and identification from an individual to the collective and from the local to the global levels. Identity may simply be defined as awareness of one's self in all its contexts from the personal to the social or political and whatever. By social, I mean the identity of an individual self's identification with a particular collectivity and the latter's acceptance of the same. I would like to go with Richard Jenkins for whom 'all human identities are, by definition, *social* identities. Identifying ourselves, or others, is a matter of meaning, and meaning always involves interaction: agreement and disagreement, convention and innovation, communication and

negotiation.’ (2012: 17) And, as sociologists we are more concerned with social identity/ies rather than an individual identity.

We know that development of self and hence identity constitutes the bed rock of socialisation, symbolic interactionism and the social order. If Cooley showed us the looking glass self, Mead suggested structuring of I, me and the generalised other. Goffman extended it to dramaturgy and so on. No doubt the question of identity had always been important in social relations but in academics it became more fashionable during the 1960s. An individual is willing more and more to exercise its autonomy, may I say relative autonomy from collectivity, the mainstay of sociological explanation until then. This development took place in the United States. Hobsbawm (1996) also notes that *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, which was published in 1968 has no entry under identity except one about psychosocial identity by Erik Erikson.

James (1890) talks of as many different selves as there are positions. Identity is seen linked to status for some and to role for others. For some, identity theory focuses on roles while social identity theory is concerned with groups and categories. For others, its base lies in the in-group and out-group. Those relating to groups talk of mechanical solidarity while organic solidarity is due to its role embeddedness. For Tajfel (1981) and Turner et al (1987) it is embedded in a social group or a category. However, Stet and Burke (2003) suggest that all three bases of identities – person, role, and social– must be studied together for an integrated and stronger theory of identity. Barth (1969: 14). helps us understand it better in the context of boundary maintenance, a central feature of a group, an ethnic group for him: 'Since belonging to an ethnic category implies being a certain kind of person, having that basic identity, it also implies a claim to be judged, and to judge oneself, by those standards that are relevant to that identity'.

For certain scholars like Calhoun identity and interest go hand in hand but for others like Brubaker and Cooper the two concepts are opposed to each other. They further argue the futility of the concept of identity quoting George Orwell that the social sciences and humanities have surrendered to the word ‘identity’; that this has both intellectual and political costs; and that we can do better. Identity, Brubaker and Cooper (2000: 2). argue, tends to mean too much (when understood in a strong sense), too little (when understood in a weak sense), or nothing at all (because of its sheer ambiguity). They tend to think ‘beyond identity’ because ‘Whatever its suggestiveness, whatever its indispensability in certain practical contexts, ‘identity’ is too ambiguous, too torn between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ meanings, essentialist connotations and constructivist qualifiers, to serve well the demands of social

analysis.’ They tend to focus on ‘identification’ instead which is ‘intrinsic to social life.’ (ibid) Charles Tilly no doubt considers this concept ‘indispensable’ even if it is ‘blurred’. For Calhoun, identity revolves around the concept of honour as well.

Some Marxist anthropologists look at identity as part of a culture that has been generated over time through hegemonic struggles. The Gramscian notion of hegemony is useful in understanding cultures and identities ‘focusing rather on the histories of their constitution through long term power hierarchies and the objective conditions of local and global political economies’ (Schroder 2010: 38). But for Eric Hobsbawm (1996) the identity politics has no relevance for the Leftists since their agenda is essentially Universalist. Yet, he suggests that collective identity has four important features. One, it is defined negatively, in the sense that one is not like others. Two, it is interchangeable like the garments. Three, it is not fixed, and fourthly, it depends on the context that may change. This shows that for him the very notion of identity is negative and impermanent.

This short review of the concept informs us about the range of issues involved in its definition. To me, the issue is not the concept in itself but what does one do with it. How a particular concept can explain a given social situation well and meaningfully is important. The notion of identity is relatively simple in a premodern society that becomes multiple and complex in a modern society and becomes yet more fluid and subjectivist in its postmodern incarnation. In the modern times given the developments in information and technology, we make and unmake identities at will in the virtual world. Electronic mail, Facebook, twitter, instagram and what not are all identity apparatuses of the modern kind that may be singular and multiple simultaneously, and may be more fake than real. The distinction between the real and not so real and virtual identities is getting blurred with developments in information and communication technology. The more the modern society, let me put it right, the modern state tends to ascertain the real identity of an individual person through biometric mechanisms, the more fakeness is generated at the same time. The name is suggestive: Unique identification Authority of India issuing Aadhar cards. If this identity is so unique how do some people manage duplicate Aadhar cards?

Therefore, from the very personal and informal ‘pet name’ (*ghar da na*), the family name to the official and formal ‘school name’, we now shuttle between multiple e-mail and other virtual identities. The cyber world in the modern/postmodern society is trying to fix an individual’s identity for all times yet providing her ample space to create multiple (may be fake) identities. If the security and surveillance techniques are proliferating so are the hackers, obviously with fake identities. This is where Giddens is suggesting that the

individual in this fragmented, uncertain and powerless world is trying to seek out unity, certainty and feel empowered through reflexivity. The problem of identity crisis that Erikson talks of has now become more pervasive. The growing problem of alienation is also adding to the crisis pushing people to take extreme steps in real life, sometimes to prove their worth and existence and at other times doing self-annihilation for imaginary emancipation. In such cases, an individual's ego and identity is central.

Why do we need to map identities? What purpose does it serve in this part of the world? Why now there is an upsurge of identities that we wish to map?

The mapping of identities serves two functions. One, governmental and administrative functions for the amelioration of socio-economic conditions of the poor and the marginalised people in a modernising and developing society like ours. A large plurality of diverse peoples in a densely populated country are unable to walk together for so many reasons that are due to numerous internal and external constraints besides the inherent character of unequal pattern of this type of lopsided development. Two, we need to map identities because we are interested in their social analysis in the context of change that had shaken all communities from slumber due to modern developments and more and more new identities are consolidating to ascertain their rights to good and respectable life, for instance, the Gujjars, Jats, Patels and the denotified communities. And, sometimes one community stands against the other, such as the Meenas and the Gujjars in Rajasthan.

It is all the more, more necessary in our country where the state has failed in delivering the necessities of life and shelter to its majority people over the last seven decades. Most of these people have been virtually left out of the developmental processes. The welfare measures could not reach them due to corrupt practices of the political elite and the administrative officers. Over the past seventy years socio-economic levelling of people has not been done. They have become rather more unequal than before even if the trend of rising economic inequality is a worldwide phenomenon. Liberal democracy is a political system of competing identities based on the head count. The majority matters.

The political elite, thus, are given to deploy all sorts of means and mechanisms, more foul than fair, to garner support for their parties. At times they make and unmake collective identities at will. One caste identity is often pitted against the other for electoral gains. When this card has been used, then more depressed ones within the oppressed castes are 'chosen' for mobilisation and so on. The case of Uttar Pradesh elections in 2017 is a glaring example in this regard. Besides the political parties, the state according to Bourdieu, monopolises not

only the use of physical force but also the symbolic force that includes power to name, to identify, to categorise, to state what is what and who is who.

Therefore, identity is projected sometimes from above by the state and the power elite and at other times it is made the tool for upward mobility and acquisition of rights and privileges by the community leaders in an unequal society. The Mandalisation of the OBCs (Other Backward Classes) made the Yadavas politically powerful in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. In the recent past, Gujjars in Rajasthan fought their way for separate reservation through force. The Jats in Haryana too have followed the Gujjar model by destroying the public property in 2016. The Jatts in Punjab are also expressing their solidarity with the Jats in asserting their identity for the OBC status. If *putt Juttan de* acquired salience in the recent past, *putt Chamarande* are also not lagging behind in asserting their identity without fighting shy of their low caste status. The Jatt-Dalit conflict in Gurdwara management and occupation of *shamlat* lands is on the rise in Punjab. The Kashmiri people are seeking right to self-determination while those in Jammu are contesting against it. The Buddhists in Ladakh too want autonomy. This process is an unending one because self-awareness and collective identification will keep on emerging with changing social and economic conditions in an unequal competing society. The case of tribal people in the north-west region is similar. There are numerous tribes including the de-notified ones that are pressing the Government for the restoration of their tribal identity and tribal status since they have been clubbed with the Scheduled Castes.

Herbert Spencer informed us that families made the clans that in turn constituted the tribes and their congregation made a nation. The first three identities are with us since many millennia. The last one, of belonging to a particular nation, is of relatively recent origin that is riding the high tide now almost all over the globe. A nation too is a community of people, imagined though **a la** Benedict Anderson, who share language, culture, dress and food etc. But this imagined community identity is now most potent form of a person's identification. This type of national identity formation is not the problem of poor countries that have risen from the slumber of tradition and colonial hangover but even the developed ones are vying for this uniqueness. The Scots want autonomy from Britain, the Catalans from the Spain and Quebecois from Canada. The problem is not only with the Kashmiris, the Khalistanis and the Nagas alone but the Baloch and Pakhtuns too are asserting their identities for self-determination.

The models of modern development driven by science and technology assumed that economic poverty and social backwardness are two major drives for collective action against

the powers that be. The world is assumed to be a global village that will be made out of the homogenisation of societies as the road roller of economic development will level inequalities and make traditional identities redundant. Paradoxically, it has not happened. The more the world is getting globalised, the more the ethnic and folk identities are surfacing. Popular Punjabi songs are replete with novel emerging identities whereby ‘metropolitan’ Chandigarh city is seen in opposition to a *pind* (village) and the girls with branded costumes in opposition to the *kurta-pyjama* clad *pendu* boys, and so on. The communities have started digging out their pasts to sort out certain distinctive features and identify with those symbols.

There seems to be an attempt towards the rootedness of peoples and communities in a globalised world when the native insults the migrant not only as an outsider but also as an uprooted person. The physical uprooting is not a slur to a migrant that he has consciously undertaken but his identification as a person uprooted from culture is disgraceful surely. The Afro-Americans had been fighting against racialism to restore their identity of dignified people with rich culture. Levi-Strauss has informed us that no culture is good or bad, rich or poor.

Mapping identities, to my mind, assumes greater significance in the present times when sociological paradoxes are coming to surface. Hitherto established theories and models are failing to explain the social and political realities. Is it not interesting that the United States and India following different trajectories of economic, social, political and technological developments behaved similarly in their previous general elections? If Modi Trumped India, Trump is Modifying the United States. The communal and racial slants are significantly manifesting in the respective results. If Hindutva forces are raising heads so do the Ku Klux Klan in the twenty first century. This is nothing but blatant exploitation of primordial identities by the respective leaders. The seventh wonder of the world generating huge revenue has also been given the Islamic, hence an outsider’s and a ‘traitor’s’ identity by certain elements in our country. In the recent past numerous incidents of violence and killings have been executed on the basis of such identity marks as one’s name, dress etc. In 1984, the voters’ list proved handy in identifying the Sikh houses in the colonies of Delhi. Who knows, to what use the Aadhar identity would be put to in the coming times? Mapping identities may prove to be dangerous as well.

No doubt identities are ever growing and proliferating keeping pace with development of modern means of communication and transport but the case of such societies with long history are all the more complex and difficult to map. Ours is a six thousand years old culture and civilisation with layers and layers of identity markers. In a competitive market

society with increasing inequalities, any one of these markers may be exploited by the political elite at her convenience. Given the opportunist character of our political elite this exploitation of identity politics will remain till we reach a stage when no one, an individual or a collectivity, will be able to use this plank to further one's interests at the cost of others. This may be possible when all means of generating inequality on grounds of caste, class and power are terminated at least at the antagonistic level. Identities then will not be used for politically nefarious ends and oppression of individuals and communities.

I hope, I have raised most if not all issues relating to identity mapping though the list could not be made exhaustive given the constraints of time and space. The slant on Punjab is obvious, though for two reasons, one, most of the north-west region was once Punjab and, two, still it leads this region in setting many trends, positive and negative.

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SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF FEMININITY IN PUNJABI LITERATURE

Kirtpreet Kaur

ABSTRACT

This paper traces the social construction of femininity in Punjab through Punjabi Literature. Three Punjabi novels, Sundri by Bhai Vir Singh, Ehu hamara jiwana, by Dilip Kaur Tiwana, Partapi (1963) by Ram Saroop Ankhi have been selected to delve upon the process of evolution to understand the construction and re-construction of femininity in Punjab. Sundri-the main character of the novel is portrayed as an embodiment of courage, faith, loyalty and purity. In Ehu hamara jiwana Bhano, the protagonist is victim of socio – economic structure of society all through her life. She never questions subjugation and left the home without ghagra and veil. In novel Partapi, Partapi is raped by the Mahant, Partapi kills Mahant even when she is not brave enough like Sundri. The attempt here is to trace how literature plays a vital role in constructing and re-constructing the femininity in the context of Punjab. The novel Sundri reconstructs the concept of femininity during the times when women were totally marginalized. The novel Ehu Hamara Jiwana and Partapi are a study of two women, who though rebellions at heart, conform to the expected norms of social behaviour set by society during those times. So these novels form a chronology of deconstruction, construction and reconstruction.

Introduction

Social construction of femininity is deep rooted in the culture of society. The construction of femininity and masculinity is established by society through gendering. Gendering is the process through which every society inculcates roles, values, norms, responsibilities and attributes to male and female differently. This differentiation transforms a male into masculine and a female into feminine. Gendering varies from society to society. To understand the gendering in different societies at different periods of history literature is the best source to measure it.

According to A Modern Dictionary of Sociology (1970:405) “the sociological study of literature is either to derive the insights of writers concerning society or to relate literature to the structure of society, in the manner of the Sociology of Knowledge. With respect to earlier literature societies or the contemporary societies that have not been or cannot be directly and comprehensively studied, literature enables us to learn something about the society on the basis of comparative sociological analysis”.

Literature basically is the body of written works like novels, prose, plays, poems, books, articles, leaflets, booklets etc. written in particular language, about particular subject of particular time period or age. So literature is the mirror of the society, which enables us to understand and comprehend specific situation from different perspectives.

Judge and Bal (2008:2) their book *Reconstructing Identities, Society through Literature* argue that the text is not simply a narrative, the purpose of which is to entertain; the reader is simultaneously involved in decoding and interpreting it as a social reality. The reality of everyday life depicts the oppression, dilemmas and ambivalence of roles a woman plays. The writings of women have moved from margins to centre of academic corridors. The folk songs, folk dances, mythology, stories and narratives depict the complexities of gender roles and relationships by constructing symbols, images and models”.

Bhasin (2014:12) in her book *Understanding Gender* advocates that "maleness and femaleness are not biological givens but rather the result of a long historical process. In each historic epoch maleness and femaleness are differently defined, the definition depending on the principal mode of production in these epochs. Therefore men and women develop a qualitatively different relationship to their own bodies". The roles and responsibilities of person generate the status of a person in society. Status of female keeps on changing with changing mode of production. So the qualitatively changing relationship of men and women needs to be traced from literature of different historical epochs. Literature is the kaleidoscope through which one can explore the specific context through its different reflections.

The novels which are selected to trace construction of femininity represent different time periods of history. To understand social construction of femininity in the culture of Punjab, Punjabi literature has been the choice of study. Three novels depicting different phases are selected. First novel selected is *Sundri* written by Bhai Vir Singh in 1898. This novel aims to reconstruct the female identity of Punjabi society in late nineties and early twentieth century. As discussed above, literature not only gives the prevailing picture of the society but also helps to reconstruct the feminine identities. Novel *Sundri* is a twentieth century challenge in the literature on the status of Indian woman. Novel *Ehu Hamara jiwana*

written by Dilip kaur Tiwana in 1968 is the story of Bhano who belongs to lower class of Punjabi society of 60's. Owing to bad economic conditions she is sold and resold. But highly socialized Bhano never revolts and accepts the exploitation without any protest. Novel *Partapi* written by Ram Saroop Ankhi in the year 1993 portrays the construction of femininity in feudalistic mode of production in which Partapi suffers throughout her life. She bears the odd circumstances and discrimination without challenging or questioning. Novel reconstructs the femininity when Partapi demands four acres of land and is consequently valued by her sons.

Novel is a good source of qualitative information, which depicted in the form of story in a detailed manner. Though in layman's term the novel is an imaginative story in which some happenings and mis-happenings are presented in an interesting manner, but the novel represents the reality of life, the reality of everyday life. This can be read underneath the lines of narratives and conversation. Novel during a specific period of time delineates the socio-economic and socio cultural structure of society. The social construction of femininity is to be understood in the dialect. It is to be extracted from the lines, between the lines and underneath the lines.

Sundri

Bhai Vir Singh, the writer of 'Sundri' played a prominent role in the revival of Punjabi literature. His writings marked a new phase in modern Punjabi literature. He got Sahitya Academy award in 1955 and the Padma Bhushan in 1956. Bhai Vir Singh wrote poetry, novels, prose and stories with the only intention of reviving and restoring faith of Sikh community, in the values taught by the Sikh Gurus. He played an important role to rejuvenate Sikhism.

Sundri is the first Punjabi novel written by Bhai Vir Singh in 1898. Novel is the byproduct of anxiety of late 19th century and early 20th century. This novel is basically written with the intention to bring reforms in declining Punjabi society and its religious institutions. It was the time when the annexation of Punjab was done by the British. After the annexation of Punjab, people were divided among themselves; they were fighting with one another. Sikhs were losing their religious identity. They were shedding their religious principles. Bhai Vir Singh tried to revive the path of austerity, sacredness and religiousness. So out of this fright and stress Bhai Vir Singh wrote the novel *Sundri*. *Sundri* is the story of bravery of a woman who represents the socio-cultural paradigm of 18th century. She represents the historical period of atrocities by Jaspal Rai and Lakhpal Rai under the umbrella

of Zakraya khan, Yahya khan and Mir Manu. It was the hardest time for the Sikhs in the history. But the history narrates that in these worst circumstances of life Sikhs never lost their faith, honesty, discipline, values and norms. Sundri being female in such historical situation bravely fights for faith and morale. So Bhai Vir Singh gives a boost to Sikhs of late 19th century and early 20th century and reminds them of their duties as Sikhs by exemplifying the picture of atrocities of 18th century and bravery of the Sikhs who fought for their faith. He reminds them about the basic principles of Sikhism. He mentioned honesty, self-respect, faith, liberty, bravery, morality, sympathy and charity as traits of Sikhs. So in a way, he recalls the teachings of gurus to remind them about their great tradition and act accordingly.

Context

To inspire the Sikhs to reinstate their faith in religion, Vir Singh goes back to history of Sikh atrocities that started after the death of Banda Bahadur. The following period of Banda Bahadur was the darkest period of Sikh history. The policies of governors of Lahore-Farrukhsiar, Zakriya khan, Yahya khan and Mir Manu intended total extinction of Sikhs. Zakriya khan became the governor of Punjab in 1726. After a few years of execution of Banda Bahadur, Khalsa hold the charge. Under the instruction of Khalsa small bands of jathedars were formed and they started their activities in allocated villages. Zakriya Khan offers his hand for reconciliation but that could not work for long, the fighting among Sikhs and Zakriya khan was becoming worse. At the same time, Persian invasion took place. Nadir shah swept the Punjab. Sikh bands retreated to hills. After plundering and looting Delhi, Nadir Shah decided to go back along the foothills of Himalayas. Sikh bands took full advantage of their hostage as they were well acquainted with the terrain. They looted Nadir shah's army. During this period administration of Punjab remained unmanaged. Meanwhile Sikhs received recognition and respect among people by protecting them. Zakriya Khan turned hostile and under his stern policy Sikhs suffered hardships. After the death of Zakriya khan, Yahya khan becomes a governor of Lahore, who again used harsh policy to deal with Sikhs. After Yahya Khan, Mir Manu became the governor of Punjab. Mir Manu proved to be the most tyrannical governor of Lahore, who fixed the price money on beheading the Sikhs. This period was the most terrible period of the Sikh history. *Sundri* is the story of a woman who survives through these hardships with courage and bravery.

Social Construction of Femininity in Novel Sundri

Novel *Sundri* was written to encounter the Christian missionary literature, which shows the gloomy picture of Indian women. Bal (2008:103) elaborates “the European woman is taken as a model of beauty. In reaction to them Sundri is a beautiful woman, more beautiful than even the moon and the stars. Thus he has specifically pointed towards beauty among Hindu women. Through the medium of Sundri he points towards prevailing equality between men and women in our society. So on the one hand novel is motivating and rejuvenating the faith of Sikhs and on the other hand encountering the gloomy literature on woman.

Sundri is the daughter of rich Hindu gentleman named Shayma. He lives in a remote village comprising of both Hindu and Muslim population. Relatives and friends were enjoying the happy evening in the well decorated house of Shyama. It's the occasion of marriage of Shayma's daughter Surasti. Surasti is an extremely beautiful, pretty and handsome eighteen year old girl. Surasti is enjoying singing and dancing with friends and relatives. As the song ends, a stout Moghul soldier abducts Surasti in the blink of an eye. The Moghul belonged to the ruler and was hunting with his servants. While chasing a deer, Moghul moved towards a village to drink water. Here he casts his eye on the beautiful Surasti and captures her. Due to weak administration of Moghul emperor, local governors were misusing their power only for their own interest. So both the life and property of people were unsafe. In the feudal lawlessness, females were at higher risk. Beautiful wife, fine house, riches and merchandise were highly tempting and thus insecure. Moghul soldier galloped Surasti in front of all but because of the terror of local chieftains; no one could dare risk his life and rescue Surasti.

This incident clearly shows the plight of women in the society. Misconduct and aggression of the chieftains had silenced the people to the extent that they rather than encounter the soldier, decided to request the chieftain to return Surasti to them. They thought that they would succeed in getting her back but the chieftain asserted that this was his right and getting one girl to him from a village was no loss. Surasti's brother offers him gold equal to her weight as recompense. Her father requests him stating that she is his only daughter and today she leaves for husband's house. He pleaded to set her free otherwise it will be very disgraceful for him. Surasti's husband offers goods and money but all attempts are vain. Nawab refused to set her free. Listening to all this Surasti's husband got scared. The husband has declared himself a very richman and nawab could loot him. He decides to go back home without his bride Surasti. Once they got convinced that Moghul would not return her, her brother fainted and fell down. Seeing this, Surasti whispered into brother's ear that she will preserve her honor at any cost; she would burn herself to death than surrender. After this

assurance all went back to the village. Surasti was about to end her life by immolation, her brother Balwant Singh armed from head to toe reached there to rescue her.

Balwant is the real brother of Surasti, who had left home years back and joined Sikh brotherhood. He had come back to home for the first time after his joining sikh band and got the news of his sister's abduction. Balwant Singh convinced his sister that suicide is a sin and brings her back home. When Balwant Singh reaches home, his brother and father scold him and persuade him to return Surasti to Moghul. They were of the view that Moghul will kill us when he would come to know that their son is a Sikh and he would abduct her again. After hearing this from his father he felt insulted and disgraced. He could not tolerate rejection from his parents, Balwant Singh decided to take Surasti with him; she is convinced that her brother has become a noble man because of his deep faith in Sikhism. After accompanying her brother, Surasti's earlier faith in Sikhism gets replenished and she decides to devote her life to serve Sikh brothers, who put their lives at stake for their faith in Sikhism. Surasti feels pity on the condition of women and decides to set an example and fight for other women who are prisoners in the four walls of their houses.

In an encounter with Turks Balwant Singh and Surasti are captured and put in jail. A short encounter Balwant Singh and Surasti are freed with the help of other Sikhs. The leader of band Sardar Sham Singh ask Surasti about her future plans. He asks if she wanted they could bring her husband back and both of them could start a new life here. If she wanted to go to his place, they could take her there. They said she was sister of a great soldier and our band considered her as their own sister. Surasti said, she don't wish to get married with a person who could not protect her. She wanted to dedicate her life to the service of Khalsa rather than go back to domestic life of an ordinary woman. If they allow her, she wanted to live with brothers here. In the times of war, she will take care of her wounded brothers and in the time of peace, she will cook food. She wanted to dedicate her life for religion. Sardar Sham Singh said, she can live with us but she needs to be courageous enough to face odd circumstances. He told her that she was not an ordinary woman as her courage was equal to that of a lioness.

She was declared as god sister. She was considered as daughter of Guru Gobind Singh. She was renamed as Sunder Kaur, later popularly known Sundri. Sundri took charge of kitchen and cooked food for brothers. When there was no food in the kitchen she went to jungle to collect herbs, roots and fruits. One day she went to a village to sell her diamond ring to buy food for her brothers. On the way back, she met Khatri whose wife was abducted by

Moghul soldier. Sundri requested her brother to rescue khatri's wife. Sundri accompanied her brothers when they invade Nawab. Sikhs not only rescued khatri's wife but killed nawab and looted his treasury. Sundri accompanied her brothers during operations and fought bravely. She helped all the soldiers irrespective of their religions. So many incidents are there when she helps the wounded soldiers of enemies.

Once she was captured by local Amir, she showed her courage and killed him with her sword and escaped. In an incident when she was coming back she saw wounded Moghul youth and took him to camp. Her brothers warned her that she should put her life in risk by helping enemies. They explained that in this time of crisis survival is the main objective of their lives. After a month, Moghul soldier got healed and was allowed to leave the camp with bandaged eyes. After some days the same Mughal soldier with four soldiers of his band traced her. Sundri got disappointed to know that he is the same person whose life she had saved and today he traced her to abduct her. He told that if she did not go with him to the chieftains, he would kill him. Sundri is shocked at his manners; she picks up courage; kills one of the two soldiers, but the other one succeeds in abducting her.

Prior to small holocaust, when Sikh soldiers were making strategies and had decided to move the camp from this location, Sundri is found missing. Balwant Singh mustered strength and finally succeeded in rescuing his virtuous sister. After Kaura Mal's death Mir Manu's atrocities against Sikhs had been intensified. Sikh soldiers' jatha (band) was moving to safe place. Sundri was riding her horse with her brothers. Her horse was injured and incidentally she was left behind than her jatha (band). She saw wounded body of a Pathan praying for water. Sundri, without caring her personal security pours water in his mouth. Pathan keeps asking her about her identity. As Sundri uttered the word 'Singhni' Pathan attacked her with his sword. Sundri fell down unconscious, her face grew pale, and she had put her life in great risk to practice principles of Sikhism.

Nawab while travelling to his place of safety noticed Sundri lying down unconscious. He gave her first aid and took her along with him. Sundri was given lavish treatment. Many physicians were called to save her life. After about a month she showed signs of improvement. Physician suggested to the nawab to not to present himself before her; she will panic to see him and that could affect her health. Sundri recovered but she could not regain her for fearing of losing her chastity and also the pain suffered on account of separation from her brothers. Nawab was certain that Sundri would not agree to change her religion so he decided to change his religion if she agreed to marry him. Once again jatha (band) of Sikhs under the leadership of Balwant Singh rescued her but in this encounter nawab's sword struck

in Sundri's stomach and thigh. Her condition was critical. After their return to the camp coming back in the camp, Balwant Singh fulfilled her last wish of sitting in physical presence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib and listen to the path. She requested her brother to give money to nawab which he had spent on her treatment. She is found reciting path before she breathes her last.

Ehu Hamra Jiwana

The novel *Ehu Hamara Jiwana* is the second book written by Dalip Kaur Tiwana in the year 1968. In 1971, Dalip Kaur Tiwana's novel "*Ehu Hamara Jiwana*" got Sahit Akadmi Award. The title of the novel is suggestive of the low status given to women in society. Woman is the central focus of Dalip Kaur Tiwana's novels. She has a deep understanding of social and cultural system where woman tends to become victim on account of her beauty, morality, loyalty and sociality. This social and cultural system converts a woman from human to an object. Her novels originated from such weak social economic backgrounds of Punjab discuss in detail how women carry on their shoulders the burden of social values and norms, male dominance and discrimination, rejection of love, immorality, disloyalty, social strains and resultant tensions of woman life.

Context

Novel *Ehu Hamara Jiwana* portrays the exploitation of females in 1960's. It is the story of lower class Punjabi family. The poor economic condition is the reason of exploitation of female in society. People sell and buy the females due to poverty. Sharing of wife among brothers is also the outcome of bad economic conditions. Novel underlines the social, economic and cultural pattern of our Punjabi society which compels Bhano to live a dreadful life. Novel delineates the life of Bhano who is sold to Sarwan by her father, after death of Sarwan, she lives with Narain and Narain once again sells her to Fto. She suffers but never questions the system. Novel underlines that females are socialized to live life without protest. Women are bought and sold as an object or as commodity. Due to low economic conditions people buy and sell women and even share with brothers. Novel describes the feudal state of society, in which women are victim of values and norms of feudal society. In feudalistic male dominated society female is more an object than a human being. In this inhuman process of objectification of female in society, the value of female traits- love, beauty, loyalty, sincerity, compatibility, affection and morality come down to zero

weightage. The way an object is sold and bought as an alternative to come out of bad economic condition, females too are used similarly. In this whole process women, instead of questioning and challenging the system are socialize to bear it as part of their fate.

Social Construction of Femininity in *Ehu hamara jiwana*

The novel is the story of Bhano who is efficient and perfect in household chores. Bhano lives with Naryan, in his house though she is not married to him. Neighbors guess that Naryan has bought her. It is not at all objectionable and questionable because buying and selling a woman is acceptable. Bhano's neighbor Santi is a kind woman who has very soft corner for Bhano and always refers to her as wife of Naryan. Village culture is full of prejudices and misconceptions. Dialo another neighbor of Bhano has opposite views about Bhano. She always refers to her as "khasam badlan vali" (one who changes her husband), and "ghar patt k aii" (one who is disloyal to her husband). But Santi presumes that she must have had some reasons due to which she decided to spend life with a man who is a drunkard.

One day Santi asks Bhano the reason for her accepting Narayan, she narrates that her brother died due to ingestion of hooch and high fever. Illness of brother leads to bad economic condition of family. In order to get money, her father sells her to Swaran, Swaran proved to be a very good husband, but unfortunately he dies because of some dispute among brothers. Unfortunately the cause of dispute among brothers was Bhano herself. Swaran's brothers demanded that Bhano should be shared among all brothers. He refused and took separate accommodation. Finally this dispute among brothers became the cause of his death. After his death she came back to her paternal home. Her father again decided to sell her, knowing this she went out of the house to commit suicide, but unfortunately or fortunately Naryan saved her and convinced her to live with him. She inquires only this much whether he is a Jatt or not.

Naryan had lost both his parents. His sister was married and lived in the state of Uttar Pradesh. After that he becomes deviant and starts consuming liquor and becomes addicted. Naryan's first wife eloped and he usually comments "gaian vi kade kille bajian ne" (one cannot keep the cows under control all the time). After saving the life of Bhano he proposes to live with her.

Though Bhano decides to live with Naryan but she cannot forget Swaran, due to this she is unable to establish a true, emotional bond with Naryan, even though Naryan tries his best. Although Bhano manages the house efficiently but emotionally and psychologically she is always diverted. She keeps on recalling her father and brother. Though her father sold her

again and again, but she never hates him because her realization is that her father wants to sell her for economic reasons. She never realizes her value as human being.

Illicit relations are integral part of society. Dialo assumes that Bhano intentionally attracted Jaggar (friend of Naryan) towards her. Misunderstanding created by Dialo and Jaggar results in beating of Bhano by Naryan though later on he admits his mistake and feels sorry. Women always share the greater burden of relations. Being pious and morally correct, Bhano bears injustice. Proof of loyalty and morality is always given by woman but that too is not easily acceptable. Novel delineates that Bhano has all the traits that an ideal female should have. She motivates Naryan to do hard work, as she is more concerned about future. She persuades to him not to drink. She inspires him to be social, teaches him the social role of brother. She is fully well versed with social roles, values and norms. Her sociality is also praised when she fulfills all responsibilities during the marriage ceremony of sister in law's daughter. She is very religious. She visits gurudwara every day and recites Gurbani, but her trust is once again shaken when head granthi of gurudwara tries to molest her.

This incident disturbs her a lot. This incident shows the mentality of males in feudal society, where the respect for woman is minimal while at the same time males are free to express their sexual desires any time anywhere. Another heart breaking incident takes place in Bhano's life when she comes to know that Naryan has done a deal to sell her in six hundred rupees to Haria. Haria, a drunkard was brother of his sister's husband. This is the worst incident that takes place in her life. Naryan tells that he wants to marry just for getting a child. Naryan assures her that she will not lose her present status. The logic is if they do not have any child then who will take care of them in old age.

This is the most tragic incident of her life and after this she does not recover both mentally as well as physically. Mentally and emotionally unstable Bhano one day falls down and is admitted to hospital. Meanwhile Naryan marries Bhagwanti and after this Bhano loses her earlier status in her own house. Bhagwanti's attitude and behavior disheartens her to the extent that she never recovers her health after that. Bhagwanti delivers a baby boy. Bhano loves him as a mother but Bhagwanti does not allow her to attach with him. Bhano is disheartened by bhagwanti's behavior. Naryan prefers baby boy than Bhano. Bhano without any condition settles at Naryan's house and make his life heaven from hell. But Naryan a representative of feudal male dominated society does not value her. Not only he prefers his child boy but at the same time, without any hesitation and second thought he sells her to fifty year old drunkard man named Fata. Without revolting, challenging, questioning she leaves Naryan's home. This happens due to social and cultural practices of the society. On the other

hand in male dominant society, female are used as sexual object and buying and selling through deals and contracts is normal. For Bhano it's her fate which is responsible for her present condition. She never thinks of revolting against system, because she considers that being a woman these tragedies are part of her destiny and she is supposed to bear that.

Bhano leaves Naryan's house without ghagra and veil because she had lost the cultural meaning of both the symbols. This is the only protest she exhibits in her life. She dreamt her last days of life with Naryan in his house. But once again she is sold as an object.

Partapi

Partapi is the main character of the novel "*Partapi*" written by Ram Saroop Ankhi, written in the year 1993. Ram Saroop Ankhi started his career as a poet but ended as a fiction writer. He won Sahitya Akademi Award in 1987 and received Sarb Shresht Sahitkaar award in 2009. He is famous for his novels *Partapi* and *Kothe Kharak Singh*.

Context

The name of the novel is given after the chief protagonist of the novel Partapi. Novel is basically is the story of female named Partapi, who belongs to middle class agricultural family of a Malwa village of Punjab. The life of Partapi is full of sorrow, sufferings and tragedies. Contrary to meaning of her name Partapi, she bears and tolerates the odd circumstances of the life. She never challenges and questions the system of society.

Social Construction of Femininity in *Partapi*

Partapi is the victim of socio culture pattern of Punjabi society. She is only daughter of family having four younger brothers. Partapi's father Mangal is a farmer with few acres of land which is not fertile. But Mangal is always confident that one day when his four sons will help him in agriculture; he will buy more land and become rich. Mangal's chest is always puffed with pride that he has got his biggest property i.e. four sons but at the same time he says, "Bhai dheer na hove kise di. Dhee gharon torni bahut aukhi ae. Ik vari tan dkka dkka hunj k le jandi ae ghar da. Jihde ghar rub ne kudi de ti neevan sirr rakhu, dhian vale sdda e hare." (No one should have a daughter. It is difficult to send her to in law. Every single penny is spent on her marriage. One who has daughter his head always remains down. Parents of daughter are always losers).

He tells his wife Dialo, "tu sunea ni, kehnde ik jatt de sat putt si. Jatt nu bdda hanker si. Pher kudi ho gyi. Ohda jamdi da gal ghut ta. Akhe-eve kise jatt agge jukna pauga. Jatt jamai

agge jukde buss” (have not you listened, a jat has seven sons. Jat was proud of it. Then a girl took birth. She was killed after her birth. He does not want to bow his head in front of any jat. Jat bows his head only before a son in law).

Dialo feels really bad after listening to this. So these lines clearly depict the status of Partapi in the family in specific and status of woman in Punjabi society in general. Social construction of femininity is a kaleidoscope for this pattern of society. Partapi is twenty years old and her parents start finding a groom for her. Dialo asks her relatives to find groom for Partapi but he should be smart and sturdy from a well reputed family. The one who owns a good chunk of property and mother in law should be nice. She declares that she will spend a good amount of money on her daughter’s marriage.

Partapi goes to aunt Akki with her friend Tapo to learn carpet weaving. But Partapi’s brother goes to dera to get education. Mahant (religious guru) of dera takes classes of boys of the village. Girls of village learn knitting and other household chores. Partapi suggests aunt Akki’s son Jeona to go to dera like her brothers to study. So it is observed that education is not imparted to girls. Priorities for boys and girls are different.

Partapi falls in love with aunt Akki’s son Jeona. Partapi wants to marry him. As per Punjab's cultural norms and values love marriages are not acceptable. Moreover marriages are prohibited if both boy and girl belong to the same village, and they are considered as brother and sister. But Partapi thinks that Jeona is not the real son of Akki and belongs to different village. But as per societal norms adopted son adopts the name of the same village also. So in this context, firstly, love between boy and girl is prohibited then choosing partner by girl is not allowed and thirdly selecting boy of the same village is a taboo. While on the one hand Partapi's love is in its initial stage, on the other hand her parents are finding a suitable match for her. But at the same time Partapi is unfortunately raped by the Mahant Dharmdas, head of the Dera. Dharmdas other than providing religious services also prescribes medicines to the villagers and secretly lends money to females. Being a head of Dera, he is not supposed to get married. From religious figures like him, it is expected that they have the power to control their sexual desires. Such religious figures attain highly respectable place among people, but the truth is just the opposite of this expectation.

Villagers are highly satisfied with the services of Mahant Dharmdas. The economic needs of Dharmdas are fulfilled by the villagers. Boys not only study at Dera but they spend quality time over there. Women and girls usually visit him. In a row of it, one day Partapi's mother sends her to give milk to Dharmdas but Dharmdas molests and rapes her. This tragic fate changes her whole future. She starts hating herself and dislikes her body because she

thinks that her body is polluted now. In such a situation she cannot face Jeona. She prays to God to kill Dharmdas. Due to suffocation and out of frustration, she kills Dharmdas one morning. Villagers get shocked to get the news; they are surprised that why one killed such religious figure, as he had no ill-will against anybody. Though police take this matter seriously but because of no clue this murder remains a mystery. Purity is the most important feminine trait of ideal female, which she is burdened to maintain at any cost. So Partapi decides to keep this incident with her only. She decided that she will not reveal even it to Jeona. Though she is a victim yet she has to share the whole burden of the incident all by herself because she has to prove her purity to the society. So much so that she could not share the truth even with Jeona, the man she loved so much.

She thinks that "Bande da ki hunda hai, oh tan shaki hunde. Ki pta Jeona ohnu ki samj bethe. Ohnu oh badkar ya badmash hi na samj bethe. (What to say about a man, they are suspicious. Jeona may misunderstand her. He may find me characterless)

In Punjabi society male is rewarded for his masculinity and female has to prove her femininity. Though Dharmdas raped her but he still holds a much respected place in the hearts of villagers. Villagers are sympathetic to him. Partapi after being victimised, raped and humiliated has to sacrifice her love only to prove her virginity. Partapi knows that nobody will trust her if she reveals the truth about having been raped by Mahant Dharmdas. Society will seek the proof and Partapi has nothing to prove it as even if she proves herself innocent, she will lose her ideal feminine identity. Though she takes revenge by killing Dharmdas but throughout life she gets punishment of a crime that she never committed. Partapi's mother comes to know about Partapi's pregnancy. Her mother, her friend Tapo and her aunt Akki blame Jeona for this blunder. Partapi decides to sacrifice her love over her ideal feminine identity.

Jeona did nothing, knew nothing, but he still takes the responsibility and leaves the village. Due to unavoidable circumstances both Partapi and Jeona bow their heads in front of societal values and norms. Both have to take responsibility of the crime that was committed by Dharmdas. In the mirror of the society both are clear like crystals. Partapi's mother marries Partapi with Gajan. Gajan is the son of Jaimal and Jaikur, lives in the village of Jogipur. Gajan had six siblings; four of them could not survive for long. So Gajan is now left with one brother and one sister. Three of them have twelve years gap with one another. Jaikur mother of Gajan had died during her last delivery. His eldest sister Bhano looked after her younger brother Chanan after the death of his mother. Jaimal wants to marry Gajan as soon as possible because he wants someone in the home to cook for them. Jaimal had spent good amount of

money on his daughter's marriage. He and his wife spent lavishly on their daughter's marriage with the notion that they will recollect it on Gajan's marriage. But the rejection of Gajan by so many families, Jaimal's only demand remains that the girl should be smart enough to manage home. Gajan is neither good looking nor handsome. Finally Gajan gets married to Partapi who is very beautiful and smart.

Partapi's mother does not like Gajan but she wants her daughter to be married as soon as possible because she is pregnant and she wants to conceal the fact to prove her virginity. On the other hand, Jeona after leaving the village goes back to his native village and gets married. So it is concluded that society happily accepts the pictures and off shots of the mirror. Whatever takes place at the back of mirror, society perhaps never mind?

Partapi was happy that "k oh Mehlan ton apni izzat bcha k Jogipur a gayi hai. Dhol dhakea reh gyea." (She respectfully came to Jogipur from Mehlan. Nothing got revealed). Though Partapi got married with Gajan but she dislikes him. She compares Gajan with Dharmdas. After seven months of her marriage she gives birth to a son named Gurdev. Her in-laws mistook the child as pre mature baby. Till the last day of her life Partapi never reveals that Gurdev is the son of Dharmdas because she is aware of the outcome of it if she reveals the truth. So in this way, by sacrificing her love, Partapi is able to prove her ideal feminine identity. Though Partapi starts her married life with Gajan but she is leading a very gloomy life. She gives birth to one more son and one daughter. Throughout life she keeps on struggling with her thoughts. She is reminded of the days she spent with Jeona. She keeps imagining her life with him.

With the passage of time the glow of her face starts fading. Her heart is broken when nobody visits her from her paternal family. Under such odd circumstances, she still perfectly performs all the duties of an ideal female. Partapi's mother in-law had passed away before Partapi's marriage, so Partapi feels that it is her duty to find life partner for her younger brother in-law Chanan Singh. She chooses a girl from her kinsfolk for Chanan Singh.

Chand Kaur is the daughter of Nand Kaur whose husband had passed away leaving five unmarried daughters. Nand Kaur was a courageous woman, that's why she could manage her home well after the untimely death of her husband. But she always repents that if widowhood was her fate then why god had given her five stones (five daughters). She always cursed that if God had to take her husband, at least He should have given her a son. "ohnu lagda, ohdian panje kudian bakrian hon, jangal de sher-bghere ohnanu kha jange. Nange sir vali tiwi mani ohna di rakhi nahi kar sakegi" (She feels her five daughters are goats, lion-wolf of jungle will eat them up. A widow cannot protect them). But with the passage of time she

is able to manage worldly affairs efficiently. She gets proposal of marriage for her daughter Chand Kaur from Partapi. Partapi plays the role of mother in the marriage of Chanan. She performs all the rituals well and whole heartedly. But after a few days of marriage due to natural calamity Chanan passes away. For Partapi it was dreadful as she had played the role of mother in marrying Chanan. Chand Kaur, wife of Chanan goes back to maternal family. For maternal family of four unmarried daughters, it was the biggest shock. It was difficult for them to remarry her, but they console themselves with the thought that Chand Kaur is not pregnant otherwise it would have been a very tedious task to remarry her. Chanan's death was a big shock for his father Jaimal. He came under depression and that affected his health severely. He had recovered from the shock of his wife's death, but this loss of his son seemed irreparable him. He could not bear it and died.

The death of Chanan creates a hollow in Chand Kaur's life, but it brings a difficult situation for Gajan. He is aware of the fact that now Chand Kaur can legally demand her share of property. Money or property plays very important part in one's life but for Gajan land is his life. Gajan lives for land and his mission of life is to keep expanding his land. Gajan wants to keep his brothers' share of land with him at any cost. The cost of solution of the problem, with which Gajan comes out, has to be paid by Partapi. Gajan brings Chand Kaur back home as his second wife. This for him seems to be the only solution to save his property. He knows that this is a very odd decision and nobody is going to accept it easily. So he bribes Banta, the brother of Chand Kaur's mother by giving him five hundred rupees. He knows Banta is a person who will do anything for money. Once his hands are warm, he will take it as his duty to convince his sister and he succeeds in his attempt.

This incident shows the plight of relations in the feudalistic pattern of Punjabi society and its culture. The second major tragedy of Partapi's life occurs, when Gajan brings Chand Kaur back home as his second wife. Now for Partapi there is no reason left to live. She becomes weak day by day both mentally and physically. Gajan starts living with Chand Kaur in a different house. He provides basic facilities to Partapi like food, cloth etc. but he severs all other relations with Partapi. Chand Kaur feels proud to be the wife of Gajan as he gives her all the rights of wife. Chand Kaur loves her full-fledged supremacy in the house. As a result there develops feelings of hatred between Chand Kaur and Partapi. Apart from it, other traits of feudal society can be seen when Gajan decides to go for sterilization. On the other hand, ignorant Chand Kaur keeps visiting doctor to get treatment to produce a child. Gajan does this with the intention that Chand Kaur should not conceive, otherwise his property will be divided. Chand Kaur starts showering motherly love to Partapi's son Gurdev, when she

realizes that she would not be able to have a child. Gajan's greed for land makes lives of both Partapi and Chand Kaur hell. Chand Kaur succeeds in creating feelings of maternal love in Gurdev's heart.

Partapi as such has no relation with Gajan but whenever she gets an opportunity to talk to him the only topic of the conversation is marriage of her daughter Bebo. Gajan is equally worried about her marriage. Finally Partapi's brother Neik finds a groom for Bebo. The groom of Bebo co-incidentally is the son of Jeona. Partapi gets disturbed to know this; she is in a dilemma, she is worried that after so many years, the chapter will be re-opened. The fact is that she still loves him, wants to meet him and open her heart in front of him. But as happiness is not her destiny, Jeona dies after Bebo's marriage. Partapi could meet Jeona only once that too on the day of Bebo's marriage. At that time they had tried to find an opportunity and talk to each other, but could not do due to scarcity of time.

Tragedies one after the other is the fate of Partapi's life. Gurdev lives with Chand Kaur, Partapi finds bride for Gurdev, but Chand Kaur performs all the rituals of a mother and convinces Gurdev and his wife to live with her. Partapi never questions it and silently keeps suffering this injustice. Hardev, the second son of Partapi lives with her and with the help of his maternal uncle completes his studies in the university. Hardev studies in the university with the aim that one day when he would get a job; he will provide his mother a dignified life. Hardev gets a job. In the meanwhile, he falls in love with his classmate Manjeet Kaur who belongs to a different caste. The two of them marry each other secretly without the consent of their parents.

Hard realities and experiences of life make Partapi to conclude that only land or property gives identity to a person. So she decides to get four acres of land. She dares demand the land and take the matter to panchayat. By doing so, she challenges the norms of society she lives in. She takes help of her brother Neik Das to get the land and with his help she is able to transfer land in her name. She feels elated and proud of this act of hers.

Partapi has four brothers. They do not own much land. Neik Das becomes Mahant and does not get married. Second brother gets the job of a teacher and gets married. Two elder brothers remain unmarried. Neik Das arranges bride for one elder brother and suggests the other unmarried brother "k tu tha bharava gola dhanda kar hun, tenu tuk mili jau. Nale jamin ekathi sambhi rahugi." (You manage with her only, you will get cooked food. Moreover land will be jointly managed without any division.) Gajan and Neik Das die during their visit to Haridwar in a stampede there. Partapi does not cry for Gajan, she cries for her brother who in every stage of life had helped her. Partapi could never forgive Gajan and does not shed a

single tear for him. For her, he was dead the day when he had brought Chand Kaur in the house. After the death of Gajan, Partapi gets five acre of land.

Gurdev is also the product of feudal society. Following his father, he too loves the land. After the death of Gajan, Gurdev gets his share of land but now his eyes are on her mother's share of land as well. He requests his mother to come and live with him in his house. All through his life Gurdev had cared more for Chand Kaur than for his biological mother Partapi. Gurdev suggests to his wife Ratno that they should keep mother with them so that they can get profit from her share of land too. To sum up the whole situation, Gurdev emotionally blackmails Partapi because of his greed for land. All of a sudden he changes his priority and starts addressing Partapi as his mother and Chand Kur as his 'Massi'. Second conclusion which can be drawn is that Partapi gets the status of a mother only when she has five acre of land in her name. The interesting part is that Partapi is very well aware the tactics and strategies of her son.

Chand Kaur loses the status of being Gurdev's mother because she had transferred her share of land and her share of land from maternal side in the name of Gajan. After losing supremacy and status of mother Chand Kaur leaves home and starts living with some relative and meets her end there only. On the death of Chand Kaur, Partapi cries and blames Gajan. She forgives Chand Kaur as she believes that it was not her fault; it was Gajan who had ruined Chand Kaur's and her life.

Chand Kaur's life too has its own tragedies. Firstly, her husband dies after a few days of her marriage. Secondly, because of second marriage she has to live with brother in-law who is much older than her. Thirdly, Gajan deceives her when he goes for sterilization and she keeps visiting doctors and ultimately dies without enjoying the pleasure of motherhood. Fourthly, she had transferred her share of land and also her share of the land received from maternal side in Gajan's name. She had never thought that one day Gajan could die and she would lose her supremacy.

Gurdev and Hardev, two sons of Partapi who throughout their lives had never cared for their mother, never questioned their father for his behaviour towards her, now after the death of their father start giving full attention to her. Gurdev wants his mother to live long and Hardev wants her to die soon. Both have their own selfish motives behind it. Gurdev presumes that till the time his mother is alive, he will plough her share of land and get benefits. Hardev wants her to die soon because after her death he will get his share of land.

In feudal society, relations, emotions, bonds, ties, love and affection have no place to stand. The only thing which is important and worshipped is land, property and money.

Partapi could have left Gajan when Chand Kaur entered his life, but the only reason was her children. In the novel, she thinks so many times that she would have left Gajan if she did not have children. She would have easily taken her share of land and re-settled somewhere. Moreover she does not have any affection for Gajan but she decided to live with him for the sake of children. For those she made sacrifices and chose to live a dreadful life with Gajan, they never were thankful to her even in her last days they are concerned only with their share of land.

Both the sons are worried about land. Hardev (the youngest son of Partapi) was very close to his mother. Throughout his childhood he had observed sufferings of his mother. When he was studying, he always dreamt that one day when he will get a job and start earning, he will give her everything that she deserved. He will help her to get her share of land from his father. But after he gets married and decides to live in Patiala with his wife, he forgets all the duties towards her. He plans to buy a plot to construct home. He had decided to ask for financial help from his father Gajan. Gajan gives him money to buy plot. After getting money he constructs home in Patiala and permanently settles there. On account of his greed for property, he never dare help his mother against his father. How could he take revenge from his father, as he wanted his share of land from him? If he fights for his mother's right with his father, his father may get annoyed and give his share of land to his elder brother. Moreover he has taken financial help from his father to buy plot. He succeeds in his plan and after the death of his father he gets his share of land. Now he starts counting days of his mother's death to gets his share from his mother's property. The day her mother dies, Hardev comes to village for her funeral rites. As he enters the house, he starts cry into seeing his mother's dead body. *"ja k maa de litt gya . bebe shabad ohde muhon lamak gya si. Ohne kapda htta k bebe de dono hath fadd laye te ohna nu siddhe karke dekhyea. Doven hathan de anguthian dian rekhavan vich kali, nili ja lal siahi kidre vi jami hoi nahi si."* (He fell down on his mother's body. He was not able to speak the word mother properly. He takes off the shroud and holds both his mother's hands to check them for mark of ink sign. Her thumbs have no sign of black, blue or red ink). He was relaxed to know that there was no mark of ink on her thumbs and his share of land was safe. The Novel ends with the death of Partapi.

The novel *Partapi* delineates gender relations which are the production of feudalistic pattern of society. Land in the feudal society constructs, deconstructs and re-constructs the relations. Partapi in her old age gets the attention of her sons because she has five acre of land and Chand Kaur loses supremacy and status of mother because she owns no land. Relations in feudal society revolve around the land. The story of the novel depicts that the relations are

real where the interest of land does not take place. The relation of Jeona and Partapi in the story portrays the affection that both feel for each other till the end of their lives. The blood relation between Partapi and her sons is guided by the economic interest, only of grabbing the land that belonged to their mother.

The role of Partapi is guided by the social construction of femininity in the society. Being innocent, she suffers throughout her life. The only great thing she did was to murder Dharmdas but she never dare to leak this secret. Partapi pretends to maintain the image of woman expected and accepted by society. She never tells anybody that Gurdev is not the son of Gajan and this way she manages to protect her femininity.

Conclusion

Novels *Sundri*(1898), *Ehu hamara jiwana* (1968) and *Partapi* (1993) three stories of different time periods of history depict social construction of femininity in Punjabi society. In the novel *Sundri*, Sundri is the heroine of the novel who is portrayed as an embodiment of courage, faith, loyalty and purity. Sundri by rejecting the ordinary life of a female had joined the sikh jatha (band) to fight for religion and morality. Sundri sets an example for women who are living a dreadful life as prisoners among the four walls of their houses. Sundri is portrayed as an ideal female having all the traits a female should have. Novel reconstructs the femininity by projecting a heroic woman. Sundri challenges the social construction of female, which makes her weak, fragile, quiet and scared. She rejects to live an ordinary life of a female who needs to be protected. She not only protects herself but fights along with sikh brothers in the battle field. But in the novel *Ehu hamara jiwana* Bhano throughout her life remains the victim of socio – economic structure of society. Men keep on selling and reselling her for money. She never questions or leaves the home without ghagra and veil. In the novel *Partapi* the main character Partapi is raped by Mahant, Partapi kills the Mahant but she is not brave enough like Sundri. Partapi throughout her life does not reveal that she was raped by Mahant and Gurdev is not the son of Gajan but Mahant. She could not dare to tell that she loves Jeona and wanted to marry him. Behind all the sacrifices, the only aim is to keep her dignity in the society. Towards the end of life, she dares to demand her share of land from her husband. She realizes that only way to live a dignified life is to have possession of land. She understood that land was more valued than relationships. Once she gets her share of land, her son and daughter in law start respecting her. Bhano and Partapi are the construction of femininity which is best suitable to fit in the framework of society. Both possess socially

constructed feminine traits like obedience, quite, patience, customary, kindness, sane, shy, introvert, politeness, submissive etc. Both the characters show the process of social construction of femininity in society. Feminine traits are deeply inculcated in their personalities as both live customary lives without questioning the system and prove them socially correct. *Ehu hamara jiwana* and *Partapi* delineate that how social construction of femininity is constructed, inculcated, maintained by the society and how it becomes reality of everyday life. Bhai Vir Singh reconstructed the femininity by projecting an ideal female who rejects the stereotypic feminine traits. So literature is the best source to understand the construction, deconstruction and reconstruction of gender in the society of the times these three novels portray.

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HONOUR KILLINGS IN THE CONTEXT OF CLASS, CASTE AND GENDER INEQUALITY: A CASE STUDY OF PUNJAB

Kiranjit Kaur

ABSTRACT

The present paper is an attempt to examine the phenomenon of Honour killings in the context of class, caste and gender inequality in the Punjabi society. Punjabi society being an agrarian society, give much importance to class and caste. The class of the individual is specifically related to family and land. This class and caste stratification is maintained by communities to continue their status and prestige in the society. Being patriarchal society, gender also plays an important role in maintaining the status and prestige. The inequality in the form of gender, caste & class is deeply rooted in the Punjabi society. The opposition to this inequality is responded with violence. Honour killings in Punjab are result of status assertion and maintenance of class, caste and gender inequality. The honour killings in the Punjab depict caste and class inequality, reflected in the form of gender inequality. The present paper had made an analysis of cases of honour killings in the state of Punjab to explore the class and caste aspects of honour killings.

Introduction

The phenomenon of honour killings has an age old existence across all the societies of world, with a variation of its extent. Each society has its own reasons, justifications and sanctions behind these killings with one common characteristic that they are gender based killings and are based on the sentiments, which arise from socio-structural setup of the society. The present paper is an attempt to explore the nature and extent of honour killings in Punjab State and sanctions working behind these incidents.

Honour killing literally mean killing of an individual for the sake of honour. Amnesty International (1999) defines honour killings as ‘a form of intra-family violence, where women, who are seen as the repositories of the man’s or family’s honour, and as such must guard their virginity and chastity, are killed, usually by their male relatives, because they are seen to have defiled the family’s honour and must be killed in order to restore it’. It is a family initiated planned response to the perception that a woman has violated the honour of

the family by transgressing the boundary of sexual appropriation (Korteweg 2012). Honour killings are characterized by the presence of female victims generally killed by male members of their own family, as a punishment for violating the social norms, failing to protect their honour and thus bringing dishonour to the family. Thus, generally, the girls and women are the victims of the honour killing, but in some cases, men are also killed in the name of honour. However, the killing of women takes place at a much higher rate than that of men. It is considered as gender-based violence the roots of which lie in the socio-cultural setup of the society that inculcate this setup in the psychology of the members of that society, during the process of socialization. United Nations keep it in the category of human rights violations due to its systematic and specified observance towards women (Connors, 2006).

Mostly the victims of honour killings are young people, who opt to love or marry outside their caste, sub-caste or religion. However, the nature of honour killings varies from society to society. In majority of the cases, an honour killing is stern united decision of the family members, who not only come to a decision whether a girl or woman's behaviour merits death, but also plan the method of killing in a well manner. In such cases, the probability of the family pardoning the so-called dishonourable act is very less, because the family calls complete network of relatives, friends and associates for assistance and community, who provide a direct support. In some cases these killings are less planned, but they hold the same communal pressure and the same impetus to regulate women's behaviour, to express their loyalty to patriarchal society. These killings are resorted with an aim to have a deterrent effect on other girls and women who may have been planning to cross the boundaries of social norms (Kant 2010). Thus honour killings result from a culture of honour, subjugation and symbolize the most obvious and cruel method of regulating and subordinating women within male-dominated honour and shame societies.

Magnitude of Honour Killings

The practice of honour killing is a global phenomenon, which is prevalent in at least thirty-one countries on six continents (United Nations 2006). Honour killings have been reported in Bangladesh, Brazil, Ecuador, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Pakistan, Syria, Sweden, Turkey, Uganda, the UK and Yemen. Honour killings have also taken place in the USA and Australia. It seems, however, that honour killings are most prevalent in the Middle East and South Asia (Rapporteur on violence against women, 2002). The Lebanese media in 2001 reported 2–3 honour killings per month in Lebanon (Amnesty International, 2007). In Jordan, an average of 25-40 women are killed each year in the name of honour and honour protection is the motive for 55per cent

of the cases of violence against women in Jordan. Approximately 26 per cent of all crimes in Jordan are honour crimes (Arnold, 2002). Around 400 women were killed for reasons of honour in Yemen in 1997 (Wikam, 2003). In 2002 alone over 382 people, about 245 women and 137 men became victims of honour killings in the Sindh province of Pakistan. Over the course of six years, more than 4,000 women have died as victims of honour killings in Pakistan from 1999 to 2004. In 2005, the average annual number of honour killings for the whole nation was stated to be more than 10,000 per year (Hossain and Welchman, 2005).

Honour killing is a condemnable phenomenon that is rapidly on the rise in Asian countries primarily and most acutely seen in India and Indian expat families. India has reported over 1,000 cases of honour killings every year; and 900 incidents of such honour killings are reported from three Indian states alone: Haryana, Punjab, and U.P. The State of Punjab is infamous for honour killings. According to data compiled by the Punjab Police, 34 honour killings were reported in the State between 2008 and 2010: 10 in 2008, 20 in 2009, and 4 in 2010. In 2011, about 10 cases took place out of which 5 incidents occurred during one and a half month of June and July only. There were 103 cases of honour killings in Haryana alone within a period of four months in 2007. Bhagalpur in the northern Indian State of Bihar has also been notorious for honour killings. In June 2010, some incidents were reported even from Delhi. The figure for India is about the same as estimates for Pakistan, which has the highest per capita incidence of honour killings in the world (Joseph, 2010). There is no nationwide data on the prevalence of honour killing in India, as the National Crime Records Bureau does not collect separate data on the crime since it is not yet separately classified under Indian law.

Concept of Honour

When speaking about honour we must keep in mind that understanding of the word 'honour' may vary from culture to culture and from language to language. Further, in the international discussion on honour killings, various terms have been used to explain the crimes relating to honour. Literally, the English word 'honour' stands for a quality that combines respect, pride and honesty (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary). Campbell (1964) finds that in the traditional Greek mountain communities' honour is described in contexts of pride, respect or esteem, as well as it indicates certain traits on which the status of a group or a person depends. More particularly, it is referred to the sexual virtue of a woman. In Punjabi society, the honour is known as *izzat*, *ghairat*, *anakh* etc.

UN Special Rapporteur (1999) defines 'honour' in terms of women's assigned sexual and familial roles as dictated traditionally by family ideology. 'Honour' is often a social

quality: it revolves around the public perception of the individuals more than their actual behaviour. It is about a right to respect, in the sense of claim for respect. The community has an obligation to respect a person, so far as the code of honour is followed.

To define the term honour is a discomfort as the apparent meaning of honour implies that women embody the honours of males. A person's honour is dependent on the behaviour of others and that behaviour must therefore be controlled. The ideology of 'honour' is one which directly results from patriarchal gender roles, wherein conformity to these roles is demanded and is a source of status and acceptance within the community; and where deviance is censured. The honour of a person is directly linked to the women (Kant, 2010). Women's honour is generally seen as residing in the bodies of women. Female 'honour' is passive in nature centring on qualities such as subordination, modesty and endurance, whereas male 'honour' is active and dynamic, centring on qualities such as self-assertion, dominance and social status (Bourdieu, 2001). Thus, honour is a moral framework for behaviour, norms or rules that provide a basis for recognition in communal life. The concept of honour is enriched with great authority and is necessary for an individual to get a place in the community (Welchman and Hossain 2006).

Honour and Inequalities

The inequality is rooted in the human nature and is inevitable in all the societies. Different theorists explain the inequalities on different basis. Aristotle explained the concept of inequality in the light of dominating nature of the Romans, whose ideology justified slavery based on race (Sernau 2011). Weber (1997) describes three dimensions of stratification—class, status and power. Lenski (1966) labelled these dimensions as privilege, prestige and power, as presented through his ecological evolutionary theory. Marxists find origin of inequality in property and social relations of production. Functionalists' asserts that differences between level of talents, abilities and motivations are source of inequalities. In the contrast, the anthropological views consider that inequality is not based on talents and different levels of abilities of human beings (Diamond 1997; Harris 1989). Race, age, sex, class, religion etc. are considered various dimensions of the social inequality. These dimensions of the inequality put the individuals in a superior and advantageous position over the other. Out of these dimensions class, race and gender take up the central positions. Marx and Engles consider gender to be first line of inequality in terms of women being considered as property of men (McLellan 1977). Then it is a particular form of social status that besides conferring privilege also puts isolation and unrealistic expectations on women, in their

interaction with social class. Similarly, gender inequality gives privilege of power and prestige to men. This gender based privilege accords special deference and respect to men for their gender and their achievements. At the same time, it imposes a duty on them to protect, guide and support their family, to become respectable persons of the society. The present stratified societies, though inequalities are there, but not considered to be natural (Sernau 2011).

When seen through the ideas of Weber, honour killings are game of power. In every society, the individuals are stratified on the basis of power. In economic realm the power is social class while in social arena, the power is in the form of status, honour or prestige (Weber 1997). The status is not only confined to respect and respectability, but also vests in just showing off. It is represented through the symbols like one's family background, name, residence and reputation in the society. These symbols are common to all societies, though the indicators of these symbols vary across the communities. Thus, this honour is required to be maintained. Indian society is not an exception to it. The various types of social inequalities e.g. class, caste, and gender inequalities have been widely accepted and maintained by the societies. Indian society is segregated in multiple ways—caste, class, gender, wealth, poverty etc. out of these, caste, class and gender inequalities still persist explicitly.

Class inequalities are formed on the economic basis while caste inequalities are specified to social relations like endogamy, kinship and matrimonial relations. Kinship groups are formed on the basis of castes. The rules of endogamy and exogamy dealing with marriage are specific to each caste. However, in agrarian societies like India, caste and class overlap. As the castes were traditionally associated with the occupation, the caste plays an important role in deciding the class of a person. In patriarchal societies, one more factor of gender inequality is consolidated with class and caste to complicate the matter more. The chastity of women is strongly related to the caste status. High ranking the caste, the more sexual control its women are expected to exhibit. Such a control helps in ensuring the purity of lineage---i.e. maintenance of high status (Sernau 2011).

Punjabi society being an agrarian society, give much importance to class and caste. The class of the individual is specifically related to family and land. This class and caste stratification is maintained by communities to continue their status and prestige in the society. Being, patriarchal society, gender also plays an important role in maintaining the status and prestige. The inequality in the form of gender, caste & class is deeply rooted in the Punjabi society. In Punjabi society, the term honour is known as *izzat*, *ankh* and *gairat*. It is the key value, which is present since time immemorial and even persists today. It forms the basis of

various other practices and traditions such as infanticide, child marriage, *purdah* system etc. Generally, the term 'izzat' is defined as symbolic summary of man's past achievements and a main element in present power (Mandelbaum 1986). Pettigrew (1978) emphasises that the acquisition of wealth, land, influence and powerful contacts are important resources to maintain and enhance *izzat*, but the cardinal consideration is the behaviour of the women of the family. The family *izzat* is considered to be 'reduced to dust', if the honour of a family woman, particularly sexual honour is lost (Izmirlian 1979). The opposition to this inequality is responded with violence.

History of Honour Killings in Punjab

Punjab, being a border state, has always remained vulnerable to the foreign attacks for gaining political power. Due to this vulnerability, the feeling of honour (commonly known as *Ankh*, *Gairat* etc.) developed as part of the conscience of Punjabi people. The two most famous ballads of *Heer-Ranjha* and *Mirja-Sahiba* prevalent in Punjabi literary texts clearly shows the importance of honour and its protection, in the context of controlling women sexuality, in the Punjabi society. Recently, during the Partition of India many women were killed for the sake of family honour. In between the years 1947 and 1950, many women were killed by their own families, to save their honour from being defiled by the abductors. A large number of women were compelled to commit suicide. Then, there started a recovery operation at national level to recover and bring back forcibly the women who were married to men in another nation and another religion. The forcible conversion and marriage was taken as an outrage to both family and community honour. The honour of the women was associated with the community and national honour and recovery of the women was used as an assertion of identity of both community as well as nation (Menon and Bhasin 1993). In the present times, honour killings are going in the state of Punjab and their number is very high. Thus, it can be seen that the practice of honour killing and crimes based on honour have their roots in the history, spilling over to the present and the future.

Research Methodology

The study is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. For studying the quantitative analysis, the cases were selected randomly. Qualitative analysis of the cases has been done through documentation and verification of the cases.

The state of Punjab is divided into three regions- Majha, Malwa and Doaba. The overview of honour killings during the period of 2005 to 2012, in Punjab shows that these killings are more prevalent in the Malwa region followed by the Majha and lastly the Doaba region (Deol, 2014). The Majha region has been selected for the purpose of this study. Ten

cases of honour killings, which took, place between the period 0f 2009 to 2012 were selected for quantitative data. The Majha region has three districts namely Amritsar, Gurdaspur and Tarn Taran. Out of these three districts, Tarn Taran district has been selected for the purpose of this study. During the period of 2008 to 2010-16 cases of honour killing were reported in this area. So this area is considered infamous for honour killings. For qualitative research, the case study method had been adopted. Five cases of honour killing, which took place in this area during the period of four years, i.e. 2009 to 2012 were taken for the qualitative purposes of the study. The cases were documented from the newspapers, and have been personally verified, to explore the various social aspects of these cases.

Objectives of the Study

It has been generally seen that whenever such an incident of honour killing take place in a society, there is always an attempt to hush up the matter by the family and nearby community, and if it becomes known it is justified in the name of socio-cultural norms and values. The main thrust of the study is to explore the incidents of honour killings in the light of class, caste and gender inequalities.

Quantitative Analysis

This part of the article deals with the quantitative analysis of the cases. This analysis has been done with the help of various variables like age, sex, religion, caste and status of the victims of honour killings, which took place in the Majha region of the state of Punjab.

Sex

Honour killings are considered to be crime based on the gender inequality. It is generally said to be extreme form of gender violence, the victims of which are usually women. However, an overview of the cases taken place in the state of Punjab shows that the victims of the honour killings in Punjab are not only women but men also become victims of this crime.

Table 1 Distribution of Victims as per Their Sex.

Victim	Number of Cases
Girl	5
Boy	2
Both	3
Total	10

Table 1 shows that out of 10 cases, in 3 cases both the boy and the girl were victims. In 5

cases the victims were only girls while in 2 cases victims were only boys. The total number of victims is 14 out of which 9 are females while 5 are males. In one case even, the mother of the boy was also killed.

Age

It is generally the youngsters who became victims of honour killings. However, there is a variation in the age of male and female victims.

Table 2 Age Wise Distribution of the Victims

Age Group (in Years)	Boys	Girls
16-20	1	6
21-25	6	4
26-30	3	0
Total	10	10

↓.

Table 2 shows that the all the victim girls fall in the two age groups categories, i.e. 16 to 20 years and 21 to 25 years. 6 victim girls belonged to age group of 16-20 out of which 3 were minor as per law i.e. under the age of 18 years, while 4 victim girls were between the age group of 21-25 years. While the age of the victim boys varies from 16 to 30 years. Majority of the male victims i.e. 6 out of 10 belonged to age group of 21 to 25 years. 3 male victims belonged to age group of 26 to 30 years while 1 male victim belonged to 16-20 years age group.

Caste

Caste determines the membership of the community as well as the social status with regard to other castes in the society (Hutton, 1969). The prohibition of marrying outside the endogamous group of a particular caste is one of the main features of the caste system. The violation of this rule poses a direct challenge to the status of the particular caste and the power associated with it. The caste groups have a tendency to restore their status through violence, in case of such a challenge. This tendency is more among the higher status castes.

Table 3 Caste Wise Distribution of Cases

Caste	Number of Cases
General	7
OBC	1
SC	2

Total	10
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Table 3 shows that cases of honour killings in Punjab took place in all the categories. 7 cases of honour killings in Punjab took place in the general category castes while 2 cases occurred in the schedule castes i.e. Majhbi Sikh. The other backward classes lie at the bottom with 1 case of honour killing. However, it is not all the castes coming under the general categories are involved in these types of killings. All the 7 cases were committed by Jat Sikh families. The table also shows that honour killings in state of Punjab are not only took place in high caste families but also low caste families, whereas, the number of such cases in low castes is less.

Family Status:

Status refers to the class of the particular individual in the social terms. Ray (2001) describes that class is constituted of three elements—status (social aspect), class (economic aspects) and power (political aspect). Bourdieu (Butler, 2007) describes class as a phenomenon of power with a powerful symbolic and cultural component. He emphasizes that there is a correlation between class (economic) and status (social) power. There is an interaction as well as conflict between two classes, which arises due to structural patterns and continues to maintain it. This conflict is collective rather than the individualistic, and is more in higher and low status communities. High status classes are more prominent to use violence to maintain their status. While the lower status castes use violence as they have no power and status to lose. However the middle classes consists of heterogeneous groups, so the collective conflict identity consciousness is less in them (Butler, 2007). As the honour killing are used to express status assertion and identity consciousness, these killings took place more in high and low status families. The status of the girl's victim's family has been determined on the basis of caste followed by economic conditions and then political position of the in the areas of their residence. The status of the girl's family is taken into consideration because it is the girl's family, which perpetrates these killings.

Table 4 Family Status Wise Distribution of Cases

Status	Number of Cases
High	5
Middle	1
Low	4

Total	10
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Table 4 shows that half of the cases of honour killings i.e. 5 out of 10 took place in high status families followed by low status families. The incidences of honour killing are less in middle class families.

Narratives of the Cases

The case studies discussed below emphasize the various dimensions of the honour killings in the district Tarn Taran in the state of Punjab. These cases glorify the various social aspects of the honour killings in Punjab.

1. Punishment for Challenging the Patriarchal Values

This case shows that honour killings are result of revolt against the established values of the patriarchal society, where the family tried to save its honour and respect in the society while the couple was attempting to preserve their relationship. Along with it, the case also glorifies the importance of class and status in the society. The victims in this case belonged to Jat Sikh families, and met through a common relative. The family of the girl rejected their relationship after initial acceptance, on the ground of lower financial status of the boy's family. The family of the boy, resulting in disapproval by them also, took this rejection by the family of the girl as insult and a matter of honour. The continuous meeting of the couple, despite the opposition of families was taken as a threat to the patriarchal society. The spotting of the boy in the house of girl aggravated the apprehension of this threat and resulted in violent response. The boy was killed on the spot to mark the act of the boy as defiling honour of the girl's family while the girl was strangulated to death as a result of posing challenge to the patriarchal authority. One woman of the village asserted that though nearby people were sympathized towards the girl, on her engagement being broken, but some people in the village were also talking about the visits of the boy to the girl's house secretly at odd hours. The case shows that though the couple belonged to same caste, their families themselves set up their relationship, the family of the girl took it offensive when the couple refused to discontinue their relationship after the disapproval of the family.

2. Asserting Norms and Justifying the Punishment

This case shows that honour killings are not only result of violation of patriarchal values but also the other social norms and rules, which are unique to each society. The present case is result of violation of both customary marriage rules as well as the moral values. The victims

of killing in this case belonged to the same village but different communities. The girl, daughter of a Jat Sikh landlord family of high social status and the boy belonging to lower class Majhbi Sikh family of the same village, had a romantic relationship for the six years. They used to meet each other during night hours. There was a gossip in the village about their relationship. The family of the girl warned the couple to face dire consequences in case they do not forbear from their relationship, but the couple ignored their warnings. One-day father and maternal uncle of the girl abducted the boy and killed him. Following the murder of the girl, bodies of both were buried. The incident became known when missing report of the boy was filed with the police. The police recovered the bodies and the police performed the last rites of the girl after legal formalities as the kin of the girl refused to take her body. The father of the girl asserted that he did not repent on his act as he has done this for the family's honour. One old man of the locality justified the act by saying that to undergo imprisonment for restoring honour is better than living without honour in the society. The justification of the killing provided by the members of nearby locality shows the violation of social norms and moral values as a cause of killing.

3. Outcome of Social and Psychological Factors

The present case identifies another dimension of the honour killings. It exemplifies how the social traditions and patriarchal values form the basis of psychological setup of the mind of the persons. Third honour killing resulted from the marriage of a girl belonging to landlord Jat Sikh family with a boy of landless Jat Sikh family of the same village. There were rumours in the village about their secret relationship unknown to their families. When the family of the girl came to know about their relationship, they tried to convince the girl to end their relationship, with both love and the force. Despite this opposition, the couple eloped and entered into a civil marriage in the court without the approval of the girl's family, as a result, their affair became an open issue in the society. The girl returned to her parental home when her father agreed to her wedding with her choice. Later on, their marriage was arranged and was performed according to religious rites and ceremonies in the gurudwara, in the presence of family members and relatives of both sides. However, immediately after the solemnisation of the marriage, the family of the girl broke all the ties with the girl and they did not visit her for the post marriage ceremonies. After two months of the marriage, the girl's father, two uncles and three cousins along with some unidentified persons armed with swords and other sharp edged weapons entered the house of the couple and attacked them when they were asleep. The girl and her mother-in-law died on the spot while her husband was seriously

injured but survived. The case shows that though the wedding of the couple was solemnised with the involvement of both the families but this involvement was a result of compulsion. The girl's family failed to accept it willfully. Thus, it makes clear that the relations developed by the children without the knowledge and permission of the parents, always remain unacceptable to parents. Even after formal acceptance, which generally prove to be superficial, the parents fail to overcome their frustration developed due to rejection of their authority by their own children and combat the social pressure generated due to rumours in the society about their failure to control their children and thus losing the authority.

4. Social Support to Honour Killing

This case, which took place in a village of district Tarn Taran, shows that how strong the social sanctions are working behind these incidents, but even then, these killings fail to have a deterrent effect. In this case, both the boy and the girl belonged to high status landlord Jat Sikh families. They had love affair for the last two years but their families were against their relationship. They failed to convince their parents and as a last resort, got married in the Court. The family of the girl did their best to prevent this marriage. In the Court, the girl made a representation of apprehension of threat to their lives from her parents and the court ordered police protection to them. After one month of the marriage, they were attacked by the family of the girl and were killed in the day light in the presence of villagers. The accused were arrested by the police but acquitted by the court, as no one appeared in the court to give evidence, in spite of the fact that the family of the boy and the majority of the neighbours eye witnessed the incidence. The local residents asserted that it was the fault of the couple, who had married against the wishes of the girl's family. One woman, relative of the boy's family said that no doubt the boy was not as highly educated as the family members of the girl but he was good looking and belonged to a rich landlord family of the same community. However, she asserted that the family of the girl was justified in killing the couple, as they themselves were responsible for their fate. The girl did not care for the honour of her family and impact of her act on the life of her younger sisters and the boy defiled the honour of girl's family. Thus the absence of witnesses in the court and acquittal of the accused in the court, in spite of the fact that majority of villages residents witnessed the incident, shows that in the state of Punjab there is an indirect involvement of the society. However, the society does not take active participation in these incidents but provides full passive support.

5. Supporting the Sanctions behind the Honour Killings

This case specifies the sources from where the sanctions working behind the honour killings get their support. In this case, the girl belonging to a Jat Sikh landless family had a relationship with the boy of a lower community Majhbi Sikh family of the same village. When the father of the girl came to know about their relationship, he gave severe beatings to the girl and threatened to kill her if she dared to meet the boy again. After few days, he came across a gossip about their relationship and in a fit of anger, he again beat the girl. One woman from the neighbourhood heard her cry. The cremation of the girl was done at night, after strangulating her. The woman, who heard the cry of the girl, reported the matter to the girl when she noted the girl missing. However, the police did not take any action. The FIR was registered after one year of the incidence, that too only when the women approached senior police officials. The police started the investigation but the accused absconded. The police closed the case after declaring the accused proclaimed offender.

Discussion and Conclusion

Quantitative analysis of the study shows that though the honour killings are considered gender specific crime, the victims include both male and females. In all the cases young persons are victims but range of victims' age varies in male and females. Majority of honour killings took place in high caste Jat Sikh families. Status of the girl's family plays an important role. More is the difference between the status of the girl's family and boy's family; more is the chance of the honour killing.

In the context of qualitative aspects of the cases, an overview of these cases clearly shows that honour killings in Punjab are a reflection of gender inequality. In all the five cases, the prime victims are girls and the perpetrators of the killing are male members of the girl's family. The first factor, which instigates these killings in the above noted cases, is revolt by the girl against the parental authority. This gender inequality is clearly shown in the first and third case, where though the couple belonged to same castes and the families of the girls in both cases agreed for their marriage initially, later on killed when the girls refused to end up the relationship against the wishes of their families. Similarly in the fourth case, the family of the girl killed the girl and the boy for entering into court marriage against their approval, in spite of the fact that both belonged to same caste and class. The caste inequality is clearly represented through the killings in the second and fifth case, in which the girls belonged to Jat Sikh families, while the boys belonged to scheduled castes. The families killed the couples as soon as they came to know about their relationships. The cases 1 and 3 glorify the class inequality as a basis of honour killing. In these cases, the couple belonged to same castes but the families due to lower financial status of the boy's family rejected their

relationship. In other cases, the class inequality automatically creeps in, when the castes of the girl and boy are different.

Thus, it can be concluded that in the Punjabi society, the honour killings are strictly result of class, caste and gender inequality. The gender inequality is the first factor, which forms the basis of honour killing, followed by the caste and class inequality. Honour killings in Punjab are result of status assertion and maintenance of class, caste and gender inequality. The honour killings in the Punjab depict caste and class inequality, reflected in the form of gender inequality.

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CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS: EXAMINING GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN THE CASE OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to explore a number of issues which have emerged for women of Jammu & Kashmir as a result of Article 370 of the Constitution giving a special status to the state. The right to retain state subject attained through the efforts of some women of substance still points towards discrimination of the women of the state. The Constitution of India denies certain rights to women, particularly, the Article 370 which gives special status to J&K state according to which if a girl of J&K state marries to a boy of other than J&K state, she does not get her full rights in J&K state. Article 370 is detrimental to women, who are even born and brought up in the State of J&K but dared to make independent choices of life. It has been found that the people of the state are not aware of the implications of Article 370 with regard to the rights of women marrying outside the state. It also shows that even our legal system is patriarchal. Keeping in view the rising aspirations of the young women the Government needs to take appropriate and vital initiatives to restore the due rights to women of Jammu and Kashmir.

Introduction

After the Bhartya Janata Party (BJP) came in power in the Centre in 2014 the so far silent issue of Article 370 once again came under discussion at all platforms. One view emerged strongly that it needs to be abrogated, while others started analysing the special status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir in terms of its effects on its people. Examining it from gender perspective it appears that in order to protect its sovereignty, the fundamental rights of the women have been sacrificed. The focus is on the Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which gives autonomous status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir, has emerged as discriminatory against women, specifically under its Article 35-A. In the present article, an attempt has been made to explore that how a constitutional or legal provision can unintentionally be discriminatory to its own population. Therefore, the broad objective is to

study the discriminatory impact of the Article 370 on men and women when they make personal choices. Are people of Jammu and Kashmir aware of the implications of being a state subject? In order to have a comprehensive understanding of the issues and challenges the young women face as residents of J&K, the discussion in this article has been divided into three sections. To begin with an attempt has been made to understand the Article 370 from gender perspective, besides the objectives and the methods of study. In section II, a few cases have been presented of those women and men who have suffered due to Article 370. Further in the third section an attempt is made to know the awareness among girls of marriageable age, and the awareness and responses of the community members regarding Article 370 and its impact in case the girls marrying non-state subjects, besides the concluding remarks.

I

Understanding Article 370 from Gender Perspective

The state subject law, the Article 35 in Jammu & Kashmir was formed in 1927 under the pressure of Kashmiri Pandits, as they launched a movement fearing Muslims from West Punjab would come to settle here and hence seek share in Government employment, purchase land and may drive them out (Zahir-Ud-Din, 2017). Muslims also did not want outsiders to settle in Kashmir. In May 1954, the Government of India amended the Article 35 of the Constitution and Article 35-A was enforced in J& K through the Constitution (applicable to J& K) in exercise of the power conferred by Clause (i) of the Article 370 of the Constitution, with the concurrence of the Government of the state of J&K. It is an Article that empowers the J& K state's legislation to define 'permanent residents' of the state and provide special rights and privileges to those permanent residents. This Article empowered the state Government to deny citizenship rights to refugees from West Pakistan and all other Indians.

When India got Independence, J&K chose to remain Independent, but when Pakistani tribals attacked J&K in 1948, the Maharaja of J&K chose to accede to India to save his state. To keep the commitment Article 370 was incorporated in the Constitution and as a result, India cannot enforce any law connected with J&K, excepting the defence, external affairs and communication without the approval of the state government. Article 370 gives autonomous status to the state of J&K. Thus, the state's residents live under a separate set of laws including those related to citizenship, ownership of property and fundamental rights as compared to other Indians.

The person who is having state subject of J&K is called permanent resident of the state. State subject is a certificate which shows a particular person belongs to J&K and is a

permanent resident of the state. A person gets state subject if his father and his grandfather having the same, means it is a hereditary process along the patrilineal lines.

For the people of India there is only one system of citizenship but in the case of J&K it is a dual citizenship- one is of the state and the other of India. The citizens of J&K are the citizens of India but the citizens of the rest of the country cannot be the citizens of J&K. They do not have the right to property and right to vote in J&K under the Article 35-A. The Centre Government cannot abrogate Article 370 unless the state government agrees to it. The Centre also cannot pass laws for J&K as it has its own constitution (Sathe, 1990). When Article 370 gives special status to J&K, then ipso facto the Constitution of India becomes discriminatory, particularly towards women by denying them certain rights:

- a. Having a special status denies a girl of J&K marrying a boy of the other state of India even if the girl has been born and brought up in J&K and a permanent citizen of the state.
- b. If she marries a person of other state, she loses all her rights regarding education, employment and property including her ancestral property.
- c. In J&K, domicile certificate is issued to women with a rider 'valid till marriage' only and after marriage they have to acquire a fresh permanent resident certificate (state subject). If she marries outside the state, she loses her status as a permanent resident of J&K.
- d. If a boy marries a girl of another state who is not permanent resident of J&K state, the boy will not lose any right; rather his wife would get all rights in J&K state with regard to employment, scholarship and property.
- e. In a patriarchal structure, the girls leave the house to join the place of husband, but the question is of making the personal choices and hence violation of one's fundamental rights. This indeed was an act of discrimination against the state subject (girls) marrying non-state subjects only on the basis of gender. It created a lot of confusion and resentment amongst women who had married outside the state.

As a matter of fact many women (10 writ petitions were accessed which were filed in High Court of J&K), suffered due to article 370 and two cases are worth mentioning here:

Dr. Susheela Sawhney's case triggered the whole debate on the issue, was working as Assistant Professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology of Government Medical College, Jammu on adhoc basis. She along with Dr Ravinder Madaan applied for the post of Assistant Professor in the same department of the college. Dr Ravinder Madaan was

selected for the said post. Dr Susheela could not get the job on the ground that she was married to a non-state subject. When Dr. Susheela Sawhney appealed to the J&K High Court, it even did not strike down such an interpretation of the state. The court took the view that a female must follow the domicile of her husband and by marrying a non-state subject, has lost her status as a permanent resident of the state.

In a similar case where Amarjit Singh Kour filed a suit in the court of sub-judge, stating that her father, Ram Singh died in 1977 leaving behind the five dependants- including brothers, sisters and her mother as his legal heir. She pleaded that for the purpose of succession she is governed by the provisions of the Hindu Succession Act and is entitled to equal share in the property left behind by her father. The empirical study also reveals that when girls who were married outside the state applied for some jobs, they were rejected on the grounds that they were not the permanent residents of J&K state as these girls by getting married outside the state had lost their PR status. After this the girls¹ filed writ petitions in the J&K High Court and taking the cognizance of all the cases and particularly, in the case of the State versus Susheela Sawhney, the full bench of Jammu and Kashmir High Court finally concluded the cases in October 7, 2002. As per the landmark judgment:

“In view of the majority opinion, we hold that a daughter of a permanent resident marrying a non-permanent resident will not lose the status of permanent resident of the state of Jammu and Kashmir.”

Thus, the grave discrimination which was being faced by the daughters of permanent residents on their marriage to the non-permanent resident was given a decent burial. The judgment has been lauded by the jurists and human rights activists as “most fair” and “just” and totally in accordance with the doctrine of equality and non-discrimination on the ground of sex as envisaged by the Constitution of India. Not satisfied with the full bench judgment of the High Court, the state government filed a special leave petition in Supreme Court of India, which later on they withdrew after a notice had been issued but without granting any order for stay of the operation of the judgment.

After this Dr Susheela Sawhney was able enough to get the job in J&K State. Now according to this judgment, the State Subject woman marrying a non-state subject will not lose her PR Status of J&K and also she would be able to get job and scholarship in J&K State. She was also entitled to get parental property such as land.

In the State of Jammu and Kashmir, as projected by the Advocate General, a citizen possesses dual rights, one is citizenship of India; and the other is the status of a State Subject or Permanent Resident. The later status is peculiar to the State of Jammu and Kashmir. This

status, if a female (married or widow) wants to continue to enjoy, then she should have her domicile in the state. This right is dependent and is linked with her domicile in the state. The argument put across is that if the wife or a widow changes her residence, then she would lose her domicile in the State and as domicile and State Subject status has been put at par, she would lose that status also (*Kashmir Law Journal*, 2003).

The statement made by Narendra Modi, the Prime-Minister of India, in Lalkar Rally at Jammu on the different treatment being given to Umar Abdullah and his sister by the State laws raises a valid and important point pertaining to the state-subject. The right to government employment and right to property are only for those who belong to the state of J&K, which have been defined in the Section 6 of the Constitution of J&K. At the first look, right of being permanent resident of J&K state after marrying non state subject can be seen in the case of Umar Abdullah, as the off springs of Umar Abdullah are state subject by birth though he is married to non-state subject, but on the other hand, the off springs of his sister are not state-subject and are barred under law to own immovable property of their mother and also to claim any public position in the state of J&K.

This raises a very important question as to whether it is constitutionally permissible to have discrimination on the basis of sex of a person only, so far as bestowing the rights upon the state subject is concerned. Children of the daughter of the state marrying non-state subject cannot get state subject but a male state subject marrying a non-state subject does not face such disability and even the female non-state subject becomes the state subject. This has given rise to an anomalous situation and worst kind of discrimination. But unfortunately the situation has not been commented upon politically so far. Even women organizations which are called for the protection of women rights have also not shown any concern or indulgence to this vital issue.

The other situation may arise where the daughter marrying non-state subject owns landed property which of course, now after the judgement (2002) of High Court of J&K she can possess and she decides to come and reside in J&K State with her children permanently. The important issue that emerges is whether in such a situation her children would be treated as state subject after her death. Who will be the legal caretaker of her children? According to the Article 370, they are not the state subject hence they will not get their Status in J&K State. As per the law, after her death the property has to be given to her parental relations or has to be escheated to the state as neither husband nor her children will be in a position to own the property.

It is discrimination based upon sex of the parent of the beneficiary and the same may not hold well in the eyes of law and is legally non-sustainable. Section 6 of the constitution of J&K is harsh against the female of J&K married to a non-state subject and their children. It also violates Article 14 of Constitution of India. Even after the judgment passed by the Full Bench of the High Court of J&K, the females who are permanent residents of the state of J&K married to non-permanent residents of the state of J&K are not in a position to effectively own immovable property as the State Subject of J&K. The children of such a female who is permanent resident of J&K state are neither given the status of permanent residents of the state of J&K nor have they been in a position to own the property of their mother. They are not even entitled to seek admissions in colleges/university being restricted to the permanent residents of the State of J&K. It is pertinent to quote a biographical note of Ms Singh Kohli (2017) who was born in Udhampur, a district of J&K state. Her mother was a resident of this state who married a non-state subject (though he was also born in Udhampur). Her grandmother bought some property in Udhampur and passed it on to her mother. Now her mother has passed away and her children (she being one) can stay in her property but have no rights on it. Being a non-state subject she could not get employment in the state. Thus, the right to retain 'State Subject' attained through the efforts of some women of substance points towards yet another weakness of the Article 370 of J&K State.

These Laws/Rules/Regulations thus framed pertaining to grant of Permanent Resident certificates are being interpreted by the state in a manner just to defeat the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution of India. Sethi (2014) comments that it is settled position of law which is also the basic theme of Article 14 of the Constitution of India that discrimination on the basis of sex of a person is violation of Right to Equality.

In order to make comprehensive study of the views and to know the awareness of the people with regard to provisions of the Article 370 and gender discrimination an empirical study has been carried out in Jammu district, where town Jourian from Akhnoor block has been studied. Three groups of people, namely, girls married outside the state, girls of marriageable age and community members who are parents of the girls have been studied. Ten cases could be prepared of those women who married outside the state and they filed writ petitions in the High Court of J&K. In addition 10 more cases were prepared to know their awareness with regard to Article 370 who have married outside the state. They were contacted through snow ball technique and were interviewed through telephone. While out of the other two groups, 50 respondents each were selected randomly and were interviewed with the help of two separate interview schedules.

II. The Cases

In this section focus is laid on women of J&K who have married outside the J&K State. Ten case studies of women were prepared who have married outside the State. The objective was to know their awareness that is, to what extent they know about Article 370 and also how much they know about their property rights. It makes us to know that if they have ever tried to avail the property, scholarship and employment rights after their marriage in other States of India.

On knowing the life history of the respondents it was found that they lacked information about Article 370. The respondents have been married outside J&K state, and most of them(5) in the adjoining area, i.e., in Pathankot city of Punjab, and other parts of Punjab, except for two who have married in other states of India. They all are happily married and none of them except two respondents have had marital problems in their life. They are satisfied with their lives and also they do not want to acquire the parental property. Some of them said that girls should not acquire parental property after marriage. After learning the legal provisions the respondents treat it as discrimination with the girls of J&K as the acquired parental property cannot be transferred to husband and children. According to them, the girl marrying outside will be helpless if her husband would leave her after divorce and she would not be able to transfer the acquired parental property to her children. All of them, getting aware of the legal provisions, tried to suggest that government should change its laws and policies so that girls in future do not have to bear this type of discrimination. 'This is an injustice with the girls of J&K which restricts them to live the life in the way they want. Also this takes away the freedom of girls to an extent'.

The case of DarshnaDevi, daughter of a citizen of J&K, married in Haryana, is an illustrative of such a discrimination. She has led a very hard life with her in-laws- the fact reveals a bitter truth of the Article 370. Actually her parents were not ready to marry her in Haryana but relatives convinced them for her marriage. After marriage she started having bitter experience from her in-laws, they started beating her including even her husband. She came to her parents first time after marriage and shared her experience with her parents. Knowing her sorrows, her father did not allow her to go back and said that "I will give you my all property if you permanently come back. But Darshana did not agree with this and said that she could not live without them now and there was no other option. But she did not go back for six months and suddenly one day two persons from her in-laws came to pursue her and to take her back with them. At this time, Darshana's father once again requested her not to

go but she did not agree and went with her in-laws. While going to Haryana she was expecting a peaceful life forgetting everything that happened in past, but what future held for her was something different. After few days her in-laws again started beating her. Even her husband started torturing her. She tolerated this for two years and was having a hope that one day they would have some positive change. But her in-laws did not change themselves. She was having two sons and one daughter and one day she thought that she could not continue her life in Haryana, because it was affecting her children's studies. She decided to go back to her parents along with her children and asked her husband to choose whether he wants to live with his parents or with her. Her husband decided to come permanently to J&K with his wife and children. After coming back she tried to purchase land in Akhnoor(J&K) but she came to know that she could not purchase the land. As her father had died, there was nobody to help her. She even applied for scholarship of her children but she came to know that her children could not have scholarship and government job in J&K. This disappointed her and one day she requested her brother to help her by giving a piece of land but her brother denied to give her even a single inch of land. This brought a darkness in her life but after discussion she came to know that she is having a legal right on her parent's property but her children and husband would not have any right on that property. She told that she was not having state subject of J&K and she could not file a writ. She went to apply for state subject to have her right of property but still she was disappointed because in her opinion it was a discrimination with her that her children cannot have right on that property. She was worried about her children and very sadly commented that her children's future was ruined. Before marriage she was not aware of all this.

The courageous case of Anju Sharma who was a permanent resident of J&K and has married in Amritsar. She has studied upto 10th standard. She wanted to live a happy and independent life after marriage, unknowing that one day she will have a bitter experience. After few months of marriage her husband started beating her. She revealed everything to her parents and her parents decided to take her back to home. Her parents tried to convince her husband not to get separated, but he refused and got divorce. After the divorce she was very depressed and tried to cope up with the situation. She also has a daughter with her, they both live in J&K State. Anju is having her own boutique and it is her only source of livelihood. Anju's parents have given her a piece of land to enable her to fend for herself. Before marriage the respondent was not having any knowledge about women rights and Article 370 but only knew about the State Subject as she has the status of state subject of J&K state. According to her, state subject is important to get employment in J&K State and nothing

more than that. Further she was asked whether her daughter has the right to inherit her property, which she had acquired from her parents. In her answer she replied that her daughter has right on her property. After knowing everything about property rights and Article 370 she got worried about the future of her daughter after her death. She is not satisfied with the law of J&K made for girls marrying outside the state. She suggests making the girls aware of the legal hassles.

III

Views and Awareness of Marriageable Girls

Further it was attempted to find out whether the young girls of marriageable age knew the legal restrictions put on them. In this part of the paper, the focus is to know the views and the awareness of girls residing in an urban area of the state about their rights with regard to article 370 who have attained the legal age of marriage. These young girls were between the age group of 18 and 32 years and they all were Hindus and belonged to different caste groups; however more than 50 per cent were either Brahmins or Rajputs. All of them were educated, of which 60 per cent have got higher education. The majority of girls know about rights of the girls, but they do not know their legal rights in the context of article 370. However, all of the girls, except one, want to marry within the state. It shows that girls do not want to leave the J&K state after marriage. The awareness of girls about PR Status (permanent resident status) was also studied. Some treat it as an identity proof; some said that it is a document by which we can get job and property. Some girls were also there who did not know about PR Status. For some girls PR status would get changed after marriage, but, on the other hand, some said that it did not change after marriage. According to them, rights remain same after marriage, because they are guaranteed by the Constitution. It is clear from the above that all the respondents are educated but none of them has proper knowledge about property rights and article 370. On learning the reality, these girls of marriageable age suggested that there was a need to make the girls aware of the facts by conducting awareness camps, forming committees, organizing rallies, and through media.

Views and Awareness of the Community Members

Community people are representative of the society and their knowledge plays an important role in getting the information in the larger context. The views of general public on equality of property rights to women marrying outside state reveal that members of a community are conscious about the lives of their daughters. The age group of members of the community interviewed falls between 30 and 69 years. The community people include both male and

female respondents belonging to various caste groups. However, a majority of the respondents are Brahmins, and otherwise also Brahmins are predominant in the Jammu region. Most of the women are homemakers, a few of them are working and the others are running their own business. Their awareness about PR status reveals that 72 per cent of them knew that the girl would lose her PR status if she got married in other than J&K state. But, at the same time, it was interesting to find that a majority, i.e., 80 per cent of respondents were aware of the fact that girls will have right on parental property if she gets married in other than J&K state. Further they were probed whether the children or husband would have right over the property she has acquired from the parents. Out of the total, 36 per cent said that only children will have access on her property, while 56 per cent said that both husband and children will have access on her property, a few others said that both would not have access on her property. The responses show that they do not have complete and clear knowledge about the property rights of women. Coming to know the facts from the researcher the people themselves suggested that they should make aware the masses by forming committees as it is a serious matter. Further they were asked specifically who would be the owner of the property after her death. It was found that 58 per cent said that Government would be the owner of the property, 28 per cent said the parents would be owner and 14 per cent said the brothers would be the owner of her property. It is only after learning from the researcher about the rights of the women as per Article 370; majority of them, i.e., 80 per cent said that it is discrimination with the girls of J&K state if they cannot transfer the property to their husband and children. But some respondents (10) were those who said that it is not discrimination with the girls of J&K because it is mentioned in the Constitution of J&K that is, Article 370 and asks to respect the Constitution. They also added that if the husband or children of the girl who has married outside State will have right on her property then there will be no security of the property of the people of J&K State for which especially this Constitutional provision has been created. So for the security of the properties of the people in J&K it is not an injustice.

To sum up, we may say that there is still discrimination in Article 370 against girls of J&K marrying outside J&K State. After a long struggle, the girls who married outside the state got entitled to their rights in J&K, but still their rights are not protected as their children and husband cannot have access to her property acquired by her and her parents. It may be justified if her husband does not have right to access her property, but at least her children should have the right on her property because otherwise the purpose of giving property right to girls is defeated. If a girl of J&K State is a single child of her parents and she marries outside the state, then who will be there or to whom she will transfer her parental property. It

has also been found that people of J&K are not aware of Article 370 and the rights of women marrying outside the state. Therefore, the Government should take vital and appropriate steps to make the women and the general public of J&K aware about their rights as per the Article 370.

The Article 370 has also become a political issue during the recent years. As the political parties both at the centre and the state often raises this issue. Some parties want to get it abolished on the basis of development issue but some political parties does not want as they do not want the outsiders to come and get citizenship of J&K State. However, keeping in view the modernizing forces, the level of education of women, their employment avenues, mobility and awareness created as an impact of mass media and social media, it is extremely difficult for any governance to insulate its population and hence to deny rights². Moreover, when the young boys and girls of Kashmir under the initiative of the UPA government are getting education, jobs and scholarships in various institutions in different parts of India, then it does not seem very appropriate to put such restrictions. Besides this, it raises a big issue of Identity. Women have right to have their own identity, equal opportunities and make own choices. In J&K state people of variety live together and it may not be a serious issue amongst the Muslims who practice different marriage rules, but for Hindus and Sikhs such laws may be oppressive which needs to be reviewed and addressed in the context of modern India.

Notes

1. Ranju Modivs State of J&K, Anjali Khosla vs. State of J&K, Kamla Rani vs State of Jammu and Kashmir, Dr.Reeta Gupta vs. State of J&K, Dr.Rubeena Nassarullah vs. State, ShabnamTaj vs State of J&K, Abha Jain vs State of J&K, Sunita Sharma vs. State of J&K, These were the cases on which the combine judgment was made at High Court of Jammu&Kashmir by Justice V.K. Janji. All these cases were filed by the girls who married outside J&K State. Before marriage they were not aware of their property rights. After marriage when these girls tried to get job, scholarship, parental property in J&K State then they came to know that they cannot get their rights in J&K after marrying outside J&K State. Getting disappointed they filed writ petitions at the J &K High Court. According to the judgment made by Justice V.K. Janji, these girls got all their rights and therefore from that time onwards girls

marrying outside State can avail all the rights in J&K State even if they are married outside the state.

2. Giving ownership rights to women would be a favourable step towards their empowerment. Renowned Sociologist Bina Aggarwal (1995) has given four arguments in favour of giving land ownership rights to women in terms of welfare, efficiency, equality, and empowerment. She through empirical data has propounded that giving ownership rights to women would be a better proposition in all respects and it will have a positive impact on the children, family members, self-development and would lead towards social equality.

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Secularism and the Sikh Community

Jagrup Singh Sekhon

The preamble of the Indian Constitution unambiguously declares India as a secular democratic republic wherein the main relevant clause guarantees freedom of conscious and free profession, practice and propagation of religion. Religion is not debarred from public but it is disassociated from the state, which is required to treat followers of all religions equally. The concept of secularism has gained a connotation of promoting an attitude of mind, which far from being hostile to religion, is best described as “equal respect to all religions’ (Chandok: 2010:333-34, Madan: 1983:18, Miri: 1994:33). However, in spite of the pious constitutional provisions, assuming equidistance from all religions non interference with doctrinal and creedal systems ,freedom to learn, educate and even proselytize , or advocate no discrimination on the basis of religious beliefs, trouble lies in the implementation of the provision given in the Constitution and laws enacted by the legislative body. The post independent polity provided space for each and every religion, a level playing field, but the nature of reality in the society was that individually sharing common religious and caste identity came together to be part of a new political process.

This paper is a modest attempt to address the question of secularism vis- a- vis the Sikh Community in Punjab, both in historical and contemporary contexts.

As mentioned above, India after independence adopted secularism as state policy and assured equal treatment to all religious communities and protection of religious liberty to all. Personal laws of different communities were also protected. They could establish and maintain institutions for religious and charitable purposes, as well as set up their own educational institutions to protect their language and culture, to impart education of their choice. All such commitments were enshrined in different articles of the Constitution.

Any investigation concerning the Sikh ethos and the nature of reality has to be cognisant of the fact that the Sikhs believe that practicing their religion is directly linked with their destiny. Their lives are affected by their religious beliefs and practices. The social, political and religious persona gets not only mixed but even combined. The structural universe of the Sikh polity is such where spiritual and temporal power emanates from almost similar sources.

One has to be circumspect while focusing on the growth and development of certain attitudes of the community keeping in mind the relevant significance of the issue of history. Social Scientists cannot

maintain the pretence that the public and private domains of the community are divorced from each other. Since the beginning of the last century Sikhs have been vocal, refusing to be a subordinate minority and have acquired language, identity and a historically and socially specific understanding of their place in the plural society in the country. The British administration subtly helped to deconstruct the tradition which in their view marked the Indian society as syncretic. Subsequently, politics and religion in tandem have been playing a profound role in the lives of the Sikhs. And it has remained so even after the partition of the country in 1947 and the formation of the present day Punjab in 1966.

The Sikh community in Punjab participates in two competing political systems. Dualism here involves a political cum religious arena confined only to the Sikhs, and second arena in which they contest is the inter-communal and secular political environment. Sikh politicization and institutionalization demonstrates a continuing interaction of ethnicity, religion and cultural nationalism that appeared to be congruent of national integration (Wallace: 1988: 4).

Sikh Self Identity: Historical Context

The history of the origin of Sikhism is traced to the first Guru of the Sikhs, Baba Nanak who was born in 1469 in present Pakistan Punjab. The two major religious communities around, Muslim and Hindu, were living in dissensions than co-existence. The Muslims were the rulers though in minority and the Hindus were the subjects. Leading an exemplary life, Guru Nanak presented a new vision of life to end the dissension among the people. His ideology was so simple, so compassionate and so practical that the disenchanting people found in him a Messiah who gave a new purpose to their lives. The new ideology laid emphasis on a self-reliance achieved through hard work which would be the source of their identity and self-respect. Primacy was given to build an equitable society where the deprived, the oppressed and the women could experience a new meaning to their existence. The nascent religion had, from the very beginning, the seeds of political viability. The Sikhs devised an inbuilt system for the co-operative provision of free food (*langar*), accommodation, and security for the needy. A better status was promised to the women, tillers of the land, and for the manual workers--the section that had long been denied opportunities for upward social mobility and dignified life. The affirmation accorded by the Sikh religion to the physical world and to honest worldly pursuits, must have worked as an opportunity for an optimally good society (Singh: 1983:77-78).

The teachings of Guru Nanak reveal his familiarity as much with the socio-economic life as with the politico-administrative arrangements of his times. His conviction is that the entire universe is

suffused with divine light. Caste distinctions and social differentiations did not harmonise with this conviction. The underlying attitudes of the new faith were all tracing and discarding many dogmatic shackles and putting forth a positive prospect of humanity (Grewal: 2002; 28-30). Guru Nanak used a variety of names for God and used both Hindu and Muslim nomenclatures, Ram and Rahim ascribing Him the True Creator of the True Name. The religious and worldly aspects of Guru Nanak's preachings had political undertones. He was among the first who paid homage to the ideal of "there is no Hindu: there is no Mussalman". It was this ideal which gave birth to Punjabi consciousness and Punjabi nationalism (Singh: 2002:48). Before his death at Kartarpur (Pakistan) the Guru selected his successor from his followers and by the time he breathed his last the nucleus of a new social group had come into existence with an acknowledged Guru to guide its social and religious life.

The first three successors of Guru Nanak made extensive efforts to institutionalise his ideological parameters. The fourth successor of Guru Nanak, Guru Arjan Dev compiled this ideology along with the ideas of various saints, *bhaktas* and *sufis* in a holy Granth named Guru Granth Sahib. This distinct identity of the followers led to the adoption of distinctively Sikh ceremonies on the occasions of birth, marriage and other events. The idea of equality was openly demonstrated in the institution of congregational worship and community meals (Grewal: 2002: 59-60). With the passage of time, the Sikhs became more assertive in their general existential attitude which the Mughal rulers viewed unfavourably. The Mughal emperor Jahangir ordered the martyrdom of the fifth Guru in May 1606 considering the fast growing new faith a danger to his empire. The action of the state was a stunning blow to the followers of the fifth guru. Guru Hargobind, the son and successor of Guru Arjan reacted sharply to the enormity of the injustice and girded two swords symbolizing, his *Miri* (spiritual) and *Piri* (temporal power). He encouraged his followers in martial activity and clashed with the forces of the state a number of times. It was a clear departure from the practices of his predecessors which made Guru Hargobind as persona non-grata with the Mughal Empire. He was arrested on the orders of Jahangir and was detained in the fort of Gwalior in 1617. This conflict continued and one of the sons of Guru Hargobind, Guru Teg Bahadur, who was the ninth Guru of the Sikhs was martyred in 1675 by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb for fighting the cause of the down trodden and the oppressed. Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and the last Guru of the Sikhs thought about his own position as being the successor of Guru Nanak. On the Baisaiki day of 1699, he created a distinct identity of his followers by creating the Khalsa Panth and invested it with unmistakable personality. The principle of unity and equality was reinforced. The Sikhs became a full fledged *teesra panth*, the third alternative to Hinduism and Islam, with distinctive symbols and rituals and a separate code of conduct. Guru Gobind Singh declared the *Khalsa* to be the heir of everything he possessed, because he himself owed everything to them (Singh: 1997:47). The already existing places of

pilgrimage and the *Holy Granth* compiled by the fifth Guru, which Guru Gobind Singh willed to be invested with eternal Guruship after his death reinforced the distinctive identity of the Sikhs. These developments resulted in the rise of the community's political ambitions and led to direct confrontations with successive occupants of the Indian throne. The confrontations by the followers of Guru Gobind Singh continued after his death too. The Sikhs came out victorious from the difficult times and carved out for themselves various autonomous principalities under their respective leaders. They were completely independent in the administration of their territories till the emergence of Maharaja Ranjit Singh who established his empire during the first quarter of the nineteenth century. His empire spread between the river Sutlej and the mountain ranges of Ladakh, Korakoram, Hindukush and Sulaiman and was recognized by the rulers of Kabul as well as by the British rulers of India (Grewal: 2002: 103). The Sikhs continued to be a minority during the regime of Ranjit Singh. The socio-economic conditions under the establishment of the regime exhibited no rancour of their harrowing past throughout the period. No case of forcible conversion to Sikhism is reported to have occurred (Singh: 1983; 81).

Within ten years of the death of the Sikh ruler in 1839 his empire was taken over by the British. With the British occupation of Punjab, Christianity entered the region. The presence of three communities i.e. Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs provided the British regime a communal climate in Punjab and they made all efforts to manipulate the infighting through deceitful means, including the conversion of religious communities into an electoral college for their co-religionists by reserving Muslim and Hindu seats in Amritsar municipal elections in 1888. The population composition of British Punjab was distributed in such a way that it did not allow numerical domination by a single community. It is to mention here that the Muslims were a majority in the west, Hindus in the east while the Sikhs were most prevalent in the centre. However, the population of the Hindus and Sikhs was a little less than that of Muslims. Unlike the rest of the country the British Punjab was characterized by the existence of three separate but interconnected social systems, one in each religious community (Deol: 2000: 66), It provided the British rulers a chance to promote the socio-religious divisions in society in two ways. First, the "western liberalism" that accompanied the Raj aided each community in Punjab to establish a network of organizations devoted to communal propaganda. Secondly, the institutions transplanted by the British bureaucracy and urban municipalities extended their socio-economic rivalry into politics by introducing new areas of power and competition (Uprety: 1980:199).

The British rulers consolidated their position in the newly acquired state by introducing substantial measures like reducing land revenue, encouraging cash crops and increasing irrigation facilities for

the benefits of the peasantry. The Sikhs being the largest proportion of peasants in the state benefitted the most. The recruitment policy of the British rulers was also used to woo Sikhs towards the British Empire. The systematic and helpful attitude of the British towards the Sikh elite began to establish belief that they could move forward only with the support of the British. The writings of the British scholars also renewed the debate of a distinct identity of the Sikhs (Singh: 1983:7-9). From the assertion of their separate socio-religious identity, the educated urban Sikh elite took the next step to establish their independent political identity. The first Singh Sabha was established in 1873 at Amritsar with the following specific goals(a) to propagate true Sikh religion ; (b) to edit and publish historical and religious books;(c) to propagate current knowledge, using Punjabi as a medium and start magazines and newspapers in this language;(d) reform the apostates and bring them back into the Sikh fold(Barrier:2000:63-64). By the end of the century there was mushroom growth of Singh Sabhas in the state. Their places of worship, called gurudwaras, became the centres of all their socio-religious activities. The Singh Sabha Movement threw the leadership of the community in the lap of the newly emerged English educated middle class. It made the Sikhs more Sikh minded and fixed the gaze of the community at the glory that was Sikh history, thus precipitated the already segregated communities of the Punjab. This culminated in the formation of the Chief Khalsa Diwan in 1903. A Sikh Education Society was founded in 1908. Such efforts brought a cultural renaissance among the Sikhs through the creation of educational institutions, publications of pamphlets, magazines on Sikh history, traditions and religion. The British officials also encouraged the efforts made by these organizations and joined hands in their endeavour. They helped them in running these organizations and encouraged them opening new educational institutions (Barrier :2000:57-92). The foundation of Khalsa College in Amritsar was laid by James Lyall, the then Lt. Governor of Punjab in 1892. It was followed by opening of many schools and colleges (including Lyall Khalsa College in honour of the then Lieutenant –Governor of the province) in many parts of the state thus making the western style education more acceptable (Deol : 2000:70). Though there were a variety of issues but the major thrust was on a clear demarcation of Sikh communal boundaries and the defence of Sikh religion from dangers from other religions. This process of demarcation of religious boundaries had important ramifications for the Sikhs in the coming years as the question of Sikh identity became a legal issue in 1898 when the widow of a Sikh aristocrat Dayal Singh Majithia contested his will on the plea that the Hindu law of inheritance under which her husband had bequeathed his fortune to a trust did not apply because he was a Sikh and not a Hindu (Grewal:2002:146). The most hotly contested argument within the Singh Sabha Movement was whether Sikhs were “Hindu”. The Sanatanists viewed Sikhism as an offshoot of a broadly defined Hinduism. The Sikh Gurus had not created distinct social and ritual boundaries. On the other hand,

“Hum Hindu Nahin” became the battle cry of radical Sikhs (Tat Khalsa Sikh). The issue of Sikh identity was further sharpened by vociferous Arya Samaj attacks on the Sikh faith. In 1899, two widely circulated pamphlets entitled *Sikh Hindu Hain* claimed that Sikhs are integral part of Hindus. In response to this, Bhai Kahn Singh published his classic tract *Ham Hindu Nahin* (Deol: 2000:74)

The leadership to the Hindu Community had mercantile castes viz Khatri, Arora and Bania followed by the ritual high caste Brahmins. These castes possessed a tradition of innovation and creative response to cultural and political change and they had also a lead over other communities in business, administration and other occupations. The developments in the state after the annexation of Punjab, particularly the rising impact of Christian missionaries, created uneasiness among the urban educated Hindus in the state. The large scale conversions to Christianity of the low castes and untouchable Hindus and Jats to Sikhism affected the strength of the Hindus. The overall socio-economic and political scenario in Punjab was considered a threat to the existence of Hindus. The Arya Samaj was founded in 1877. Its founder Swami Daya Nand belonged to Gujarat. Of all provinces in India, the Arya Samaj made the greatest impact in the Punjab. It also provided organisational networks for the solidarity of the community and its messages were disseminated through magazines, newspapers and a dedicated band of preachers. This resulted in the founding of centralized organization namely Dayananda Anglo-Vedic Trust and Management Society in 1886 which opened the first Arya School in Lahore in the same year which was followed by opening of many educational institutions in Punjab including Kanya Mahavidalya at Jalandhar in 1896. The primary focus of Arya Samaj was preaching of the Vedas and reform in Hindu society through condemnation of idol worship, child marriage, practice of sati etc. It propagated social integration of the society by advocating inter-caste marriages, abolition of untouchability, dispelling of orthodoxy, superstitions etc. from the society. The religious reform movement of the Arya Samaj, particularly its campaigns against other religious groups in Punjab brought it into direct confrontations with these groups (Sharma: 2000; 100-101)

Similar types of movements also took shape among the Muslims as well. Writing about the then prevailing state of affairs at the turn of the century. Kenneth W. Jones writes:

Pattern of conflict became institutionalized; provocations produced set responses. What had been implicit in the nature of Punjabi society now became explicit. Tension might increase or decrease, but beneath the surface fears, suspicion and hatred remained. The existent divisions of Punjabi society between religion, language and script deepened. By 1900 communalism became the dominant form of identity in Punjab (Dhami, 1985:14).

The logic of communalism was sustained on factors considered to be favourable to these communities. The Muslims considered their demographic preponderance as their legitimate claim of proportional representation in respective influential positions of power, while the Hindus stressed the importance of modern and secular education, the area where they were advanced relatively. The Sikhs added the third dimension of loyalty and cultivated the fear of getting 'elbowed out' by numerical dominating communities (Sohal: 1985:74-75). This socio-economic antipathy was transformed into political hostilities when the leaders of these communities began to use their communal organizations to protect and advance their economic and political interests. Thus communal competitions among the elites of major communities began and eventually intensified communal rivalry transforming the separate socio-religious identities into separate political identities.

In the process of communalisation, the vernacular press played important role. There was competition among the communally oriented leaders of the communities to set up new presses. Lahore and Amritsar emerged as centres of native journalism with 67 periodicals at Lahore and 22 at Amritsar. The Tribune, an influential paper expressed the feeling of the Hindu upper and middle classes while the Sikhs took initiative to propagate community feelings (Sohal:1985:75) by establishing two newspapers i.e. *Khalsa Gazette* (an Urdu weekly) and *Khalsa Akhbar* (a Punjabi weekly) in 1883. The leaders of both communities used polemical writings to degrade other communities. Sensationalism and yellow journalism became prominent features of the then Punjab press. It remained involved in the lingual, regional and communal issues which further sharpened the communal consciousness and emotions of the people. The reason for this consciousness was not only the growth of press in Punjab but also community consciousness, as Punjabi language was used by the Sikh organizations and Hindi by the Hindu organizations. This was quite evident from the rise of religious and communal movements in the state at the end of 19th century (Singh: 2009:5-7). As the new century unfolded, "the three communities in Punjab increasingly used the press to disseminate ill will and hatred towards each other" (Uprety: 1984: 95). The press at its most bellicose in Punjab became the single most important vehicle responsible for the flaring up of inter-communal conflicts as each community armed itself with dailies, weeklies and monthlies to propagate their views and to attack or even ridicule others. The Hindi and Urdu press largely appealed to the Hindu and Muslim sentiments respectively while the *Gurmukhi* press appealed to the Sikhs.

Language became yet another important issue of conflict in late 19th century. Punjab following the example of North West Provinces that had earlier become a centre of Hindi-Urdu controversy in

1881. Though Urdu was the official language, Arya Samajists advocated the cause of Hindi and wanted it to be accepted as the national language. On the other hand the Sikhs considered this move against Punjabi which they claimed was spoken by all communities as their mother tongue. The government had to intervene to resolve the controversy and assured that Urdu will remain the official language (Sohal: 1985:83-84). Differences in language and script came to be subsequently associated with differences in religion thus deepening communal consciousness and its appeal.

The land Acquisition Act 1900, which benefited the scheduled agricultural castes (most of them were Sikhs) created serious discontentment among the Hindu trading castes. Again, the constitutional proposals of separate electorates in early 20th century were viewed by the Hindus as a concession to the Muslims. The Punjab Hindu Sabha spearheaded the movement leading to the founding of All India Hindu Mahasabha from 1907 to 1914, and five Hindu Sabha conferences were organised in major towns of Punjab. On the other hand, the CKD which commanded a major network of Sikh religious, educational and social organizations continuously articulated Sikh political interests. Sikhs too were accorded separate electorate under the Montford Reforms Act 1919 (Grewal: 2002; 152).

During this period, a secular, national and revolutionary movement namely Ghadar movement emerged firstly in foreign lands by the migrant Sikh peasants and members of other communities but it was crushed with heavy hands by the British rulers in 1917. This movement proved to be weak as compared with the purely communal or non secular forces since the latter were fully embedded in the social structure (Puri:2000:145-70).

Institutionalization of Sikh Politics

The early 1920^s witnessed the emergence of many powerful anti- British movements in the form of Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) and Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) ostensibly to liberate the Gurudwaras from the control of the British backed *Mahants*. The formal organization of the SGPC in December 1920 can be considered as the single most significant event in the institutionalization of Sikh politics. In conceptual terms it can be described as a political system for a particular and varying range of Sikh affairs. Since its inception it strived to exert its control over Sikh religion. The SGPC Act in 1925 accorded this organization legislative legitimacy. In this way, it became a political system for particular and varying ranges of Sikh affairs having relations, directly and indirectly with other systems like the state and central governments and other groups of Sikhs. Internally, the dynamics of the system have revolved around the relations between the contending

political parties and groups. Individual Sikh leaders and their contending groups contest supremacy locally and within the SGPC (Wallace: 1988: 11-12).

The SGPC with its vast network of patronage and influence has developed into a platform for legitimizing the democratic leadership of Sikh society and has come to acquire tremendous significance over the ninety two years period of its existence. The periodic elections after every 5 years generate a lot of enthusiasm and throw up issues of seminal importance to the Sikh community. Elections to the SGPC in the post independence India have been markedly different from the ones held in pre-independence. Before independence the basic political issue being freedom, the Akali Dal being a part of the national movement, strived with and for the nation. No doubt inner party factionalism was rampant but no faction deviated from the mainstream politics. Though the SGPC originated as a Gurudwara Sudhar Movement in early 1920 to liberate the Sikh shrines from the Mahants but it came to an end with the enactment of the Sikh Gurudwara Act in 1925, which brought the Sikh Gurudwara under the democratic control of the community. The Act made the Sikh community custodian of the Sikh shrines thus providing huge resources and facilities for food and shelter. Though the primary objective of the SGPC is to manage the affairs of the gurudwaras and to propagate Sikh religion through its legally created *Dharam Parchar* Committee, it also has direct bearing upon the Punjab politics in general and the political issues relating to the Sikh community in particular (Narang: 1996:143-54).

The struggle for control over SGPC has remained political since the first Gurduwara elections in 1926 as various Sikh political parties and groups have been involved in the appropriation of the SGPC resources, rather than in defending or promoting the religious community. The Akali Dal which won the polls, continued to face a bitter opposition from its rivals both from the Congress and other Sikh groups. The elections of the SGPC became more politically oriented in the late 1930s, as these were contested more or less on distinct party lines i.e. SAD(Master) supported by the Congress, Central Akali Dal(of Kharak Singh) and Khalsa National Party(SS Majithia) helped by the Unionist Party. The elections of the Punjab Assembly in 1937 and 1946 under 1935 Act promoted coalitional tendencies among different parties and groups in the province, as a consequence this increased the relevance of the SGPC and its resources for creating support structure for the elections (Singh: 1986:101-127). The independence of the country in 1947 changed the nature and structure of the political process but the struggle to control SGPC remained extremely intense.

The elections to the SGPC have been contested with the view to strengthen the Sikhs politically who as a minority were in a politically disadvantageous position. The Punjabi Suba Movement launched by the Akalis immediately after independence determined the course of events till it became a

reality. A total of three SGPC elections 1956, 1960 and 1965 were held during this period over the issue of Punjabi speaking state which was more or less an attempt of securing a Sikh majority state (Narang: 1996:143-144). On the other hand the ruling Congress Party used all means to pursue its aims in the SGPC body. It passed many bills to use the SGPC for petty political ends. The party even entered in the election fray of the SGPC in 1954 under the garb of a frontal organization known as the Khalsa Dal. On the other hand the Akali Dal had its alliance with the CPI in these elections. The communists formed the Desh Bhagat Board. This alliance emerged victorious by winning 106 seats out of total 132 (Singh: 1986:70-73).

In the 1957 national and assembly elections, the Akali Dal merged with the Congress. The Congress Party succeeded in ousting Master Tara Singh from the SGPC. A similar pattern of struggles for the appropriation of Gurudwaras' resources were witnessed in the subsequent years. As mentioned earlier, the thrust of the SGPC elections in post independence period i.e. 1954, 1960 and 1965, was dominantly towards achieving the Punjabi Suba which became reality in November 1966.

The 1979 elections of the SGPC discovered a new focus-- the issue of state autonomy. The constraints of coalition building and its sustenance did not allow the Akali Dal to highlight communal demands of the Sikh community. The Congress during this period was out of power in both state and the centre and played a dubious role in these elections by supporting anti Akali factions particularly the candidates of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala. Political parties and organizations like Dam Dami Taksal led by Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala had come to the fore in Sikh politics after the Sikh - Nirankari conflict in 1978. The other parties /groups which actively participated in these elections were another Akali Dal led by Khalistani protagonist Jagjit Singh Chohan, the newly created Dal Khalsa and other protégé of Congress i.e. head of Budha Dal led by Baba Santa Singh. Bhai Amrik Singh, the right hand of Bhindranwala and President of the All India Sikh Students Federation (AISSF) contested against the Akali Dal candidate Jiwan Singh Umranangal from Beas constituency. Jiwan Singh Umranangal was bitter critic of Bhindranwala brand of Sikh politics and was on his hit list. These parties, particularly the Bhindranwala group, raised the issues of Sikh identity and Sikh nationality. This developed further into the Sikhs advocating the theory of a separate nation and also a sovereign status (Narang: 1996: 144-45). But all these political and religious outfits toeing extremist and fundamentalist issues were rejected by the Sikh electorates. Moderation had its sway over the general public as only seven out of 140 seats were won by these forces (Suri and, Dogra :1988 : 123-34).

The next SGPC elections took place in 1996 after a gap of 17 years because of terrorist violence (1978-93) in the state. The political process remained in a limbo as the state remained under

President's Rule firstly from September 1983 to September 1985 and later from May 1987 to February 1992. The working of the SGPC came to a standstill and its relevance was questioned by the radical forces in the state. Terrorism took a heavy toll of human lives (Puri, Judge, Sekhon: 1998). Though an effort was made to restore order in the state by the Rajiv –Longowal Accord in July 1985, but it proved to be short lived as the Akali government, which came to power in 1985 elections under the leadership of Surjit Singh Barnala failed to restore peace and normalcy in the state. This government was dismissed in May 1987 and it eroded the base of the traditional Akali Dal. The 1989 parliamentary elections brought forth a new leadership of Simranjit Singh Mann. But this new radical leadership could not make much headway in bringing the Sikhs and Punjab out of morass and hence lost its legitimacy. The Akali Dal was itself divided into various groups and factions. But the traditional leadership of the Akali Dal was gaining momentum in spite of the rise of militant and radical groups in the Akali Dal. The 1996 SGPC elections were contested as plebiscitary so as to resolve first the issue of leadership and then to build a party (the SGPC) and redeem the lost glory of the other Sikh institutions (Narang: 1996: 145). The major fight in these elections was between the Shiromai Akali Dal (Badal) and more than half a dozen factions of various Akali Dals who formed the United Front. Though the major focus of the United Front leaders in the elections was on religious issues relating to the Sikh community but they also raised political and economic issues like remunerative prices for agricultural produce of the farmers, subsidized inputs, marketing facilities, non acquisition of productive land of the farmers for industrial purposes, soft loans to improve the living conditions of the people were raised within the religious framework (*Ajit*: October 4, 1996, *Punjabi Tribune*: October 4, 1996). Serious allegations of mismanagement of gurdwara affairs and rampant corruption in SGPC administration were levelled against Badal and Tohra group who had control over these institutions. Voters were appealed to throw them out in these elections. The front had the support of the ruling Congress in the state as many prominent leaders of the party openly opposed candidates of the SAD (Badal).

However, the moderate SAD (Badal) focused on rural development and the entire campaign was dominated by promises to the rural peasantry. But from political promises to the conduct of the campaign, in which liquor and other intoxicants like opium and *bhukki* were freely distributed , it was difficult to imagine that the electoral process was for a religious body and not for the state assembly (Purewal : 2000:89). Parkash Singh Badal, the leader of the SAD (B) while campaigning for the elections emphasized the importance of the SGPC elections in the context of coming of the state assembly elections in 1997. He emphasized that victory in these elections would pave the way for the Akali government in the state.

The outcome of these elections was that the electorate once again rejected the radical and communal politics and overwhelmingly voted for the moderate Akali Dal. It won 158 seats in a house of 170 members.. The radicals were pushed to a distressingly low level. The results clearly rejected the politics of extremism, separatism and indicated that the majority of the Sikhs accept only democratic and secular tradition of Akali politics. The outcome of these elections was a serious setback to the ideology of separatism, especially for the demand of Khalistan.

The 13th SGPC elections took place in July 2004. These elections were held immediately after the 14th general elections in the country. The fight in these elections was between Shiromani Akali Dal (Badal) and Panthic Morcha consisting of splinter Akali factions. Another radical group in Sikh politics i.e. Dal Khalsa provided tactical support to the Panthic Morcha. The Congress was in power in the state at the time of elections. As usual, it was alleged that the ruling party took keen interest in the gurdwara elections and helped radical forces to capture control of religious institutions. The Panthic Morcha raised issues like getting Amritsar a Vatican City like status, restoring the sovereignty and independence of the Akal Takht, building memorial in the Golden Temple complex in the memory of 1984 victims etc. The SAD (Badal) also raised both religious and other issues including the Satluj -Yamuna Link canal. The Panthic Morcha suffered defeat as it could win only 22 seats in a house of 170 members. The SAD (Badal) captured 133 seats while the rest went to independents. The SAD(B) changed its strategy in September 2011 elections and carved an alliance with the Sant Samaj as well as the Dam Dami Takshal of Bhindranwala. It was done keeping in view the coming state assembly elections in January next year. Though this election witnessed a multicornered contest but the major players were the SAD (B) and Panthic Morcha (comprising many splinter Akali Dals including Panch Pardhani-- a new radical organization, a few groups of the All India Sikh Students Federation etc. and the Akali Dal (Amritsar). It contested only 140 seats. The Panthic Morcha had the blessing of the Congress party. The voting rights of the Sehajdhari Sikhs remained the centre of controversy in this election along with some another economic and political issues' particularly the water dispute with Haryana. The ruling National Democratic Alliance led by the BJP at the centre, issued a notice on October 8, 2003, possibly under pressure from its ally SAD(Badal) to debar the Sehajdhari Sikhs in the 2004 SGPC elections. The SAD (Badal) accused the Panthic Morcha a B team of the Congress Party and raised the issue of anti-Sikh riots in Delhi in 1984 and other issues of such nature. The SAD (Badal) contested election on 140 seats with more than half new faces, including a few with militant background. The Head of the Dam Dami Baba Harnam Singh Dhumma played a major role in these elections. The SAD (B) and the Sant Samaj won 157 seats out of total 170 in the 2011 SGPC elections.

Control over the SGPC through democratic process is not only desirable for its vast resources, but also for the great influence it exercises in almost all matters concerning the Sikh community. It provides a powerful network of political linkages across the state, as every village and street in the city in Punjab has a gurudwara which is directly or indirectly linked with the SGPC. Thousands of employees working in the SGPC headquarter at Amritsar and in other local gurudwaras under its control are a powerful network between the party that controls SGPC and the Sikh community. Thus the gurudwaras are the bedrock of political and social activities of the party in power in the SGPC during state and national elections. Material assets included, as of now maintenance, development and management of 86 gurudwaras across the country, has a total budget of Rs. 806 crores in the year of 2013-14 (The Tribune: March 16, 2013) and over 1000 crore in 2016-2017. Notably, the SGPC had total revenue of 2 crores in 1970 which increased to 3 and 6 crore in 1977 and 1980 respectively (Wallace: 1988: 12).

But the role of the Sikh leaders was not confined to community issues as they played an important role during the freedom struggle and even after. Nehru acknowledged the courage and sacrifices of the Akalis during Guru Ka Bagh Morcha in 1920's near Amritsar. Another important development of this period was the emergence of a militant Sikh organization particularly in Doaba region of Punjab namely 'Babbar Akali Dal'. It had twin objective of vindicating the Sikh faith and gaining political independence. They invited Hindus and Muslims for eliminating the British officials and their local sympathizers. They published a paper *Babbar Akali Doaba* to propagate their ideology and political message. The British regime crushed this movement with a heavy hand by eliminating its prominent leaders. The aim of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha was to organize labourers and peasants for establishing a revolutionary and socialist India. One of the sessions of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha was presided over by a veteran, secular and revolutionary Sikh leader, Sohan Singh Josh and the other session, held at Amritsar in August 1929, was attended by Jawahar Lal Nehru. There was a close link between the Indian Congress Party and Naujawan Bharat Sabha. In 1928, the Sabha supported the Congress in its protest demonstration against the Simon Commission (Grewal: 2002; 164-65). The formation of the Kirti Kisan Party by Sikh leaders, Sohan Singh Josh and Bhag Singh Canadian having rural and revolutionary background, supported the idea of expropriating large landholding and increase in wages and the reduction in revenue and water rates. The British declared this organization illegal in 1934. The Akali Dal and the Central Sikh League leaders attended the All Parties Conference at Delhi in February 1928, and Mangal Singh Gill became a member of the Moti Lal Nehru Committee to frame the constitution for India as an alternative to the proceedings of the Simon Commission. The Sikh leaders also participated in the Congress Session at Lahore towards the end of 1929 in which the resolution for complete independence was passed. The Sikh leaders

participated in the celebrations of Independence Day on 26 January with great enthusiasm. The Akali Dal and the Central Sikh League and Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee also joined the movement (Grewal: 2002; 168-69). The Sikh leaders were strongly opposed to the Communal Award though the Congress remained neutral and tried unsuccessfully to ensure that it did not become the basis of formal legislation. In November, 1938 when the All India Akali Conference was held in Rawalpindi, the Akali and Congress flags were hoisted together, and the Akali leaders appreciated the Congress as the only representative political party in the country, a true trusteeship of national honour and respect. On 1st December 1940, a General Conference of the Sikhs was convened at Lahore to pass a resolution against the formation of Pakistan. It was also argued that the issue of Khalistan was meant to oppose the demand of Pakistan. The Akalis even fought the elections of 1946 independently of the Congress, in support of the unity and integrity of the country.

Political Dynamics: Post -Independence Era

The partition of the country in 1947 and trifurcation of the state in 1966 changed the demographic structure and territorial jurisdiction of the present Punjab. Pakistan got the larger part of pre-independence Punjab as the Muslims were fifty-one percent of the total population while the Hindus and Sikhs constituted only thirty-three and twelve percent respectively. These proportions were radically altered with the partition and as per 1961 census. The Hindus with sixty-four percent became the majority community while the population of the Sikhs was about thirty-three percent. In the post trifurcation Punjab, the Sikhs became the majority, with sixty percent.

The post independence political power in the State Legislative Assembly was jointly shared by the elites from the rural Sikh peasantry and the urban Hindu middle class. The old urban Sikh class, which played an important role in socio-political affairs of the Sikhs in the pre-partition Punjab, was marginalized in the newly emerged power structure, based on the numerical strength of competing social groups. In 1952 and 1957, in the Punjab Assembly Elections not a single urban Sikh, belonging to the urban trading caste, got elected. This unfavourable social political milieu forced the older Sikh urban elite to religion for solace and to the brotherhood of the larger community. The top level position in the Akali Dal was already with this class (Master Tara Singh). They began providing leadership in cultural spheres by editing newspapers, magazines and writing extensively on Sikh religion and history. In this way they assumed the role of opinion makers, with emphasis on maintenance of separate identity for the Sikhs.

The demand for a Punjabi *Suba* was formally adopted by the Akali Dal in 1949 to maintain an independent status of the Sikhs and to save them from Hindu domination at the state level. The

argument was that political power cannot survive without faith in Sikhism, and Sikh faith can weaken and even wither away in the absence of political power. This demand of the Akali Dal became stronger after their defeat in first general and state assembly elections. They feared that Punjabi would likely remain a secondary language even in Punjab. The formation of Andhra Pradesh on the basis of language and the announcement of the formation of State Re-organization Commission by the Central government kindled hopes and fears in the Punjab. The Akali demand for the formation of a Punjabi-speaking state was also supported by the Communist Party. But the fear expressed by others was that such a state would eventually lead to separation and logically to the disintegration of the country. This development created bitterness in the state as both protagonists of the Punjabi Province and its opponents started using all means at their disposal to negate the other's viewpoint.

The Central government gladdened the Akali Dal by creating a new state of PEPSU by amalgamating the Sikh princely state of Punjab having a majority of Sikhs. It was later on merged with the Punjab in 1956. The Akali Dal was politically marginalized by the new political structure and the rise of rural peasantry under the Chief ministership of Partap Singh Kairon as they remained satisfied with the development process of the government. The peasantry, more or less, remained solidly behind the Congress in the secular political domain as they benefited the most from the rural development schemes. In 1957 State Assembly Elections, the Akali Dal did not contest on account of an understanding between the Akali and the Congress leaders. The Working Committee of the Akali Dal resolved on 30 September 1956, that the Dal would not have a separate political programme of its own. It would concentrate on the promotion of the religious, cultural, social and economic interests of the Sikh Panth, and guard any violation of 'fundamental rights' which might adversely affect Sikh interests. It would actively participate in the working out of a Regional Formula, and in the implementation of various plans for the development of the country (Narang:2002:302-3). Master Tara Singh declared that he would never forsake Nehru, and Nehru also praised Master Tara Singh for his courage and honesty of purpose. The new state of Punjab was inaugurated on 1 November, 1956. Partap Singh Kairon was the Chief Minister. The Akali legislators joined the Congress Party under his leadership.

But, on the other hand the Akalis regarded the Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) as their domain almost by right. The Akali Dal remained in firm control of the SGPC, which provided it not only financial resources but also a penetrative network of communication and a sound infrastructure for a mass mobilization during its agitations and elections. The control over SGPC provided the Akali Dal leadership of Master Tara Singh to build a coalition of urban Sikhs with big landlords and the tradition-oriented peasantry. With a Gurudwara as a centre of political activity,

political activity was presented as *dharma yudh*. On the other hand, the factionalism in the Congress party in the state also contributed to increase the salience of communalism in its power by failing to take any principled stand on communally sensitive issues i.e. reporting of the correct mother tongue in census, reorganization of the state on language basis etc. The coming of Partap Singh Kairon to power in 1956 turned the tables and he succeeded in fighting both Hindu and Sikh communalism. The Congress contested elections to the SGPC under a frontal organisation Sadh Sangat Board. The defeat of Akali Dal in the 1962 elections was followed by a split in the party, one group led by traditional Sikh leader Master Tara Singh and the other by Sant Fateh Singh. The latter group emerged dominant in the Akali politics as its leader gathered strength among the rural Jat Sikh peasantry. Its leader Sant Fateh Singh shrewdly spelled out his political agenda and presented the Punjabi Suba demand as a purely linguistic demand for Punjabi speaking people of the state and emphasized the unity and brotherhood of Hindus and Sikhs (Kaur: 1999:34-38). The position of Sant Fateh Singh was further strengthened with the results of SGPC elections in 1965 as his group won 95 out of 138 seats (Arora: 1990: 28-29). Though later on Master Tara Singh tried to revive his control over Akali politics by raising some emotional and religious issues but the determined Sant and other developments in the country did not allow him to take centre stage in state politics. Sant Fateh Singh continued his demand for the creation of Punjabi Suba on language basis which became reality on November 1, 1966 but with many disputes and unresolved issues which influenced the politics of the state and the country in the coming years (Brass: 1974:324).

The reorganization of the state brought structural changes in demographic, geographical, economic, cultural, and political spheres. The most important changes with far reaching implications were that the Sikhs became a majority in the state and this has shaped the politics of the state till now (Wallace: 1988: 9). This demographic change has brightened the future of Akali Dal as a party of the Sikhs (Anand: 1976:270). In the changed conditions, the Akali Dal supported by particularly the Sikh peasantry, adopted a pragmatic policy in having political and electoral alliance with the Communist parties and Jan Sangh later on in almost all state assembly elections.

In the 1967 elections, the Akali Dal could not get a majority on its own. Master Tara Singh Akali Dal, which demanded votes on special status for the new state, could win only two seats. The Congress emerged the largest party by winning 48 seats with 37.7 percent vote share of the total votes polled. The SAD secured 19 seats with 11.95 percent votes followed by Bhartiya Jan Sangh (BJS) getting 9 seats with 9.8 percent vote share. Because of the division in the Party in 1964, the CPI and CPI (M) contested these elections separately. The anti- Congress sentiment was so strong that the party could not muster the support of five legislators for a majority in the house. The United Front which

was formed just before the elections managed the majority by securing the support of all non-Congress parties and independent legislators. It was the first non-Congress government in the state under the leadership of Gurnam Singh--- a retired Judge of Punjab High Court. Comrade Harkishan Singh Surjeet was appointed Convener of the coordination committee for the smooth working of the government. A Common Minimum Programme (CMP) was chalked out for the working of the UF ministry (Sandhu and Singh: 2008:105). Though the UF ministry began its regime with tremendous enthusiasm and goodwill but the internal contradictions among the constituent political parties, defections, frequent changes in the cabinet etc. forced the Chief Minister to resign on November 22,1967. It is alleged that the Congress managed large scale defections in the Sant Akali Dal Legislative Party by wooing Lachhman Singh Gill, a prominent legislator of the party along with sixteen MLAs. The Congress party supported Lachman Singh Gill to form the government. The Congress did not join the government and provided outside support to it (Singh: 2002:324). The Gill ministry was also riddled with many controversies and could not complete even one year.

Mid-Term elections in the state were held in February, 1969. The SAD fought these elections as a united group with a closely knit alliance with the Jan Sangh and also a partial alliance with one of the communist parties i.e. CPI (M). The SAD(S)'s position was strengthened with the merger of the splinter Akali Dal after the death of its leader Master Tara Singh (Singh: 2006: 307-8). The SAD emerged as the largest party by winning 43 seats with 29.4 percent vote share of the total votes polled in the election. The number of Congress legislators came down from 48 in 1967 to 38 in these elections with 39.2 percent vote share. The BJS won 8 seats i.e. one down from the previous election with 9 percent vote share. The CPI and CPI (M) won 4 and 2 seats respectively.

The Akali Dal Jan Sangh coalition government was formed under the leadership of Justice Gurnam Singh. The Left parties offered outside support which was very critical for the survival of the government. The strengthening of the support base of the Akali Dal and increase of strength in these elections was the result of structural changes which took place in the rural power structure during the late 60s because of the Green Revolution. The Akali Dal led government started espousing farmers' economic interests which challenged the political monopoly of the Congress in the state. (Dhami: 1985:90). The government launched several new projects for agricultural and industrial development to strengthen the economy of the state. The Upper House of the State Assembly was abolished, a new state university i.e. Guru Nanak University was opened in Amritsar, and the Punjab School Education Board was established to improve the standard of education in 1969. A thermal plant was also set up in Bhatinda to improve the power generation in the state.

The coalition government under the leadership of Justice Gurnam Singh began well and the relations between the Akali Dal and Jan Sangh remained cordial. The Sachar Formula was replaced by the Three Language Formula. Punjabi was made compulsory medium of instructions at all stages in government schools while Hindi was made the second language from the fourth class. English was made the third compulsory language from the sixth class onwards. But the differences between the two parties cropped up on the implementation of this formula in private and government-aided schools. The Akali Dal was in favour of a uniform implementation, while the Jan Sangh was against it. The Congress Party also took a stand similar to that of the Jan Sangh (Anand: 1976:282-83). This development brought bitterness between the coalition partners. On the other hand the intra-Akali conflict, the threat given by Sant Fateh Singh to go on a fast unto death on the Chandigarh issue and many other controversies brought political instability in the state. The Akali Dal got divided between the supporters of Chief Minister Gurnam Singh and those of Sant Fateh Singh. It led to the demise of the coalition government resulting in the resignation of Gurnam Singh on March 25, 1970. It was followed by another coalition government under the leadership of Parkash Singh Badal on March 27, 1970. The relations between the Akali Dal and Jan Sangh remained far from cordial in this government. The Jan Sangh withdrew its support on the issue of jurisdiction of Guru Nanak Dev University which was opened in Amritsar on November 24, 1969. The government survived with the support of defectors and also the Congress (Bhatnagar and Verma ,1988:167-68) .

In the meanwhile parliamentary elections were announced in March 1970. The Congress entered into an alliance with the CPI and won 10 seats and its ally CPI got 2 seats. The Akali Dal could win only one seat. These elections marked a new era in the state politics and reestablished the dominance of Congress in Punjab. The poor performance of the Akali Dal in these elections forced Parkash Singh Badal to advise the Governor to dissolve the assembly for fresh elections which the latter agreed and Punjab was brought under Presidents' Rule on June 13, 1971 (Kaur :1999:112-113). The elections to the state assembly were held in March 1972. The Congress Party continued its alliance with the CPI and it benefited both. The Congress won 66 seats and its ally CPI 10 the highest for the party since the 1952 elections. The Akali Dal could get only 24 seats and Jan Sangh just disappeared from the political map of the state as it failed to enter into an electoral alliance with the Akali Dal.

The Congress formed the government under the leadership of Giani Zail Singh-- a non Jat who completed his full tenure and provided political stability in the state. He started to demonstrate that he was a better Sikh than the rest of the Akalis. He established foundations in the name of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh with substantial financial support from the state. The important

religious functions during his period were the celebration of 300 years of the martyrdom of the ninth Guru Teg Bahadur in 1975, the naming of state highway as Guru Gobind Singh Marg, renaming of the cities in the name of Gurus and their Sahibzadas. On one such occasion, he was honoured at Damdama Sahib (one of the five Takhts of the Sikhs), in recognition of his services to the Sikh Panth. To counter the religious overtones of the state government the Akali Dal adopted a programme in 1973 known as the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. It restricted the Union Government's jurisdiction to only four subjects, i.e. Foreign relations, Defence, Currency and Communications and raised the bogey of discrimination against Sikhs and that "Religion was not safe without sovereignty". The political goal of the Akali Dal was described as, "an autonomous region in the North, as an integral part of the Union of India ...wherein the Sikhs interests are constitutionally recognized as a primary and special importance as a fundamental state policy"(Umranangal:1974:1-12).

At the same time, the Akali Dal continued its focus on economic issues particularly related to the peasantry, and organized farmer's rallies including one addressed by Jayaprakash Narayan in October, 1974. They raised the issue of discrimination by the Centre over the delay of allocation of heavy industry to the state, alongwith non-renumerative prices for farm produce. The party vehemently opposed Emergency (1975-77) in the country and thousands of its workers, including top leaders, courted arrests. The opposition to the Emergency earned the Akali Dal the credit of being a champion of democracy and raised its stature in national politics. Living together in jails during the Emergency period with the political leaders of other non-Congress parties helped in a certain secularisation of their political perceptions and priorities (Puri: 1988:310).

The March 1977 Parliamentary Elections changed the political scenario in the country in general and Punjab in particular as the Congress party failed to win even a single seat in the state, even after securing about 35 percent of the total votes polled. The Akali Dal and its allies Janata Party and CPI (M) won handsomely. The defeat of the ruling party was the result of people's reaction against atrocities committed by it during Emergency. The SAD fought these elections with a commitment to strive for a secular democratic socialist society laying major emphasis on social, economic and regional issues. Two of SAD members joined the national government headed by Morar Ji Desai. It was followed by the state assembly elections in June 1977. The Akali Dal-Janata Party and CPI (M) alliance won 91 out of a total 117 seats. The SAD alone won 58 seats i.e. one seat less than the absolute majority. The coalition ministry was headed by Parkash Singh Badal, with outside support of the CPI (M). In the wake of the hard earned legitimization of its secular credentials, the government followed many pro-peasant policies and concentrated on rural development. Many

ambitious programmes of Integrated Rural Development for providing facilities to rural population like education, health services, market centers, particularly the opening of focal points etc. were launched. The measures and policies of the Akali led government benefitted the peasantry greatly. It was the result of these tangible pro-peasant policies of the Akali led government that consolidated Akali Dal's support base among the peasantry (Dhami, 1984: 91- 92).

Two important events in 1978 which shaped Punjab politics were the Akali-Nirankari clash on Baisakhi April 13, 1978 and the All India Akali Conference held in Ludhiana on 29 October, 1978. The mainstream party of the Sikhs, the Akali Dal led by Parkash Singh Badal was, at that time, in command of the government in the state. It successfully managed to weather the conflicts and issues which blew across the state. A *hukamnama* for complete boycott of the Nirankaris was issued from the Akal Takhat. The Nirankaris living in Punjab became targets of radical groups of Sikhs who were determined to take revenge of the Baisakhi incidents where more than a dozen Sikhs were killed by the followers of Sant Nirankari. A new organization called Dal Khalsa was formed in August 1978 allegedly with the blessings of the Congress. The All India Akali Conference at Ludhiana in October 1978 ratified the Anandpur Sahib Resolution endorsed by the Akali Dal in 1977. The resolutions passed in the conference had a long-term programme of the party, covering a wide range of political, economic, religious, cultural and social issues. The demand focusing on true federalization of the Indian polity, involving restructuring of the Centre- State relations and decentralization of power for preserving and safeguarding the being and self identity of the nations and nationalities that collectively make the Indian people, in fact, made a few suggestions for important changes in the basic structure of the system. (Tohra: 1978:3-15). The party succeeded to allay the existing fears and apprehensions of allies regarding the secessionist impulse in the issues raised during the conference. It emphasized to clarify that the objective was greater autonomy for the states by making India's constitution more truly federal.

The Congress made an impressive come back in the January 1980 Lok Sabha Elections which tilted the scales against the Akali Dal. The Badal government along with other non- Congress governments was dismissed by a blatant abuse of Article 356 and the return of the Congress party in the state set in motion a very fast slide of the Sikh community into escalating politics of grievances, hatred, ideological militancy and separatist violence.

The Akali Dal began with the politics of confrontation after its defeat in both the elections in 1980 and raised the issue of Anandpur Sahib Resolution and many other demands. It launched *Nahar Roko Morcha* at Kapuri as a token of protest to stop water flowing to Haryana. In the meanwhile the violence in the state, which began after a bloody conflict between the supporters of Jarnail Singh

Bhindranwale and the Nirankaris in April 1978, started assuming dangerous dimensions. The politics of agitation was replaced by the politics of violence and lawlessness. While the political rhetoric of discrimination against the Sikhs remained a central feature of the *Morcha*, the demands presented to Indira Gandhi on 21 September, 1981 contained more central aid to the state, stopping of economic exploitation of Punjab, soft loans to the farm sector, checking of price rise, and remunerative prices to agriculture produce etc. (Samiuddin :1985:688-91). The Movement launched by the Akali Dal on the issue of river waters and other grievances of Punjab went out of steam within a short period. The Akalis therefore joined Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala who was then entrenched in the Golden Temple complex to launch *Dharam Yudh* (Holy war) in August 1982. From then onwards it was Jarnail Singh Bhindranwala who called the shots (Puri, Judge and Sekhon,1998:42-45). The circumstances forced moderate Akali leaders like Sant Harchand Singh Longowal to call him as “our lathi (stick)” to beat the Congress Party with. The moderate Akali politics started giving way to radicalism and made them the hostages of Bhindranwale. Great significance was attached to a construction of the past traditions, and a self selective image was given shape and form by opposing it to the ‘other’ i.e. Hindu. At a popular level, a particular aspect of the Sikh past, the Khalsa tradition, tended to overshadow, the other revered and a traditional rhetorical history was constructed (Jeffery:1987: 59-63). The Khalsa was destined to be sovereign ruler, and that called for a violent struggle. It was legitimized with a commonly used couplet as *koi kisi ko raj nai dey hai, jo lai hai nij bal say le hai* (no one gives power to another, whoever acquire it, grabs it by one’s power) in sermons, lectures, heroic versifications and on political stages.

The treatment meted out to the Sikhs while passing through Haryana to Delhi at the time of Asian Games in 1982 and many other incidents of provocative nature by the then Haryana government under Bhajan Lal deteriorated the situation in the state and gave legitimacy to the actions of hatred and the killings commanded by Bhindranwala and his associates. It was Bhindranwala who called the shots and the Akali leaders were compelled to follow him to lead a militant struggle for the final and total implementation of the Anandpur Sahib Resolution. He emerged the unchallenged Sikh leader having a strong base among the youth, and was able to marginalize the other Akali leaders. He delivered many speeches during this period and in most cases he shared Dias (stage) with prominent leaders of SAD. The political stage of the Akali Dal was used to articulate grievances of discrimination against Punjab state in general, and Sikhs in particular. He strongly opposed any negotiations with the Central government and asked the youth to acquire firearms and get baptized. The latter who responded to Bhindranwala’s call saw him in the mould of the tenth guru i.e. Guru Gobind Singh and felt that he had come as a savior to rescue the besieged Sikhs (Pettigrew:1995: 16). The Akali leaders became increasingly uncomfortable with the rise of Bhindranwala who took

centre stage and spread violence in the state. The situation went out of control in the state because of large scale killings of the people. The repeated failure of negotiations between the Centre and the Akalis for an acceptable resolution of the political and other issues complicated the already vexed situation in the state (Surjeet: 1992). The Congress Party, ruling at the Centre, made things difficult for a possible solution when it dismissed its own party government in the state, in October 1983. The state was brought under President's rule.

The attack on the Golden Temple in June 1984 resulted in the retributive killing of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh body guards in October 1984 and the subsequent massacre of Sikhs in Delhi and other parts of the country pointed to a most threatening aspect of communal hatred and social disorganization. The Congress Party was able to win an unprecedented mandate in the December 1984 Lok Sabha Elections on the plank of an alleged secessionist threat to the country's integrity. On the other hand the people of Punjab, particularly in the countryside, went through scathing experiences of combing operations called "Operation Woodrose". This brought (though temporarily) a clear cut division between the Hindus and the Sikhs on the one hand and the Sikhs and the Indian state on the other.

Later, efforts were made by both the parties to find out political solution to the vexed Punjab problem which resulted in the signing of an agreement in July 1985 between the President of Akali Dal and the Prime Minister of India to bring peace in the state. This agreement was known as Rajiv Longowal Accord and acted as a sudden burst of light at the end of a dark tunnel. It was viewed as the return of sanity and an end to the era of confrontation. The Anandpur Sahib Resolution was no more regarded as secessionist. The focus was on the negotiable demands and not on the emotional symbolism. It was followed by Assembly Elections in the state, indicating a return to secular democratic politics. The unprecedented popular response to the Akali Dal symbolized the public choice to punish the wily Congress through the ballot. It was for the first time that the Akali Dal won 73 seats out of total 117 with a vote share of 38 percent of the total votes polled. The high percentage of polling (67.5%) in the election was considered a general acceptance of the peace accord even after the assassination of Sant Longowal a month before the elections by the anti-accord forces.

Surjit Singh Barnala became the Chief Minister of the state against the wishes of opposite group in the SAD. This group was led by Badal and Tohra who had also opposed the peace accord between the SAD and the Central government. In spite of a majority in the house, the SAD government could not complete its full term and was dismissed in May 1987. The Barnala government was not allowed to work by both the party as well as the Central government. The major challenge came from the terrorist organizations and advocates of the Khalistan movement. It was also believed that the

Central government was also in a dialogue with the representatives of radical and militant organizations including the All India Sikh Students Federation(AISSF) which was also one of the frontline terrorist organizations in the state(Gill:2001:31-32). The leaders who opposed the Accord did not leave any stone unturned to oppose it and criticized it as an instrument of fragmenting *Panthic* unity. These leaders, along with a total of 27 MLAs, broke away from the ruling Akali Dal, reducing it to a minority in the legislative Assembly. The government was forced to depend on the Congress support for its survival. The failure to implement the Punjab Accord by the Central government was indicative of bad politics on the part of the Central government. The situation in Punjab started deteriorating, with the escalation of terrorist violence and excesses of the security forces. The number of killings increased manifold as “terrorism took a serious dimension unparalleled in the world in its sweep and lethal effects”, stated a retired Director General of Police (Dhillon:1998:105) The state was put under the President Rule in September, 1987 till elections were held in February 1992.

The other important events during the Barnala government were the sporadic rise of terrorist violence under the garb of Social Reform Movement launched by the AISSF in April 1987 (Sekhon:1999: 77-89). The Sarbat Khalsa Congregation which was called by the Dam Dami Takshal on January 1986 to revive the militant struggle against the state was followed by the declaration of Khalistan in April 1986 by the Panthic Committee in which Sikh religion was regarded as the official religion of the state. The dismissal of the priests of the Golden Temple and the Akal Takht, dissolution of the SGPC and the Akali Dal were other important events during this period.

The conciliatory moves by the V.P. Singh government proved to be futile as the graph of violence continuously shot up. The unprecedented victory of radical elements, including Simranjit Singh Maan and the widow of one of the assassins of Indira Gandhi, turned the tables against any conciliatory efforts to resolve the Punjab crisis. The Congress performed badly, as it could win only two seats. The traditional Akali Dals i.e. Akali Dal(Badal) and Akali Dal (Longowal) led by Surjit Singh Barnala, BJP and communist parties drew blank in these elections. The year 1990 witnessed the highest number of (2474) civilians killed. Nobody dared to ignore orders of *bandhs* given by any of the fifteen to seventeen terrorist organizations and radical groups.

The elections to the Punjab Vidhan Sabha were held under the shadow of gun and terror in February 1992, after a prolonged period of 57 months. It was an easy win of the Congress, as the mainstream Akali Dal boycotted the elections. The voting turnout was very low i.e. 23.8 percent The Congress fought this election promising people to bring peace and protect their lives and property. The elections in the village panchayats and urban bodies in 1993 paved the way for a democratic process

in the state. The Congress government under the leadership of Beant Singh succeeded in eliminating terrorism in the state though at the heavy cost of human rights violations and killing of innocent people by the security forces. Later on Beant Singh himself became the victim of a human bomb in August 1995. The return of constitutional politics created space for political activity in the state. The Akalis started demanding the implementation of Anandpur Sahib Resolution, and also opted not to demand separatism from the Indian union. The mainstream Akali leaders emphasized on the modern secular issues of the community. This was the result of the historic Moga Conference of Akali Dal in February 1996 which shaped the future course of Akali politics. The most important event of this conference was the opening of membership of SAD for non-Sikhs. This development changed the very nature of political and religious domains in the state. The success of the Akali Dal in the state since then has been due to the change in its agenda by making a complete break from the past. It promised to maintain peace and harmony in the state and affirmed its full faith in the democratic and constitutional systems in the country. The adoption of a moderate policy helped it to rejoin the mainstream politics by removing the tag of being the supporter of secessionism (Singh :2006: 124-125). The electoral outcome in 1997 State Assembly and 1996 and 1998 national elections and afterwards proved the supremacy of the Akali Dal led by Parkash Singh Badal. In the meanwhile the SAD (B) won the Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee Elections with a thumping majority, by winning 158 seats of the total 175. The SAD (M) could win only 7 seats. Parkash Singh Badal declared these elections a plebiscite as these resolved the crisis of leadership in the Akali Dal (Narang :1999:145).

The elections for the state assembly were held on February, 1997. These elections were qualitatively different from the previous elections as far as Hindu-Sikh relations were concerned, they had come under strain during terrorism in the state. The election experienced a record participation of 68.7 percent of total votes in the state. It was about 45 percent higher than the previous elections held in 1992. The percentage of polling became possible with the elimination of terrorism and abandoning of politics of parochialism by the regional party. The SAD (B) and BJP entered into an alliance which brought dividends to both parties. The SAD-BJP alliance won 93 seats with 45.9 percent votes of the total polled. The Akali Dal alone won 75 seats with 38 percent vote share .It was the highest number of seats it won. It was the same with the BJP as it won 18 seats with 8.3 percent vote share. The Congress lost miserably as it could win only 14 seats with 26.6 percent vote share. Though the SAD (B) had a clear cut majority in the Vidhan Sabha but it preferred to form a coalition government with the BJP and allocated a few important ministries to it. The alliance government initiated a few schemes for weaker sections of the society by announcing Shagun Scheme (financial help at the time of wedding to the daughters of the poor and Dalits), old age pension and many other social security

schemes for the poor. The party took special care of the peasantry by waiving off power bills to tube-wells, canal water etc. This was for the first time that non-Congress government completed its five year term in the state.

The 2012 elections were marked by a much more positive nature of the campaign in the sense that parties not only devoted their manifestos to the issues of development and governance (besides, of course, promising freebies as usual) but more significantly even during the campaigns refrained from raising emotive issues bordering on ethnicity or indulging in ugly mudslinging as in yesteryears' elections.

In the last assembly and national elections i.e. 2012 and 2014 respectively, the SAD has refrained from mentioning the Anandpur Sahib resolutions in its manifesto or during campaigns, ostensibly under a new political strategy (pressure from BJP but also for the party's sincere desire) to broaden its support base on a long term basis across the communities. The ground reality is that the SAD successfully managed to garner the support of many radical Sikh organisations including Dam Dami Taksal of Bhindranwale, under new religio-political engineering to avoid raising 'Panthic' or religious issues in the elections. Most of these organisations were in alliance with the recently held Shiromani Gurudwara Parbandhak Committee elections in November 2011 as well as the 2012 assembly elections. Similarly, rather than going for confrontation with the centre, the party simply has been asking for greater autonomy for states while condemning the 'unitarian mindset'. In a sign of convergence of political agenda, the SAD as well as the state unit of Congress has also been reiterating its commitment to continue its peaceful democratic struggle for inclusion of Chandigarh and other Punjabi-speaking areas back into Punjab and seek settlement of the inter-state river water issue on the basis of nationally and internationally accepted Riparian Principle.

Conclusion

The Sikhs in Punjab have two political systems which have developed since 1920 and are based on religious and territorial bases. Their identity revitalized since the British times, has been related to

the communal mobilization process eventuating in a set of Sikh institutions. The formation of the SGPC and the emergence of the Akali Dal as representatives of the community began the process of providing institutional framework for the Sikhs.

The Akali Dal's control over the SGPC since its inception, with substantial revenue and resources, has made it a formidable force to exercise great influence in almost all matters concerning the Sikh community. Several thousand gurudwaras in Punjab provide a powerful network of political linkages across the state as every village and street in the city has a gurudwara which is directly or indirectly linked with the SGPC. The persons attached with the gurudwaras even a powerful link between the party that controls the SGPC and the Sikh community. The Akali Dal dominance in the SGPC is similar to the Congress dominance in the secular political system of Punjab till the 1967 elections. The formation of Punjabi Suba with a Sikh majority provided an opportunity to the Akali Dal to try their luck in the secular political process in the state. They successfully overcame their weakness through alliance tactics with the urban Hindu support mostly led by the Jan Sangh and later on the Bhartiya Janata Party and various other non-Congress parties/groups including Left parties. The alliance politics of the Akali Dal enabled it to form coalition governments alternatively in the state since 1967 with exception of the recent Assembly Elections held in January 2012 where it created history by coming into power for an unprecedented second time. Though the SAD (B) had clear cut majority in the Vidhan Sabha in 1997 Assembly Elections but it preferred to form a coalition government with the BJP and allocated a few important ministries to it.

The historical process of political institutionalization of the Sikh political systems thus appears to be occurring within a broad framework of a "secular" Assembly as well as an ascriptive SGPC temple system (Wallace: 1988:34). Religious considerations are and will continue to be the core concerns for both, party and community, though they may not be as enhanced as they earlier. Both party and SGPC have provided evidence, particularly since demanding the Punjabi Suba purely on language basis, and later on focusing on broader issues of political and economic development. The political institutionalization process, particularly after the reorganization of Punjab in 1966 and the advent of the "Green Revolution" in the state combined the social and political spheres positively even though it faced severe constraints of revival of fundamentalism in eighties and early nineties.

Whatever the issues of Sikh politics both before and after the Partition, the aim more or less remained secular. Summing up this use of religion for secular aims, Bomball states that 'in its quest for political power, it was perhaps natural for the Akali Dal to project itself from its very inception as a political arm of the panth with the articulation, and defence and consolidation of a separate Sikh identity, as its political objective' (Bomball:1986:888).

Notes

i In the 36 page Manifesto titled 'Shiromani Akali Dal Mission 2012-2017: Development for All', the Panthic issues like punishment to the perpetrators of anti-Sikh violence in 1984 riots, promotion of Punjabi language and culture along with the territorial /river waters issues got mention only in a few paragraphs on page 15 under the heading of 'Rights and Demand of Punjab'.

ii In 2012 Assembly elections SAD gave tickets to as many 11 Hindu candidates, most of them belonging to the urban based business community, out of which 10 won. In 2007 the number was 7. The difference was that this time the SAD leadership highlighted it during the campaign to flag its secular credentials.

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COMMUNICATIONS

Identity Formation and its Role in Modern India

Presidential Address at 19th Conference of North West Indian Sociological Association (NWISA)

K.S.Sangwan

The present paper deals with the issues related to identity and how these identities over a period of time have been used and what role they have played especially in politics or how our politicians are making us aware of our identity or others identities and try to organize us around these identities to take political benefit.

First of all we would like to explain the meaning of the word identity. If we go by Oxford dictionary it states that the characteristics, feelings or belief that distinguish people from others e.g. a sense of national/ cultural/ personal or group identity. Anthony Giddens (2010) says that distinctive characteristics of a person's character or the character of a group which relate to who they are and what is meaningful to them. Some of the main sources of identity include gender, sexual orientation, nationality or ethnicity, and social class. An important marker of an individual's identity is his or her name and naming is also important for group identity.

Richard Jenkins (1996) defines social identity as our understanding of who we are and of whom other people are, and of course this also includes their understanding of themselves and of us too. It follows then, that all human identities must be social identities, because they are formed on the continuing process of interaction in social life. Identities are made, not given. Nevertheless, we can see three central parts to identities; they are partly individual or personal; they are partly collective or social; and they are always embodied. Identities help us in understanding similarities and differences in social interactions. Our personal names are examples of individual identity which separates us from other individuals. Collective identification as member of working class acts as a source of group solidarity, pride or perhaps even individual shame at being part of a particular group. Whatever, the perception we may have of our own social identities, but individual and social identities are tightly bound together within the embodied self (Burkitt, 1999).

Identities are also multi-layered, consisting of several sources. Primary identities and secondary identities are linked to the process of primary socialization and secondary socialization. Primary identities are those that are formed in early life and include gender,

race /ethnicity and perhaps also disability/ impairment. Secondary identities build on these and would include those associated with social roles and achieved statuses such as occupational roles and social status position. Social identities are quite complex and fluid, changing as people gain new roles or leave behind old ones e.g. the identity for scheduled caste from depressed class to Harijan to Dalit.

While discussing identities at national level we find that in pre-colonial India State forms like Kingdoms and occasional large empires existed and were not like modern States. During colonial period some element of control over population and resources were introduced. The British had territorial divisions for the sake of their easy control over the area. The territorial units were not on the basis of any principle except administrative convenience. During National movement for freedom, the Congress tried to mobilize the people depending on various identities but mainly on linguistic and region basis so that language can get an effective tool of political transactions and therefore, bring the administration closer to ordinary people by making affairs of the state transparent to them. Also implicit in this practice was an idea that the great diversity of India precluded the realization of any homogeneous cultural nationalism on the lines of European Nation State and a recognition of the legitimacy of regional cultural based, primarily, but not exclusively on languages.

After independence it was expected that various types of demands would come based on language or region for greater recognition of their identity. According to Dipankar Gupta (2006), historically, there were three waves of regionalist movements. The first was the demand for linguistic states in the mid-fifties; the second was a wave of 'sons of the soil' movement in 60's and 70's and third wave was a regionalist agitation in areas like Punjab, Assam and Kashmir with a tending towards secessionism. However, these were all regionalist movements, in the sense that they pressed the demand of particular region against the central government.

Myron Weiner (2006) talks about minority identities and made an argument that if education is increasing aspiration, economic growth is enlarging economic opportunities and political democracy is resulting in increased politicization, than one can expect, not less, competition and conflict among India's many social groups. While discussing majority minority issue many Indian narrowly use the term minority to refer to those who are not Hindu, a conception which implies that somehow the dominant core of Indian identity is Hinduism, the mainstream with which minorities should identify if they want to be regarded as wholly Indian. Thus, some Hindu and Mainly the Hindu organization particularly after

2014 elections began to emphasize the need for the 'Indianization' of minorities, by which they mean that minorities should adopt 'Indian' i.e. (Hindu) names, observe Indian (i.e. Hindu) national holidays, identify with India's historical i.e. (pre Islamic Hindu and Buddhist) past its heroes and great events and be attached to the soil of India.

Majority minority issue cannot be confined only to the religion but there are other important bases of categorizing them as minorities such as caste, tribal, linguistic as well as religious groups. The distinct identity for these groups can be the feeling of discrimination due to social and economic subordination by others or from the State itself. Politics plays an important role in creating, maintaining and reinforcing the identities. The distribution of education, employment and wealth in India is largely determined by political process. The central feature of political life means that each ethnic group can best improve its share of education and employment by increasing its political power. The twin objectives of all ethnic groups in India are to strengthen their group identity and to improve both the social status and economic well-being of the group which can best be achieved through the route of politics. It is this central fact that induces politicians to appeal to their ethnic group for votes. The recent Bihar assembly election is an important example where minorities in the name of Backward Communities were united on the issue of Reservation. The another example is of U.P.'s recent election where OBC communities minus Yadavas were identified and organized because the major share of education and employment was controlled by Yadavas and other OBC communities were at a great disadvantage. The B.J.P. has tried to organize the other Backward Castes or Communities who were deprived of power politics for example non-Yadavas in Uttar Pradesh, non- Marathas in Maharashtra, non- Patels in Gujarat and non- Jat in Haryana and at National level they organized Hindus by denying tickets to Muslims in Parliament election. It is because ethnic groups can be organized more easily than to workers in the form of class because caste or ethnic group provides fictive ties of kinship which provide a more effective sense of attachment than do the appeals to interest made on behalf of class.

It has also been observed that identity sometime takes a different shape depending upon their interest and organization of various communities or caste or ethnic group on the political lines to gain political power. Such type of identity may not be as strong as caste identity but in certain situation it takes the form of united stand against the majority group or the ruling group. Dalit identity is one such example which has gained currency at least in sociological literature if not in politics (Dabhi & Nayak 2006). These situations again differ from region to region. British used the term depressed classes for the Scheduled Castes and

other similar castes, Mahatma Gandhi used the word Harijan for the same group with a particular purpose of giving higher status to these communities. But Dalits have by large rejected identities like untouchables, depressed classes, scheduled castes and Harijans which were given by colonial rulers and Hindu Nationalist leaders. The term Dalit is now extensively used in both academic and non-academic sphere. Dalit leader feel that the use of this word has discovered a past and an identity either within the Hindu religion or outside of it which is inclusive and non- discriminatory. The assertion of Ad-dharmis and Valmikis is an example in Punjab. The assertion of Dalit identity with a modicum of pride is also a way of challenging the century's old humiliation experienced by them.

This shows that identity formulation is based on experiences in relation to others and in its expression and indicates that identity formulation is an interactional and historical process (Louis, 2003). The new Dalit Identity asserts the denial of the caste identity that has been imposed on them which has enslaved them for centuries. The new generation of Dalits is more assertive; more organized and are challenging the caste based discrimination.

In recent years it has been observed that the traditional symbols or identities which were not very important before 2014 elections have now suddenly began to gain importance through various acts. These acts, if examine carefully, revolves around majority Hindu and other minority communities. If we look at the state of Haryana we find that the present government is highlighting on the protection and preservation of Cow. Cow as a symbol is directly related to Hindu religion and therefore, symbol of Cow becomes important for the present BJP Government. The number of un-useful Cows is in such a number that it becomes very difficult for the district administration to control them or take out them from the road in the urban areas which led to frequent accident. Many young people have died because of the accident especially in the night. In rural areas these Cows destroy the crops of the farmers and there is no check on it and farmers are feeling helpless and getting a big economic loss.

We are witnessing various cases of death or beating, who take Cows from one place to another for sale or purchase or for some other purpose. The Cow vigilantism creates problem for the minority people just to appease their political bosses In the name of Hindu religion, in spite of the fact that Prime Minister has already condemned such attacks by the Cow vigilantes. The revival of Saraswati River is another important assignment which the present Haryana government has undertaken. The Saraswati River is again a symbol of Hindu religion; therefore, the government is spending a huge budget for its revival. It is not sure that to what extent state will get the benefit of water of Saraswati River when the present rivers like Yamuna and Ganga are getting dried every year.

In Haryana the third major emphasis is on Gita. As per Haryana Government directives Gita should be taught in all schools and have been made part of the school curriculum. It has also been noted that various institutions in the name of Gita are coming up in Haryana. Similarly at National level recently in U.P. the issue of Taj Mahal is again projected as an identity for a particular community so that people can be organized or divided for political gains. Similarly the issue of Tipu Sultan in Karnataka is another example.

All these traditional symbols or identities have been revived during the last three years of BJP rule and government is trying to organize people around these symbols or identities which are also creating a sense of fear among minority religious communities. The revival of Hindu identity at national level might help a particular political party but may lead to threaten the social fabric of the society at large and ultimately to the democratic process of the country as a whole because we are a country of diversities with different identities based not only on religion but also on caste, sub caste, language, region and other factors such as backward caste, scheduled caste, Tribes and there are further sub divisions based on their local identities. Such divisions based on identities might create problems for National integration. Therefore, it is always in the interest of the country that the focus remains on development and equal distribution of resources, so, that we may have a harmonious society where every individual can breathe freely and gain the benefit of country's vast resources and of democracy.

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Report of 19thNorth-West Sociological Association's National Conference on "Mapping Identities: Tradition and Change in North West India"

The first day of 19th NWISA conference held at the Guru Nanak Dev University on 27th October 2017 began with an inaugural session and a symposium. The conference witnessed participation from various college and universities in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Punjab and Maharashtra. Twenty one papers were presented across five sessions. All the sessions were chaired by eminent sociologists like Prof Paramjit Judge, Prof Nagla, Prof Jasmeet Sandhu, Prof Gurpreet Bal and Prof Sangwan, Prof Satish Sharma and Prof Vivek.

The inaugural session of the conference began with Prof. Gurpreet Bal, Organising Secretary NWISA and Head of Department of Sociology extending a warm welcome to all the participants. Prof. Vishwarakhsha gave a brief introduction to NWISA. Prof Satish K Sharma's inaugural address raised specific questions about the intensification of competing identities under globalisation and continuities of feudal elements. In the process exclusions, contestations, conflicts and suppression mark modern societies. Prof. K. S. Sangwan's Presidential Address questioned the reinterpretation of identities. Tracing a brief history of identities in post-colonial India and the role of caste and politics, he discussed the manner in which symbols like cow, invocation of Saraswati River and the Gita are reviving majoritarian identities in contemporary India. The Chair of the session, Prof B.K Nagla noted the existential problems of survival given the legacy of power in India, feudalism, competition and globalisation. This fuels problems and identity crisis, inducing groups to articulate narrow identity interests to mark an inability to compete. Prof. Jasmeet Sandhu proposed the vote of thanks to the faculty members, scholars and students.

The Symposium on the first day was a novel attempt to map the sociology of North West India. The distinguished professors traced the beginnings of sociology of the North-West and concluded by reflecting upon what sociologists could take away from this history. Prof. Judge's talk reminded the need to acknowledge and study the contributions of prominent sociologists like Prof P.N. Pimpley, Prof Victor D'Souza and Prof Majumdar. He also identified trends in the sociology of this region; evolving from urban bias in the 1970s, to

issues of caste in the 1980s, agrarian and social movements and contemporary themes like gender. Prof. Nagla's talk reiterated the importance of region and disciplinary histories in sociology. He suggested that grassroots social issues can only be revived through a focus on the regions which tend to be missed in an otherwise very mainstream urban-centred Indian sociology today. Prof. Jasmeet Sandhu's institutional view of sociology at Guru Nanak Dev University recounted the manner in which challenges like infrastructure etc. were addressed to build research expertise in both new and older fields like caste, political sociology, gender, entrepreneurship, health, urban society and media. Prof. Satish Sharma talked about beating the odds in a hilly terrain in Himachal Pradesh by turning it into an advantage through developing research on population, environment, travel and culture studies. Prof. Sangwan discussed the history of building a strong tradition of fieldwork in Haryana which proved beneficial in the domain of governance and policy. Prof. Vishwaraksha talked about the Department of Jammu's recent origins, field research traditions and the manner in which they keep the contributions of prominent sociologists alive through memorial lectures. On hindsight the symposium demonstrated the tremendous expansion of North West sociology through strong tradition of guidance from teachers, academic friendships, excellent research and learning through exchange which suggested a direction to newer members associated with NWISA.

The first day had two technical Sessions on different aspects of identity. The first two papers by Prof. Paramjit S. Judge and Dr. Manjit Kaur were illuminating for the larger discipline of sociology. Both of their papers stressed that contemporary identities need to be contextualised within history, socio-cultural and political contexts, whether it was Nihangs among the Sikhs as discussed by Prof. Judge or changing political identities in Punjab by Dr. Manjit. The second Technical Session had three speakers. Aftab Ahmad Rather, Himatbir Singh and Irm jalali looked at identities in conflict marred regions of North-West, like the imagination of the collective identity, Kashmiriat, the other on stigmas in militarized places and gender and entrepreneurship respectively.

The gender session began with Prof. Supriti's presentation on neglected elderly women migrants in Haryana University Campus. Yudhvir and Hema Gandotra and Ms. Asha Rani looked at adverse sex Ratio and its sociological impact, the first focused on marriage in rural Haryana and other at the causes behind it. Shashi Punam and Shakun Sharma discussed women inclusion and empowerment through decentralised governance in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu city.

The session on Tribes, Ethnicity and Change had presentations by Hilal Ahmad Dar, Dr. Mohinder Slariya, Rajni Bala, Amanjot Kaur. All were field-based studies on the identification of Scheduled tribes in Jammu and Kashmir; the struggles that mark the lives of Gujjar Tribe in Saal Valley of Chamba District; the demography and changing cultural and political formations of Bakrwals; and how new consumer demands or plastics affect the traditional occupation and livelihood of wandering Gaddi Lohar tribes who traditionally worked with metals.

There was one open panel with diverse papers. Prof. Vishwa Rakhsa and Anil Sharma looked at the occupational socialization of newly trained teachers in schools which in many ways compel them to eventually adopt older traditional teaching practices. Jesna's paper looked at how online participatory cultures like user-generated contents are creating new expressions of spiritualism. Syed Nasir Ali discussed the sensationalism of news by Indian Media Houses. Suraj Mohani explored the problems faced by the youths in Jammu due to drug addiction. Amanjot Kaur documented how the demands of new consumer goods like plastics are affecting the wandering Gaddi Lohar tribes who traditionally worked with metal. Sadaf Khan's paper explored the impact of conflict, loss of life and widowhood in Kashmir society. The assertion of third gender identities in Jammu was discussed by Hema Gandotra.

The Valedictory session on 28th October, chaired by Prof Sangwan ended with address by Prof Anand Kumar. Prof Kumar laid out the few reasons to pay attention to identities in the context of tradition and change in North India. The North-West has been the heart of India's political nationalism (decolonisation and democratisation). Both crisis and resilience of identities can be seen. There are pathologies of nation-building in Kashmir, social justice in Haryana, failure of governments in Himachal market-mediated globalisation and politics of identities marked by over simplification, struggle for legitimacies and conflict. He suggested ways to conceptually grasp the multi-layered, multi-dimensional reality of identities through: individuality, locality, community, nationality, intersectionality and humanity. He concluded by illustrating that intersectionality, in terms of methodology and conceptual nuances, is one of the highly relevant dimensions to understand gender, tribe, class and nation and answer identity questions.

(Jesna Jayachandran)

Research Findings of Ph.D. Thesis: Borderlands and Social Exclusion: A Sociological Study of Border Area of Punjab

Borders are always the agents of exclusion whether they are volatile or non volatile but intensity of exclusion may vary from border to border. This study researched the exclusions faced by the people of border areas due to their location near border. It was confined to the Gandiwind block of Tarn Taran district which is one among the nineteen border blocks in Punjab. It covered four villages of the block, situated within radius of two kilometres from the international border of India and Pakistan. The study understood deprivation as exclusion faced by the border area residents in comparison to reference groups residing in mainstream areas.

For the study a sample of two hundred and forty respondents was taken to conduct a survey. Sixty respondents were selected from each village with the help of simple random sampling technique and their responses were recorded. Observation and case studies were the other methods used to develop data. This gave a view of different aspects of exclusion faced by the people living in border areas. Some of the key findings have been given below.

Most of the respondents are male and belong to Sikh religion having mean and median age around 45(forty five) years approximately with standard deviation of 13.06 years. Jats and Mazbi caste communities dominate in these border areas of Punjab numerically with minimal presence of Other Backward Classes (OBC's). Presence of daily wagers is around 36.67 percent and there is also presence of contract labourers which is around 9.58 percent. As majority of the respondents are scheduled caste therefore percentage proportion of landless in the border areas is around 56 percent. Around 61.25 percent of the families have only one earner in the family which affects their income. The number of educated people in the border villages of Punjab is very less.

Coming to the impact of border on the lives of border residents, it was found that most of the respondents faced difficulties like having to leave homes in wars or war like situations. Nearly 84 percent recalled that they spent around one to six months residing away, along with their livestock and other moveable articles from their house. Around 87.50 percent

of them replied that they were not compensated for their loss during these types of situations. There was difficulty in finding marriage partners for the people of border residents and there was great difficulty in finding or forging alliance for their sons.

A look into the education and health variables in the border belt found that more than 58 percent of the respondents states that their children were studying in village schools. It is widely known that children of well to do families mostly study outside the village. The reason behind it is to get quality education and avoid bad habits of addiction which are common in these areas. Around 74 percent of the respondents felt that the number of educated people in these areas are very less and lack of getting quota in higher education institutions might be the reason behind less educated people in these areas as 77.92 percent of the respondents did not get any reservation benefit in higher education. Surprisingly, 22.08 percent did not know about the reservation.

More than 60 percent of the respondents felt that the quality of water is bad and it is responsible for the various health problems in the border areas. Nearly 82.50 percent of the respondents or head of the household replied that for treating minor ailments they prefer local medical practitioners and more than 50 percent prefer taking treatment of accidents, vaccinations, maternal deliveries and serious ailments in nearby towns. A large number of respondents constituting 96.25 percent believe that doctors are not willing to work in these remote villages along Indo-Pak border. While 68.75 percent of the respondents did not know about health schemes of government at all, nobody was found enrolled in any health scheme.

It is found that respondents believe that liquor is most common among the intoxicants followed by drugs. Among the type of liquor, desi liquor is being reported to be consumed by the people of border areas. Among drugs around 47.62 percent of the respondents believe that synthetic pills were used as stimulus followed by smack. 25.95 percent of the respondents believe that smack is prevalent in border areas. Around 43.33 percent of the respondents believe that extent of addiction in percentage is around 75 percent excluding women and children and around 33 percent believe that extent is around 50 percent in the border villages of Punjab. There might be various reasons for addiction, but as found in the study enhancing sexuality is also one of the causes of addiction which crosses all the class boundaries. It has been substantiated with case studies mentioned in the fourth chapter of the thesis.

Looking into the employment scenario it was found in the study that around 47 percent of the respondents think that agriculture is sole source of employment. Exactly 40

percent think that daily wage labour is main employment activity. More than 80 percent of the respondents are not getting any benefit or are not aware of employment schemes and that is why they are unable to get benefit of these schemes. Nearly 40 percent of the respondents think that less land value is the biggest problem of the farmers having land beyond fencing. Other problems like less entry gates, lack of crop choices and no credit facility are other non ignorable problems in the border areas. When political awareness was assessed it was found that more than 50 percent of the respondents failed to even answer the name of their elected representative at the centre and at the state level. Around 88.75 percent of the respondents think that living near border is surely a disadvantage. Around 43.67 percent of the respondents believe that facilities should reach the ground level and 34.67 percent of the respondents believed that they should be duly compensated for their disadvantageous position. Respondents also felt the need of special quota, special package and cooperation with military facilities to improve the situation.

Around 86.67 percent of the respondents believe that officials are not bothered at all to increase the awareness among border area residents regarding government initiative. Behaviour of police is not appreciated by around 62 percent of the respondents and more than 50 percent of the respondents felt that police is not effective in checking drug smuggling in these areas. Exactly 86.67 percent of the respondents believe that problems in border areas are different from the non border villages therefore they need a different approach to counter these problems.

While talking about specific problems being faced by the border area residents around 26.89 percent of the respondents replied that lack of employment is a border specific problem. 21.06 percent of the respondents believed that network problem in communication is also a unique to these areas. Around 15 percent believe that public as well as private transport is also found lacking in these areas and exactly 12.98 percent talk about lack of clean water as a unique problem in these areas. While it could be argued that many of these problems are a part of rural areas, the study argues that they are perceptibly more acute in border areas.

Before discussing policies and strategies to tackle exclusion in the borders, it is imperative to look into the role of Border Area Development Programmes (BADP) already in place. Border Area Development Programme was started with the twin objectives of balanced development of sensitive border areas through adequate provision of infrastructure

facilities and promotion of sense of security amongst the local population.

There are certain miscellaneous issues which also need attention and policy recommendations. Among them drug smuggling and drug addiction are very common as discussed. First of all these issues are related to the deprivation being faced by the people of border areas in various aspects like economic, health, agriculture, education etc. From here inference can be drawn that deprivation in other aspects is making the border residents to adopt for smuggling and become addicts. Smuggling is only for economic gains and people are indulged in smuggling only to excel economically and get out of the deprivation being faced by them relatively to their counterparts (taken as reference groups) residing in other areas of Punjab. Resolving some deprivations being faced by the border area residents would probably check the rising number of smugglers and addicts in the border belt.

The study concluded by suggesting some policy measures to improve infrastructure, quality of life and development in border areas. Repressive laws and actions followed by the various law enforcing agencies and various other secret agencies active in border areas is also leading to smuggling and other social challenges. Their repressive approach is increasing the alienation and anomic conditions in the border belt. Nexus between the politicians, police, smugglers etc is taken for granted and inevitable part of these types of activities due to economic gains. Government needs serious outlook to solve the problems of border areas as, 'Defiance of authority by adopting smuggling and psychological outlet of being deprived might be signalling towards the revolutions as these were among certain words attached to revolution'.

Himatbir Singh

Research Findings of Ph.D. Thesis: Changing Contours of Entrepreneurship: A Study of Social Entrepreneurship in Punjab

Entrepreneurship is a process of creating something new with value by allocating the required time and effort to gain economic independence and rewards, and achieve satisfaction. The economic progress made by the creative and goal oriented entrepreneurs is viewed as one of the indicator in development of a nation. But huge strides made by entrepreneurs and businessmen around the world, are insufficient when a large part of society is underprivileged and is lacking even basic amenities. The aim is to balance economic growth and social development on this planet and bring sustainable development. But it is not possible to get rid

of them if the responsibility rests with few. It has to be shared among government, NGOs, corporations, entrepreneurs and public at large. With such a social mission, some entrepreneurs and corporations these days are working to transform the life around the world and are called social entrepreneurs.

Usually, the concept of social entrepreneurship is confused with philanthropy and charitable organisations. In practice, it is a broader term and hence, it is important to understand its contours. Although an emerging field of research, social entrepreneurship is still latent and unrecognised in the state of Punjab. So, the broad objective of present research work was to study the various social entrepreneurial activities in Punjab.

Social entrepreneurship in present study is defined as an innovative way of managing opportunities by individuals and organisations (such as not-for-profit, government, corporations or for-profit), engaged in wide variety of not-for-profit and for profit activities, and using the resources within and outside their direct control, and with the mission to create social value. The following objectives of the study were formulated: 1. to assess the nature and extent of social entrepreneurship in Punjab. 2. To examine the development process of social entrepreneurial activities. 3. To look into the consequences of social entrepreneurship in terms of socio-economic benefits, environmental improvements, employment generation and development. 4. To know the level of success of social entrepreneurial activities. 5. To find out the sustainability of social entrepreneurial activities in Punjab.

The present research work was primarily exploratory and descriptive in nature. Although a number of NGOs and charitable organisations are already working in the state of Punjab, but social enterprises are rarely found. So, at the outset, the task was to identify the social entrepreneurial activities in Punjab. As such no data about number or type of social enterprises is available, whether in government records or based on the research by any private organisation. Hence, various organisations were visited and, interactions were held with officials and employees working there. Moreover, their literature available on internet was also studied. At the end, four organisations were identified to be social entrepreneurial. These were Bharti Foundation, Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad (or simply Lijjat), National Rural Development Society (NRDS) and Organic Farming Council of Punjab (OFCP). The objective was to study the structure and functioning of these organisations and their impact on beneficiaries. Hence, both secondary and primary data were collected. The secondary data were collected through interaction with officials, reports and documents of the

concerned organisations, both available within the organisation and on internet. The primary data were collected through interviews and so, different interview schedules were prepared for four cases. As the organisations were located in different areas of Punjab and in certain cases it was difficult to locate beneficiaries, hence 35 beneficiaries in each case were interviewed. Thus, the sample comprised of 140 beneficiaries in all who were selected randomly. Based on the objectives of the study, the findings are mentioned below:

It was found that social entrepreneurial activities in Punjab were of varying nature which addresses different problems of society. With the goal to establish 500 primary and 50 senior secondary schools to provide quality education to over 200,000 underprivileged children, with special focus on the girl child, across the rural India, Bharti foundation was started in the year 2000. Presently, there are 95 schools run by Bharti foundation in Punjab. On the other hand Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad is an organisation for the empowerment of the women which is run by women. The organisation has kept Sarvodaya Philosophy as its ideal and is owned by all sister members who work in the organisation. All the profit or loss, whatever it may be is shared by the members jointly and, all the decisions, whether major or minor, are based on the consent of the members. The third organisation under study was National Rural Development Society which was launched in the year 1983 to uplift the socio-economic conditions of masses. It raises funds, properties, assets and other resources for the purpose to conduct and promote manifold constructive activities for upliftment of the village Palahi. With the aim to promote and develop organic farming, and to advise the State Government regarding policy initiative on organic farming and value addition of crops produced, Organic farming Council of Punjab was started in the year 2006. Under the project initiated by Organic Farming Council of Punjab to promote organic farming, five districts of Punjab- Mohali, Fatehgarh Sahib, Patiala, Gurdaspur and Sangrur were chosen, covering an area of 1144 acres and assisting 547 farmers.

Hence, mission and target population in all cases is different. While Bharti foundation is involved in education of underprivileged children, Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad in empowerment of women, National Rural Development Society in rural development, and Organic Farming Council of Punjab is addressing health and environment by promoting organic farming. Further, it was found that funding sources also differ in all organisations. Whereas, the primary schools started by Bharti Foundation in Punjab are built and run by the foundation on land either donated or leased-out by the community, the senior secondary schools are being run in partnership with the Punjab State Government. So, Bharti foundation

is partially self-funded organisation. On the other hand, Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad receives fund through the sale of its products and so is a for-profit organisation. However, Organic Farming Council of Punjab receives funds from government and hence is grant funded. The projects initiated by National Rural Development Society were funded either by Non Resident Indians, village community or through government grants and so is fully-dependent.

If we look into the impact of various activities specifically, it was found that Bharti foundation is providing quality education to underprivileged children and most of respondents felt that Satya Bharti Schools, run by Bharti foundation are better than other schools. It was mainly because of teaching methodology and availability of free education, uniform and books. Further, from the study it was found that the foundation is serving the weaker section of society. All the respondents were engaged in petty jobs with low income and some of them were illiterate. While studying Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad, it was found that as the organisation is for the empowerment of women, hence every woman irrespective of age, religion, caste and education can work there. Although member sisters working there, were less educated but still they were able to financially support their families. Moreover, the environment of the place and working conditions were satisfying. Through their earnings at Lijjat, some respondents were able to provide education to their children, while some were able to marry their children. Almost all the respondents were satisfied with their job. The third case was National Rural Development Society which has initiated projects for the development of village Palahi in district Phagwara. It was found that NRDS has attempted to initiate projects so that people of village Palahi are provided the amenities at par with urban areas. The problem of stagnant water was resolved by lying of sewerage system. The streets of village Palahi were covered with interlocked tiles. NRDS also started Polytechnic College, built a sound proof hall, and initiated solar energy system and bio-gas plant.

On studying Organic Farming Council of Punjab, it was found that socio- economic status of most of the farmers involved in Organic farming was good. Most of the farmers joined organic farming due to harmful effects of chemical farming to health and soil. It was found from interview with respondents that the council helped farmers by providing free organic fertilizers, organising awareness camps, and guide the farmers in preparing organic fertilizers and vermicompost. As far as yield is concerned, most of the respondents found that organic farming yield is either same or more than chemical farming. By shifting to organic

farming, most of the respondents found that the fertility of soil has increased. Hence, by reviving the organic farming in the state of Punjab, Organic Farming Council of Punjab is not only improving the environment but the health of people as well.

Although, the organisations under study have benefitted various sections of society, but it was found that the activities where funds are generated by the same organisation are more successful (like Bharti Foundation and Lijjat) as compared to organisations where government grants, philanthropy and donations are source of funds. Even the beneficiaries of Bharti foundation and Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad were comparatively more satisfied with functioning of these organisations. Most of respondents in case of Bharti Foundation want to continue the education of their wards in Satya Bharti Schools. Also, most of the respondents in case of Lijjat want to continue their job. On the other hand, projects initiated by NRDS faced the problem of sustenance. The solar energy system and bio gas plant failed due to the maintenance problem and shortage of funds. The lack of interest in reading and indoor games led to the failure of library and indoor stadium. Even the sewerage pipes were not connected to the whole village. Had NRDS members planned the projects by considering the needs and interests of villagers, the projects would have sustained. Moreover, a nominal fee would have been charged for its self-sufficiency. Further, it was found that most of the farmers who joined OFCP, have converted only one to five acres of land to organic. They were well aware of the benefits of organic farming, yet they were reluctant to practice it on the whole farm. This was mainly due to the lack of proper market. Further, a lot of hard work is needed for preparing the organic fertilizers, manures, pesticides and seeds as organic inputs are either not available or there are very few distributors. Had OFCP provided market support, more and more farmers would have joined it.

Bharti Foundation is an example of private-not-for-profit partnership model of social enterprise, proposed by Alter (2006). It is a mutually benefit business partnership between Bharti Enterprises and Bharti Foundation. By reaching more underprivileged children, social impact of Bharti Foundation is enhanced; while Bharti Enterprises benefits by improving goodwill and public image, thus attracting more socially conscious consumers which yield more profits.

Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad is a suitable example of employment model as proposed by Alter (2006). It is a for-profit organisation with empowerment of women as its

social goal. It achieved financial self-sufficiency through the sales of its products. Income is used to meet operating expenses and pay wages to member sisters.

National Rural Development Society was started with aim to develop rural infrastructure. Due to the non availability of funds and improper planning many projects initiated by NRDS failed. Had NRDS members planned the projects by considering the needs and interests of villagers, the projects would have sustained. Moreover, nominal fee would have been charged for its self-sufficiency. It would have been an appropriate example of fee-for-service model, where social enterprise commercialises its social services and sells to target population.

In case of Organic Farming Council of Punjab, it was found that major problem faced by farmers was non-availability of market. Had OFCP provided market support, more and more farmers would have joined it. It would have been suitable example of Market Intermediary Model, as proposed by Alter (2006). Hence to become a sustainable social enterprise OFCP should have introduced market support.

In the end, it is concluded that social enterprises which are able to generate funds by themselves are more sustainable. Hence, more entrepreneurs need to be motivated to initiate such ventures addressing social problems. Further, awareness regarding the field of social entrepreneurship needs to be spread among masses. Also, government should encourage and support such ventures. Existing social enterprises should be given due recognition so that more people get motivated to initiate such projects.

Amritpreet Kaur

Research Findings of Ph.D. Thesis: Globalisation and Social Networking: A Sociological Study of Dialogue, Disposition and Emerging Trends in Indian Society

The paradigmatic changes in the ways societies and cultures have responded to technical changes have clearly brought to fore new means of **sociation**. The relevance of social networking along with recognition of ‘social capital’ as an important dimension of socio-economic structure have aroused interest among scholars from varied academic backgrounds to understand these aspects of social life. Scholars term our present society as “informational society” where information has eventually become a “mode of production” and one of the basic characteristic of this “informational society” is the networking logic of its basic structure. The network paradigm is central to the structural organization of both the Internet

and the society. Wellman argues that one of the important social transformations of late modernism is a shift away from tightly bounded communities toward increasing “networked individualism” in which each person is at the centre of his or her own personal community. The individual of today finds his community in networks which are spread across distances, which are not ‘real’ but imagined.

This study aimed to understand the usage patterns of Social Network Sites (SNSs here after) by individuals and the forms of content shared on these platforms. Discussion of contextualising these patterns in the larger cultural and commercial framework also includes the part of analysis. The other objectives were to assess the impact of these new mediums on community dynamics and social activism. Owing to the descriptive nature of study triangulation method was used as both quantitative and qualitative techniques were used to analyse the richness and complexity of the issue. As part of the quantitative analysis a simple random sample was chosen of 189 individuals, who had a Facebook account. For qualitative analysis individuals who were running Facebook communities and users who had literally considered these platforms, as having enhanced their life in significant ways were interviewed. Apart from this other secondary sources in terms of stories published in the media were analysed. These stories helped to understand the ways in which such platforms had become such a regular part of day to day life. These narratives gave us insights in how social media has affected the larger socio-political setup. Apart from this having my own account on Facebook made me a participant observer.

India (as on Aug 2015) has around 350 million active Internet users (constituting 27% of the total population) and 590 million unique mobile users and 134 million active Facebook users and 97 million mobile social media users. So this clearly reveals the growing importance of Internet and social media in India. The key findings with respect to socio-cultural profile of users on Facebook reveal it be younger, male-dominated, more educated domain. Since these environments are now considered to “nonymous” (as opposed to anonymous) so identity construction on these platforms is a very interesting and noteworthy activity. Although the ties on Facebook are weak but importance/relevance of weak ties to our contemporary social landscape has been considered to be crucial. It is believed that weak ties have the capacity for bridging information across disparate social groups. As SNSs support large number weak ties it has the quality of bridging social capital and proved to supplement social capital. Many users revealed how their Facebook connections have helped them personally in a number of ways.

Coming to the forms of content shared, the most popular way of communicating on social network sites is to share the content streams, created by themselves or other people in their network. So producing/publishing content is the way individuals communicate on SNSs. The concept of ‘phatic’ culture given by English sociologist Vincent Miller about communication on social media quite aptly describes the form of communication on these social networking sites. Communications are phatic in the sense that the content, as it is not very meaningful but with every share and comment what one is trying is to acknowledge the presence of other or to mark one’s presence in the network. Rise of the use of emoji’s , moving away from blogs to microblogging or social network, the click and use architectural designs of these websites all point towards the direction that content is ‘non-dialogic and non-informational’. So here “content is not king, but ‘keeping in touch’ is.

One issue that needs to be of concern that although these spaces are non-profitable (like Facebook login page mentions that “it is free and will always be”) most of these are inherently profit driven environment. Facebook captures all the data that users feed while creating a Facebook profile. This provides wonderful opportunity to advertisers to target users on the basis of their interest (e.g. groups they have joined, pages they like). So these sites are definitely located within the larger commercial interests of corporate and advertisers.

The debate whether Internet can support communities akin to real life communities has been going on since the time Internet based virtual social groups became popular. Benedict’s concept of community as ‘imagined’ entity makes the case of computer-mediated communities as holding possibilities for the future. Internet was hailed as a medium where individuals could look for community like structures which they have lost in physical worlds. So there were many academic research works on online communities where researchers argues that these online groupings indeed carry the characteristics of regular communities like they did develop shared norms, meet regularly, talk, display a sense of belongingness and help each other. So ultimately it was ascertained that the ‘community’ metaphor is the most popular way of describing these groups but this notion needs reconsideration. Facebook founders usually refer to the entire gamut of Facebook users across the globe as being belonging to one larger community of Facebook users. Even this notion of community is very weak and amorphous. What would happen if for some reasons Facebook shuts down? (which has happened many times in the past with such social network sites, the most recent example being Orkut). So over emphasis on the community metaphor needs re-evaluation.

So the most important way to build close- knit activities around common interests is to create a ‘Group’. It was found that individuals on Facebook join number of groups for

variety of reasons ranging from sheer simple sense of nostalgia to get associated/gather association from others. Facebook groups can be of real help to associate people with some common sense of interest. Facebook pages can of immense usefulness for the purpose of disseminating information and for winning networks for business purposes. But these activities could be best described by the word 'group' rather than 'community' and also at times (not always) the activities and level of involvement in these groups recede over a period of time and the posts/content become totally irrelevant to the extent of becoming trivial or even vulgar defeating the very purpose for which the group was created. Due of this number of groups on Facebook have become redundant.

Apart from individual networking, social media in general (of which social network sites are the most important and popular genre) has come to be recognised as an important medium for dissemination of information and articulation of public opinion. Along with electronic medium it has tremendous capability to influence public opinion. This is here where social media can lead to some revolutionary changes within societies. It has almost been both academically and otherwise recognised to be an important public sphere in the making. The role that Internet has played in the contemporary social movements be it Arab spring, Occupancy movements in America, Egyptian and Tunisian revolts proves that it has the capacity to threaten the regimes.

Within the Indian context it has emerged as an important medium for generating and endorsing political opinion and has also been put to use by groups for harnessing and garnering support for their causes(e.g. by feminists or various caste groups). The rise and success of AAP in India which also heralds a fundamental change in the Indian political makeup is also, in part, hailed to the role of social media.

As the line between the real and virtual blur, new possibilities are evoked in the social and the cultural realm. The narratives on social media allow one to have glimpse into the life influencing and life defining characteristics that this media has brought to the life of individuals. For example, for many individuals Facebook and other such social media has opened immense possibilities to realize their desire to share their innate (creative) talents or to follow up their interests by joining groups. Conversations with such individuals during the course of study revealed the empowering facet of this medium in terms of sharing and creative co-creation among users who happened to meet on virtual groups. Overall we find that Social media empowers commoners, break boundaries, crumble hierarchies and unsettle notions and as more and more individuals are going to embrace this domain which stands for

massive communication, free speech and cult of individual autonomy this is surely going to result in social churning.

Shefali Bedi

Research Findings of Ph.D. Thesis: Institutionalized Elderly in Punjab: - A Sociological Study of their Inter-generational and Intra-generational Relations

Scholarly interest in aging families got accelerated in recent years, because of rapid population aging, increased global concerns for the vitality of systems of care and support for the aged and structural and compositional changes taking place in family institutions. In recent years, lots of old age homes have sprung up in India and the trend towards these government and private care institutions for the aged people is gradually gaining social acceptance, especially among those who see these institutions as a better alternative than living with their children or living alone. Indian family has traditionally provided natural social security, care and support to the old people but now-a-days, the traditional role of family is being shared by informal support such as old age homes. Besides analyzing the inter-generational relations it is also important to study the intra-generational relations in later life. Although, parents and their adult children are more likely to be considered as a primary social support of resources but over the course of life, when elderly also involved in the processes of mutual aid that involves services, care, emotional bindings and financial help with their age cohorts referred to as intra-generational. On the other side, care and support occurs not only between people belonging to different generations but also between the same generations. Relations between generations within the family and between age groups have been the source of 'Ambivalence' relations through the human history. Ambivalence as an alternative to both the solidarity and conflict perspective paradigms for orienting sociological research on inter and intra-generational relations. Thus, in this study, "Ambivalence" is introduced in the study of both inter and intra-generational relationships in later life. It aims to adopt the ambivalence perspective for the better understanding of inter and intra-generational relationships of the institutionalized elderly in Punjab state.

The present study was proposed to examine the demographic, socio-economic and health aspects of the institutionalized elderly, to know about their family structure and the various reasons which drove the elderly away from the families and to these old age homes, to examine the inter-generational relations and the intra-generational relations of elderly,

before and after the institutionalization and also to analysis their perceptions regarding their stay in the Institutional living vis - a – vis family living.

The universe of the present study comprised of the institutionalized elderly in Punjab state. There are total 30 old age homes in different districts of Punjab. Out of which twenty-five old age homes were selected for the present study and remaining five were not considered because some of homes for aged were just coming up or the number of inmates was too less i.e. upto 5. Thus, fifty per cent of residents from each old age home (numbers 311) were randomly selected and interviewed with the help of a structured interview schedule and a few case studies of the institutionalized elderly were also be prepared to supplement the data collected in the survey state.

As far as demographic, socio-economic and health aspects of the institutionalized elderly are concerned, the study reveals that a majority of the elderly inmates who are institutionalized in old age homes of Punjab state fall in the 'young old category' of 60-70 years. Most of them are males, hail from rural areas and belong to Punjab state. Majority of them are Hindus and are from upper castes. Majority of them are widowed and some of the inmates are staying with their spouses in the same old age home. It can also be concluded that a little more than 1/3rd of them are illiterate and others have studied up to various levels of education. Majority of them had 3-4 members in their households, whereas, with regard to the number and gender of their children, study reveals that majority of the inmates of old age home have more sons than daughters. Prior to institutionalization a large proportion of elderly lived with their married sons and their families. While analyzing their economic aspects, it was found that in their prime years, a little less than one-third of them were involved in petty jobs (plumbers, carpenters, vegetables seller, washer men, machine operator or shopkeepers) and are old age pension holders. Most of them are having insufficient income and they largely depend upon the old age homes to fulfill their basic and other needs. A little more than one-tenth of the respondents have no monthly income and most of them have income upto Rs. 500/-. On the other hand, the majority have spend monthly expenditure of upto Rs. 500/-. While considering their health aspects, it was also noted that most of them are suffering from general diseases such as visual, hearing, joint problems or other multiple diseases (like back pain, dental problem, shivering and constipation) and are suffering from these problems for 3-5 years and are dependent upon an old age homes for their medical treatment.

An analysis concerning the institutionalization; reasons, facilities and perceptions of the institutionalized elderly shows that more than fifty per cent of the inmates have been living in old age homes for last 2 to 5 years. A little less than one-third inmates of the government old age homes and a little more than one-third of them in non government old age homes had strained relations with their sons/daughters-in-law which forced them to shift in old age home and most of the inmates decided to shift to old age homes themselves as they already had knowledge about the old age homes. Regarding the availability of the facilities and services, the study finds that it was better in the non - government run old age homes than the government run old age homes. By and large most of the elderly are not paying for their institutional stay and for other facilities in these both types of old age homes. Most of the respondents are satisfied with the facilities and services being provided to them in the non government old age homes. Majority of the inmates are not satisfied with the nature of accommodation being provided them in the government old age homes. Majority of the inmates of non government old age homes have expressed their reasons for their satisfaction more as compared to the inmates of government old age homes. Those who are satisfied give reason such as receiving all services free of cost or at nominal charges. Most of the elderly in government oriented old age homes are dissatisfied with the lack of institutional facilities and services such as lack of basic facilities follow the institutional rules strictly (living like beggar and slaves) and difficulty of mobility in multi-storied buildings as compared to non government old age homes. Further, it can also be concluded that majority of the respondents were feeling good to be residing in old age homes and had bad experiences of living in their earlier residence. Majority of the inmates have friendly relations with their inmates in both types of old age homes. The findings also indicate that most of the elderly engage themselves in their indoor activities such as in watching T.V., reading newspapers, books and magazines, listening radio, using lap-top and computers as their leisure time activities. Majority of the inmates visit their married daughters and sons once or twice in month. Study also shows that fifty per cent of the elderly did not give any suggestions as they felt that there is no need of any kind of improvement in non- government old age homes and a little more than one-third of the inmates made suggestions regarding need for more facilities and services in government old age homes such as provision of independent room facility, need better medical health care, transportation facility should be there during emergencies, religious places should be within premises, polite and well behaved staff.

While assessing the intergenerational family relations of institutionalized elderly, the study reveals that majority of the elderly had face to face interaction/exchange views on various issues with their sons and grandchildren before being shifted to the old age home which was replaced with more telephonic interaction with their sons and grandchildren after their institutionalization. Most of the elderly reported decrease in their both type of interaction pattern in terms of face to face interaction/exchange views on various issues and communication through phone with their daughters-in-law, after coming to the old age homes. As regards the financial support, one-fifth and one-tenth of the institutionalized elderly were receiving financial support quite often from their sons and grandchildren respectively, before coming to the old age homes. Further, this financial support has slightly increased from their sons and grandchildren, after their institutionalization in an old age home. But in case of daughters-in-law this type of financial support has decreased after shifting the elderly to the old age homes. As far as emotional support concerned, it is concluded that the percentage of the aged being provided emotional support by their sons and grandchildren has slightly increased after shifting to the old age institutions. While, in case of the elderly respondents who got such type of support from their daughters-in-law quite often, it has decreased after being moved to the old age homes. Further, the study also shows that most of the institutionalized aged perceived that the frequency and types of interactive pattern, financial support and emotional support has also increased after the aged has been institutionalized.

In order to assess the intra-generational relations of the institutionalized elderly, the study highlights that the majority of the married institutional elderly shifted together with their spouses to the old age homes. The study finds that most of the elderly interacted with their spouses prior to being shifted to the old age homes and they continued to interact with them quite often or sometimes after shifting to the old age homes also. Those who have spouses have been getting financial support and continue to get it after institutionalization also. Majority of the elderly are being provided emotional support by their spouses and the frequency has almost remained similar after their institutionalization. Study also reveals that both kinds of interaction and frequency of interaction of the institutionalized elderly with their siblings have slightly decreased after moving to the old age homes. Change can also be noticed in types and frequency of financial support and emotional support provided to the institutionalized elderly by their siblings which has decreased after being shifted to the old age homes. Further, the study also reveals that there is a great variation in frequency and

types of interaction of elderly with their friends. Decline in frequency and types of financial support and emotional support can also be noticed provided to the elderly by the friends after being institutionalized to the old age homes.

To summarize, most of the elderly shifted to old age homes due to the familial conflict yet they have expressed either a slight improvement or maintained their relations with their family members even after being moved to the old age homes. They are willing to reside in old age homes; it may be because they don't want to go back in the same situation, where they were earlier. They did not feel bad about their institutionalisation; rather they expressed their views that more old age homes should be established for homeless, helpless and ignorant elderly. They also expressed their satisfaction in staying away from their children in order to avoid the daily familial conflict. The elderly do prefer "intimacy - but - at - a - distance" with their families. Further, it also emerges from the above observations and leads us to conclude that a majority of the institutionalized elderly has almost maintained their relations with their spouses, but, after institutionalization their relations with their siblings and friends have deteriorated in terms of interactional, financial and emotional support.

Isha

BOOK REVIEWS

Neerja Ahlawat (ed.) : *Gender Discrimination and Development Paradox*. Jaipur: Rawat, 2016, Pp.xiv+210, RS.795. ISBN 978-81-316-0774-9

Since the onset of the present century a new social issue in the form of missing daughters has emerged in a serious manner in India and particularly in the North- West India. Though this concern was never absent in our and also in some other societies, but with the increasing development of societies such issues have become matters of serious concern. The book under review is an outcome of the seminar covering all the possible dimensions of increasing male sex ratio of India's population. It has eleven chapters and each chapter tries to examine the challenge of gender discrimination, hence providing a comprehensive understanding of the issue. The introduction by the editor raises all the possible issues, concerns and challenges which the process of development has ushered in.

The first chapter raises an issue of the nature of development, the way it is conceived, planned, projected and the nature of its effects pointing out the paradox involved in it. The practices of infanticide and foeticide have many implications. The most important is the denial of fatherhood and motherhood to the parents. These denials may be forced or voluntary. There would be emergence of a strong force of sister-less brothers and emotionally imbalanced daughterless fathers. There would be shortage of possible brides and increase in their bargaining power. The commoditification of the sexes and the associated problems like dowry would increase and in the view of the author the interests of all the stakeholders of the development shall remain secure so long as there is skewed sex ratio. This is the real paradox which needs to be addressed.

The 2011 census has shown an improvement in overall sex ratio, but the disturbing figures have emerged with regard to child sex ratio (0-6 years of age) which has dropped from 927 in 2001 to an all India low of 914 in 2011. Mary John takes it up as a challenge for law and policy makers in her article and suggests that Government should reconsider its population policies, government schemes and various acts/laws enacted from time to time. Government has to show political will in exposing the nexus between medical practitioners and the political machinery. Radkar highlights that the West and North-West India are the main culprits in eliminating the daughters. All these are economically developed states, and their prosperity has led to sex selective abortions where they have resources and access to these techniques. Education and income are determinants of low fertility. Son preference

becomes more visible when family size goes down is reflected in the lower child sex ratio. She is of the view that along with education if the status of women is high, the child sex ratio would not be as low. Kerala is one such example. In fact these are the regions which are responsible for the decline of sex ratio and child sex ratio at national level.

Neerja Ahlawat in her article on 'eliminating daughters and selecting sons' points out that the desirable family now means two child family and that too of one's choice. Her field data reveal that family planning programmes emphasizing small size of family is also responsible for foeticide. People valued girl child, but they showed a strong dislike for having her. Dowry and expenditure on her marriage are the major discouraging factors, besides the taunts of in-laws for not having son, prevalent hypergamy where the status of bride giver is lower than the status of bride taker. Daughters are taken as outgoing rather than incoming. Author has also brought out the role of deras and use of herbal potions to beget sons.

Manjeet Rathee's article on women and conservative backlash in society and media touches on number of issues on the basis of field experiences of Haryana. She discusses the discriminatory and violent practice of female infanticide which has acquired new dimensions when the paradigm of development and new technology is being used for civilized extermination of a particular sex and that, too, in the name of democratic choice in neo-liberal culture. In the globalized market economy, the visibility of women has increased. There are two trends: women are commoditized aggressively for the sale of various products and, on the other, they are depicted in traditional stereotyped roles as ideal wife or *bahu* confined to the boundaries of home and hearth.

Further Anjali Dewan explores the socio-economic and cultural dimensions of female foeticide and infanticide. Historically, infanticide has been in practice in India. The girl infants have been known to be killed by rubbing poison on the mother's breast, by feeding with the milk of errukam flower or oleander berries by using sap of caltrops plant, paddy grains, giving sleeping tablets or simply burying the infant alive. The British law banned the practice in 1870, nearly 147 years back, but now with the help of technology female foeticide is in practice and to check it Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994, came into force in 1996. There was provision of three years of imprisonment and Rs. 10,000 fine for offenders, which was amended in 2003 and now the Pre-conception and Pre natal Diagnostic Techniques Act since February, 2003 is in force. She suggests socialization, education, employment, ownership of property and monetary benefits to parents of girls as ways of improving the status of women and empowerment of the girls.

Another study on behavioural categorization of women based on empowerment level and the extent of son preference shows that there is a strong need to bring about diversity in the approaches towards the method to check the rapidly declining sex ratio, keeping in mind the differential behavioural attitudes of women towards son preference. Different women have different reasons for preferring sons. Therefore, the policy makers should be clear that like for different diseases we require different medicines, similarly to treat the problem of daughter discrimination, varieties of approaches are required to combat the problem.

The next chapter focuses on some initiatives of a voluntary agency-URMUL (Uttari Rajasthan Cooperative Milk Union Ltd) to ensure the dignity of girl child in Ganganagar in Rajasthan. Ganganagar is the most prosperous district of the state, but, at the same time, it has the worst girl child sex ratio of 850 in 2001. The URMUL trust with the support of media channels, school-colleges, village panchyats, chamber of commerce and state administration did some pioneering work in spreading awareness messages. It promoted Kanya Lohri and the couples who have girl children are publically honoured for their decision. The Ganganagar Chamber of Commerce arranged financial support worth 10 lakh rupees for the families with one or two daughters and no son. Money would be used for the higher and professional education of the girls. As a result of these efforts there is a slight improvement in the number of female children in the district. Some interesting facts on the implementation of PCPNDT Act have been presented in the article on combating female foeticide by Mitu Khurana. The PNDT Act was passed in 1994 with the aim to check the declining sex ratio. This Act was modified in 2002 so as to include pre-conception techniques which could selectively stop the conception of the female foetus by segregating Y carrying sperms. The PCPNDT rules were modified in 2003. Despite the ACT and Rules in place, the sex ratio of all the states of India continues to decline. The author analysed the data received by CDMOs of the nine districts of Delhi regarding the action taken by them under the PCPNDT Act. Data show that there is poor implementation of the Act and there is no fear of the law in the minds of the law breakers. There is a need to enforce the Act strictly if we need to check the declining sex ratio.

SudhaYadav treats the female foeticide as a silent violence. It is a practice that involves the detection of the sex of the child in the womb of the mother and the decision to abort it if the sex of the child is detected. The detection of the sex of the baby is done through Amniocentesis (popular between 1979 and 1982 with 95-97 % accurate results), Chronic Villus sampling and ultrasonography. Amniocentesis was first introduced in 1974 to ascertain the genetic defects in the child but quickly, it was appropriated to detect the sex of the child.

In early 1979, North India's first sex determination clinic was opened in Amritsar. No doubt in patriarchal structure, son preference intensifies in the transition period when fertility is declining. The author reiterates that the birth of a male child is also preferred in capitalist as well as socialist countries. Chinese couples accept a one child family but the child has to be a male. At the same time, however, according to a Chinese estimate, by 2020 there would be 40 million unmarried young men called 'bare branches'. She quotes Dr Ronald Edrison who has clinics for pre-selection tests in many developed and developing countries who said that out of 263 couples who approached him, 248 selected boys and 15 selected girls. Another study quoted by her is worth mentioning which shows that the districts with more than 100 sonography centres showed a higher decline in child sex ratio, i.e., 901 in comparison to districts with less than 100 sonography centres is 937. The last chapter by Dehmiwal identifies reasons for discrimination against girl child and also consequences of female foeticide, besides the government incentives to protect the girl child.

The book on the topic provides a comprehensive view of adverse sex ratio from an interdisciplinary perspective. The social and economic reasons to commit this kind of violence against the girl child have been explored in depth and what are the likely consequences for the social and economic development of the country have been presented in detail in the context of diverse space and time frame. The studies have identified small family norm, son preference, to obtain passport to heaven, dowry, and insecurity as the reasons. While high education, urban background, high income, economically developed states with high per capita income, better infrastructure facilities, better medical facilities and technologies responsible for sex selection of the foetus have been facilitating processes. These have led to serious challenges which our society tend to face- like squeezing of marriage cohort, practice of polyandry, child marriages, crime and violence against women. The book may be a valuable source for all those who have sensitive minds and are pondering over the serious social concern.

Gurpreet Bal

B.K.Nagla: *Sociology of Sanitation*. Delhi: Kalpaz Publication, 2015, 372 pp., Rs 1090. ISBN- 978935 128.

The book "Sociology of Sanitation" written by B.K.Nagla is an excellent presentation on the issues of sanitation linking it with various social and economic aspects of life in India. The

book is a publication on 'Sociology of Sanitation'- text book series has been expectedly brought out with the support of 'Sulabh International Center for Action Sociology'. It gives various perspectives on sanitation and thus shows its connection with health, culture, social structure, environment, globalization, and social change. It further relates with the state actions and gives details about the sanitation movement in India due to the efforts of Sulabh.

In the contemporary India it is difficult to think of sanitation and its impact on society without focusing on Sulabh International and the untiring endless effort put in by Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak and therefore, the book is most aptly dedicated to him. The book starts with a biographical note on Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak and then presents a brief sketch and description of what has happened in the country in the area of sanitation. It is based on extensive review of literature including print media- newspaper and magazine. However, it is not based on the field work and therefore, does not comment on the actual condition existing in the country.

In the second chapter on 'Perspective and Orientation' functionalist manifest and latent functions, conflicts and symbolic interactionist perspective have been rightly included in the sociological traditions. The third and fourth chapters are on the linkages of sanitation in a wider perspective with health and culture. Interestingly the author also brings in 'purity and pollution' along with the health. To us, it is a different way of looking at health with the conception of pollution and purity. The book then takes the debate further to the issue of empowerment of Dalits.

In our country no academic discussion is possible without bringing caste into it. Thus, the chapter 'Social Structure and Sanitation' becomes the backbone of the book. Here not only caste, gender, sex, family are discussed in the context of sanitation but also matrimony or wedlock find a place while discussing sanitation.

Sulabh International came to be known initially for its wide network of "Sulabh Shauchalaya". In the chapter on this issue vividly brings out toilet as a tool of social change. Very interestingly, here it is linked to untouchability, human capital and human rights. Concepts of dignity, liberation are brought in here leading to social transformation. For many of us it is interesting that how toilets have lead to social change. In the appendix 2, the author also presents how toilets have evolved all over the world. The chapter is followed by providing linkages between state and sanitation presenting a detailed view on public policy on the issue.

The ninth chapter on Sulabh Sanitation Movement in India presents how Sulabh worked to provide toilets but interestingly it explains how public toilets evolved in the past fifty years in the country. In the chapter on globalisation and sanitation the author brings in various issues like global village, globalization and raising the issues of water, migration, technology, media, mass communication, trading, commerce etc. Here perhaps the author could have looked into what is happening to the process of globalization-liberalisation during the past decade. Each nation as a society is trying to get isolated from others. Global citizenship is losing its place. The concept of old nation citizenship is prevailing over the concept of global citizenship. Nationalism is becoming a major concern in many countries and this includes hatred towards other nations. Recovering the past glory (real or fabricated) is becoming important in many nation societies. Therefore, perhaps a book in 2015 should have looked into more recent trends when talking about globalization.

The eleventh chapter is epilogue and includes the “Swatchh Bharat” campaign launched in October 2014. Here the field work reports could have been more useful. The relationship between the advertising and media coverage with what has changed in country could have been brought out clearly. This particular chapter has focused on something for future analysis, whether the country is getting cleaned after twenty four months of efforts, as emphasized by the most powerful in the government of the country.

The book is an extensive presentation of how the sanitation has actually progressed in the country. The strength of the book lies in the material surveyed by the author. It has been supported by a number of case studies separately included in the book in the twelfth chapter. Glossary in the book will be of great help to those readers who do not have sociological background. The book will serve its purpose if it is read by the administrators, and policy makers for whom clean India is one of the highest goals. I hope the book is followed up by another publication with field work on the issue of sanitation in the country. It will serve its purpose better if the book is also brought out in the national languages like Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Kannada etc. so that the information included reaches the masses in country.

Dinesh Sharma

Manoj Kumar Teotia: *Urban Development in North-Western India: Emerging Trends, Concerns and Strategies*. Chandigarh: CRRID Publications, 2016, Pages 372, Price: Not mentioned. ISBN: 978-81-85835-80-2

The Indian society is changing and becoming more fluid. It is plausible that in a not-too-distant future, the country shall see a higher scale of urbanisation. A direct source for a sociological analysis of urbanisation and urban life is to study some aspects of urban and social life and segments of urban population relating to immigrants, caste system, occupational categories, family organisation, politics and religion. With the onset of globalization, liberalization and privatization, there were trends for migration and there has been a tremendous increase in urban population which had its consequences for the whole population. In the post liberalization era, such spate of development is going unabated and adding to the existing challenges. North-West India comprising of Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Chandigarh has also undergone social transformation and is facing lot of problems due to urbanization. The book under review focuses on emerging challenges such as housing, slums, poverty, infrastructure and services, etc. The book is largely based on secondary data gives an overview of the problems and challenges in North-West India. The book is divided into ten chapters. An effort has been made to look into the emerging urban development patterns and governance systems that contribute to processes of urban fragmentation or to enhanced processes of integration.

Chapter 1 introduces the topic and concepts such as urban area, urban agglomerations, urbanization, slums, urban poverty, housing, governance and planning. The author also introduces theoretical framework and emphasises on Political Economy Perspective and Bottom Up Approach while negating the Neo-Liberal Perspective and Top-Down Approach. An attempt has been made to focus on Pro-Poor inclusive urban development that aptly aims at equitable urban development and inclusive growth. Chapter 2 to 8 analyze secondary data on trends in urbanization, housing, slums, infrastructure and services, planning and governance and try to show serious deficiencies in them. Chapter 2 discusses trends at National level with special emphasis on State-wise, District-wise data in North-Western Region. Using data from National Buildings Organization, it emphasizes that the urban population will increase from 20 to 25 percent by 2026.

Chapter 3 is devoted to housing and its problems. In this chapter, exhaustive data on housing have been given and it is projected that there will be acute shortage of housing in future. In the post-liberalization era, plan outlays for housing and urban development proportionately have declined and not much relief has been extended to houseless population and slum dwellers. Slums and their conditions are discussed in Chapter 4. The chapter asserts

that growing concerns of slums and urban poverty are not addressed in different policies whereas NSSO and Census data show multiple and physical deprivations in slums. Census data show that the slum population in India has increased from 15 percent of urban population in 2001 to 17.4 percent in 2011. The book points out that the country is having a huge slum population but there are deficiencies in housing and coverage of basic infrastructure and services. There is need for policy interventions to bring them into the mainstream of society.

Chapter 5 is entitled Poverty and deals with urban poverty across India with emphasis on North-West India. It is interesting to see that the estimates of Planning Commission in the book at one hand reveal the decline of urban poverty but on the other hand states that number of urban poor continue to be high and concentrated in slums and deprived part of urban areas. These findings seem to be contradictory and no such effort is made to study the positive impact of various schemes started by Government of India in eradicating poverty. The chapter suggests that there is need to upscale the efforts for alleviation of urban poverty in all cities. At the beginning of Chapter 6, the author states that rapid urbanization in India, including in the North-Western states, seem to catalyse greater need for improvement in urban infrastructure and services. The state of urban infrastructure and services is far poorer than is desirable for India's current income levels and is likely to have adverse impact on measures to increase productivity. There is need to preserve water, improve sanitation, traffic and parking management and explore avenues for public-private partnership. The garbage bin-free scheme of Chandigarh can be replicated in other cities.

Chapter 7 is focused on Planning and begins with a pessimistic note that urban development and planning in North-West India has limited focus and priority as it ranks low in state agenda of growth and development. Subsequently, Urban Planning Framework is discussed which clearly depicts hierarchical structure and roadmap for planning. The book makes a suggestion of merging the Department of Local Government and Housing and Urban Development to be put under the command of Minister designated for Local Government and Urban Development with emphasis on promoting Information Technology. It also gives various other suggestions for planning.

Chapter 8 is on important dimension of Governance which is also considered as weak in North-West India which is inhibiting sustainability of urban settlements, institutional, managerial and technical inefficiencies, etc. that impede the process of urban development.

The urban local bodies cannot function properly due to lack of political will and paucity of funds. The city level analysis of Municipal Finances of Amritsar, Faridabad and Srinagar show the plight of dismal conditions. The book gives good suggestions for improving urban governance.

The ninth chapter in the book is based on primary data on the perception of residents on satisfaction with crucial infrastructure and services. The data were collected from four cities: Amritsar, Shimla, Srinagar and Faridabad and reveal moderate to poor satisfaction of the respondents with supply of electricity, road sweeping, sewerage management, solid waste disposal, education and health needs, effective governance, etc. The respondents were not satisfied with the functioning of official and elected representatives of urban local bodies. The last Chapter summarizes findings, strategies and policy perspectives for sustainable urban development in North-Western India. It reinforces the need for serious interventions and commitment for improving urban governance. It touches upon the concept of smart city and calls for empowering urban local bodies.

In the overview, it may be mentioned that the thrust of chapters is to focus attention on the different dimensions of social life and the plethora of ills plaguing the urban areas. With the population pressure showing no signs of letting up, India is heading towards an urban crisis of behemoth proportions. Overall, the book has a useful data which can be utilized for further research. It offers guidelines for the formulation and improvement of development plans and opens new areas of research for further study. Though it is not the first book to deal with urbanisation, but it provides an analysis of the major components of the urban issues. The findings try to strive to eliminate commonly held fallacies about urbanisation.

Ranjay Vardhan

Cheruvallil-Contractor, Sariya and ShakkourSuha (Eds.), *Digital Methodologies in the Sociology of Religion*. London: Bloomsbury, 2016, 228 pp., E 27.99, ISBN PB: 9781472571151

This book discusses various aspects of sociological theory and emerging methods of studying the intersections of religion and internet. As its title suggests it deals with methodologies of studying belief, faith and culture in digital era and is particularly focused on digital

religion. With a primary focus on the debates in digital methodologies in the field of religion, it critically looks at how digital technologies have changed social interactions and the ways and challenges to understand identities, gender, communities and culture. Since the focus is on methodologies the chapters are intended to assist researchers and provide a foundation to study digital religion. All of them broadly initiate thought provoking discussions on ethics, objectives, theories and empirical research dilemmas of studying religion online. The central focus is on reflexivity and engaging with 'unfamiliar' research methods along with more traditional methodologies that have been used by sociologists. The chapters therefore not only provided a blue print of tried and tested methods but also pose far too many thoughtful questions that prods the reader into thinking about other areas, concepts and theories.

The book is divided into four parts that covers fifteen chapters. Each chapter is distinct and a broad reflective exercise that looks into theory and concepts. They delve on specific cases on digital religion and explore various aspects of ethics and the strengths and weaknesses of various methodologies. All the chapters therefore begin with an introduction of actual research projects and proceed to reflect on methods and tools.

Chapter 1 by Campbell and Altenhofen gives an excellent over view of the evolution of research on the digital religion, definition and debates. The four waves of research orients the reader to history and advances in the field including the most recent convergent approaches that have merged with the expansion in social networks and digital technologies. Chapter 2 and 3 in one way illustrate the advantages and context in which researchers connect or rely upon online and offline survey methods to understand belief and faith. Various issues of sampling like representation, homogeneity to framing effective questions are discussed here. Chris Allen's chapter looks at use of social media in the West for 'anti-social' expressions and the challenges of studying social networking sites such as Facebook. The author rationalizes the choice of his approach to do digital ethnography like lurking, engaging with anonymity and so on (pg 42, 43).

Chapter 5 by Stephen Pihlaja advances discourse-centred approach through his case on dynamic YouTube interaction, recommending a combination of systematic observation, direct contact and user discourse analysis (p. 51). Cheruvallil-Contractor's chapter looks at esoteric Sufi practices in online blogs and forums, particular the methods she adopted to capture and study the intimacy of digital spiritual experiences and gender through online ethnography while taking care to ethically collect data online. The 7th Chapter by Scheifinger uses the theory of globalization and rational choice theory while building his case of online pujas in the digital marketplace. His discussion of a combination of digital and traditional

research methods to understand the online-offline connection of religious practice is highly relevant to understand the fluid connections of faith, mediation and practice. Singh's chapter describes a few methods used to study the manifestation of Sikhism online like semi-structured interviews, online survey and offline engagement with young Sikhs while engaging with the issue of reflexivity, ethics and anonymity of researcher during the research project.

The chapters in part 3 deal with digital communication. For instance Hutchings suggest ways to engage with the study of digital apps used for religious purposes like interviewing the publishers, producers, text analysis before reflecting upon his study of digital Bible and offline and online observations of church activities. Piela explores videoconferencing to conduct interviews with Hijab wearing Muslim women and the practical considerations of feminist interviews including managing the researcher-participant relationship. Arasa and Narbona's communication model used to analyse communicative effectiveness of non-profit religious organization and religious organizations is a template to conduct research into dispersed online religious activities. In Chapter 12 Cheong, Bumman and Hwang delve into communicative dynamics of religious authority in media saturated environments using a mixed methods approach like a connective online-offline data collection approach using the case of the Buddhist Tzu Chi foundation.

The chapters in part four explore various cases of virtual reality of digital games. Bainbridge discusses ethnography in the virtual multi-player online gaming world while considering various ethical and data collection issues. Heidbrink, Knoll and Wysocki lays out some practical methods like documentation, and discusses different approaches to playing and religion in digital games. Masso's chapter explores multimodal corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis to study video games as multimodal texts. This chapter illustrates compilation of paratexts of gaming, transcribing and filtering raw data.

Some of the authors give a short glossary, for instance in chapter 11. Largely the chapters in the book together demonstrate a diversity of approaches to understand and engage with digital religion. The chapters are a guide for researchers as they indicate ways to explore multi-site research whether it is quantitative or qualitative and advances that can capture the fluid interconnections of offline-online world. The difficulties are also laid out so as to ease the process of online research for novices. The suggestions to overcome methodological errors and challenge are too valuable as they offer solid grounds to build an understanding of the ever changing field of digital technology and experiences given the rapid pace of advancement in online activities and cultures. The tips in the book are an additional resource

as they suggest new avenues in digital methodologies which can be applied beyond the study of digital religion too.

Jesna Jayachandaran