

VOLUME 1, JAN-DEC 2023

ISSN:

VISION AHEAD

(A Peer Reviewed/ Refereed International Journal
of Multidisciplinary Studies)



Published By
Bundelkhand College, Jhansi (U.P.)
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Subscription Fee:

College Faculties (BKD) – Rs. 1000/- (Annual)

Institutions and Others – Rs. 1500/- (Annual)

After acceptance of the paper, account details will be
sent on corresponding author's email.

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Published By:

VISION AHEAD, Bundelkhand College, Gwalior Road,
Jhansi (U.P.) India

Printed At:

Pallavi Cards and Offset Press, Bada Math
Gusaim Pura, Jhansi, (U.P.) India

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(A Peer Reviewed/ Refereed International Journal of Multidisciplinary Studies)

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About the Journal

This journal is published annually, with an aim to assimilate wisdom of the past, new ideas- innovations of the present and vision – dimensions of the future into one. It provides a powerful forum to the academicians; professionals and research scholars to show case their professional excellence through positive criticism, healthy discourse and thoughtful interactions in their write-ups. It promotes research, recent developments and new theories in the vast gamut of literature, culture, social studies and humanities. It further aims to project and encourage the ethical scholarship and research activities by exchanging new ideas in the field of social, economic, political, literary and moral issues and concerns. This journal would provide a deeper insight and extended scope to new researchers to find materials for further research. Advanced technology and globalization have definitely contributed to the dissemination of knowledge, but this journal presents new perspectives to implement that knowledge in various fields in very systematic and comprehensive way.

In the first issue of this journal, we have made a humble attempt to raise new ripples in the ocean of knowledge by bringing new insight through a rich blend of research paper which focus on exigency of Corporate Social Responsibility, the impact of liquidity management in commercial banks, new horizons of Indian Economy, the hazards of video games, key factors of juveniles' behavior, environment-friendly Buddhist ethics, the current status of feminism, Film-studies racial chauvinism, revisiting texts of authors of English and Hindi domains and many more.

Only original – standard contributions are invited which should follow word limits of 2000 to 4000 words conforming to the latest edition of MLA Hand Book to the editors and copy right regulations. The decision of referees/editors regarding the approval, editorial changes and amendments in the manuscripts will be non-negotiable. The responsibility of the opinions, criticisms and factual information provided in the articles will entirely be of the respective authors and not of editors.

The next issue of Vision Ahead invites unpublished- original research papers by the end of October, 2023.

Only soft copies will be accepted.

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HINDSIGHT OF THE INDIAN ECONOMY

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Abstract

In recent years, the Indian economy has shown acceleration in economic growth. When India started its economic planning in 1950, our main objectives were sustained economic growth, self-reliance, better income distribution and alleviation of poverty. As per the perused policy, capital intensive and major industries were assigned to public sectors and rest were opened to private sectors. The global-development-experience of the last few decades shows that a policy with fewer barriers and restrictions can bring out the industrialization and export-growth fast by which, coupled with sustained economic growth, we can inch towards becoming a superpower. Sustainable-development is a process in which we should make use of our available resources in such a way that they can be used to fulfil our present needs without compromising those of future generations. Growth is a necessary condition, and we must embrace growth as the highest goal. It should be inclusive providing equal opportunities to every section of the society to participate in the process of growth. Recently in the last 2 -3 years, when we were at war with Covid-19, we visualized critical areas like tackling health emergency, focusing on social impact and economic response. In the era of Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav, we must make rapid strides in every sphere of development and make our presence felt globally. For this, we have to achieve many milestones and sheer brilliance of the fundamentals to paint new vistas in Indian economy.

The year 2022-23 ushered in dynamism and a sense of optimism for the Indian economy, setting a tone for positioning India as an economic superpower in the years to come. Macroeconomic fundamentals have recovered dramatically from the sluggishness and dependency of the last years. India has emerged as one of the few large economies with a favorable economic outlook, amidst the widespread gloom and uncertainties suffered by a number of developed and emerging economies. This positive outlook animates to a successful turnaround from economic stagnations, persistent inflation, high fiscal deficit, weak domestic demand and high current account deficit. The paradigm shift in private sector and trade orientation beyond 1991 has been associated with higher rates of growth, over 6 percent between 1991 and 2004, and over 8.5 percent between 2003 and 2007, which thereafter clocked 9.5 percent before the global Financial Crisis started surfacing on the world economy. It is the latter figure that has drawn the attention of the world when India became one of the fastest growing economies in the world after China. The economic policy adopted since then, which is pursued as an alternative policy for planned development, is popularly called the economic reforms or simply the Reforms. The market driven policies replaced the government interventions and the activities reserved for the public sector were reduced to bare minimum. The word 'reform' denotes the

replacement of old order or policy by new order or policy. Such reforms are necessitated by the changes taking place around. The reforms are open minded and flexible response to the changing economic environment aimed at serving the best interests of the country.

Current Scenario

The fiscal year 2022-23 preambles the third decade of the 21st Century where we are traversing a long way, commemorating “Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav” and simultaneously facilitating inclusive and sustained growth, well supported by “Atamnirbhar Bharat Abhiyan”. The economy is also witnessing a transformation phase rapidly. Under the circumstances, there is a need to get the economy ready for the youth of tomorrow. Indian economy remained relatively better placed drawing its strength from its fundamentals all through the difficult period. The external sector appears to be well buffered to withstand the terms of trade and portfolio outflows. Indian financial system remains resilient and supportive of the ongoing revival. We managed to respond to the devastating impact of Covid-19 with firm determination, strong human spirit, and scientific efforts. The proliferation of the internet has led to an exposition of demand for and availability of data abundance. The statistical data have laid a wonderful pathway in mitigating the deadly Covid-19. Though these couple of years may not have been very great in terms of economic growth, there has been a definite silver lining in terms of superlative performance on the agricultural front. The food grain production reached historical high record. Even horticultural production overshadowed food-grain production setting a record of high growth for ten years. The archiving policy and thrust on agriculture leading to a sizeable food-grain and horticulture produce as well as comfort food stock is something which helped the country to wade through this rather difficult period with relative ease. This is exactly in this context that ensuring adequate and sustained flow of the agriculture sector has been our principal focus. The marginalization of land holding has further aggravated the situation. A large section of the farmers is still deprived of the benefits of promoting research findings. Hence, we need to search for new options and solutions in farming.

Efficient Management of Pandemic

After a long spell of growth in the last few years, the occurrence of Covid, and the resultant imposition of lock downs, the situation of the downturn was further exacerbated with continued and severe implications for domestic growth. Covid-19 had set an urgent agenda before us, and we are still battling with this. The crisis evoked unprecedented policy responses. The Covid-19 pandemic has since early 2020 put the economy in serious jeopardy and forced the transformation of human lives and livelihood. Yet amid this unprecedented crisis, Indian agriculture sector stood out as an exception, growing at 3.6 percent during 2021, while the other sectors contracted. The Indian economy has emerged stronger from the adversity. The pandemic has re-emphasized the need to create are salient future-ready infrastructure. However, we should recognize the fact that despite making great strides over the past four decades, Indian (agriculture) is besieged with problems such as falling productivity, increasing input costs, low profits, the climate change, and volatile prices which render farming non-remunerative.

Cusp of globalization

Now we are at another cusp of globalization. The global economy is passing through an extremely uncertain period amidst the simultaneous interplay of various headwinds: Covid, the sharp rise in energy and other commodity prices, disruption in the global supply chain, and worsening food security. On the other hand, the globalization has also fostered competition, efficiency, innovation, etc. It has bridged the technology gap, improved institutional capacity and accelerated the accumulation of physical and human capital formation in emerging markets. The result was higher growth and the lifting of millions out of poverty. More importantly, globalization-led productivity gains contributed to a trend decline in inflation across countries due to black swans. The onset of the pandemic in early 2020 saw global commodity price crash as restrictions and the stringent lockdown were expected to lead to a collapse of aggregate demand. The impact of these overwhelming spillovers on India has been relatively modest. Corporate entities eventually face a trade-off. Any policy tightening would have been detrimental to growth and extracted heavy social costs without being effective in containing inflation pressures. The persistence of inflation at elevated levels as the current synchronized rise in inflation across the economies is not a maiden occurrence in modern economic history.

Building Strong Grassroots Institutions

The philosophy of building strong grassroots institutions as long-term social institutions was validated in the foregoing years when SHGs and FPOs effectively engaged in the larger cause of fighting the pandemic. The third wave of the pandemic has receded, the vaccination drive has been intensified, and despite the fourth wave started looming large the policy makers were unhesitatingly and unwaveringly hopeful of a vibrant economy and a rejuvenated agriculture ecosystem. The country has just battled one of the worst tragedies of human history due to the Covid-19 pandemic. These were incredibly challenging years like none witnessed in our collective memories. But during these looming and desperate times, the courage and unassailable spirit of the masses showed through and with the steadfast and unflinching support of the government, the country rallied together and remained strong throughout. The years 2020 and 2021, were also exceptional years that demonstrated the indomitable spirit and the resilience of humankind. This then remains a report on response, rehabilitation, recovery, reinvention, and resilience that infused immense confidence in the power of grit, determination, and human capacity to face and fight against adversities.

Rewriting Economic History

During the last few years, we were at war with the virus and visualized three critical areas for action. The crisis also evoked unprecedented policy responses. In the post-pandemic period, the country has practically rewritten its economic history by achieving many milestones that indicate the sheer strength of the fundamentals. Looking forward, the horizon is full of possibilities for the path-breaking initiatives and newer technology in the form of digitalization. This is an unparalleled success of the economy achieved through continuous innovation and complementing the initiatives of the government and other developmental agencies. History suggests that technology, science and prosperity has been the result of the efforts of multi-pronged strategies and constant endeavors since ancient time. Now with the introduction of the New Education Policy 2020, the government has emphasized highlighting our traditional knowledge, science, and technology to reclaim our age-old position of

Vishwa Guru. The three-dimensional development–Sustainable Development, Inclusive Development, and Human Resource Development ought to be the strong pillars of the all-around development of society. The indulgence of young scholars in taking up such a mammoth task and combining these variants in the form of a genre of research is worth appreciating.

Agricultural Sector

The performance of the agricultural sector influences the growth of the Indian Economy. In terms of composition, out of the total share of 18.8 per cent in GDP in 2022-23 for the agriculture and allied activities sector, agriculture alone accounted for 13.2 per cent of GDP, followed by fishing at 5.00 per cent and forestry and logging at 0.6 per cent of GDP. Notwithstanding the fact that the share of this sector in GDP has been declining over the years, its role remains critical as it accounts for about 50 per cent of the employment in the country. Apart from being the provider of food and fodder, its importance also stems from the raw materials that it provides to industry. The prosperity of the rural economy is also closely linked to agriculture and allied activities. The rural sector (including agriculture) is being increasingly seen as a potential source of domestic demand; a recognition, that is shaping the marketing strategies of entrepreneurs wishing to widen the demand for goods and services. The agriculture credit delivery system will perform well and more efficiently if the digitalization of land records is completed, and banks are allowed to create a charge online. Addressing the regional imbalances in agriculture credit fear is another area of priority. For instance, the Central Eastern and Northeastern regions together form 23% of total agriculture credit disbursed in the country while they have a 44% share in the gross cropped area.

Information on agricultural output

Timely availability of reliable information on agricultural output is of great significance for planning and policy making. The existing system of agricultural statistics, in spite of established procedures and wide coverage, has inherent limitations in the matter of providing an objective assessment of crops at the pre-harvesting stages, with the desired spatial details which are essential to identify problem areas and the nature of required interventions in terms of spatial, temporal and qualitative inferences. Capabilities of the existing system of crop forecasts and crop estimation can be enhanced with the introduction of technological advancements and the adoption of emerging methodologies. In turn, an efficient and sound information mechanism can assist considerably in the management of concerns in areas such as food security, price stability, international trade, etc. Remote Sensing (RS), Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Geographic Information System (GIS) can be used towards this end. Schemes/projects like Forecasting Agricultural Output using Space, Agro-meteorology, and Land-based Observations (FASAL) and Extended Range Forecasting System (ERFS) have been initiated to establish a more scientific and reliable basis for forecasting.

Industrialization Policy

As per the pursued policy, capital intensive and major industries were reserved for public sector and the rest were opened for private sector. The public sector received priority and prominence in allocation of resources. Our country preferred the policy of controls, licensing, and restrictions in giving permission to private and foreign investors. The frameworks of other policies like taxation, fiscal and monetary policy,

foreign exchange policy and industrial policy were in line with the above-mentioned strategy. This was called ‘closed economy approach’ which suited well during the initial years of planning. However, its efficacy was lost thereafter. Our economic growth was slow and our problems started aggravating on account of many reasons. Things went wrong because we continued to cling on to the policies and institutions long after they served their purpose. Other developing countries like Japan, China, Thailand, Korea, and Indonesia liberalized their economies for global investments, competition, adopted global technologies. These countries achieved faster growth and prosperity. India lost the opportunity of faster growth due to not adopting alternative policies. The global development experience of the last few decades shows that a policy with fewer barriers and restrictions can bring out faster industrialization, export growth and sustainable economic growth. Indian economy experienced a downturn in the form of faltering industrial growth, widening deficit, depleting foreign exchange, and depreciation of the Rupee for some time. However, the Indian economy ended 2021-22 on a strong note. We will continue, as a key solution provider, to play a constructive role in the formulation to meet the challenge of the overall economy, with special emphasis on rural space.

Need to Focus on Rural India

The Indian economy cannot grow in a sustainable and equitable manner without the contribution of rural India and for this to happen financial inclusion needs to be put on a mission mode and sustained efforts of all the stakeholders are necessary over the next few years. The problem of India’s rural economy is not insurmountable and if tackled well can make India a force to reckon with the global arena. India started its economic planning in 1950. Our plan objectives were sustained economic growth, self-reliance, better income distribution and alleviation of poverty. We need to address the challenges of our rural economy through greater policy attention and coordinated efforts. The clear need of the hour is to focus on improving farm production and productivity, better utilization of agriculture inputs, proper marketing infrastructure and support, stepping up investment in agriculture with due emphasis on environmental concerns and efficient food management. We need to put in place efficient supply chain management, adopt international best practices and improve the entire “farm to fork chain”.

Infrastructural space

There are many players in the infrastructural space and to take part in making India the \$5 trillion economy, which has just outpaced U.K and jumped to enjoy status of largest fifth economy of the world. Now post-harvest Management is the crucial need of the hour. NABARD has taken enough initiatives to support infrastructure creation. Even the process of tagging storage across the country has been completed. The utter need of increase the diversification of agriculture is an urgent need. The agriculture sector should focus on high-tech agriculture, commercialization and high-value products.

Skills for Tomorrow

The youth aspires to acquire new skill sets and gain hands on experience in the use of technology. To enable the youth to emerge as confident and skilled entrepreneurs, agriculture business centers and agriculture business incubation centers have been set up. To provide focused venture capital for investment in agriculture centers and infrastructure by starts up, various steps have been initiated at various levels. Skilling

the farmers and the youth to take technology into the fields will be the key to catalyzing this transformation of the rural economy necessary for Atma Nirbhar Bharat.

Inclusive Growth

With the arrival of banking technology, there is an increased focus on Inclusive Growth. This is because of the realization of the fact that unbanked villages and the poor provide business opportunities for banks and other financial intermediaries. Government of India and Reserve Bank of India have taken the multi-agency approach to implement financial inclusion and establishment of Financial Stability and Development counsel to institutionalize the mechanism for maintaining financial stability. The RBI has urged all banks to include performance under financial inclusion in the performance of their field staff. Banks have created financial literacy and Credit Counseling Centers. In the recent past, the efforts were directed towards eco-system development, and assuming the delivery model as a key, a complete eco-system was felt necessary. The main objective hovered around the issue that front-end device transactions must be seamlessly integrated with the banks' CBS which was of late done effectively and consequently, Business Correspondence (BC) Model was also strengthened. At the same time, branch-less modes of delivery were innovated, and the focus got shifted from growth to inclusive growth.

Economic development strategies must be compatible with environmental goals. This requires the incorporation of environmental dimensions into the process of development. It is important to make choices and decisions that will eventually promote sound development by understanding the environmental functions. The human economy is engaged in a wide range of activities that are causing enormous damage to the ecosystem that sustains both our species and the earth's legacy of biodiversity. The content of environmental sustainability concentrates on the most recent innovations, concerns, and challenges encountered by researchers in taking global issues related to pollution, environment and sustainability. This is the first step in the exploration of different deeper and broader ways of understanding the environment and sustainable development. We should look at ourselves and the others as the key to understanding human behavior towards the environment.

Banks are special commercial entities. Protection of depositors' interest is paramount to a robust, reliable and stable financial system in any country around the globe. Banks are also expected to be permanent institutions after they obtain a regulatory license. The banking sector is going through a process of churning. Banks have risen to the expectations of customers. They have lubricated the wheels of agriculture and industry. Banks have played a vital role in the development of the economy. To stay relevant, banks would need to embrace newer and tested technologies for effective and timely business decision-making, understanding the needs of their customers, and delivering personalized services. Banks have contributed heavily to poverty alleviation and employment generation programs. In recent past, banks have carved out special outfits like R'SETIs for short-period training for engaging the youth in productive ventures, particularly based on local resource endowment. Banking for tomorrow will strengthen these unique devices for the cause of economic growth and employment. Rural Development in India is not a political slogan, but it is a pure economic necessity.

Sustainable Rural Development

Distribution of benefits of the public program is one of the crucial things to alleviate poverty and ease inequality of income. A well-documented study of various related issues to improve the economic and social life of rural people involves the extension of benefits of developments to the poorest among those who seek a livelihood in rural areas. Upliftment of rural areas is crucial for the upliftment of our economy. Rural Development programs have passed through several phases. Its primary objective was to bring about an overall development in rural areas covering economic resources as well as the cultural and economic aspect of community life. Emphasis was laid down on the reduction of poverty and promotion of economic property by way of self-employment as a measure of curbing the disparity, which grew wider between those who owned resources and who did not. Rural Development hinges upon the drastic change in this plan and situation. The backward and forward linkages have also disappeared. The route of transfer of people out of low productivity in agriculture and related activities into more rewarding pursuits has been slow. However, the degree of agricultural development is India's economic development index. The government of India and the state Governments are giving impetus to create a scientific eco- system, speed up development according to the wishes and expectations of the villagers, and therefore transform the agriculture sector of the country through a holistic approach. With the experience and vision in the domain, the farmer himself is one of the valued stakeholders, and the creation of rural infrastructure is a catalyst for achieving sustainable rural development.

Curbing Financial Exclusion

A large portion of India's population lives on the outside of the country's financial systems. There are growing concerns about people being 'under-banked'. Financial inclusion is a top objective for the country in terms of economic growth and social development. It makes it possible to close the wealth divide. It helps to move money into the economy and ensures that people who have previously been unable to enter the financial system may do so with ease. The function of financial inclusion in the economy and how different stakeholders contribute to the overall development of the effort is of paramount importance. Financial Involvement benefits the economy. In today's race for economic strength and self-sufficiency, it is critical for any government to provide favorable conditions for individuals, households, and private entities, including the availability of banking services. Banking facilities and a strong bank branch network are significant enablers of developmental and expansionary activity. A strong and sturdy financial system is a pillar of economic growth, development, and progress of an economy. To stand out on a global platform, India must focus on inclusive growth, and financial inclusion is the key to the inclusive growth. There is still a long way to go for financial inclusion to reach the core poor. Opening no-frills bank accounts is not the goal or end goal of financial inclusion, while traditional financial institutions must acquire the trust and goodwill of the poor through establishing strong partnerships with community-based financial businesses and cooperatives. Financial inclusion has not produced the anticipated results, and there is still a long road ahead, but there is no doubt that it is playing a key role and is working positively.

Financial Inclusion (FI) is a policy thrust area for RBI and because of the various initiatives; tremendous progress has been made in the domain of financial inclusion since the country set out in mission mode about seventeen years ago. Further, with the launch of Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), almost every household has

been brought under the fold of formal financial system. Both in terms of deposit accounts and credit products, there has been a steady improvement over the years. RBI has initiated setting up a National Strategy for Financial Inclusion with the objective of making financial products and services available, accessible, and affordable to all citizens in a safe and transparent manner to support inclusive and resilient multi-stake holder led growth. The strategic pillars of the financial inclusion strategy would include universal access to financial services, providing basic bouquet of financial services, access to livelihood and skill development, financial literacy and education, customer protection and grievance redressal. The FI strategy aims for sustainable financial inclusion by leveraging technology and adopting a multi-stakeholder approach.

New Phase of Faster Expansion

The Indian economy's development trajectory in the first decade of the twenty-first century appeared to signal the start of a new phase of faster expansion. From an average growth rate of roughly 6% for the previous quarter-century, the rate has surged to 8.1% during these years. Along with the falling population growth, this revealed that per capita income increased by more than 6% in those years resulting in a doubling of per capita income every ten years. Most crucially, the economic process was not a fluke and is showing signs of sustainability as well as financial stability, despite the challenges from unforeseen external shocks.

Financial inclusion is not a novel notion in India, since we are one of the few countries that have pioneered financial inclusion in some form or another. Banking systems were forced to adhere to two basic principles: i). serving the needs of the real economy and ii) profitability. However, there have been instances where pursuits for profitability through cost reduction resulted in the natural exclusion of several sections of society from a financial net. Concerned with this exclusion, the Finance Minister noted in the Budget Speech 2005-06, "The financial inclusion provides business prospects for the financial institutions at the bottom of the pyramid to expand the volume of the business. Profitability could be raised solely by identifying new avenues for deployment of cash & thus emphasized the requirement of financial inclusion of those parts that stands excluded". The era of inclusive growth is upon developing nations, and financial inclusion is the key to inclusive growth. Financial inclusion, also known as inclusive financing, is the provision of financial services at low or no cost to the disadvantaged and low-income segments of society. There have been many formidable challenges in financial inclusion, such as bridging the gap between the financially excluded sections of society and the formal financial system, providing financial literacy, and strengthening credit delivery mechanisms in order to improve financial economic growth. A nation can grow economically and socially if its weaker sections can become financially independent. Based on my experience in teaching in higher education institutes and as a policy maker in banking sector, I strongly emphasize the fundamental characteristics of financial inclusion and its importance in the social and economic development of society. My studies focus on the role of financial inclusion in strengthening India's economic position in comparison to other countries. After analyzing the facts and figures, it can be concluded that financial inclusion is certainly playing a catalytic role for the economic and social development of society but still there is a long road ahead to achieve the desired outcomes.

The way forward

In the past, the financial inclusion was mandated through direction of priority sectors lending and branch licensing and we succeeded to a large extent in those mandates. Critics of the mandatory approach maintain that for bringing improvement, healthy force like competition be injected. However, deterrents like rudimentary infrastructure, uneven regulation, monopoly or even cartelization can be great obstacles in the way of market functioning. The RBI should extend helping hand to the bottom of pyramid businesses by putting in place right infrastructure construction and enabling regulation so that through development of products, institutions and networks, Financial Inclusion fostering can be encouraged. Greater financial inclusion is an important driver for attaining social inclusion and many of the SDGs. Mobile financial services can bring millions into the formal economy, enhancing individual livelihoods and reshaping sustainability of the economy. Future studies should examine other interventions that promote financial inclusion. Apart from the popular interventions which are financial innovations, digital technology, financial literacy and cheap loan schemes and other ideas should be explored so that a wide variety of options are available to policy makers seeking to adopt new financial inclusion strategies. Future research should provide new ideas, strategies and interventions that increase financial inclusion in countries where all available options have already been used up.

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IMPACT OF LIQUIDITY MANAGEMENT ON PROFITABILITY OF JOINT VENTURE COMMERCIAL BANKS IN NEPAL

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of Liquidity Management and Profitability of Joint Venture Commercial Banks in Nepal. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, regression analysis and t-test. SPSS 21.0 version. The data used to analyze five (5) samples size out of 27 has found to be covering period 2012-2021 of joint venture commercial Banks in Nepal. The Liquidity management represents the variables of the Credit Deposit Ratio (CDR), Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR), Current Reserve Ratio (CRR), Total Deposit to Total Ratio (TDTAR), Total Loan to Total Assets Ratio (TLTAR) and the profitability including Return on Assets (ROA). The findings of the study have a R square value of 0.615 which means that 61.5% of the variation in the dependent variable is explained by the independent variables while 38.5% is explained by other variables outside the model and also showed that there is a strong positive correlation between the dependent variable and the set of independent variables. The result showed that there is significant impact of TLTAR on ROA and there is insignificant impact of CDR, CAR, CRR and TDTAR on ROA of joint venture commercial banks in Nepal.

Key words: *Liquidity, Management, Assets, Deposit, Loans and advances, Profitability*

Introduction

Profitability and liquidity are the main metrics that banks use to evaluate their performance. The ability to easily convert assets or securities into cash is referred to as liquidity. One of the first signs when a financial organization is in serious financial trouble is typically a lack of liquidity. Maintaining liquidity is crucial if it is involved in the comfort and pleasure of the client. Liquidity plays a part in determining the income level of the organization. According to Ali and Jameel (2019), the commercial bank's liquidity reflects its capacity to pay its contractual obligations, such as those involving lending and investment commitments, withdrawals, deposits, and accumulated liabilities, when they are due. A healthy liquidity stage is essential to a firm's productivity and profitability. Therefore, in order to ensure high profitability, the banking industry wants to determine the top of the line stage of the liquidity. The amount of liquidity that a company needs depends on its unique characteristics; there is no set formula for figuring out the optimal level of liquidity that a company should maintain to guarantee a favorable influence on its profitability (Owolabi & Obida, 2012). Liquidity shouldn't be excessively high or low. Instead, it must keep its stage at a respectable level. To keep the public's trust in banks, financial institutions' involvement in liquidity is crucial. In order to improve the banks' profitability and reap the rewards of the money's time value, it is necessary to invest the excess liquidity that is now accessible at the banks in a variety of investment opportunities (Alshatti, 2015).

Profitability is a sign that a business can generate revenue from its assets. Being able to turn a profit from all of an enterprise's business activities is what is meant by profitability (Owolabi & Obida, 2012). Every business's primary goal is to increase and enhance its revenue, thus making the effective use of its resources is a must. Profitability is a sign that a business can generate revenue from its assets. Being able to turn a profit from all of an enterprise's business activities is what is meant by profitability (Owolabi & Obida, 2012). Every business's primary goal is to increase and enhance its revenue, thus making effective use of its resources is a must. Profitability is a measure of a company's performance that depicts a financial institution's capacity to produce revenue that exceeds the value of its capital base. The profitability gauges the business's financial success. Bank profitability is a crucial component of financial development, and its importance extends from the performance of banking firms to macroeconomic stability. A larger return greatly reduces bank instability at the firm level. At the macro level, more profitability creates a stable banking sector that can fund economic development and growth (Osuagwu, 2014). A profitable and strong banking company is better able to withstand negative shocks and actively contribute to financial stability. Profitability also shows how well banks are performing in a certain climate. More specifically, it is a reflection of the management quality, shareholder behavior, and risk management capabilities of the bank (Aburime, 2008). Banks are expected to maintain a sizable stake in liquid assets, but they must also be profitable in order to remain viable. Almost all profit-oriented institutions, not only those in the banking sector, can use profitability and liquidity as reliable indicators of their overall performance. For the shareholders and depositors, who make up the main constituencies of financial institutions, these performance indicators are extremely important. Depositors are worried about a bank's ability to respond to withdrawal requests, which are typically made on demand or with little notice, while shareholders are more interested in a bank's profitability stage. Since banking makes up a significant portion of Nepal's economic structure, it is prudent to do research on the financial system by analyzing the profitability of the banking industry and its performance. In order to provide insight for increasing better asset and legal responsibility control of banks in Nepal, the study intends to investigate how liquidity effects the profitability of Commercial Banks of Nepal.

Review of Literature

Mohanty, and Mehrotra, (2018). conducted a research on The Effect of Liquidity Management on Profitability: A Comparative Analysis of Public and Private Sector Banks in India. This paper makes an attempt to study the effect of liquidity management on the profitability of public and private sector banks in India. For this purpose, 27 public sector banks and 20 private sector banks have been considered for the periods 2011-12 and 2015-16. Cash-Deposit Ratio (CDR), Credit-Deposit Ratio (CRDR) and Investment-Deposit Ratio (IDR) have been used as independent variables to denote the liquidity management of the banks, while Return on Assets (ROA) and Return on Equity (ROE) have been used as proxy variables for the profitability of the banks. It is discovered that CDR and IDR have a large detrimental impact on ROA. However, when all factors are included, it is discovered that there is no meaningful association between bank profitability and liquidity in the case of ROE, regardless of the kind or structure of commercial banks in India. This suggests

that commercial banks can concentrate on boosting their profitability without doing so at the expense of their liquidity, and vice versa.

Pradhan, and Gautam, (2019) conducted a research on the impact of liquidity management on bank profitability in Nepalese commercial banks. This study examines the impact of liquidity management on the profitability of Nepalese commercial banks. The return on assets and return on equity are the dependent variables. The independent variables are the capital ratio, total deposits, current ratio, liquid asset ratio, quick ratio and investment ratio. This study is based on secondary sources of data that are collected for 18 commercial banks through 2009/10 to 2014/15, leading to a total of 120 observations. The data were collected from Quarterly Economic Bulletin and Bank Supervision Reports published by Nepal Rastra Bank and annual reports of the selected commercial banks. The regression models are estimated to test the significance of liquidity management on the profitability of Nepalese commercial banks. The result shows that capital ratio is positively related to return on assets. This indicates that higher the capital ratio, higher would be the return on assets. Likewise, the study reveals that investment ratio and current assets ratio are positively related to return on assets and return on equity. This indicates that increase in investment ratio and current assets ratio leads to increase in return on assets and return on equity. However, the study reveals that liquid asset ratio is negatively related to return on assets and return on equity. This indicates that higher the liquid asset ratio, lower would be the return on assets and return on equity. The regression result shows that beta coefficients are positive for current assets ratio and liquid asset ratio with return on equity. However, the study reveals that beta coefficients are negative for quick ratio with return on assets.

Mishra, and Pradhan (2019) conducted a research on Impact of liquidity management on Profitability: An empirical analysis in private sector banks of India. This paper makes an attempt to explain the impact of liquidity management on the profitability of private sector banks in India. For this purpose, 10 private sector banks have been considered for the period from 2013 to 2017. Cash-Deposit Ratio (CDR), Credit-Deposit Ratio (CRDR) and Investment-Deposit Ratio (IDR) have been used as independent variables to denote the liquidity management of the banks, while Return on Assets (ROA) and Return on Equity (ROE) have been used as dependent variables for the profitability of the banks. It is discovered that CDR and IDR have a large detrimental impact on ROA. However, when all the factors are taken into account with regard to all the chosen commercial banks in India, it is discovered that there is no meaningful correlation between bank profitability and liquidity in the case of ROE. This suggests that commercial banks can concentrate on boosting their profitability without doing so at the expense of their liquidity, and vice versa.

Wuave, Yua, and Yua, (2020) conducted a research on Effect of liquidity management on the financial performance of banks in Nigeria. This study examines the effect of liquidity management on financial performance of banks in Nigeria for the period 2010 to 2018. The study uses secondary data from five banks listed bank on the stock exchange in Nigeria. The proxies employ for liquidity management are; Liquidity ratio (LQR), Loan to Deposit Ratio (LDR), Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Deposit Ratio (DR), while Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Equity (ROE) and Return on net Interest Margin (NIM) are proxies for financial performance (Profitability). The study uses panel regression analysis in estimating the model and hausman test while making a choice between fixed effect and random effect model.

The study finds that Liquidity Ratio (LQR) have positive and significant effect on financial performance of DMB as measured by Return on Assets (ROA), Return on Equity (ROE) and Net Interest Margin(NIM). Therefore, it suggests that banks in Nigeria establish sound governance and risk management systems by creating strategies, policies, and practices for liquidity management that are well integrated into their risk management practices as well as by creating a contingency funding plan to address any liquidity shortfall during times of stress or emergency while making sure that active monitoring liquidity funding needs to avoid any liquidity challenge that could trigger crisis in the economy.

Dzapasi (2020) conducted a research on the impact of Liquidity Management on Bank's Financial Performance in a subdued economic environment: A case of the Zimbabwean Banking Industry. Liquidity is generally referred to as the ability to generate adequate cash to pay off financial obligations but in banking it mainly refers to the ability to honour maturing deposits. Banks indeed require liquidity since such a large proportion of their liabilities are payable on demand (deposits) but typically the more liquid an asset is, the less it yields. Hence, the decision to choose a particular combination of assets over another, taking into consideration the liability size of a bank, would have a massive effect on bank liquidity management, profitability and risk. This paper sought to establish the impact that proper liquidity management has on the financial performance of banks on the backdrop of a poorly performing economy. Factors that include asset liability mix, regulatory and market changes and liquidity management strategies are closely scrutinized in line with the ever changing Zimbabwean economic environment. A mixed research methodology was adopted, where research methodology is based on the multiple viewpoints or perspectives which are brought forward by both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The study focused on the population of banking financial institutions in Zimbabwe and drew a sample of five (5) leading banks that comprised of Commercial Bank of Zimbabwe (CBZ), Standard Chartered Bank of Zimbabwe, First Capital Bank, FBC Bank and ZB Bank. The study's key conclusions were that there is a significant beneficial association between bank financial performance and liquidity management. Profit margins have decreased over the research period due to the trade-off between liquidity and profitability in Zimbabwean banking institutions, but this has led to more stability, which has ensured better performance and sustainability. However, all parties involved in the process must take a comprehensive approach to managing liquidity, and as a result, recommendations have been sent their way for consideration.

Obim, Takon, and Mgbado, (2020) conducted on a research on the impact of liquidity on banks profitability in Nigeria. The study examined the impact of liquidity on banks profitability. The study sought to examine the impact of liquid assets, bank deposit, and Treasury bills on Return on Asset. Secondary source of data was employed using Central Bank of Nigeria statistical bulletin. Ordinary least square multiple regression techniques were adopted to establish the impact of independent on dependent variables. According to the data, there was a positive but insignificant correlation between bank deposits and return on assets, a negative but insignificant correlation between liquid assets and return on assets, and a positive but insignificant correlation between treasury bills and return on assets. According to the report, necessary steps should be done to stop unfavorable market development that could have a detrimental influence on bank deposits. Additionally, it is advised that banks

hire knowledgeable employees to make sure the best choices are made in terms of the proper level of liquidity.

Bencharles, and Abubakar, (2020) conducted a research on Liquidity Management and Its Impact on Islamic and Conventional Banks' Profitability in Nigeria: A Comparative Study. The study investigates the impact of liquidity management on Islamic and conventional banks profitability in Nigeria for the period 2012-2019. First bank plc and Jaiz bank were both used to represent the conventional and Islamic banks in Nigeria respectively. Time series data were sourced from the quarterly bulletin of selected banks used for the study. Time series data were first subjected to preliminary analysis (descriptive statistics, unit root test & co-integration test) so as to ascertain the background characteristics of dataset. The ordinary least square estimation technique was used to capture the relationship between liquidity and profitability. Liquidity was measured by the liquid asset to total asset ratio (LATA), current ratio and cash ratio while bank size was used as a control variable. Profitability was measured using the return on asset. The risk return trade-off was discovered to be true because empirical findings showed that profitability and liquidity had an inverse connection in both conventional and Islamic banks. However, it was discovered that the profitability of Islamic banks responded more dramatically to fluctuations in the level of liquidity than did regular banks. The study indicated that, although liquidity was shown to be more significant in Islamic banks, the link between liquidity and profitability followed the risk return hypothesis. Therefore, the study advised banks to just hold on to cash as necessary to meet their stated liabilities and not needlessly hold on to liquidity as this erodes bank profitability.

Khatri (2020) conducted a research on the impact of liquidity on profitability of Nepalese commercial banks. This paper seeks at investigating the relationship between the liquidity and the profitability of commercial banks in Nepal. Ten out of twenty seven listed- commercial banks were involved in the study covering the period from 2013 to 2019. This study is based on the secondary data, which are extracted from Bank Supervision Reports published by Nepal Rastra Bank and annual reports of the selected commercial banks. The liquidity indicators are Credit-Deposit Ratio (CDR), Cash-Deposit Ratio (CADR) and assets quality (AQ), while Return on Equity (ROE) and Return on Assets (ROA) are the proxies for profitability. By using Hausman test and thereafter fixed effects approach, the result showed that Assets Quality (AQ) has negative and significant relationship with Return on Assets (ROA) whereas it has positive and significant relationship with return on equity (ROE). Cash Deposit Ratio (CADR) has positive and insignificant relationship with return on assets (ROA) and Return on Equity (ROE). However, the study reveals that Credit-Deposit (CDR) has positive but insignificant relationship with ROA and has negative and insignificant relationship with Return on Equity (ROE).

Ajayi, and Lawal, (2021) conducted a research on the effect of Liquidity Management on Bank's Profitability. Liquidity management and profitability are very important issues in the growth and survival of businesses including financial institutions and the ability to handle trade-off between the two is a source of concern for financial managers. Hence, this research examines the relationship between liquidity management and bank performance using secondary data from the published annual reports of five (5) sampled Deposit Money Banks in Nigeria for a period of ten years (2009-2018). The proxies for liquidity management include loan to deposit

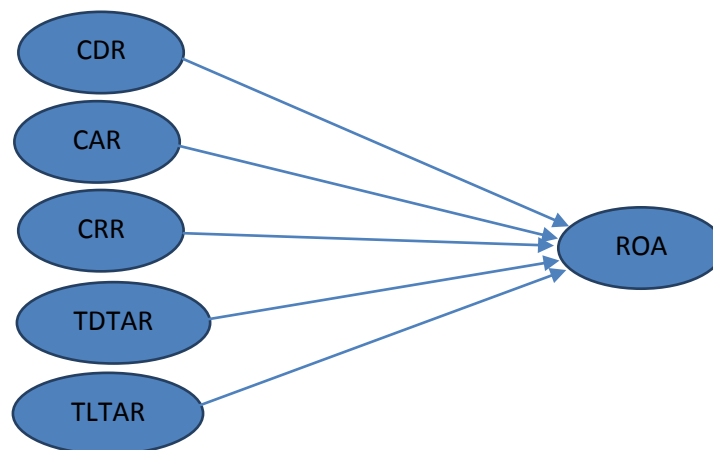
ratio, loan to assets ratio, liquid ratio, while return on assets was the proxy for profitability. Data was analyzed using Auto Regressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) and results from the study showed that there is a negative and significant relationship between loan to deposit ratio with p-value 0.0021 and Return on Assets (ROA), a positive and significant relationship between loan to asset ratio with p-value 0.0005 and return on assets (ROA) and a positive and insignificant relationship between liquid ratio with p-value 0.1808 and Return on Assets (ROA). According to the study's findings, there is a considerable and favorable connection between bank profitability in Nigeria and liquidity management. It is advised that banks always make an effort to manage their credits effectively by rigorously adhering to credit-granting regulations.

Variable Description

Profitability: A bank's profitability can be determined using a number of different techniques. The Return on Asset (ROA) method will be used in this study to assess the profitability of these institutions.

Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR), Credit Deposit Ratio (CDR), Total Deposit to Total Ratio (TDTAR), Total Loan to Total Assets Ratio (TLTAR) and Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) will be used to determine the liquidity.

Conceptual framework



Dependent variables

The profitability of banks is regarded as a dependent variable in this study. There are several ways to gauge a bank's performance, and one of those ways is profitability. A Return on Assets is one of the many measures that can be used to determine profitability (ROA).

Independent variables

The Liquidity management represents the variables of the Credit Deposit Ratio (CDR), Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR), Current Reserve Ratio (CRR), Total Deposit to Total Ratio (TDTAR), total Loan to Total Assets Ratio (TLTAR). Credit-Deposit Ratio (CDR) - CDR measures the proportion of outstanding credit to total bank deposit. Two factors are indicated by a high CDR: first, the bank is disbursing more of its deposits in the form of loans with interest; and second, the bank is generating more income. As an alternative, an extremely low ratio indicates that the bank has low risk while also not employing assets to produce income. According to Shrestha

(2018), the profitability of commercial banks and the credit deposit ratio have a substantial link. The Cash-Deposit Ratio (CADR) measures the amount of cash that banks hold relative to their total deposits. It measures how much a financial organization lends in relation to the deposits it has raised. It implies how extensively lending—the main banking activity—uses the resources of a financial organization. A larger ratio demonstrates the banks' greater liquidity position, which is more beneficial for brand-new investment opportunities. According to Shrestha (2012), the profitability of the cash and bank balance to deposit ratio is not significantly impacted.

Research Methodology

Descriptive and Causal Comparative research design was used for the study. This research is based on secondary data collected from 5 of Nepal's 26 commercial banks between 2011-12 and 2020-2021, yielding a total of 50 observations. The Nepal Rastra Bank's Bank Supervision Reports and the yearly reports of the chosen commercial banks are the primary sources of data. The collected data from this source has been carefully gathered and used in accordance with the needs of the study.

Result and Analysis

Based on the dependent variable the equations for the analysis of relation between the variables are listed below:

Model 1: $ROA = \beta_0 + \beta_2 CDR + \beta_3 CAR + \beta_3 CRR + \beta_4 TDTAR + \beta_5 TLTA + \varepsilon$

Where, Y= Dependent Variable, β_0 = Intercept of dependent variable, $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ and β_5 = coefficient of independent variables, ε = error terms.

Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics of dependent variables ROA and independent variables CDR, CAR, CRR, TDTAR and TLTA of the study is shown in Table 1. The descriptive statistics used in this study includes mean, standard deviation, and N represent the number of the observation.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics
Correlations

	Mean	S.D.	ROA	CDR	CAR	CRR	TDTA	TLTA
ROA	1.7396	0.5629	1					
CDR	79.368	10.005	-.069	1				
CAR	12.404	2.3558	-.292*	.251	1			
CRR	13.095	6.6221	.117	.010	-.013	1		
TDTA	83.193	5.1262	.187	-.729**	-.256	.033	1	
TLTA	76.295	83.214	-.364**	.032	.154	.130	.071	1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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

Table 1 shows the relationship between several liquidity management metrics and the profitability of Nepalese commercial banks. Table 1 presents, the descriptive statistics of Nepalese Joint Venture Commercial Banks. The study period is 2012 to 2021 associated with 5 commercial banks. The average value of ROA of Nepalese commercial bank is 1.7396 with the standard deviation of 0.56294. Similarly, the

CDR has average value of 79.367 with the standard deviation of 10.00465. The CAR has average value of 12.403 with the standard deviation of 2.35578. Similarly, the average value of CRR is 13.094 with the standard deviation of 6.62209. The TDTA has average value of 83.1930 with the standard deviation of 5.12617. Similarly, the average value of TLTA is 76.295 with the standard deviation of 83.21373.

Table 2

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.721 ^a	.615	.177	.51057

a. Predictors: (Constant), TLTA, CDR, CRR, CAR, TDTA

Table 2 shows the model theory of the research. We can see the R2 to be 0.615 i.e. 61.5%. The adjusted R2 indicates the model's goodness of fit and demonstrates a good fit. The model well matches the data; the Total variation, employed as a performance indicator for ROA, is the observed behavior that can be explained by changes in bank deposits, liquid assets, and loans and advances.

Table 3

Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-1.601	2.498		-.641	.525
1 CDR	.013	.011	.229	1.195	.238
CAR	-.049	.033	-.205	-1.503	.140
CRR	.013	.011	.151	1.157	.253
TDTA	.036	.021	.324	1.676	.101
TLTA	-.003	.001	-.382	-2.854	.007

a. Dependent Variable: ROA

The latter shows that the independent variables, specifically: CDR, CAR, CRR, TDTA and TLTA, jointly account for 73% of variability in the observed behavior of ROA. This demonstrates that the model successfully matches the data is snugly fitted. The relevance of such a good or tight fit is also tested using the t-statistic. When compared to the table value, the model's reported t-statistic value of 1.676 is noticeably high. This shows that the model is statistically robust because the high adjusted R2 value is better than would have happened by chance. The adjusted R2 shows a good fit of the model and indicates the goodness of fit of the model. The observed behavior of ROA, which is employed as a performance indicator, is well explained by the model, with variations in bank deposits, liquid assets, and treasury bills accounting for the majority of the variation.

Conclusion and Implication

The study looked empirically at how liquidity affects bank profitability. The organization needs to have an excessive amount of liquid in order for the firm to exist. In today's industry, profitability has been impacted by the necessity of liquidity, and any company's ability to endure depends on its capacity for both short-term and long-term goals. It is determined that banks need to keep enough liquidity to meet their daily responsibilities. This study's main objective is to investigate how profitability in Nepal's commercial banking sector is impacted by liquidity management. The information was obtained from five banks' annual reports from 2011 to 2021 as well as Bank Supervision Reports released by Nepal Rastra Bank. Correlation and a fixed effect model are used to evaluate the data in SPSS. The study looked empirically at how liquidity affects bank profitability. The organization needs to have an excessive amount of liquid in order for the business to survive. The importance of liquidity has affected profitability in today's business and the survived of any business depends on its ability to meet the short and long-run. It is concluded that banks must maintain adequate obligations amount of liquidity to meet its daily obligations. The following recommendations are preferred based on the findings. The following recommendations are preferred based on the findings:

1. Bank deposits and Return on Asset have a positive but insignificant association.
2. The link between liquid assets and return on assets is unfavorable and negligible.
3. The correlation between Total loan to total assets and Return on Asset is both significant and positive.
4. It is important to take the proper precautions to stop unfavorable market development that could harm bank deposits.
5. To guarantee that the best decisions are made in regards to the ideal level of liquidity, banks should employ professional and qualified employees.
6. The management should keep enough cash balance to cover its ongoing operating costs.

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RUTH PRAWER JHABVALA'S TUSSLE WITH INDIA IN *HEAT AND DUST*: THE QUINTESSENCE OF RACIAL CHAUVINISM

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Abstract

Ruth Praver Jhabvala, a celebrated writer, having the experience of a multiple diaspora, developed a love-hate relationship with India during her 25years' stay in India. In the second phase of her career, her essential European sensibilities overshadowed her initial enchantment for everything Indian which she also confessed time and again. In 'Heat and Dust', her personal experiences got reflected in terms of physical and psychological trauma the westerners faced who came to India under political or spiritual obligation. Here, the writer concentrated more on the seamy side of India, its culture and climate portraying, derisively, the endemic poverty, dirt, squalor, backwardness, heat and dust- its tropical hazards. Everything appeared to be coloured with the tinge of a prejudiced perspective- a purely British point of view to strengthen the traditional image of India among the Western readers.

Key Words: *Prejudiced Diaspora, Chauvinism, Supremacy, Disillusionment, superstitions, cross-cultural interaction.*

Ruth Praver Jhabvala- of Polish- of Jewish origin, migrating from Germany to England to India to America, adapting herself to each place with a "chameleon or cuckoo quality" as she confessed herself in an interview, was a celebrated "rootless intellectual" an "ever exiled" European an superb writer with an outstanding creative sensibility.

Her 25 years stay in India after getting married with an Indian Parsi, Cyrus Jhabvala, provided her ample opportunity to have access to the culture, rhythm, society and climate of India. With a perspective an ironic vision of an outsider- insider, she explores the different aspects of cross cultural assimilation in India and the typical traits of Indian though, allegedly, with the prejudiced eye of a European.

In the first phase of her literary career, she expresses her delight and enthusiasm for everything Indian in her early novels. She writes:

"I still cannot talk about the first impact India made on my innocent – meaning blank and unprepared- mind and senses. I entered a world of sense delight that perhaps children- other children enter. I remember nothing of it from my childhood" (Jhabvala testament one).

She really loved that period. She further says:

"The smells and sights and sounds of India- the mango and jasmine on hot nights –the rich spiced food- the vast sky- the sight of dawn and dusk- the birds flying about –the ruins –the music- at that time I loved everything there----" (Jhabvala testament one).

But this early charm proved to be ephemeral and her essential Europeanness took over her vision very soon. Now this was the period of disenchantment and disillusionment about everything Indian after her short trip to England back. In the second phase of her literary career which include these novels: *A Backward Place*, *A New Dominion*, *Heat and Dust*, she appears more and Imperialistic author working on the thesis of the 'white men's burden'. India's poverty, backwardness social injustices hot-dusty climate etc increasingly rankled with her, and it darkened her fiction about India. India proved too strong for her and the books during this period reflected her increasingly melancholy, alienation and feeling of being an outsider: "I am no longer interested in India. What I am interested in now is myself in India, which sometimes, in moments of despondency, I think of as my survival in India", she wrote in an autobiographical essay 'myself in India'. She wrote in 'Heat and Dust' during these moments. While writing this book, she had jaundice and then a severe asthma attack which propelled her to uproot herself once again, leaving India forever for New York. There she continued to write about India but now from a totally European point of view.

Her European sensibility asserted itself as she herself vindicated it: "I was no longer immersed in sensual delight but had to struggle against all things people do have to struggle against in India: the tide of Poverty, disease and squalor rising all around: the Heat--- the frayed nerves: the strange, alien often inexplicable, often maddening Indian character." (Testament one) The most tangible of them is the westerner's reaction to the heat and dust of India which provided the background and the title of the above novel:

"how to explain – to begin with- an Indian summer day: when inside the city walls the lanes and the alleys are packed with people and the sun dross every kind of smell out of the gutters, while outside planes of dust stretch away into the shimmering distance that may turn out to be the horizon or just a further extension of dust." (Jhabvala *New York Times* 35)

She finds it inconceivable to achieve a meaning full assimilation with India. She again writes: "---I am using these exaggerated images in order to give some idea of how intolerable India- the idea, the sensation of it- can become. A point is reached when one must escape, and if one cannot do so physically, then some other way must be found." (*Myself in India*, 14-15)

Ruth Jhabvala's assertion that all westerners suffer disenchantment as a rule in India and that it (India) inflicts physical and psychological pain on all European alike, is very well reflected in "Heat and Dust". She explains this like this:

"There is cycle that Europeans-by Europeans I mean all westerns, including Americans- tend to pass through. It goes like this: first stage, tremendous enthusiast-everything Indian is Marvelous; second stage, everything Indian not so marvelous; third stage everything Indian abominable." (quoted in *Out of India* 13-21)

In this novel two parallel stories run with gap of 50 years; one happens in free independent India and the other in Post Independent India. In 1923, the beautiful, spoiled and bored Olivia, married to a British ICS officer, Douglas Revers, outrages British community in the tiny suffocating town of Satipur by eloping with an Indian Prince. 50 Years later, her step-grand daughter, the narrator goes back to the heat the

dust and the squalor of India to solve the enigma of Oliva's scandal, and, ironically, shares the same fate by being drawn to the fussy Indian bureaucrat with whom she gets pregnant. Though the story is moving and profound, handled with dazzling assurance, there is an obvious tinge of racial chauvinism felt everywhere both in the narration and the dialogue exposing a precisely stated thesis. Here she is more interested in the effect India has on westerners who came here either under political obligation during colonial expansion or under spiritual obligation to seek enlightenment. Though the writer came here bound by marital ties, her presentation and assessment of Indo-European cultural interaction in this novel is a one-way traffic, an estimate of India through the western eye.

The title of the novel *Heat and Dust* itself encapsulates the writer's derogatory image of the alleged suffocating atmosphere of India. She shows heat and dust as responsible for the cranky nature of white people in India. These people, here, live in their bungalows with windows shut and blind drawn all day long, making occasional trips to Shimla as if India were a cursed land thus referring contemptuously to India's topographical hazards.

Nissim Ezekiel strongly criticizes the title

In *Heat and Dust*, for example, the title itself would be subjected to an analysis more thorough than anything it has so far received. Is there not a demeaning motive in this characterizing of a country and its culture in terms of climate and the least valuable elements lying on the physical territory designated? How would an English reader respond to a novel set in England, entitled in the same spirit by an Indian writer 'cold and fog'?" (Ezekiel 138)

The title has strongly negative connotations creating the picture of India as a detestable place in the eyes of western readers. Actually, the title exemplifies the writer's intolerance for India in the later phase of her life when she developed a kind of restlessness for everything Indian. When Olivia gets batty because of boredom and long absence of her husband, Douglas, all day long, he blames Indian heat and dust responsible for that and not his coldness towards Olivia: "No English woman is meant to stand it." (*Heat and Dust*, 117)

There are two phases of India in this novel and each has been portrayed in an ironic tone tinged with obvious contempt and derision, to our dismay. In the first story, the attitude of the Britishers, who came here under political philosophy, is more of a white man's burden as if they have come here to civilise the 'wretched inhabitants of this wretched country.' (148) Douglas, Mr. and Mrs. Saunders, Major Minnie's, Crawfords etc. all are the products of colonial philosophy who treat Indians as slaves, and always try to perpetuate colonial supremacy through their disparaging remarks and behaviour towards everything Indian. Douglas considers Indians as 'a pack of rogues' (38) and does not hesitate in delivering the deadly insults cleverly in local language to these poor people upholding administrative supremacy and imperialist authority over them. Civil Lines, where these Britishers live, is inaccessible to the Indians as if they (Brits) would get ill by the mere shadows of these so called unhygienic people. Only servants with their heads down can be seen in their houses. These Britishers constantly make Indians realise through their lifestyle, demeanour and deportment that how civilised, disciplined, hygienic, well-mannered and well-arranged they are. There is an air of racial chauvinism leaving no sphere for positive

cultural interaction. Dr. Saunders, when invited at Nawab's palace, asserts, maliciously, his opinion about Indian people and their culture: "I had the fellow called to my office and, no further argument, smartly boxed his ears for him, one-two, one-two..... It's the only way to deal with them, Nawab Sahib. It's no use arguing with them, they're not amenable to reason. They haven't got it here, you see, up here, the way we have."(121). By 'up here' he means the 'head', the 'intellect'. Mrs. Saunders, also, criticises her Indian servants: "She said that these servants really were devils and that they could drive anyone crazy..... it was all done deliberately to torment their masters."

These characters seem to be the spokesmen of their writer's own estimate of India. These uncompromising and rigid British characters are one in their opinion of India, and thus appear more stereotyped than individual, expressing the authorial point of view- a prejudiced vision of Indian scenario. A desire for positive intellectual communication or intimacy is absolutely absent in their characters as they believe that a friendship or any other relationship between the ruler and the ruled might threaten the British imperial position.

In the very beginning of the novel, the writer shows her contempt for India by digging at the poverty, filth and squalor of it when the narrator is shown looking out of the window of the dormitory of. Society of Missionaries Hostel she is staying at in Bombay on her first arrival in India, she speaks up that the Indians in the street looked 'like souls in hell'. (7)She(the narrator), during her stay in India, comes across many unpleasant scenes and sights of human misery, and describes, loathfully, India's crippled medical facilities, mismanaged civic amenities, crumbling religious institutions, primitive-cruel superstitions and savagery in the name of religion more than the natural beauty, simplicity and communal oneness of India. A Westerner warns her about the dangers lurking in India as if it were a damned place: ".....you can't live in India without Christ Jesus. If He's not with you every single moment of the day and night.... then you become like that poor young man with the monkey taking lice out of his hair. Because you see, dear, nothing human means anything here."(7) Ruth Jhabwala, severely, attacks different religious practices like suttee, exorcistical treatment of a patient of epilepsy etc. giving us many examples of cruelties, gruesome and horrible mutilations. In fact, she is now excited in delineating only the seamy side of Indian culture to strengthen among the western readers, the popular western image of India. She is rightly blamed for making this novel more racial and sensational, doing no justice to India and its culture.

Besides this, the disillusionment and disenchantment western-seekers visiting India for spiritual bliss highlights the writer's own delusionment which she confessed herself in 'Myself in India': ".....whether religion is such a potent source in India because life is so terrible, or so it the other way round- is life so terrible because, with the eyes of the spirit turned elsewhere, there is no incentive to improve its quality."(14-15) In this novel, Chid and two other European youths, tired of western materialism or rat-race for money, spiritual emptiness and absence of moral values, visit India in search of simple-innocent happiness and spiritual peace as the narrator herself admits:".....that many of us are tired of the materialism of the west, and even if we have no particular attraction towards the spiritual message of the East, we come here in the hope of finding a simple and more natural way of life."(95) These people forsake their own religion in the hope of re shaping their lives under India's spiritual

heritage. But the writer, having herself the experience of a multiple diaspora, shows the frustrations of these displaced Europeans in India. Contrary to their aspirations, they all become the victims of cheats, trickery, diseases and even molestation; they abandon their mission and go back home hopelessly. The European girl confesses grimly that instead of spiritual peace “all I found was dysentery.””(23) The predicament of expatriate women in India is not very satisfactory. Olivia and the Narrator, bewitched by Indian sensuality and also sexuality, both develop an illicit relationship with the Indian men, and get pregnant; the former aborts the baby while the latter gives birth, and then both go to take shelter in the mountainous region of the Himalayas. We feel, as if, everything is shown from a biased and traditional perspective- a purely defective British point of view to consolidate the notorious Indo-phobia among European readers.

However, to our respite and satisfaction, there are few instances where she is a little bit kind or positive towards the country where she stayed for 25 years and had enjoyed some very memorable moments with her family. The narrator appreciates the feeling of togetherness and oneness among the common men of Satipur when she goes to sleep on the the roof with her neighbours in a summer night: “The town has become a communal dormitory..... I have never known such a sense of communion..... How different from my often very lonely room in London with my only walls to look at and my books to read.”(52) Nawab, though his relation with Olivia was not acceptable if judged by the rigid social conduct and norms, gives full protection to her, and takes care of her till the end at a time when she was ostracised by the British community. His loyalty bespeaks reputed Indian character. The narrator befriends one Maji, an old spiritual and devoted woman whose association and teachings help her to soothe herself amidst her struggles, and find some solutions to the modern problems- prevalent in post-war western culture. However, Major Minnies’ views on India glimpses some aspects of Ruth Jhabvala’s own opinion about India: “There are many things to love her for- the scenery, the history, the poetry, the music..... but it finds out the weak spot and presses on it....therefore, one should never allow oneself to become softened (like Indians)by an excess of feeling..... it is all very well to love and admire India- intellectually, aesthetically..... but always with a virile, measured, European feeling.”(170-171)

The whole analysis shows that though the author loved India for many of its specialties and charms, her European origin, her culture, her supposed racial and imperial supremacy came in her way of accepting India wholeheartedly. She enjoys an antithetical attitude towards India instead of illuminating her understanding of the simplicity and inherent beauty of its culture. She has been rightly criticised for “attitudinising rather than being objective and dispassionate in her portrayal of India.” (Chadha, 11-12) To our dismay and chagrin, the cross- cultural discourse here disintegrates and gives place to contempt, disbelief and dissent. It, unfortunately, shows crevices in the fabric of our efforts to assimilate different cultures and races, and thus loses the charm of a creative work for Indian readers and their aesthetic taste.

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CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

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Abstract

For a progressive country, economic development is an important issue for a new global economy. As of today, the private sector multinational companies are not part of any particular country but are spread all over the world. In India and other developing countries, accountability of multinational companies and domestic corporate abstract towards the society is mentioned in this research paper. Whether the government is adopting a flexible approach in the determination of corporate social responsibility. The basic question is what efforts have been made by the government so far for its implementation? Also, what reforms are required for proper implementation of the corporate social responsibility policy?

Keywords: *Multinational Corporation, Sustainable Development, Social Responsibility, Information Technology, Environmental Social Governance.*

In the contemporary context, economic development is an important issue for all the states in the era of new global economy. “The new environment of liberalization, privatization and globalization has created a challenge before the state to make possible the excellence of performance with minimum cost.”ⁱAll country followed the same instruction for the development at any cost. In this situation Fred Rigg s rightly advises, “state governments to focus on the right formulation of public policy to meet the challenges of globalization.”ⁱⁱThe rise of globalization has stimulated a major debate about the state and public policy. Globalization has not only affected state but also influenced the public policy to a great extentⁱⁱⁱ. State changes its nature under the influence of globalization and the main factors responsible for these are:

- Development of information and technology
- Activation of global organizations
- More emphasis on work-efficiency and productivity

In such a situation, the participation of private sectors along with government undertakings is also important for economic development of the states. Private sector and multinational companies, today, are not the part of any particular country but are spread all over the world. Though these companies have generated a special competition in domestic and international markets both, the main objective of these companies is to earn profit. A tough competitive environment has been created in the domestic market, due to which the responsibility of providing better facilities in less profit has arisen in the markets, and an environment of competition has been created.

In some projects, the multinational companies have not properly followed the government standards, and one reason could be the flexibility of control by the government. For example, the private sector companies had participated in the Pipeline Drinking Water Scheme in Uttar Pradesh, but due to various administrative reasons and series of events in the Corona period, the company could not complete the scheme in due time, left it midway and went back. In such a situation, the question arises as to what is responsible for that, whether the administrations flexible approach was being adopted by the CPSEs towards private sector companies/MNCs or there was no accountability of the companies under which the companies could not meet the standards and the project had to be abandoned midway.

It seems that the government's flexible attitude and less controlling attitude towards MNCs hinder proper compliance of social responsibility. With the arrival of MNCs in developing countries, there are indications of a widening-economic-inequality-gap. In India and other developing countries, what is the accountability of multinational companies and domestic corporates towards the society, it is mainly mentioned in this research paper, whether the government is adopting a flexible approach in determining the Corporate Social Responsibility? What is the contemporary status of Corporate Social Responsibility in India? What efforts have been made by the government so far for its implementation? This is the basic question. Also, what reforms are required for proper implementation of the Corporate Social Responsibility Policy?

The domestic and multinational companies should have a social responsibility in developing countries, but the rules of social responsibility are not being followed by the companies, which is really a matter of concern. Such there have been many examples run by these companies. The question arises whether in the past regarding many companies should only worry about their profit needs or they also have some social responsibility. For example, in the past, the issue of corporate social responsibility has been discussed more due to the dispute in the projects of Special Economic Zone (SEZ), so the importance of corporate social responsibility cannot be underestimated in the contemporary perspective. Due to the allocation of land by the government to the corporate sector in Special Economic Zone projects, many farmers were displaced, and it , also, has been adversely affecting the environment. While about 250 Special Economic Zone projects have been approved by the Union Ministry so far, the standards set by the government are being ignored by the corporate to complete these projects at the earliest, for which both the government and the corporate sector are responsible. In this context, the members of civil society and environmentalists clearly say that neither the government is following the standards set while allotting land, nor the corporate sector, in the race to complete the projects very quickly, is careful of environmental protection and social accountability. The members also state that natural resources are being misused by the developing project which is not, really, in line with the principles of sustainable development.

Conceptual Perspective

The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility is actually based on the concept of business ethics. The said concept existed in ancient times in the form of charity/welfare in the East and West. Due to the change in nature of business, this concept has come forward in a new form.^{iv}The term corporate social responsibility

came into general use in the late 1960s and early 1970s following the formation of major stakeholders in many multinational companies. In 1970, George Steiner wrote in his book *Business and Society*, "Business is a truly fundamental and economic institution. It has responsibilities to help society achieve its basic goals, and therefore a large company has a social responsibility. The responsibilities loom large, but all companies can take some part of them at no cost and benefit in the short run as well as in the long run."^v

In the year 1984, R. Edward Freeman's book *Corporate Social Responsibility* describes that companies should voluntarily do business in an economically, socially and environmentally responsible manner. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to those business practices, which include works that benefit the society. Social responsibility for business enterprises means the fulfillment of social obligations along with business activity so as to pave the way for sustainable development. Corporate social responsibility can generally be seen as a corporate initiative to assess and assume responsibility for the environmental impact and social welfare impact of a company's operations. In simple words, companies use natural resources to make a product, which promotes pollution. The profit of this activity enjoyed by the company but the loss in the form of pollution has to be borne by the various individuals living in the society. And the different sections of the society do not get any kind of compensation for this inconvenience. Therefore, the responsibility of this inconvenience to the society is on the companies. For this reason, it has been made mandatory for companies all over the world, including India, to spend some part of their income on the welfare of those people who suffer this inconvenience for no fault of their own; this is called Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The meaning of corporate social responsibility is that corporate companies should take care of all the participants in their business beyond just profit; their decisions should not affect the interests of the participants, and that is, to give priority to collective interests. In the corporate social responsibility report by various companies, it has been noticed that such companies have been found involved in irregular activities.

Under Corporate Social Responsibility, companies are expected to execute certain obligations toward the social sector in a manner that benefits their customers, employees, shareholders, the community as well as the environment. In this context, companies should also ensure some accountability for the development of their local society under no legal pressure, such as contributing to the education of the society, doing eco-friendly activities, contributing to the improvement of the living standards of the people living at the lower level. etc. For this, it is mentioned in the rules that a separate 'Social Responsibility Fund' will also be created.

Corporate social responsibility actually appears to be a means of putting into practice the principle of trusteeship of the Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi had envisioned that industrialists and wealthy people would work for their society by becoming trustees of their wealth, not as the owner of the money. Industrialists who earn crores of rupees per year should realize their social responsibilities. If we take forward corporate social responsibility on the basis of trusteeship, then the country can be of great benefit.^{vi}

Essential Elements

The correct execution of Corporate Social Responsibility really depends on good Corporate Governance in the company. Systematic Corporate Governance requires

honesty, trust, transparency, orientation towards goals and commitment to the organization.

- In good corporate governance, rights of shareholders should be recognized; shareholders should be encouraged to exercise their rights.
- Well organized infrastructure like separate Corporate Social Responsibility Cell, formation of other related units is also necessary which makes it easy to ensure accountability.
- Transparency in policies is also an essential element for Corporate Social Responsibility. The functioning of the company should be such that all necessary information is easily available; an independent and transparent audit system should be developed.
- Corporate initiative is also an essential element of Corporate Social Responsibility, without which the set goals of Corporate Social Responsibility cannot be met.

Corporate Social Responsibility in India

Corporate Social Responsibility rules in India came into effect from April 1, 2014. The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility in India is governed by section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013. Corporate Social Responsibility law in India has been designed keeping in mind the Indian context, it is linked to the inclusive development agenda of the nation.^{vii} India has mandated Corporate Social Responsibility Expenditure to identify Corporate Social Responsibility activities. The Corporate Social Responsibility provisions under the Act are applicable to companies having an annual turnover of Rs 1,000 crore and above, or having net worth of Rs 500 crore and above, or having a net profit of Rs 5 crore and above. The Act requires companies to constitute a Corporate Social Responsibility Committee, which will recommend a Corporate Social Responsibility Policy to the Board of Directors and also monitor the same from time to time^{viii}. The Act encourages companies to spend 2% of their average net profit of the preceding three years on Corporate Social Responsibility activities.

Companies Act, 2013^{ix}: these activities specified under Schedule VII of the Act include:

- Expenditure on eradicating hunger and poverty
- Expenditure on promoting education, gender equality and women empowerment
- Spending on combating HIV-AIDS and other diseases
- Expenditure on environmental protection
- To contribute to the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund or any other fund set up by the Central Government for socio-economic development and relief.

Section 8 of the Companies Act as amended by the government gives a special license under the Companies Act. There are three main conditions for granting a license. The company must be created for a charitable (for the good) purpose, the income and profits (profits) must be used toward objects, the company must not be paying any dividends to its members.

In the contemporary context, these changes would result in the private trusts set up by corporate either being converted into registered public trusts or ceasing to function as Corporate Social Responsibility implementing agencies. Till now a large amount of

Corporate Social Responsibility in India was being contributed by many companies including blue-chip companies through their private trusts. After this change, most of the CSR will have to be given in public institutions. For example, private trusts such as Reliance Foundation, Bharti Foundation and DLF Foundation, which used to receive the bulk of the corporate social responsibility spending for affiliated companies, will be affected by this change. It is indeed a positive initiative in the right direction.

Contemporary perspective

Corporate Social Responsibility is increasingly being leveraged for MNCs to build a positive brand image, and help them comply with Environmental Social Governance (ESG). A brand image in MNCs has become important in the contemporary context as stake holders are becoming more aware of it. There are a number of people who understand social issues:

- India's number of philanthropic partners has increased since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, with more funding being provided by individuals, corporate social responsibility funders and other entities for philanthropy. Through this fund, there has been an increase in the amount of cooperative grants for improving the lives of the people.
- With the increase in funding levels, innovative funding approaches have also been developed to drive Corporate Social Responsibility, creating an environment of accountability and competition to perform better.

Contemporary problems

- Despite growing awareness of the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility compliance, challenges remain in identifying the right partners and projects, as well as selecting projects that are impactful and self-sustaining in the long term. Lack of community participation in Corporate Social Responsibility activities: Local communities take little interest in participating and contributing to Corporate Social Responsibility activities of companies. This is mainly because of the lack of awareness among the local communities about Corporate Social Responsibility. The reason for this situation is that serious efforts have not been made towards spreading expected awareness about Corporate Social Responsibility.
- It is said by the companies that there is a lack of transparency on the part of the local implementing agencies as they do not make adequate efforts to disclose information regarding their programmes, audit, effective assessment and utilization of grants. This lack of transparency negatively affects the process of building trust between companies and local communities, while transparency towards implementation is essential to the success of any Corporate Social Responsibility initiative at the local level.
- Well-organised Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are not available in rural areas, which can identify the real needs of the community and design effective programs for them and work closely with companies to ensure successful implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility activities.
- Lack of review and controlling units is also an important reason for not being able to properly implement Corporate Social Responsibility activities.

Government's efforts to make more effective

To make Corporate Social Responsibility more effective, various committees have been constituted by the Government of India from time to time, and according to the recommendations of the committees, the Companies Act, 2013 has been amended and strengthened for Corporate Social Responsibility.

Anil Bajjal committee^x

On 7 October 2015, the Central Government appointed a committee headed by our former Union Home Secretary, Anil Bajjal, which submitted its report to the government on improving the monitoring of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) spending. The committee was set up by the Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs to suggest steps to improve the monitoring of Corporate Social Responsibility expenditure. The committee in its report has recommended uniform tax treatment for all Corporate Social Responsibility activities under the Companies Act 2013 and relaxation in norms for the first 2 to 3 years with non-compliant companies. The Companies Act, 2013 has suggested that the organizations spend at least 2 percent of their net profit of three years' average annual income towards Corporate Social Responsibility activities. In compliance with the implementation of the Companies Act for the first financial year April 2014 to March 2015, the report will be available by the end of 2015.

- Variation in taxes for spending on different Corporate Social Responsibility activities can lead to distortion in allocation of funds to developing sectors.
- There should be uniformity in all taxes regarding expenditure on Corporate Social Responsibility in all eligible activities. Currently, certain activities contributing to Prime Minister's National Relief Fund are only exempted.
- The applicability of section 135 related to the provisions of Corporate Social Responsibility should be clarified.
- Government should have no role in monitoring Corporate Social Responsibility spending; it should be the responsibility of the corporates and their respective boards.
- There should also be no role of external experts to be prescribed by the government to monitor the quality and effectiveness of the expenditure of Corporate Social Responsibility companies.
- Moving beyond just allocating funds, companies should regularly review the progress of Corporate Social Responsibility compliance and take some measures for a more professional approach towards it. Along with this, they should set clear objectives and connect all stakeholders with them.
- It is equally important to inform their NGO partners about their business needs. NGOs should know that the companies that give money from their Corporate Social Responsibility budgets are also serious about their chosen causes.
- Companies should also reconsider the roles of the Board, Corporate Social Responsibility Committee, CFO etc., and establish new Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) including a defined procedure for utilization of funds. Simultaneously they should determine the applicability of the impact assessment, prepare a detailed checklist of processes with owners and timelines, and shape an annual action plan.
- The government should ensure that the activities included in the Corporate Social Responsibility policy of the company are implemented by it. It is also the responsibility of the government to address the issues of non-availability of NGOs

and create awareness in the society about the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility and its activities.

- Government is planning to use technology tools like artificial intelligence and machine learning for data mining of specified reports to bring changes in its policy on Corporate Social Responsibility. Leveraging technology to improve monitoring of companies by the government is welcome, but it should be applied to the financial and governance aspects of companies before being applied to their social obligations.

Injeti Srinivas High Level Committee^{xi}

The High-Level Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility was constituted by the government in the year 2018 under the chairmanship of Injeti Srinivas. The committee has made several recommendations with far reaching implications. Treating CSR expenditure as tax-deductible expenditure, provision for carrying forward of unspent funds for a period of 3-5years, SDG+3+framework (which includes promotion of sports, welfare of senior citizens, Welfare of Persons with Disabilities, Disaster Management and Heritage Conservation will also be included) Reconciling Schedule 7with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), balancing national priorities and local area priorities The major recommendations of the committee include conducting an impact-assessment study for the CSR mandatory and registering the implementing agencies on the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) portal. Develop a CSR Exchange Portal to connect contributors, beneficiaries and agencies; allowing CSR in bonds linked to social benefits; Promotion of social impact companies and assessment of major CSR projects by third party or on independent agency are other recommendations of this committee.

Amendments in Companies Act, 2013

On January 22, 2021, the concept of Corporate Social Responsibility in India was further strengthened by the Government of India by revising the Companies Act, 2013, to remove the irregularities in Corporate Social Responsibility, in the notification of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs^{xii}, CSR rules. Following are the important points of the above notification:

- Under the new system made by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, if the company is unable to spend the CSR fund out of its annual budget, then it will have to transfer the amount to the fund specified by the government. Also, if a company is not able to fully spend its CSR funds, then it will also have to mention it in its director's report. Along with this important change, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has also made many other changes.
- As per the new rule, if the company spends more than the CSR fund allotted out of its annual budget, it can carry that amount for the next three years. Along with this, such institutions which are registered astrust or society or company formed with charitable purpose, if they are doing CSR work, then they will also have to getthemselves registered by filing a CSR form. The companies doing CSR work can be identified with this registration number. This new form will also have to be attested by a practicing professional.
- Companies can now appoint an international organization to design and develop their CSR program. Earlier, companies could spend CSR funds alone or jointly with other companies. But the details of their respective expenses will have to be given separately. The Chief Financial Officer or Financial Head of the company

will also verify the expenditure of the CSR Fund during the year. The CSR Committee will prepare the annual CSR plan of the company, the budget and the items and methods of spending it, submit it to the Board of Directors, and the company will spend CSR in the same manner.

- Such companies working under CSR, whose annual expenditure is ten crores or more in the last three years, they will also have to get the Impact Assessment done. Companies will also have to display the CSR policy as well as the details of the CSR committee on their website. For the first time, research related to the vaccine of covid-19 being done by the company, can also be included in CSR for the next three years. However, a rule has also been made that the above research should be done with a government organization only.
- Companies Corporate Social Responsibility Policy Amendment Rules, 2021, amends rules regarding CSR implementation, CSR expenditure, CSR reporting. It also adds provision for display of CSR activities on website and transfer of unspecified CSR amount.
- A real and genuine discharge of Corporate Social Responsibility really depends on good corporate governance in the company. According to Cadawari Committee, three important pillars of good corporate governance are Nomination Committee, Pay Committee and Audit Committee. According to the Cadawari Committee, the Board of Directors is responsible for the governance of the company.^{xiii} There can be no single model of good corporate governance; standards of corporate governance can be developed under the guidance of certain principles.^{xiv}

Use of Corporate Social Responsibility Fund In Research and Innovation

The success of any project lies in leveraging technology in contemporary perspective and also solving social problems. Therefore, Corporate Social Responsibility funds can be used in the area of research and innovation also, which will create a policy environment that will encourage Corporate Social Responsibility investment in technology-based solutions. In addition to this, the area of research, collaboration with local bodies and governance and Community participatory structures can also be set up; such projects can become self-sustaining in the long run.

In the Field of Education

Corporate Social Responsibility can be used to support the education sector in a number of ways. Grants can be used in the implementation of socially relevant projects or projects that support scientific research, which in time will provide appropriate alternatives to social problems.

Incubator Management

Such grants can also be given for the purpose of providing seed funding to start-ups and government recognized incubators, setting up of new incubators, helping existing incubators to involve more people through internships and fellowships. The Corporate Social Responsibility policy of the government allows a company to choose to intervene at any point in the end-to-end technology value creation process, virtually acting as a key enabler.

Environment Friendly Projects

Corporate social responsibility can be used to support environmental friendly projects in a number of ways, such as make up material which is cheap and reusable,

developing green alternatives like green heat and power management system, and investing in flood management system etc. Projects like this can be implemented through Corporate Social Responsibility grants that serve communities in eco-friendly innovative ways.

Contemporary Possibilities

Companies need to take a more responsible approach towards compliance with the norms of Corporate Social Responsibility. In the contemporary context, the role of the Corporate Social Responsibility professional has increased manifold not only for social responsibility but also for sustainability and many other areas.^{xv} Recently, due to the concerns related to Corporate Social Responsibility, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has decided to set up a centralized system to monitor the compliance of Corporate Social Obligations. In addition, as recommended by the Anil Bajjal Committee, annual awards should be given to encourage companies to voluntarily undertake Corporate Social Responsibility activities so as to “fill the gap” in the implementation of the development agenda of governments. Responsibility can be highly effective^{xvi}, through those efforts made by the government at the level of policy making, but there is a need for their effective implementation.

In the contemporary era, the Corporate Sector has deeply considered the issue of social responsibility. During the last seven years, many companies of the country has spent 60 percent of their CSR amount on activities related to education, health and rural development. In this context, while answering a written question in the Lok Sabha, the Ministry of Corporate Affairs has given this information. Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu accounted for 33 per cent of the total CSR amount spent by companies during this seven-year period. A separate 'Social Responsibility Fund' is also being created for Corporate Social Responsibility. Various companies have made rules to implement it in the functioning, for example, on the website of the companies, the cell of Corporate Social Responsibility has been formed which is competent to fix responsibility for taking decisions in this context.

Reforms at the Policy Implementation Level

In order to properly implement Corporate Social Responsibility, both the government and the corporate will have to take initiatives in the direction of policy making and implementation. Policies will have to be made in a way that would encourage Corporate Social Responsibility such as:

- Inclusive Development Policies
- Environment-friendly policies
- Transparent Policies
- Social Accountability Friendly Policies

Central Control and Evaluation Board

The accountability of the companies does not end with the mere allotment of funds by the Corporate Sector. Companies would have to regularly review the progress of Corporate Social Responsibility compliance, by to adopting a professional approach. There should be a constitution which can evaluate the CSR activity. The government should also set up control and evaluation boards at the central and state level for this. The Central Evaluation and Control Board should have a representative of the company as a member of the government and a retired judge be made a member and

chairman of the state governments. The above boards will review the progress of social responsibility compliance of the companies.

New Experiment for transparency

The company should prepare a detailed check list of the procedures decided by it from time to time so that the Corporate Social Responsibility plans can be checked once in a year. The government should also ensure that the corporate social responsibility is being followed by the company. Whether the activities included have been implemented or not should be reviewed. Along with this, the government should create awareness among the public and society about the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility and its activities. Various technology tools like Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for data mining of various reports are being used by the government to bring changes in its policy on Corporate Social Responsibility in contemporary perspective.

For the success of Corporate Social Responsibility, it is necessary that both the companies and the government strictly follow the rules related to responsibility. At present, the government has taken a commendable initiative to monitor the companies, but it needs to emphasize on the implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility by taking more prompt initiatives. At present, there is a high need to create such an environment in developing countries that the private sector also, come forward, willingly, to work with social responsibility.

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ROLE OF FEMALE CHARACTERS IN SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGEDIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY FROM PAGE TO THE SCREEN

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Abstract

William Shakespeare has a great impact on the theatres and plays of the entire world. His plays present a lively and realistic interpretation of the relationship between men and women. Shakespeare became one of the best dramatists when England was flourishing under the reign of Queen Elizabeth who loved literature and encouraged literary activities. At that time, the Elizabethan era was witnessing a great transition, especially for women. Despite having a female monarch, the role and characterization of women during that time were dehumanizing. Women were recognized as inferiors in a male-dominated society. During Shakespeare's time, women did not enjoy social, political and economical parity with men. Shakespeare presented female characters playing a very crucial role in his plays, especially in his tragedies i.e. Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth. However, it is noteworthy that there has been a lot of research on Shakespeare's tragic heroes but the female characters despite their centrality in the tragedies remain sidelined in academia. In modern times, Vishal Bhardwaj has delineated Shakespeare's female characters in his adapted trilogy Maqbool, Omkara and Haider from a different angle. Bhardwaj has skillfully portrayed the female protagonists of Shakespeare's tragedies in a very microscopic way. He has given Shakespeare's tragic heroines more empowered status and active roles in his worldwide acclaimed Shakespearean trilogy. This paper comparatively analyzes how Shakespeare's 16th-century tragic heroines are transformed and presented on the 21st-century cinema screen.

Keywords: *Adapted movies; Elizabethan; Female characters; Shakespeare's plays; Transformation.*

Introduction

William Shakespeare has a great influence on the theatre and plays of the entire world. His plays present a lively interpretation of the relationship between men and women. Shakespeare became one of the best dramatists when England was flourishing under the reign of Queen Elizabeth who loved literature and encouraged literary activities. At that time the Elizabethan era was witnessing a great transition, especially for women. Despite having a female monarch, the role and characterization of women during that time were dehumanizing. At that time all forms of authority were given to men except the most important of all, the kingship of England. Montrose elaborates on the point "with one vital exception, all forms of public and domestic authority in Elizabethan England were vested in men: in fathers, husbands, masters, teachers, lords, magistrates." (Montrose 65) Women were recognized as inferiors in the male-dominated society. During Shakespeare's time,

women did not enjoy social, political and economical parity with men. In his plays, especially in his tragedies i.e. *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, Shakespeare presented female characters playing a very crucial role. Shakespeare does not present a traditional female character but creates a new woman who is beautiful, intelligent, independent and equivalent to men.

It is noteworthy that there has been a lot of work in the study of Shakespeare's tragic heroes but not much in the study of tragic heroines. The main reason behind it is that women are assigned prominent roles in his comedies but they remain subservient in his tragedies. His attitude towards female characters reflects his bipolar approach to comedies and tragedies. It was in the late nineteenth century that John Ruskin made a seminal observation that Shakespeare has no heroes but only heroines in his comedies. Shakespeare is said to be a feminist in his comedies but in his tragedies, the central figure is ascribed only to male characters. In Shakespeare's tragedies, we come across several types of female characters who directly or indirectly influence the actions of male protagonists. Though they serve a subordinate part, they are requisite and more relevant to the greatness of tragedies. According to some critics, tragedy is the outcome of the tragic actions of the hero but there is something hidden behind the truth. Another truth is that females are the cause of the ruin in the life of tragic heroes; especially Lady Macbeth and Gertrude are responsible for the tragedy in *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*.

In Bollywood films, Vishal Bhardwaj has delineated Shakespeare's female characters in his adapted trilogy *Maqbool*, *Omkaara* and *Haider* through a different angle. Bhardwaj's portrayal of female characters along with the male ones has a perfect correspondence between the movie and the play. He has skillfully reinvented the female protagonists of Shakespeare's tragedies in a very microscopic way. Remarkably, he has given Shakespeare's tragic heroines more empowered and active roles in his worldwide acclaimed movies. He took special care in presenting modern female counterparts of Shakespeare's tragic heroines in his movies based on Shakespeare's great tragedies: Nimmi as Lady Macbeth in *Maqbool*, an adaptation of *Macbeth*; Dolly as Desdemona, Indu as Emilia and Billo as Bianca in *Omkaara*, an adaptation of *Othello*; Ghajala as Gertrude and Arshia as Ophelia in *Haider*, an adaptation of *Hamlet*. The present article discusses Shakespeare's tragic heroines on the Elizabethan stage on the twenty-first-century Indian cinema screen:

Shakespeare's Female Characters of *Macbeth* in the Movie *Maqbool*

Macbeth is the last and the shortest of Shakespeare's four great tragedies. This fast-moving tragedy is about Macbeth's vaulting ambition and Lady Macbeth's provocation for supremacy which leads her to a turbulent state of insanity and tragic death. *Maqbool*, an adaptation of *Macbeth*, is the initial step of Bhardwaj's worldwide acclaimed adaptations of Shakespeare's great tragedies.

Maqbool, released in 2003, is the first part of Bhardwaj's Shakespearean trilogy. It is set in the criminal background of the Mumbai underworld. Bhardwaj transformed the sixteenth-century characters of the play into present-day Mumbai. In the movie, Nimmi as Lady Macbeth performs the most questioning role of Nimmi and nowhere in the movie, she is overshadowed by her male counterparts. In the movie, Tabu in the role of Nimmi excelled the character of Lady Macbeth.

If we analyze the character of Nimmi in the movie, we find that she is not depicted as a typical idealistic type of Bollywood heroine. Bhardwaj has presented the figure of Lady Macbeth with a dual personality: as the mistress of a powerful underworld don Abba Ji (King Duncan) and as the beloved of Maqbool (Macbeth). She is a combination of virtue and vice as a normal human being. Bhardwaj represents Lady Macbeth in the form of Nimmi giving voice to the spirit and attitude of a new woman. Nimmi knows how to use her sexuality to manipulate the protagonist and achieve what she wants. In an interview, Bhardwaj and the scriptwriter Tyrewala clarified the reason for changes made in the role of Lady Macbeth for the requirement of the plot, “The major decision was to change the character of Lady Macbeth from Macbeth’s wife to Duncan’s mistress who was having an affair with Macbeth. This changed the dynamics of the relationships completely. Suddenly the sexual conflict became the core of the screenplay. For Macbeth, the lady Macbeth became the throne herself.”(Bhardwaj)

Nimmi is trapped in an endless depth of psycho-bottom. She is deeply frustrated to live as the mistress of Abba Ji who is about her father’s age. She wants to have Maqbool at any cost and it brings a major change in her role from that of Lady Macbeth in the play. Unlike Lady Macbeth, she incites Maqbool to murder Abba Ji not due to her ambition for power but due to her love for Maqbool because she is already in power being the mistress of Abba ji. She is schematic like Lady Macbeth who kills the guards of King Duncan to make them responsible for the murder. Both the females’ Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* and Nimmi in *Maqbool* represent themselves as daring fiends before their chicken-hearted husband/lover. Their dominating personality empowers the hero to commit the crime. They deliberately manipulate their husbands by raising insecurity in their minds and doing away with people who come in their way. In the original text, witches prompt Macbeth toward the ghastly act of murdering Duncan. In Bhardwaj’s *Maqbool*, Nimmi dislikes being warm to “repulsively fat body, whenever she is in bed with him, she looks uninvolved and keeps looking blankly.” (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala) Maqbool remains unmoved towards Nimmi’s seductions in the first place but fails to maintain his position in the face of her evil beauty in the long run. She had always wished to be in Maqbool’s arms and finally became successful in winning him. The story of *Maqbool* deviates from that of *Macbeth*’s as in the original text, Lady Macbeth and Macbeth shared a sacred relationship, guided through the holy rituals. The adaptation depicts a forbidden romance by turning the relationships upside down.

Bhardwaj wonderfully sets Nimmi in the same condition of mental instability and remorse as Lady Macbeth suffered in the play. Like Lady Macbeth, Nimmi also suffers from sleepwalking. She hallucinates by seeing blood on her face and walls and behaves like a mad woman. She dies pathetically while uttering her crime remorsefully. Her mental disorder is highlighted when she says: “The stench of blood is everywhere....I have to clean up. I won’t be able to sleep otherwise” (Bhardwaj and Tyrewala 129-130). Mondal uses a powerful disturbing image in depicting the pitiable condition of both ladies: “They are emptied of all strength to the point that they have nothing left to contribute to the narrative: a sterile empty shell for a body and devastated mind unable to cohabit any longer with sanity (Mondal 5).

Like Lady Macbeth, Nimmi becomes a neurotic and miserable creature who dies pathetically. However, Bhardwaj does not make her cruel like Lady Macbeth that she can kill her baby if she had sworn it:

“I have given suck, and know
How tender ‘tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dashed the brains out, had I sworn as you
Have done this” (I, viii).

Nimmi is happy to know about her pregnancy and gives birth to the baby. Though the movie depicts grey shades of Lady Macbeth’s character in her role, her remorse and tragic end drag the sympathy of spectators. Unlike Lady Macbeth, she is presented as a victim of underworld activities. She came from Lucknow to Mumbai to become a film actress but is cheated on by Abba Ji and finally becomes his mistress as she had no option left for herself. In this way, Bhardwaj diverts from the source character of the play and depicts the condition of many girls who come to Mumbai with a dream of becoming an actress but are exploited there. In some points, Nimmi cannot be equated with Lady Macbeth as Nimmi instigated Maqbool to kill Abba Ji not to get the power and supremacy but to come out of her present condition as the mistress of an overaged underworld dons. Nimmi is portrayed as the victim of a hateful underworld don, who desperately needs another male gangster to rescue her.

Shakespeare’s Female Characters of *Othello* in the Movie *Omkara*

The international success of the adaptation of *Macbeth* as *Maqbool* inspired Vishal Bhardwaj to adapt *Othello* as *Omkara* in 2006. In *Omkara*, the link with Shakespeare’s *Othello* is more explicit than that of *Maqbool*. Unlike Shakespeare’s *Othello*, Bhardwaj has given more significant and active roles to the female characters in the movie. Bhardwaj presents the character of Dolly with the same innocence, purity, beauty and dignity as Desdemona is depicted in the play. Desdemona is one of the most pathetic, innocent and silent sufferers of Shakespeare’s tragic heroines. A.C. Bradley compares her character with other Shakespeare heroines, “She is the most pathetic of Shakespeare’s women, as innocent as Miranda and as loving as Voila, yet suffering more deeply than Cordelia or Imogen and she seems to lack that independence and strength of spirit which Cordelia and Imogen possess, and which in a manner raises them above suffering” (Bradley 169).

The simplicity, innocence and tenderness of Desdemona and Dolly make them easy tools for Iago/Langada. Like Desdemona, Dolly elopes with Omkara and decides to marry him. Thus, Desdemona was a rebel as she did what was not acceptable in Elizabethan society; Dolly also rebelled by eloping and marrying Omkara because the Indian social structure doesn’t accept such marriages even today. The play shows that Desdemona, despite being very, breaks the cultural canons of Elizabethan society by confessing her love for Othello before the Duke, her father and others; the movie shows Dolly, despite being engaged with another person of her father’s choice, challenges the conservative rules of a male-dominated society by asserting her love for OmkarabeforeBhaisaab (Duke), her father and others. Her confession of love echoes the frankness of Desdemona in the play: “I’ve always followed the tune of my heart.....Dad....please forgive me....I can’t live without Omkara” (Bhardwaj et al 23-24).

Dolly is portrayed as tactless as Desdemona that's why she is easily manipulated by Langada in fulfilling his evil design of taking revenge on Othello. Bhardwaj presents Dolly as less active and more submissive than Desdemona. Desdemona protests her husband's accusations of having illicit relations with Cassio but Dolly remains quiet when Omkara accuses her of adultery and dies in tears without any complaint.

Both Desdemona and Dolly become victims of their deep love and suffer suspicion, abuse and harsh treatment by their husbands for whom they had left their family. They become passive and die defenceless without proving their fidelity to their husbands. The tragic fate and brutal murder of Desdemona in the play and Dolly in the movie remind us of the tragic fate of Browning's heroines in *Porphyria's Lover* and *My Last Duchess*, whose lives are taken away by their lover and husband.

In the movie, Emilia is re-imagined as Indu who is more empowered than her source character. She is created not merely as Emilia's analogue but as a fully recognized Indian woman. A more acute change occurs in her role as she is presented as an affiliated sister of Omkara and shares a special bond of affection with him. Unlike Emilia, she plays an integral part in the action of the film. Bhardwaj presents Indu as a typical housewife who follows her husband but she can't bear injustice done to Desdemona like Emilia who only curses her husband and dies by his hands. In the movie, Indu takes a firm stand against her husband when she comes to know that her husband played an important role in Dolly's death by poisoning Omkara's mind and she also has her inadvertent role by stealing Dolly's waistband. She is so enraged at the injustice of events that she kills her husband and retributes the order of justice. This action of Indu in the movie overshadows the role of Emilia on whom her character is based. It makes her role "the instrument of justice and moral retribution, something which has been found lacking in Shakespeare's ending." (Trivedi, 33) Stephen Alter also explains this transformation in the character of Indu in the movie, "Probably the greatest plot change from *Othello* to *Omkara* is Emilia's role. In the play, she curses her husband when she discovers what Iago has done, but Vishal takes her response a step further. Knowing that Langada has destroyed the lives of those she loves, Indu picks up a sickle and kills him with a single stroke. Konkana's high-spirited village housewife is transformed into a vindictive goddess, a figure out of Hindu mythology rather than Elizabethan melodrama (Alter 223).

This quick transformation in the role of Indu from a typical wife to an avenging woman establishes her in the category of avenging female characters in Hindi cinema like the memorable role of Radha in the movie *Mother India*. In the words of Mike Heidenberg: "In this last role, Indu assumes prominence that Emilia lacks in *Othello*. The fact that she is avenging the family honour of both sides of her family, further, casts her as the film's heroine" (Heidenberg 100).

Shakespeare's female Characters of *Hamlet* in the movie *Haider*

Hamlet is the first and the longest in the quadrangle of Shakespeare's great tragedies: *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*. It is considered to be the most popular and the most produced play of Shakespeare after *Romeo and Juliet*. *Hamlet* adapted as *Haider* completes Vishal Bhardwaj's adapted trilogy on Shakespeare's great tragedies. *Haider* is set in Kashmir during the insurgency movement in 1995 which

gives the filmmaker ample opportunity to bring female characters to life in an area of extended violence.

In the movie *Haider*, the role of Gertrude is beautifully reinvented as Ghazala, a charming woman in her forties but she is always seen with sad eyes. Bhardwaj brings a major change in the role of Gertrude/Ghajala by making her the centre of the movie. Ghazala is presented so powerfully that she overrules the protagonist as the story largely revolves around her. Rachel Saltz remarks: “Instead of *Haider*, the director Vishal Bhardwaj might have considered calling his fast-loose adaptation of “*Hamlet*” “Ghajala” after its Gertrude character....[she] has such depth and mystery that she hijacks the movie” (qt. in Trivedi “Woman as Avengers” 36).

The character of Gertrude is a very complex and puzzling one in the play. She has been misunderstood and underestimated by critics for centuries. Though there is no textual evidence of Gertrude being an ally in her husband’s murder, she has been maligned for frailty, concupiscence and murder of her husband. A.C. Bradley doesn’t find her role in her husband’s death as he says: “The queen was not a bad-hearted woman, not at all the woman to think little of murder” (Bradley 135). The movie shows Ghajala an ignorant accomplice of Khurram/Claudius in the murder of her husband. Her ignorance of Khurram’s treacherous nature and information about the hiding of a terrorist in her house provides an opportunity for Khurram to get his brother arrested by the Indian army. Later on, he gets his brother murdered and removes him from his way to snatch his wife. Thus, Ghazala, unlike Gertrude, unwittingly becomes the instrument of violence in the movie.

Like Queen Gertrude, Ghajala’s married life was not happy and satisfactory as her former husband was always busy in his medical practices and devoted himself to his patients and hospital. She tells Haider about her unsatisfied married life: how the gap between her and his father began to increase day by day when Haider went to Aligarh to study. Both Gertrude and Ghazala have one thing very common and that is their deep love and affection for their sons. As the play depicts that Gertrude almost lives by Hamlet’s looks, Ghajala also had little reason to live but only for Haider " (Bhardwaj 91).

The movie presents Ghajala as more active and confident than Gertrude who exerts little influence in the play. Queen Gertrude’s role is limited to a few lines and scenes in the text but Ghajala outshines the movie from the beginning to the end. She is an independent lady who wants to take the decisions of her life by herself. After the disappearance of her husband, Ghajala doesn’t accept living in the status of ‘half-widow’ (the wives of disappeared people in Kashmir were called half-widows because they were uncertain of whether their husbands were alive or dead). She frankly expresses her desire to ‘become whole’ i.e. not to live as the widow of her husband but to marry Khurram. Its clear indication is found when Khurram asks her to join school again, she replies “once I become whole....I am partly a widow and partly a bride” (Bhardwaj and Peer 133-134).

Ghajala’s role is dramatically transformed in the closing scene of the movie. She doesn’t die like Queen Gertrude by ignorantly consuming a poisonous drink but she tries to stop the cycle of vengeance by becoming a human bomb and ending her life in a much unforeseen way. When she loses all her hope to make her son surrender and save his life, she chooses to become a suicide bomb and kills herself. Through this act of sacrifice, she wants to restore peace and humanity as she considers herself

responsible for all the violence and tragedy. She repeats the message 'revenge begets only revenge' quite contrary to the play, many times in the movie. Poonam Trivedi alludes to Ghajala's role as a female suicide bomber to Dhanu, the assassin of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi (1991). In Bollywood cinema, there are references to female suicide bombers in some movies: Megha in Maniratnam's *Dil Se* (1998) and Malli in Santosh Sivan's *The Terrorist* (1999) also turn into suicide bombers. Trivedi tells about the character of Ghazala in *Haider*: "from a typical Bollywood mother, making a last-ditch attempt to extricate her son from the morass of violence and revenge that he has fallen into, she is also, like Indu in *Omkara*, a Shakti figure who can suddenly stand tall and resolute" (Trivedi "Woman as Avenger" 38).

The movie majorly departs from the original play in reinventing Ophelia's character as Arshia. The role of Hamlet's friend and confidant Horatio is merged into her personality. Though her role is transfigured from the original character of Ophelia, she retains the same beauty, innocence and love for Haider in her essential core as Ophelia had. In the movie, Bhardwaj gives her all the agency that Ophelia never had: she is an active journalist and helps Haider in search of his father in army camps, hospitals, prisons and detention centres.

Unlike Ophelia who is a submissive girl, Arshia is represented as a modern girl who is confident enough to take important decisions in her life. Ophelia obeys her father's restrictions on visiting Hamlet but Arshia shows her free will and disregards her father and brother's impositions on her private life when they persuade her to remain away from Haider. But at the end of the movie, she is completely changed from what she was in the beginning. After the death of her father and the desertion of Haider, she is emotionally shattered and loses the previous glory of her role. Arshia, like Ophelia, becomes mad due to unbearable grief and ends her life pathetically. Poonam Trivedi finds similarity in the tragic fate of Ophelia and Arshia: "It is pernicious corruption, political and patriarchal, the 'rotten' in the world of her father, and her brother, a multinational jobber, which kicks in, controls and finally crushes her.....Arshia though physically protective and supportive ends like Ophelia, a victim of circumstances" (Trivedi "Woman as Avenger" 40).

Conclusion

It is curious to note that in the above-discussed Shakespearean tragedies and adapted movies, female characters act as catalysts for the disaster of male characters. Though they are assigned secondary roles to their male counterparts, they are used as an important instrument in building up tragic elements. If we look into the character of Lady Macbeth in *Macbeth* and Gertrude in *Hamlet*, we find them as the main causes of tragedies in the life of tragic heroes. However, the guiltless and pathetic death of Desdemona in *Othello* and Ophelia in *Hamlet* cannot be ignored. Most of Shakespeare's tragic heroines are victims of forces which are beyond their control. They struggle for power and defend their honour.

In his adapted trilogy Vishal Bhardwaj gives Shakespeare's tragic heroines an essence which makes them not only essential to the tragedy but also unique in representation. It is important to note that the above-mentioned female characters undergo a significant transformation when they are shifted from the text to the screen. It is since the function of onscreen media is entirely different from that of print media. In his adapted trilogy, Bhardwaj places the female characters at the centre of the movie and allows them to appropriate and challenge male power structures.

Bhardwaj has given a more empowered voice and active role to his female characters than their original counterparts in the play. Poonam Trivedi opines on tragic heroines in Bhardwaj's Shakespearean trilogy: "..... Women show the way, creating areas of nurturance, regeneration and conflict resolution, or summary justice, in the end, as the way forward. Vishal Bhardwaj's moral/spiritual and political arc resonates with aspects of Indian philosophy/mythology which reserves a stronger, more proactive potency for the female principle than the familiar western Aristotelian division of male reason versus female nature." (Trivedi 41)

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THE QUEST OF THE FEMININE: A POSTMODERN FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF MARGARET ATWOOD'S *THE HANDMAID'S TALE*

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Abstract

The woman in this novel represents a fraction of the minority in the real world, yet it posits the relevant conjecture of contemporary extremism. The Handmaid's Tale provides the readers with a construction of the female self within a system of utterly annihilating patriarchy. A woman's rogue journey away and yet into a hopeless dystopia has never been iterated. Hence, the ontology of this paper probes to analyse the narrator of Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale as a distinct voice of the woman at many intersections, building the foundations for many more to come and stand on the shoulders of an era-defining movement.

Key Words: Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale*, Feminism, Intersectionality, Dystopia, Utopia.

Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* is an explicitly political novel which became an immediate bestseller when published in Canada in 1985 and the United States in 1986. The novel emerges from the long traditions of Utopian fiction, particularly the anti-utopia or dystopia, which has become a common feature of this century given the political and literary landscape. Atwood also joins the ranks of the writers of specific nature who converse about the feminist potential in these Utopias and dystopias and thus, it is the objective of this paper to analyse the narrator of Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* as a distinct voice of the marginalised, through the lens of feminism and deconstruction.

Innumerable critics of *The Handmaid's Tale* have chosen to describe the narrator as a heroine, a developing consciousness, or an emerging woman. The reader comes to understand what Simone de Beauvoir meant when she introduced the concept of one rather than being born a woman who actually "becomes a woman" with the construction of Offred. (Beauvoir, 15)

Some have looked to the pre-Gilead period (the present) as a happy (or tolerable) alternative to the Gileadean nightmare, while others have interpreted the Gileadean society as, in part, a by-product of cultural feminism. Needless to say, a few have found hope or assurance in Gilead's obvious demise before 2195, the date of the epilogue's academic conference. But these interpretations are unseated by a close reading of the text and attention to its dystopian context, which demonstrates the need for sustained political, and feminist consciousness and activity among women by constantly examining what may happen in their absence.

As the title suggests, *The Handmaid's Tale* consists primarily of a story told into a tape recorder by a Handmaid in Gilead in the late twentieth century. Appended to the

narration is a concluding epilogue, the partial transcript of an academic conference in 2195 on the (by then) defunct Gilead, in which the keynote speaker, Professor Pieixoto, reports finding, transcribing, and arranging the tapes and presents his interpretation of them. Atwood's text arises several cracks in the power structure- a love affair, and the purported existence of an anti-government movement, and escape or change seems possible. Therefore, the narrative utilises many fundamental elements common in dystopias but the author ensures the scope of a quest in her protagonist. (Stirling, Johnson, 73)

The Handmaid's Tale presents totalitarian politics and repressive laws. Gilead is always at war with external enemies (and, according to its evening news, always winning); it faces scarce natural resources; those who do not fit the society's norms are re-educated, expelled, or executed. Like *Brave New World*, Gilead is a hierarchical society with highly differentiated roles, status rankings, and activities, but Gilead is also a distinctive novel that follows a typical dystopian plot: in the face of a powerful regime, the narrator follows the dystopia's norms; then, some possibilities for resistance only when grafted onto patriarchal attitudes and imposed it throughout society. Gilead is devoted to reproduction- white, Christian, misogynist, stratified reproduction specifically. Fertile women are rare (men by patriarchal definition are not infertile), and Commanders, the rulers of the society, want children. If a Commander's wife is unable to bear children, a fertile woman must be brought in to be impregnated by him, by force if necessary. These women are the Handmaids, trained in indifference, self-abnegation, and service, prepared only for pregnancy, their status and purpose made evident by their uniforms and their names (formed by "Of" plus the first name of their current Commander). To legitimate and enforce the Commanders' power and their exclusive access to Handmaids, Gilead's infrastructure requires a highly developed, complex structure of power, system of indoctrination, and division of labour, which is executed with the combined force of younger men and older women trained as the *Aunts*. Though not a seamless and frictionless dystopian system the Commanders break Gilead's rules at Jezebel's, the power elite's whorehouse, and, as Offered comments, "everyone's on the take" (235). The reader must pay close attention to the construction of different 'types' of women in this establishment. Beauvoir's theory is coming to quite a literal plain with the negation and reconstructive nature of these processes as Gilead's power over their subjects is extensive and intense.

"Yes, Ma'am, I said again, forgetting. They used to have dolls, for little girls, that would talk if you pulled a string at the back; I thought I was sounding like that, the voice of a monotone, the voice of a doll. She probably longed to slap my face. They can hit us, there's Scriptural precedent. But not with any implementation. Only with their hands." (Atwood, 56).

The reader must read the aforementioned paragraph and think about the idea of an education. Taking de Beauvoir's concept and relating it with Foucault calls *Discourse* opens up a new window into the very complex dynamic of the author of the text itself- Margaret Atwood. Foucault defined 'discourse' as the context of speech, representation, knowledge, and understanding, as it defines what can be said, studied and the processes of doing so. Here, in *The Handmaid's Tale*, one observes how Gilead created specific discourses of religion, sickness and rationality and used those concepts to subjugate and form a new hierarchy of women. They not only divided men into Commanders and workers, but women into Wives, Aunts, Marthas, and

Handmaids for the upper classes. For the lower classes, the word used was "Econowives". The priest used the discourse of religion, of sin and salvation to preach particular norms of behaviour in domains like marriage, sexuality, family and charity. The physician used the discourse of sickness and health to prescribe particular kinds of lifestyles- healthy eating, having intercourse in certain positions etc. And the psychiatrist constructed particular kinds of behaviour as "deviant" through the discourse of rationality.

Offred tries to retain some sense of herself as a person and as an individual differentiated from others, but that self breaks down inexorably, and in the most minute detail. At first, she vigorously and confidently refuses to call the room she sleeps in "mine," because it has no key for her to assure her privacy and exclude others and because it is at best a transitory way station for her (2:11). But eventually she labels it "mine" (8:65) precisely when her private life is being compromised. Then she joins herself in the false and splintered community of the Commander's household. She sees as "ours" (20:149) the house of the Commander and Serena Joy. (Napikoski) Eventually even her skin becomes "ours," as the Commander watches her putting on the skin moisturiser during one of their late-night furtive meetings (25:203). Finally, near the end of the tapes, she accepts Gilead: "Everything they taught at the Red Center, everything I've resisted, comes flooding in. . . .They can do what they like with me" (45:368; and 41:348-49). The de Beauvoir theory holds a clear shine in this exact moment when the Subject has broken the 'other' to the point where she no longer wishes to fight back. She simply and very objectively accepts her fate.

The narrator has a horrendous ordeal, in an equally if not more, horrendous world. The notion seems to be devised as a response to a drastic decrease in birth rates. Men in power have taken complete control of women, in body and mind, just not the soul. Their entire aim is to insure an increase in the declining birth rates. The woman's individualism is repressed, and the men also prevent any physical freedom. The women are owned by the state (reminding the readers of the literal saying- women come with the house), by the men and by corruption; their bodies become nothing more than a means to provide new life. They are degraded to a state of sub-human existence; they are no longer people, as Atwood writes,

"But who can remember the pain, once it's over? All that remains of it is a shadow, not in the mind even, in the flesh. Pain marks you, but too deep to see. Out of sight, out of mind." (Atwood, 175).

Atwood suggests that the women here are merely reproductive organs, ones that can be bought and discarded without thought, mercy or conscience. This is reinforced on every level; the language particularly delivers Atwood's intentions on a revealing scale. The names are a mark of the oppression; the protagonist is called "Offred." She is of Fred, as in, she belongs to him. The women are assigned names that are not their own; they are dubbed with the disgusting title of "Handmaiden," taken and justified from the Bible. And by leaving their names behind or rather stripped off of them, they are left with very little of their former lives. The women are left to simply be objects to be used, controlled and destroyed at the slightest hint of nonconformity in such an absurd system.

The culture created in the entire text is evocative of one that could exist. The way the men attempt to justify its existence is nothing short of terrifying. They make it sound perfectly normal. Well, not normal, but an idea that could be justified to a people. Not that it is justifiable, but the argument they present has just enough eerie resemblance to a cold, logical, response to make it seem probable in its misguided vileness. The totalitarian elements provide an image of a people that will endure anything if they're provided with a glimpse of liberty. The small degree of liberty the Handmaids think they have doesn't exist: it's an illusion, a trick, a shadow on the wall. They're manipulated into believing it and become frenzied in the face of it. It is the ultimate means of control in its nastiness.

Therefore, this paper concludes that all the forces of Gilead use not only the discourse of physical and legal power of the state but also the mental subjugation of the subaltern to suppress a specific feminine self of the woman. It is that 'self' that they fear and, subsequently, the 'self' they shall stomp on. Offred presents the reader with a bleak and yet an essential narrator; a woman who has known freedom and liberty, rights and privileges of gender and sexuality, who has been with men other than her husband, and someone who knew what it was to be loved; she goes from all that to being quintessentially a sex slave. Her dark and intelligent narration, while she explores what stays of her truer or more real self amongst this new version, is what provides the foreground for papers like these to analyse the subjugation of the marginalised. This is where Atwood's awe-inspiringly power of persuasion resides. By portraying such a bleak situation, she is not only able to fully demonstrate what life could be like if we suddenly followed the misogynistic views of the old testament with fierce intensity but also paint what the world would look like if Women were to have no power whatsoever. This is reinforced by complete cultural destruction and a lack of any form of self-expression for the literal half of a society's population. They would not be able to read or write and they would not be able to speak their minds. It would even go as far as to condition and instil in them the wrong message so powerfully, that they cannot completely form a single independent thought. Toad fuel to the fire, the women in this novel, know no difference. Sure, the narrator of this remembers her past, but she's not allowed to. She is blatantly and repeatedly forced to repress any sense of individual sentiment. The woman in this novel represents a fraction of the minority in the real world, yet it posits the relevant conjecture of contemporary extremism, and why this is exactly the reason for the constant contact with the feminine.

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**The Woman of Indian Cinema: A Comparative Analysis of the
Female Identity in Shyam Benegal's *Bhumika* (1977) and
Amit Ravindernath Sharma's *Badhai Ho* (2018)**

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Abstract

The woman's body has always been the site of conflict, and the films of a country like India showcase that in their own ways. The objective of this paper is to showcase the way a woman has progressed or even digressed in some ways towards the end of an unjust way of the world.

Keywords: *Indian Cinema, Woman in film, The female voice, Feminism, Badhai Ho, Bhumika, Family.*

Indian cinema has gone through a long list of generational discoveries and rediscoveries. Whether it be the necessary patriotism of post-independent India or the exploration of the modern angry young man through the tropes of kitchen-sink drama, Indian cinema has had one thing in common- the quest for the self. This paper aims to probe into the pursuit of the female self and to examine how far it has travelled from the ground of Shyam Benegal's *Bhumika* (1977) to Amit Ravindernath Sharma's *Badhaiho* (2018).

In films around the world, retrospection has been known to be used as a device for the spectators to understand the character; more specifically what drives a character's decisions and especially their demeanour. *Bhumika* is a biopic unlike any; based on the autobiography of the doyenne of Marathi theatre and cinema Hansa Wadkar, Benegal sets the filmy fantasies with the bleak reality of life. Wadkar was living in times when words like feminism had not been popularised in India and Benegal, very carefully, makes sure to avoid the didactics seeping into the screenplay. The viewers find themselves attached to a magnetic force that easily transcribes Usha's fierce and vulnerable personality.

In simpler terms, one can easily put this film as Usha's experiences with different men. These men appear at different points in her life, adding somewhat like the building blocks of her personality. Girish Karnad's keen writing makes for edgy character arcs, that would occasionally make you question their decisions and mostly make you uncomfortable through it. The creators have projected Usha as incomplete

and mostly like an empty jar of sorts, as Anuj Kumar opines in his review for *The Hindu*; her entire persona is like a search for things she would like to collect and with every man that comes into her life she tries to find her something that she could assimilate into her 'self.'

In *The Second Sex* (1949), Simone de Beauvoir argues that women were at a disadvantage in a society where they grew up under "a multiplicity of incompatible myths" about women. So, instead of being encouraged to find their own dreams and pursue meaningful projects for their lives, Beauvoir posits that the myths proposed to women, whether in literature or history, science or psychoanalysis, all encouraged them to believe that a woman's only purpose in life was to be a tool for others – and especially for men. (Beauvoir, 56). In *Bhumika*, the men, all of them, are a temporary solution to her problems at a specific point in her life. Keshav Dalvi, played by Amol Palekar happens to be the only constant force in her life ranging from a grooming adult to an overbearing and demanding husband. She resorts to his proposal of marriage only because she doesn't want to be tied down by her own family and their restrictions. But after marrying him, she realises the toxicity in her marriage, and the relationship altogether, thus forced to look for a man in Anant Nag's Rajan, a fellow actor, who claims to be in love with her. He's scared to marry and doesn't want to be the reason for her divorce but he provides his support unconditionally. Smita Patil stubbornly tries to hold onto her free will in the endless performance of being a woman, duty-bound to and by so many different men, shuffled off to jail after jail, different faces for the same situation. Whenever occasionally she finds happiness in comforting others, she resists once it becomes her obligation instead of her choice, concentrating the viewer's mind on the fact that these feminine duties have nothing to do with the task at hand and everything to do with control. Controlling a woman becomes everything to society when it sees that things are falling apart, it is an endless cycle of generational trauma and fear, where the only way to truly escape is to give in. There is also a slightly different angle about the film industry, that one must sincerely note, which is the exploitation of women where being an actress serves as a metaphor for the expectations and attempts to fill different roles while trying not to lose herself, even when the woman in question isn't entirely sure who that is or what she wants. The filming of a movie is just another way to exert control over women rather than an indictment of the industry specifically, that image is everything. As the film peels back the layers of identities and falsehoods and brutal reality, in the end, she is miserable, but it is solely by her own hand.

However, that still leaves Usha longing for a man who is the most ideal person to be with. Eventually, she meets Vinayak Kale, played by Amrish Puri, a simple businessman, who, literally and figuratively, lives far away from the showbiz of the film industry. She feels that her desolation would somehow connect with his fragmentary life, thus she gives him her all, only to realise that this was a mistake as well. When she starts living in his house, she feels trapped and paralyzed. Her suffocation forces her to leave him as well and finally learns to be alone.

The second film in the analysis here is Sharma's *Badhai Ho*. Priyamvada is the mother of the family, a kind and nurturing mother, who emotionally blackmails her son to play Housie with her kitty party friends. Nakul (Ayushmann Khurrana), like every other son, is annoyed by his mother but loves her to the core. Nakul, shown to be the main protagonist of the movie, has a nice life that revolves around his ordinary

Delhi family and his sweet girl-next-door type girlfriend Renne (Sanya Malhotra). The plot entangles when his father Jitendra aka Jeetu (Gajraj Rao) impregnates Priyamvada, as this initiates an entire phase of log kyakahenge (what will people say) and thus Nakul starts ignoring his colleagues, friends as well as Renne, in order to avoid any shame. The story revolves around the 9 months of pregnancy and how the family faces issues from the so-called developing society.

The film's main storyline is the world turning upside down for the Kaushik family when the middle-aged mother gets pregnant. There is certain warmth in the conventionally assigned quirkiness of the film's various characters and their external and internal conflicts. Gajraj Rao, who plays the father Jeetendra Kaushik, in a seemingly simple performance, shines in his common man turned helpless husband and father. He manages to avoid any lapse into a caricature with different shades as his character is built on little touches and details of gestures and expressions by the actor—the common man/TT who won't give away a mango easily as a tip, the vyakul (distracted) romantic poet burdened by the guilt of late fatherhood and the responsibilities laid ahead and the utter embarrassment of being judged by friends, family and neighbours. Rao gets the many everyday eccentricities of a regular householder spot on.

Neena Gupta as the older mother-to-be is so comfortable in her own skin that she doesn't seem to be acting at all; it all amalgamates in the standout scene of the couple interacting with their son's girlfriend. Surekha Sikri steals her spotlight as much as she can, in form of the gamma (grandmother) who understands the tropes of biology better than the younger generations occupying the same space as her. (Joshi)

Ye bhi koi mummy papa kekarne ki cheezhai (Is this something for the parents to do), says Nakul Kaushik (Ayushmann Khurrana) to his girlfriend Renee (Sanya Malhotra) when the two are trying to form some conjugal relations of their own. The 'something' in question here is sex. *Badhaai Ho* is about the inability to come to terms with one's parents having sex, seeing their relationship as conveniently chaste despite knowing very well how kids come about in this world. Nakul has to face up to the fact when his mother Priyamvada Kaushik aka Babli (Neena Gupta) gets pregnant, and the whole plot is about him coming to terms with this.

The film captures the little, seemingly hopeless conflicts of a middle-class family very well. *Badhaai Ho* does a fine job of depicting middle-class self-righteousness when it comes to matters of sex and its hypocrisies or for example, in putting the mother on the pedestal, but yet again, it fails to do anything about the woman in question. Neena Gupta, who plays Priyamvada, righteously steals the show but solely based on her acting chops. The writing does next to nothing to explore the realities of a woman going through geriatric pregnancy and everything to showcase how her son finally comes to accept something that had nothing to do with him in the first place. It's in the film's pointless conclusion that things unravel. The convenient and sentimental 'it's all about loving and accepting your family' route doesn't quite work with the otherwise cheeky tenor at the start of the film.

In *Bhumika*, one finds Benegal's protagonist to be struggling throughout her life. She wants to breathe, but she can't. She wants to sing and dance for her own self, but the people around her see this and exploit her very desire to their own benefit. She is

never given a formal education, as she simply initiates into the traditions of a Krishna Dasi and eventually a film actress. She transforms from the daughter to being the sole breadwinner of the family, yet never archives the respect that comes with it. She is dealing with the frail ego of a husband, the crying need of a daughter, and the expectations of a conventionally patriarchal mother. She is expected to fulfil all these roles for all these people, yet it is her own self that she ends up losing. Beauvoir's theory talks exactly about this exploitation. And on the other hand, Sharma's *Badhai Ho* simply limits the woman to the family domain. With Usha of *Bhumika*, the woman tries to break free, but with *Badhai Ho*'s Babli, the woman is simply too old to step out. Her life is governed by the acceptance of the men around her. Her fault doesn't lie in the fact that she got pregnant, the fault is in the fact that she had the audacity to have sex. The woman's body has always been the site of conflict, and here this woman's act of getting pregnant was an assertion of her sexuality. The film, however, renders her completely powerless when the narrative becomes about the people around her 'forgiving' and 'accepting' her repercussion.

Conclusion

Beauvoir's theory of conceptualising the woman comes straight forward, where the woman of the newly independent India raised her voice and fought for what she believed to be her right, even if it was her right to simply make mistakes. The woman of the twenty-first-century Indian cinema, however, is rather more dependent on the perception of others to enact anything of her own, very well under the sweeping right-wing nationalism's idea of the ideal woman of the century, therefore, kicking to the curb the finest of the equal rights to exist only in ideas.

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ROLE OF BUDDHIST ETHICS IN SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract

Buddhism is a substantial and diverse group of traditions that have evolved through more than two thousand years in a variety of environments. However, there have been some practises that have been shared among various Buddhist cultures that have helped establish local Buddhist environments. Life is interconnected. Our natural environment, or nature, is alive and at least somewhat conscious. It is neither holy and ideal nor bad and subject to conquest. Our fully awakened nature is not apart from the fundamental reality of nature (Buddha-nature). Buddhists view the term "Nature" as merely a helpful conventional term, devoid of any special, inherent reality that would unmistakably set it apart from everything that is "not Nature." In a less scientific sense, it refers to the world as it was before extreme human distortion of the patterns of interdependence between humans and the rest of the planet's living creatures. It can also be thought as the interdependent living web that connects different beings, both sentient and non-sentient. All living things are thought to possess the Buddha-nature, or the capacity to achieve complete enlightenment. Buddhists reject the idea of using other sentient beings as food or other objects. Buddhists see nature as wilderness because it offers a setting where quick advancement in Buddhist practice, or self-cultivation, can be made.

Keyword: *Buddhism, Environment, Dharma, Ecology, Buddha- Nature, Interdependence, Environment Friendly, Bodhisattva, Monastic Communities.*

Introduction

The environmental problem is global not only because it endangers humanity but also because its resolution necessitates significant global effort. In general, humanity, and each individual person in particular innate sense of unity between man and nature takes on profound moral significance. It is becoming increasingly important to instil in people a sense of responsibility for the lives of other living beings, as well as a sense of involvement in everything that occurs on the Earth. Most environmental problems are not caused by villains who want to destroy the planet. The situation is far more complex. The division of labour and subsequent alienation of man caused a schism between actions. Today's technology increases the possibilities of our activities in time and space, and even highly specialized science cannot calculate all of them, the consequences of people's activities. "Until evil does not ripen, the fool considers it sweet like honey," the Dhammapada says. When the evil matures, the fool succumbs to grief.". As one of the religions that incarnates, Buddhism is always regarded as one of the leading religions in proposing ideas about environmental protection and sustainable development in its teaching system. These ideas can be found not only in Buddhist teachings, but also in the religion's rituals and methods of

daily practise. Studying Buddhist philosophical ideas about environmental protection and sustainable development is critical not only in theory but also in practise, particularly in enhancing the role of Buddhism.

Buddhism and ecology

“Like the Buddha, we too should look around us and be observant, because everything in the world is ready to teach us. With even a little intuitive wisdom we will be able to see clearly through the ways of the world. We will come to understand that everything in the world is a teacher. Trees and vines, for example, can all reveal the true nature of reality. With wisdom there is no need to question anyone, no need to study. We can learn from Nature enough to be enlightened, because everything follows the way of Truth. It does not diverge from Truth.”

Many Buddhist monks such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, Venerable Kim Teng, and Venerable PhraPhrachak emphasize the natural relationship between deep ecology and Buddhism. According to the Vietnamese monk Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh:

“Buddhists believe that the reality of the interconnectedness of human beings, society and Nature will reveal itself more and more to us as we gradually recover—as we gradually cease to be possessed by anxiety, fear, and the dispersion of the mind. Among the three—human beings, society, and Nature—it is us who begin to effect change. But in order to effect change we must recover ourselves, one must be whole. Since this requires the kind of environment favorable to one’s healing, one must seek the kind of lifestyle that is free from the destruction of one’s humanness. Efforts to change the environment and to change oneself are both necessary. But we know how difficult it is to change the environment if individuals themselves are not in a state of equilibrium.”

We must protect ourselves in order to protect the environment. We protect ourselves by opposing selfishness with generosity, ignorance with wisdom, and hatred with loving kindness. The essence of Buddhism is selflessness, mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom. We practice Buddhist meditation, which teaches us to be aware of the consequences of our actions, including those that are harmful to the environment. Buddhist meditation is centred on mindfulness and clear comprehension. When we are mindful of each and every step, we can achieve peace.

Buddhist thought as a form of religious ecology or ecological religion

There are three scenarios in which the connection between Buddhist values and the natural world might be examined:

1. Nature as a teacher
2. The spiritual power of nature
3. Using nature as a way of life

1. Nature as a teacher

Buddha emphasised the need of respecting all living things and the environment. Living simply enables one to recognise the interdependence of all life and live in harmony with all beings. In order to live simply, we must learn to be open to our surroundings and relate to the world with awareness and receptive perception. It permits us to take pleasure without possessing and to profit from one another without coercion. The Buddha, however, was not a romantic idealist. He also observed and

understood that all living things experience pain. He observed creatures battling for survival in a dangerous environment. As one lone figure ploughed the earth to reap the harvest, he witnessed death and dread, strong people taking advantage of the weak, and the destruction of countless of living things. As Ajahn Chah has written:

“Take trees for example ... first they come into being, then they grow and mature, constantly changing, until they finally die as every tree must. In the same way, people and animals are born, grow and change during their lifetimes until they eventually die. The multitudinous changes which occur during this transition from birth to death show the Way of Dharma. That is to say, all things are impermanent, having decay and dissolution as their natural condition”. (Buddha-Nature)

Nature, like us, is not self-contained and unchanging. Nature's very essence is change. In the words of Stephen Batchelor:

“We each believe we are a solid and lasting self rather than a short-term bundle of thoughts, feelings and impulses”. (The Sands of the Ganges)

Buddha instilled in us the values of simplicity, calm, and respect for the flow of life as it occurs naturally. Everything has an impact on everything else in this realm of energies. Trees have an impact on the climate, the soil, and the creatures in nature, and similarly, the climate has an impact on the trees, the soil, the animals, and so on. Since water and air are both essential to life, the ocean, sky, and air are all connected and dependent upon one another.

Buddhism causes one to lose the sense that their existence is so much more significant than everyone else's. As "progress" and consumerism increase, the ideas of sticking to one's ego, the value of the individual and the emphasis on self are becoming more prevalent in the East. We frequently label and compartmentalize things instead of viewing them as a continuous, unbroken whole. We waste resources, do not replenish them, and forget that Buddha gained his "knowledge from nature" instead of viewing nature as our great teacher. We can understand the need to shift from an attitude of dominating nature to an attitude of working with nature if we begin to see nature as our friend and cherish it. At that point, we will begin to realise that we are an integral part of all existence rather than viewing ourselves as in charge of it.

2. The spiritual power of nature

Acarya Shantiveda in eighth-century India, dwelling in nature was obviously preferable to living in a monastery or town:

*“When shall I come to dwell in forests
Amongst the deer, the birds and the trees,
That say nothing unpleasant
And are delightful to associate with.”*

(A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life)

Patrul Rinpoche, one of the greatest Tibetan Buddhist teachers of the nineteenth century, writes:

*“Base your mind on the Dharma,
Base your Dharma on a humble life,
Base your humble life on the thought of death,*

Base your death on a lonely cave.” (The Words of My Perfect Teacher)

The Buddha advocated using the benefits of the forest to maintain the harmony of nature. The existence of natural harmony, balance, morality and ecology depends on the survival of the forest. Buddhist teachers and gurus have often emphasised the value of living in harmony with nature, respecting all living things, scheduling time to meditate, leading a simple life and using nature as a spiritual force. Buddha emphasised the importance of the four unbounded virtues of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity (impartiality). Our true nature is often dulled by the massive sensory impact unavoidable in modern urbanised living in the fast and furious pace of the twentieth century. Having few activities and distractions while living close to nature is a very healing experience. Learning to trust oneself and to be more of a friend than a judge cultivates a lightness of being. The sound of animals, the texture of trees, the subtle changes in the forest and land, the subtle changes in your own mind all point to the truth of the concept of impermanence.

3. Using nature as a way of life

The Buddha praised frugality as a virtue in and of itself. Skilful living reduces waste, and we should recycle as much as possible. Buddhism promotes a simple, gentle and non-aggressive attitude towards nature—reverence for all forms of nature must be developed. The teachings of the Buddha were illustrated by natural phenomena. The plant and animal kingdoms are treated in his stories as a part of our heritage, even as a part of ourselves. As Krishnamoorthi said, “We are the world, the world is us.”

We might realise that the actual solution to the environmental catastrophe starts with us if we examine ourselves and the kind of lives we are leading. Unhappiness comes from craving and greed while serenity and happiness come from simplicity, moderation and the middle path, which leads to liberation. There is never enough in the universe to really please us and give us complete satisfaction and contentment and no government can meet all of our aspirations for security. As a result, we constantly seek to acquire more material belongings. But Buddhism frees us from the individualist mentality and its shackles of materialism and consumerism. We can start to experience inner peace and harmony with people around us when we work to overcome greed and desire. The Buddha's teachings and Dharma reflections speak about life as it is in practice. In particular, to be attentive means to be open, receptive, sensitive and not attached to anything in particular, but rather to be able to fix on things depending on what is required at the moment.

We might be able to coexist with nature without upsetting its balance or disrupting the cycle of life if we learn to behave morally and refrain ourselves from killing, stealing, or engaging in immoral sexual behaviour. We can feel closer to nature by choosing jobs that don't damage other creatures, by refraining from using or trafficking in arms and by avoiding meat, alcohol, etc. Our minds are so busy and active that we rarely give ourselves a chance to slow down and become conscious of our thoughts, sensations and emotions, and to completely experience the present. We need to live in peace and harmony with nature, as the Buddha instructed us to do, but we must begin with ourselves. If we want to save the earth, we must look for a new ecological order, consider how we live and then cooperate for the common good. Without cooperation, there will be no solution to our problems. We may reduce much of the suffering in the world by letting go of self-centeredness, sharing money with the needy, taking responsibility for ourselves and committing to a simpler way of life. As the Indian

philosopher Nagarjuna said, “*Things derive their being and nature by mutual dependence and are nothing in themselves.*”

Breathing in, I know I'm breathing in.

Breathing out, I know

as the in-breath grows deep,

the out-breath grows slow.

Breathing in makes me calm.

Breathing out makes me ease.

With the in-breath, I smile.

With the out-breath, I release.

Breathing in, there is only the present moment

Breathing out is a wonderful moment.

(From a poem by the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh)

Conclusion

We can find solace and stability in nature. Buddhism is best practiced in unspoiled natural settings, typically remote areas where the natural energies are calm. Karma serves as the foundation for comprehending almost everything within Buddhism. The basis of Buddhist ethical understanding is karma, which is the causal web of intentional, mental and physical deeds. Ahimsa, the value of non-harming and reverence for life, is the cornerstone of Buddhist karma-based ethics. This refers to respect for all forms of life on the planet, especially sentient life, not just for human beings. As one's thoughts become pure, so do their deeds eventually. As a consequence, one's new mental state results in more enlightened acts with regard to Nature and more enlightened influence on others about Nature. Mental attitudes that are discordant with or detrimental to Nature also dissolve. In fact, action has an impact on thought. Our activities purify and enlighten our brains as we behave more responsibly toward life and Nature. We shall act in a more ethical and environmentally friendly manner if we take into consideration the effects of our actions. Buddhist nuns and monks swear to uphold moral principles that forbid harming environment. There are pledges for preserving the purity of water, for refrain from killing any living thing on the planet including insects, birds and animals, for avoiding forest fires, and taking care of trees. Buddhist monastic communities are creating new methods for adapting the tenets of the Buddha's early teachings to the modern world. For instance, in the Dharma Realm Buddhist Association, monks, nuns and laypeople are getting aware of recycling, educating temple patrons and residents about the dangers of pollution and encouraging the reforestation of the grounds of temples.

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INDIVIDUAL RISK VARIABLES: KEY PREDICTOR OF DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR AMONG JUVENILES

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Abstract

In the past few years, the number of adolescents who commit serious crimes has grown by leaps and bounds all over the world. This is a big problem for social and criminal justice.

Juvenile delinquent behavior is not the manifestation of just one risk factor and can never be predicted with complete certainty; rather, it is predominantly affected by the presence of more than one risk factor, such as family, individual, environment, etc. The purpose of this article is to illustrate and explain the intersection between the effects of individual factors (Psychological Factors and Personality) and their involvement in juvenile delinquency.

Key Words: *Juvenile Delinquency, Adolescence, Individual risk variables*

Introduction

Delinquent behavior is any conduct that is absurd, wrongful, and contrary to society's normative expectations. According to sociologist William Graham Sumner (1906), deviance is a violation of existing context-specific, cultural, or societal expectations, including folkways, mores, or codified law. The delinquent youth is someone whose conduct is overly aggressive or frightening, who is actively involved in fighting with family members, seeks publicity, attempts to damage or vandalize property, steals money from individuals, and appears to hold a family in distress

Juvenile Jurisdiction defines a juvenile as "a child or youth at the age of 7 or below the upper age who has committed a crime, violated probation, or engaged in indecent or immoral conduct," with emphasis on their nature vs. nature worldwide. It is difficult to describe, quantify, explain, and prevent the perplexed phenomenon of juvenile delinquency in the modern era with numerous adverse effects on the wellbeing, societal, academic, and legal systems. Therefore, juvenile delinquency is a broad, generic term that covers a child's different forms of antisocial behavior and can be legally defined. Due to the differences in social contexts and laws of the land, juvenile delinquency is conceptualized accordingly, so it has been described separately in the various literatures where scholars have suggested that child delinquents are therefore two-to-three times more likely than adolescents whose delinquent conduct tends to begin to graduate to more serious, aggressive, brutal,

and chronic offenders in their adult age.

Individual delinquent behavior is not the manifestation of one pre-reason and can never be predicted with complete certainty rather it's predominantly affected by multiple interrelated factors such as dysfunctional families, cultures, social media, poorly maintained schools, peer scrutiny, law enforcement agencies, and juvenile justice status or other variables worldwide results of multiple interrelated factors rather affected by only one (Mbiriri et al., 2017); (Ojo, 2012). For example, the modus operandi of every crime manifests the individual personality traits of a person such as age, height, motive, perception, and so on. Risk factors or variables are generally categories in three areas, called individual, social and environmental, results in increased likelihood of criminal behavior (Jung et al., 2018); (Farrington et al., 2015).

The purpose of this article is to illustrate and explain the intersection between the effects of individual factors (Psychological Factors and Personality) and their involvement in juvenile delinquency.

Psychological Risk Factor

Understanding the Psychological Dimensions of juvenile offenders is an inescapable measure towards addressing their problems. Like adult offenders, juvenile Delinquents with extreme mental disabilities have a fundamental right to show their competence (Maniadaki et al., 2009).

In juvenile offenders, the prevalence rates of psychiatric disorders are higher than the prevalence rates seen in the overall population, and the presence of comorbid disorders is widely seen, such as emotional distress with depression (Hovey et al., 2017); (Colins et al., 2010); (Wasserman et al., 2003). According to study findings in Europe, a high proportion of juvenile offenders with Mental Health disorders in custody have been identified, ranging from 69% to 100%. (Hovey et al., 2017).

Comparative studies between delinquents and non-delinquents have indicated a higher incidence of internalizing symptoms (anxiety, depression) relative to externalizing symptoms (aggressiveness, law, breakdown, hyperactivity) among adolescent offenders in correctional facilities (Jurma et al., 2014).

Depression is substantially higher among juvenile offenders than among other young people. Nevertheless, depression can be predictors of antisocial behavior may pose a significant risk of involvement in property crime, violent behavior among youths (Ozkan, 2017). Several empirical findings suggest that depressive processes are not primarily responsible for offending among juvenile offenders, but that such depressed activity is correlated with a significantly impaired history of victimization (Hall et al., 2017).

Anxiety has also been related to delinquency and criminal behaviour. Similarly, violent behavior is inexorably related to subsequent psychological distress, so it would be expected that depression and anxiety would also be exacerbated by measures that prevent violence (Jolliffe et al., 2019).

When committing crimes, a staggering number of delinquents express utter emotionlessness. (Lance, 2003). Previous research investigated the advantages and

pro-social behaviour of emotional intelligence but paid less attention to how emotional intelligence might have unfavorable and detrimental effects (Austin & O'Donnell, 2013; Hyde & Grieve, 2018). Emotional intelligence (EI) is conceptualized as "the capacity to detect and identify one's own and other people's emotional states and to integrate this information to influence one's thoughts and behavior" (Davis & Nichols, 2016). A review of previous research found a link between low EQ and antisocial behaviour such as violence, hostility, substance abuse, and antisocial attitudes (Garca-Sancho et al., 2017); empathy (Milojevi et al., 2016); poor mentalization (Fonagy et al., 1997), impulsivity, and sensation seeking (Gomà-i-Freixanet, 1995).

Research suggests that adolescents who exhibited cognitive impairment at an extremely young age were more likely to suffer from impulsive behavior, responding without foresight and planning to sensations, impaired self-control, lack of tenacity, failure to withhold sexual satisfaction, attention problems, lack of concentration (Farrington, 2009); (Moeller et al., 2001). In fact, (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990) Criminality's general theory posits that psychosis is a central key of delinquent predisposition, and is supposed to continue in later periods of life. In risk-taking behavior, highly impetuous youth and teenagers are more frequently involved than moderately reckless Adults (Stanford et al., 1996).

Earlier Studies also postulates that Conduct disorder is a pervasive psychological disorder in juvenile offenders, who tend to commit more violent acts and show more cognitive impairment than defendants who have not had conduct disorder and openly present in comorbidity with substance abuse disorder, mood disorder, and ADHD (Choi et al., 2017).

Similarly, the co-occurrence of other diseases, such as alcoholism, personality problems, and mostly ADHD, is an added factor (Biederman et al., 1999) and the association or resemblance between ADHD and bipolar disorder in adolescents is causing significant concern.

Psychopathic Personality trait

Psychopathic traits as a peculiar attribute of seriousness and resilience for child and youth conduct difficulties. A prominent role in the coherent hellish experience of Western civilization has long been practiced by psychopaths. 'They are' callous'" intraspecies beast of prey" and remorseless to others even to those who are relatively close to them. In the conflation of a much more severe psychiatric subgroup of socially incompetent young people, psychopathy has become notable.

In their childhood and adolescence, teenagers with extreme psychopathic characteristics begin their criminal behavior, perpetrate pettier misdemeanors, are far more likely to use weapons and witness real evil against their targets (Pechorro et al., 2014). In contrast to perpetrators without such characteristics, more interpersonal violence higher percentages of re-offending, and a smaller ratio between discharge and recidivism was substantially correlated with psychopathic features in criminals.

A constellation of behavioral (e.g. impulsivity, irresponsibility), interpersonal (e.g. coercion, deception, egocentricity), affective (e.g. lack of empathy, remorse, or guilt), and antisocial (e.g. weak anger management, severe criminal behaviour) traits identifies the psychopathy concept. For example, youngsters with higher

psychopathic characteristics, for example, engage in violent acts earlier in life, are referred to the justice system earlier in life, and indulge in much more delinquent acts (Pechorro et al., 2014). Young people who manifest more extreme manifestations of these characteristics are known to commit an unprecedented number of crimes, are more susceptible to violent violence, appear unfazed by the brutal repercussions of their actions, and are more likely to re-offend or resist recovery rehabilitation initiatives (Blair et al., 2001); (Forth & Burke, 1998).

Callous-unemotional (CU) psychopathic personality traits (i.e. Lack of conscience and remorse) have been shown to substantially enhance the prediction of antisocial activity and suggest that adolescent aggressive and risk-taking behaviors are associated with inability in adolescence to regulate emotions and emotionally induced behavior's (Aucoin, 2006). Male youth offenders were found to be less precise and similarly juvenile sex offenders to be less specific about their emotions in recognizing their emotional states, and less capable of overcoming poor moods and prolonging good ones (Savitsky&Czyzewski, 1978). The Juvenile offenders struggled to manage their rage and were born in emotionally disengaged families (Moriarty et al., 2001).

Conclusion

Juvenile delinquency is adequately conceptualized because of the disparity in social environments and laws of the country, therefore various studies indicated that child delinquents are thus two to three times more likely than adolescents whose delinquent activity appears to engage in more extreme violent, brutal, and persistent offenders in their adult age.

As the aforementioned official statistics and perspectives lead us to some discomfoting conclusions about the nature of delinquency as it relates to a broad spectrum of risk and protective factors and when addressing an individual's risk factors, youth involved in multiple crimes such as sexual assault, murder, and theft; substance abuse may be more receptive to strategies and interventions. Furthermore, individual variables play a vital role in the advancement of understanding for self-identity and a sense of justice, rationale, adoption of adult offender peer models, and the quest for their dysfunctional personality models.

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A STUDY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN INDIAN UNIVERSITIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JAPANESE AND FRENCH LANGUAGE

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Abstract

This research paper aims to study the current status and future prospects of foreign language learning in Indian universities, with a special focus on the Japanese and French languages. The research methodology adopted for this study involved conducting short surveys with professors from various Foreign Languages Universities in India. The surveys covered a range of questions related to the availability of language courses, the quality of teaching, the relevance of the languages in the Indian context, and the prospects of students pursuing these languages in terms of career opportunities. The survey showed that Japanese and French are popular foreign languages in India due to economic and cultural reasons. However, the quality of language courses and teaching in Indian universities is inadequate, which makes it challenging for learners to improve their skills. Policymakers, educators and students need to work towards improving the availability and quality of language courses, especially for Japanese and French, to meet the growing demand and support the country's global connections. The study emphasizes the need for multilingualism recognition in a rapidly changing world.

Key Words: *Foreign language learning, Japanese and French languages, Availability, language courses*

Overview of Language Education in India

Foreign language education in India dates back to ancient times, with Sanskrit being taught to foreigners as early as the 6th century BCE and later, Persian and Arabic became important languages of trade and scholarship and were taught in Indian centers of learning. Under British colonial rule, English was introduced as the language of administration and education, which led to its widespread adoption as a second language and domination in foreign language education in India. The Present day, India's language education system has traditionally focused on Hindi and English, but now there is a growing recognition of the importance of learning other languages due to India's diverse linguistic heritage and globalization. Foreign language education in India is inconsistent with varying levels of language proficiency among students and teachers and differing availability of language courses across universities. Although the National Education Policy 2020 emphasizes

multilingualism and encourages the teaching of regional languages, more work needs to be done to make language education in India accessible and of high-quality.

India's focus on promoting Indian languages and culture after independence declined in the teaching of foreign languages, but recent years have seen an increased recognition of the importance of multilingualism and learning foreign languages, especially for trade and diplomacy. Today, foreign language education in India is offered in a range of institutions, from primary schools to universities and covers a variety of languages, including French, German, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, among others. Despite the challenges of developing language education in a multilingual and diverse country like India, there are efforts underway to improve language education and promote a more inclusive and globally connected India.

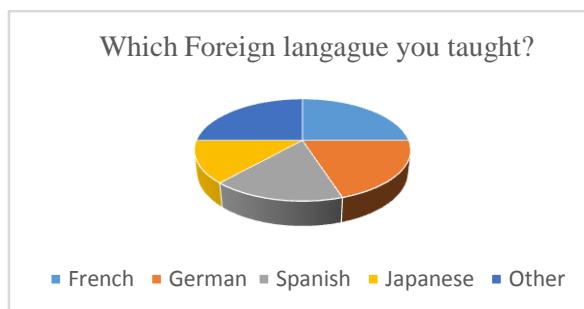
Research Methodology

A discussion was conducted among 100 Foreign Languages Faculties from various Indian University with the help of a short survey to determine the current status and future prospects of foreign languages in Indian universities. Special attention was given to the discussion of Japanese and French languages through specific questions.

Result and Discussion

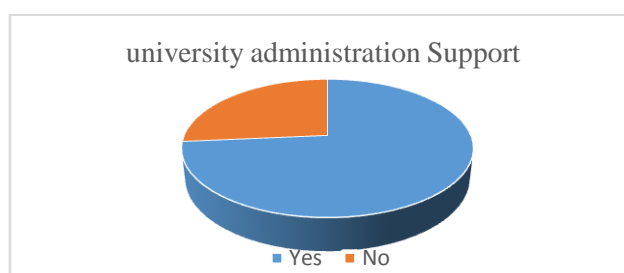
Survey Result of Close ended Questions

1. What foreign language you taught in your university?



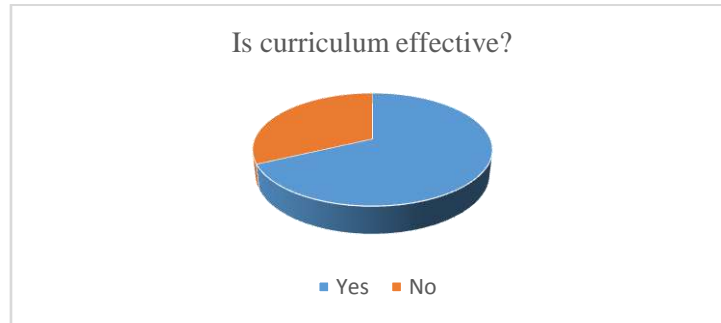
The foreign languages taught in the university are French, German, and Spanish, and Japanese, and others, with 30%, 24%, 20%, 16%, and 30% of teachers respectively.

2. Do you believe that foreign language education is important for Indian students?



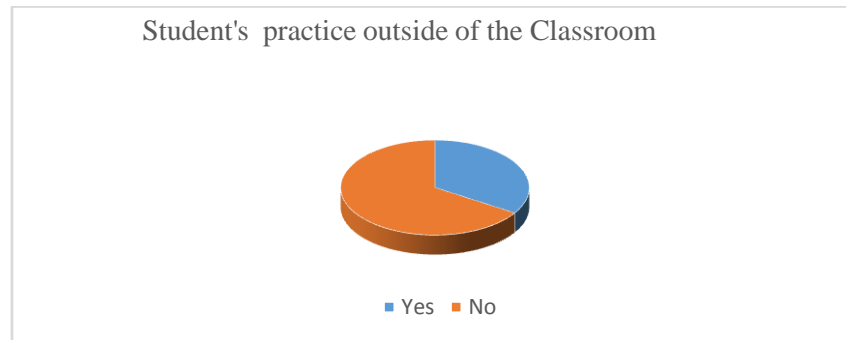
The 78% of the foreign faculty agree that foreign language teaching is important, while the remaining percentage hold the opposite view.

3. Do you believe that the current curriculum for foreign languages courses is effective?



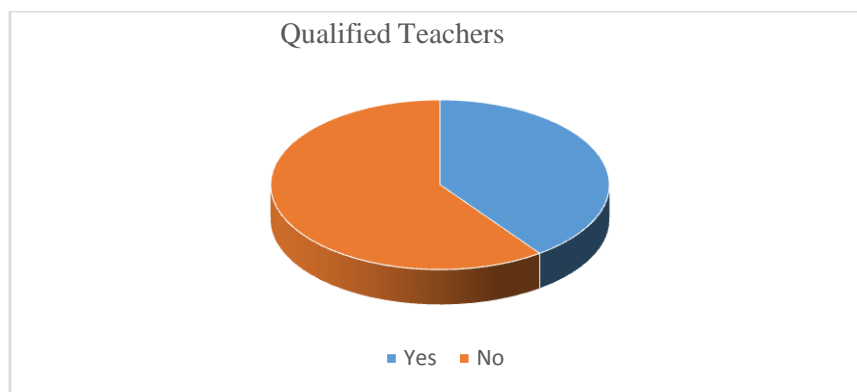
The majority (68%) of the foreign faculty members believe that the current curriculum for foreign language courses is effective, whereas the remaining percentage holds the opposite view.

4. Do you think that there are enough opportunities for students to practice and use their foreign language skills outside of the classroom?



According to a survey, a significant portion (66%) of foreign faculty members holds the belief that students do not have opportunities to practice and apply their foreign language skills beyond the classroom. Conversely, the remaining percentage holds an opposing view.

5. Do you feel that there are enough trained and qualified teachers for teaching Foreign Language in Indian universities?



Based on a survey, a considerable proportion (60%) of foreign faculty members believe that there is a shortage of trained and qualified teachers for teaching foreign languages in Indian universities. On the other hand, the remaining percentage holds a contrasting viewpoint.

Discussion on Open-ended Questions

Comparison of Language Learning in Indian Universities and Abroad

Discussion: Both Indian universities and foreign institutions have strengths and weaknesses in language learning. Indian universities excel in emphasizing multilingualism and have a strong understanding of the cultural and social context of languages which can be advantageous for learners. However, Indian universities often face a shortage of resources, such as well-trained teachers, modern teaching methods and up-to-date learning materials, which can hinder the level of proficiency among learners and limit available courses.

In contrast, foreign institutions typically have a more advanced infrastructure with modern teaching methods, technology and a wider range of resources that can lead to higher levels of proficiency and greater course specializations. Foreign institutions may lack the cultural and social context that is essential to understand the nuances and subtleties of languages and may not offer courses in the specific dialects or regional variations that are relevant to Indian learners.

Analysis of the popularity of Japanese and French language learning in India

Discussion: Japanese and French have become two of the most popular foreign languages for learners in India in recent years, driven by a range of economic and cultural factors. The strong economic ties between India and Japan have led to a growing demand for professionals who can speak Japanese and navigate the cultural nuances of doing business in Japan. At the same time, the popularity of Japanese popular culture, including anime and manga, has helped to generate interest in the language among Indian learners. French is also popular due to its status as an official language in many countries, making it important for trade and diplomacy. Additionally, French culture has a strong influence in India, particularly in the fields of fashion, cuisine and the arts.

The availability of language courses and programs in India has contributed to the popularity of Japanese and French with many universities and private institutions now offering courses in these languages, as well as opportunities for students to study abroad in Japan or France. However, challenges still exist in language learning in India including lack of resources such as well-trained teachers, modern teaching methods and up-to-date learning materials. Furthermore, the emphasis on English as a second language can hinder learners' ability to practice and improve their skills in other languages.

Despite these challenges, the growing popularity of Japanese and French language learning in India reflects the country's increasing global connections and the recognition of the importance of multilingualism in a rapidly changing world. However, more support and investment are needed to further the development of language education in India and overcome the existing barriers to language learning.

Cultural and economic factors contributing to the popularity of Japanese and French language learning in India

Discussion: The popularity of Japanese and French language learning in India has cultural and economic roots. Understanding these factors is crucial to gaining insight into why these languages have become so popular in India. The cultural influence of Japan and France in India has contributed to the popularity of their languages. Japanese pop culture and French cuisine, fashion and architecture have generated interest in learning these languages. French is also an important language for trade and diplomacy as it is an official language in many countries around the world. The growing economic ties between India, Japan and France have played a significant role in the popularity of these languages as well. Japanese companies have invested heavily in India and French businesses have significant investments in key sectors. However, there are significant challenges that must be addressed, such as lack of resources, including trained teachers and modern teaching methods. Additionally, the emphasis on English as a second language in India can make it difficult for learners to find opportunities to practice and improve their language skills. To ensure that Indian learners have access to high-quality language resources and opportunities, these challenges must be addressed. By doing so, India can continue to strengthen its cultural and economic ties with Japan and France and prepare its citizens for success in the global economy.

Teaching methodologies and pedagogy for foreign Languages instruction in Indian universities

Discussion: Foreign language instruction in Indian universities has undergone significant changes in recent years, with traditional teaching methods giving way to more communicative approaches that focus on real-world language use. Task-based, project-based, and content and language integrated learning (CLIL) are now commonly used to engage students in authentic language use and integrate language learning with other areas of study. Technology is also playing an increasingly important role, with digital resources enhancing language learning experiences. These developments are creating more engaging and effective language learning experiences for students in India, as pedagogy and teaching methodologies continue to evolve in response to changing theories and advancements in technology.

The role of technology in foreign language learning in Indian universities

Discussion: The integration of digital resources and tools has played a significant role in foreign language learning in Indian universities, providing learners with access to authentic language resources and facilitating communication and collaboration. However, there are also concerns about technology's potential to be a distraction that may undermine the importance of human interaction and exacerbate existing disparities in access to language learning resources. Therefore, language instructors should carefully consider the potential benefits and drawbacks of technology in language learning and strive to strike a balance between the use of technology and traditional teaching methods to ensure that it supports rather than hinders language learning outcomes.

Challenges faced by Indian students in learning foreign languages, with especial focus on Japanese and French

Discussion: Indian students learning foreign languages, such as Japanese and French, face a range of challenges that are both unique to India's educational system and cultural context and some are experienced by language learners worldwide. The primary challenge for Indian students is the limited exposure to the target language outside of the classroom due to the widespread use of English in India. Additionally, there is a shortage of qualified language instructors and teaching resources in many Indian universities and cultural differences and language-specific linguistic difficulties can also pose challenges. However, Indian students can overcome these challenges by using various language learning strategies and resources, including immersive experiences, digital resources and multimedia platforms to achieve success in their language learning endeavors.

The employment prospects for Indian students proficient in Japanese and French language

Discussion: Indian students who possess fluency in Japanese and French can expect to have promising job prospects in both domestic and international markets. They can work as translators and interpreters catering to the high demand for these services. Many multinational corporations in India require employees who can communicate in these languages to conduct business with counterparts in Japan or France. Proficiency in Japanese and French can also lead to opportunities in tourism, hospitality, education and government agencies that have business or diplomatic relations with Japan or France. As the demand for proficiency in these languages is likely to increase in the future, Indian students investing in developing their language skills can secure a prosperous future.

Future prospects and recommendations for foreign language education in Indian universities with a focus on Japanese and French

Foreign language education in Indian universities has made significant progress, but there is still much to be done to improve proficiency especially in languages like Japanese and French. The future prospects for these languages are promising as proficiency in them will provide students with a competitive advantage in the job market and the tourism industry. To improve foreign language education in Indian universities, several recommendations can be implemented including increasing the

number of qualified language instructors, improving teaching materials and resources, offering study abroad and language exchange programs, fostering collaboration with universities in Japan and France and emphasizing practical language skills in professional settings.

To address the shortage of qualified language instructors, Indian universities should invest in recruiting more qualified instructors, especially native speakers of Japanese and French to provide students with authentic language instruction and cultural insights. Investing in the development of high-quality language teaching materials and resources such as textbooks, multimedia materials, language learning apps and online courses can enhance students' language learning experience. Offering study abroad and language exchange programs will enable students to immerse themselves in the target language and culture and gain practical experience using the language in real-world settings. Indian universities should also foster collaboration with universities in Japan and France to provide students with access to a wider range of language learning opportunities and resources. Finally, placing greater emphasis on the practical application of language skills in professional settings such as offering internships and job placement services, can prepare students to succeed in a globalized world. By implementing these recommendations, Indian universities can provide students with the language skills and cultural insights they need to succeed in the future.

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THE EFFECT OF VIOLENT VIDEO GAMES ON EARLY ADULTHOOD'S BEHAVIOUR

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to examine the impact of violent video games on the behavior of individuals in early adulthood, which spans from ages 18 to 40 and is a crucial period in the lifespan. We collected a sample of 32 participants using simple random sampling and lottery methods, and divided them into two groups: an experimental group consisting of hardcore gamers, and a control group consisting of individuals who usually play games. Data was collected using the Problematic Gaming Behavior Scale, and analyzed using a t-test. The results showed a significant difference between the two groups, with participants in the experimental group exhibiting more violent behavior on the questionnaire than those in the control group.

Key Words: *-Violent videogames and Adolescence behavior*

Introduction: -Video games are games that can be played on the platforms like computers, mobile phones, tablets. These are also played on XBOX and other such platforms using console or joystick. Video games initially targeted a male audience and have rapidly gained popularity since their introduction to the industry, particularly over the past decade (Harriger, J., 2012). Video games have become a source of entertainment for most of the adolescents and adults too. Many children play games of their interest and showcase their hidden talent through such games. The games studied in this research include PUBG, Valorant, Counter-Strike, Doom, Call of Duty, and Apex Legends. PUBG, also known as Player Unknown's Battlegrounds, is a mobile game series developed by Tencent Games. It is a battle royale game in which 100 players fight to be the last player standing on an 8 x 8 km island, although smaller maps and different game modes are available. (Hall, .C, 2022).

Valorant is another such violent video game which affects its audience to a greater extent. The composer of this game is Jesse Harlin and the developer is Riot Games. It was released on June 2, 2020. It is a five-versus-five team shooter game. Players pick one of Valorant's 10 unique agents in the game, each with their own unique and outstanding abilities. (Anastasio .C.D, Goslin .A, 2020). *Counter-Strike was originally a mod of the game the legendary Half-Life in 1999. In the game Half-Life people could customize certain maps according to their convenience, and it was through this*

map editor that Counter-Strike came into existence. Minh Le and Jess Cliffe are the people who made Counter-Strike one of the most popular individual games in the world (Henningson, J, 2020).

Call of Duty is yet another series of violent video games that was first released in 2003 and has had a new installment every year. It primarily features the theme of World War and portrays the situations and lives of soldiers during that period. *Doom originally was first released on December 10, 1993, when a shareware copy was uploaded to an FTP server at the University of Wisconsin. In Doom, a player is popularly nicknamed as "Doomguy" by the community. Doom was played by an estimated 15–20 million people within the two years of its release, making popular the mod of GamePlay. This game has a first-person shooter with a background setting that mixes science fiction and horror. (Id Software, 2016).* Shooter game Apex Legends' developer is Respawn Entertainment, and it is published by renowned Electronic Arts. In Apex Legends, players form squads of two or three and choose a character with unique abilities, who is referred to as a Legend. (Thubron, 2011).

Early adulthood typically spans from the age of 18 to around 40 years old. This period is often marked by a transition from formal education to the adult life pattern of work and marriage. As individuals move away from their peer groups from adolescence, they may experience some degree of social isolation, as opportunities for social contacts outside the home may also decline. To achieve success, they must compete with others, thus replacing the friendliness of adolescence with the competitiveness of the successful adult. (Erikson, E. H., Identity: Youth and crisis. New York: Norton, 1968). The objective of this study is to explore the impact of violent video games on behaviour in adolescence. In the past, video games could only be purchased and played on personal computers, and only a few people had access to this technology. Now-a-days children have started to regularly spend a lot of time playing violent video games. It is necessary to understand how the violence in video games impacts people in real life and how their behaviour toward everything changes in this pivotal period.

Objective of the study

The objective of the present study is to study the effect of violent video games on early adulthood's behaviour.

Related Literature

This research paper studies the impact of video games on young people, specifically those aged 18-25. A descriptive study was done with the cooperation of 50 responses of male and female respondents, equally represented. It was observed that playing video games had a significant negative impact on the respondents' sleeping patterns and their ability to apply skills learned in video games to real-life situations. Video games also have had a negative impact on the respondents in certain other scenarios. (LOBO, P.A., 2020). Some studies have shown a significant positive correlation between adolescent aggressiveness and exposure to violent video games. However, the impact of this exposure is dependent on the home environment. In individuals from a benevolent home environment, exposure to violent video games had little to no impact on their level of aggressiveness. On the other hand, in individuals from a

dysfunctional family setting, exposure to violent video games had both immediate and lasting impacts, which were mediated by normative views. (Shao, R., and Wang, Y.,2019).

Research Methodology

Sampling

According to F. N. Kerlinger (2002), “Sampling is taking any portion of a population or universe, as representative of that population or universe”. In this study the simple random sampling and lottery methods were used to collect data. According to Kerlinger (1986), Simple Random sampling is that “method of drawing a portion (sample) of a population so that all possible samples of fixed size n have the same probability of being selected.” According To Kothari 2004, sample size is the number of items that must be chosen from the entire universe in order to form a sample.For the present study a sample of 32 participants was collected from different institute of Rajasthan.

Research design

Research is a collection of information or data that has been investigated using a hypothesis and has subsequently produced significant findings in a structured manner. A research design is only a structural framework for the many research methodologies and approaches that a researcher uses. Between two group research design were used in this study.

Data Collection Tool

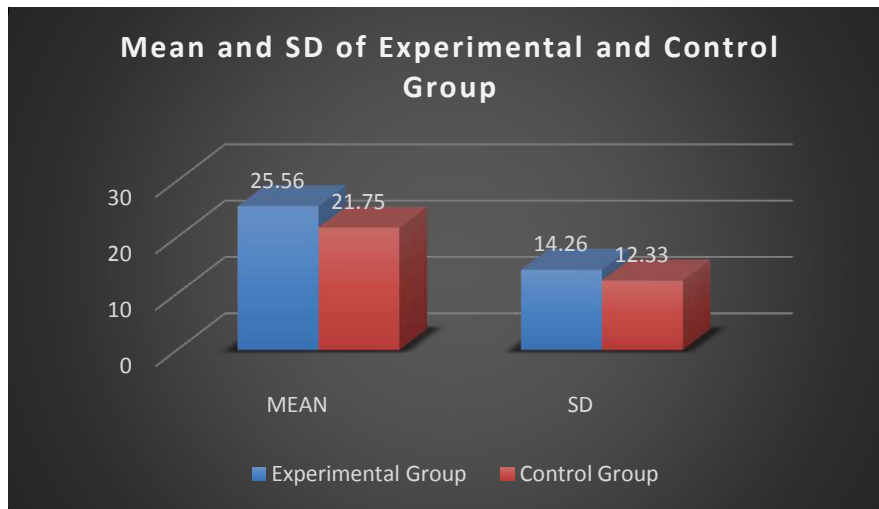
The data for this study was collected through a questionnaire that contined 19 questions related to violent video games, including their effects on an individual's behavior, daily routine, and any positive or negative psychological effects.It is to be administered on the individuals ranging from 18-40 years of age. Thequestionnaire is Problematic Gaming Behavior Scale (PGBS) taken from ‘Gaming Behaviours in Day-to-Day Life: Exploring a Problematic Gaming Behaviour Scale’ (Collie, C.N., 2018).

Statistical Tool

The t-test has been used for data analysis.

Result Table

Groups	Mean	SD	t-state	Level of Significance
Experimental Group	25.56	14.26	2.95	0.05
Control Group	21.75	12.33		



"The researcher has developed the hypothesis 'There is a significant effect of violent video games on early adulthood's behavior' for the objective of studying the impact of violent video games on early adulthood's behavior. To test this hypothesis, t-test has been used. The result indicated that t value is "2.95" and it is significant at .05 level. The mean and SD value of experimental and control group is 25.56 & 14.26 and 21.75 & 12.33 respectively. Hence the hypothesis "There is a significant effect of violent video games on early adulthood's behaviour" has been proved on the basis of t-test.

Discussion

Violent video game affects the behaviour of individual negatively. Separately and together, violent video game play and aggressive personality accounted for significant percentages of both aggressive behaviour and nonaggressive criminal behaviour. Additionally, it was found that playing violent video games was a better predictor of both types of delinquency than playing any kind of video games. The strong correlation between aggressive personality and violent video games is in line with a developmental theory in which prolonged exposure to violent video games (and other violent media) fosters the development of an aggressive personality. (Anderson, C.A., and Dill, K.E., 2015). According to studies, playing violent video games can lead to an escalation in aggressive views, thoughts, and actions over the short- and long-term. Playing violent video games can also make people less sensitive to aggressive behaviour and less likely to engage in pro-social activities like assisting others and experiencing empathy work (the ability to understand others). Individuals are more prone to exhibit aggressive behaviours, thoughts, and sentiments the longer they play violent video games. (Anderson, C.A., Shibuya, A., Ihori, N., Swing, E.L., Bushman, B.J., Sakamoto, A., Rothstein, H.R., Muniba, 2016.). According to the above-mentioned study the hypothesis "there is a significant impact of violent video games on early adulthood's behaviour" is proved.

Conclusion

This study reveals that there is a significant impact of violent video games on early adulthood's behaviour as these violent games seem to have a cognitive effect. These games affect one's behaviour negatively which results in destructive thoughts and actions. Playing violent video games influence aggression in the short term by

provoking aggressive thoughts. The player's ability to learn and use new aggressive techniques, which become increasingly available for usage during actual conflict situations, will likely have longer-term repercussions. This study shows that some individuals play violent games despite experiencing negative psychological reactions such as anger, irritability, and guilt. They use such games as a way to cope with their everyday stress and alter their mood states. According to the data collected, people's work, studies, relationships as a consequence gets affected because of violent video game.

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REVISITING THE NARRATIVE OF WOMEN'S SUPPRESSION IN ALICE WALKER'S THE COLOR PURPLE

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Abstract

*Most of Alice Walker's works are dissertations on the plight of black women and deeply ingrained patriarchal structures. This article traces the elements of women's suppression implied in Walker's *The Color Purple*, and the root cause of this suppression is due to the characters' ignorant demeanor. The article also posits an attitudinal transformation in the characters that awakens consciousness and leads to the dismantling of patriarchal structures and it also proposes certain impactful tools to eradicate patriarchal oppression.*

Keywords: *Patriarchy, Male-dominance, Womanism, Attitudinal transformation*

"He thinks man should have dominion over the Earth, which includes land and water, women, animals and children." (*The Color Purple* XV)

By quoting this line, which is the essence of the Bible's saying, Walker illustrates the position of man in the universe, where he has a free grasp on all that exists in the world, including women. In her novel, Walker discusses the idea of God, which has historically been connected with 'Man'. Walker claims that "God is 'God' Everyone knows what that means- what He...(always masculine of course)"(xv) writing this Walker presents a patriarchal viewpoint that points to a distorted understanding of the Bible.

The Color Purple, under the canopy of "Womanism," sheltered the black community without being biased against men or women. The present article analyzes the patriarchal structure of society in various spheres of life and this particular series of discrimination was continued due to the ignorance of women (characters) shown in the novel. The structure of patriarchy is not an overnight construction; rather, it is the result of long-practiced oppressions that men deliberately did to have an upper hand in society. Gerda Lerner, in her book *Creation of Patriarchy*, opines that history is the amalgamation of recorded and unrecorded events and these unrecorded events are manipulated by the male centric society. Walby defines patriarchy as "a system of social structure and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (20) and the structure was so tightly knit that women could not read the mindset behind this constructed pattern of society.

The Color Purple, begins with the exploitation of a girl child by a male character whom she believed to be her father. She is merely fourteen-years-old and is writing about her appalling experiences in letters that she addresses to God. "You better not never tell nobody but God. It'd kill your mammy,"(3) and the salutation "Dear

God”(3). She conveys the message to God that she is continuously being raped by her father. Through this, the novelist touches upon both the physical and spiritual aspects. Writing letters displays two different ideas: firstly, that God is the only medium to convey one’s indescribable feelings, and secondly, that writing letters is such a powerful weapon that it can reduce one’s mental stress. Through her letters, Celie writes about her repressed feelings which she never dares to express to anyone. Later on, Celie gives birth to a boy named Adam and a girl named Olivia, whom Alphonso takes away. Suppression of a woman by another woman is also observable in the novel; when Celie’s mother asks her about the father of her children, Celie’s silence makes her mother irritated, as Celie writes, “ My mam dead. She die screaming and cussing”(4). Celie, who is now being tamed by Alphonso, is now forced to enter a loveless marriage with Mister, and here Celie experiences the same matrix of abuse. Mister is another character who continues the chain of suppression and abuse that was first initiated by Alphonso. Celie again experiences an unhappy conjugal life where she is treated merely as a sex object for Mister. Whereas after leaving her home, Celie is worried about her younger sister, Nettie, whom she thinks is not safe in the company of her father. Nettie runs away from Alphonso and takes shelter at Mister’s cottage. Mister is attracted to Nettie and his act compels Celie to keep her sister away from him; therefore, she gives Nettie the address of a black woman whom she first met in a store. Nettie leaves Celie with the promise that she will keep on writing letters to Celie. The saga then continues with the entry of Harpo, who has an affair with a young girl named Sofia. Later on, he marries Sofia. Harpo has the same tendency toward women as his father. He tries to tame and mind Sofia, as his father used to do with Celie. Sofia never surrenders her will in front of Harpo, as Celie writes, “What he do that for? She reach down and grab a piece of stove wood and whack him cross the eyes... She throw him over her back. He fall bam up gainst the stove” (37) Celie was accustomed to Mister’s mistreatment. Earlier it is noticeable that Celie instigates Harpo to beat Sofia but later she favours Sofia. The power of sisterhood is traced here, when Sofia’s conversation with Celie enables her to revolt against Mister.

The novel then unfolds the character of Shug Avery, who is Mister’s past love. Celie feels jealous of Mister and Shug’s relationship yet she nurses Shug when she is ill and with the passage of time, they become friends. Later, their friendship turns into sexual intimacy and their sexual intimacy awakens Celie’s consciousness. It is here that the traces of lesbianism are found, which leads to the dismemberment of patriarchal structure and enables Celie to revolt against patriarchal structure. The mirror scene, plays a vital role in the evolution of Celie’s character. It happens for the first time with Celie when she becomes aware of her sexual organs by seeing them in the mirror that Shug gave her. Celie experiences the orgasm for the first time and it gives birth to a transformed Celie. The presence of Shug not only nurtures Celie’s consciousness but also saves her from domestic violence. Shug helps Celie locate those letters which were hidden by Mister. The letter unravels the mystery that Alphonso was their stepfather. By the end of the novel, Alphonso dies, leaving his property to Celie and Nettie. Both the sisters are united and enjoy financial freedom. Harpo and Mister are now changed and they cooperate in household chores. It is quite noticeable that Celie invests her free time in sewing quilts and pants. Later, Celie gives her hobby a concrete shape by establishing an unisex enterprise called Folkspant, Unlimited, which is the symbol of equality, as Celie writes, “Anybody can wear them.”(246). Shug’s love for Celie proves to be a helping tool that enables Celie to know about her anatomy and transforms Celie into a strong woman who establishes her own kingdom.

By the end of the book, Celie restores all her lost esteem ,prestige and most importantly her lost body which was appropriated by the male character from the very beginning of the novel and recovers herself from a toxic relationship.

Alphonso is the stepfather of Celie. It is through the character of Alphonso that the chain of women's suppression and male dominance gets started. He seduces Celie and threatens her not to tell anyone. Unaware of the situation and what is being done with her, Celie indulges herself in household activities and takes care of the kids. It is male dominance that has suppressed women to such an extent that she has to tolerate whatever is going on. Celie considers herself an ugly and illiterate girl. Though she is performing her household duties perfectly yet she is mistreated. Society believes that women should be under tutelage until they die. Celie, in the beginning of the novel, is tamed by her stepfather and then by Mister but as the novel proceeds, the reader sees an attitudinal transformation in Celie's character and her writing, respectively. Through the character of Celie, the novelist dismantles the patriarchal structure of society and breaks its rules and regulations. Celie is doing all those household chores for which she is not being paid. This is the socially constructed structure of society which is not only traceable in the novel but also outside the novel. On a sociocultural level, this structure is also visible. Alphonso expects that Celie should behave in a predictable way. Alphonso, who is the typical example of a male centric society, forces Celie to marry Mister. That shows the mentality that Celie's destiny is decided by the male characters presented in the novel. The protagonist has accepted this subjugation and oppression as a part of her daily life, as she has only seen what she has been shown by society.

Harpo, the son of Mr., gives a crystal-clear image of a male's mentality about women. He speaks to Celie about Sofia, "Well how you specs to make her mind? Wives are like children. You have to let 'em know who got the upper hand. Nothing can do that better than a good sound beating" (35), Sofia is a strong character, as presented by the novelist. At first glance, it seems that by birth she is a strong character but after deep analysis of the text, it becomes clear that Sofia too has faced many problems. She says, "All my life I had to fight" (39) Sofia loves Harpo and she is fully committed to him but not at the cost of her freedom. She opposes him badly; in fact, she beats him badly when Harpo tries to tame her. Sofia says, "A girl child isn't safe in family of men"(39). Upbringing plays a vital role in the evolution of a personality and discrimination starts in the family at its primary level. Celie's illusion about female patterned behaviour is shattered by Sofia. Harpo tries to tame Sofia but fails in his mission, he feels ashamed of his masculinity. Shug Avery, another black female character of Walker, deconstructs the patriarchal structure by awakening Celie's consciousness. Her consciousness transforms her into a strong, confident business owner who establishes her own company and enjoys financial freedom.

Conclusion

It can be stated that the primary factor of women's suppression is their ignorant behaviour. *The Color Purple* is the tale of the journey of a black American woman who moves from ignorance to consciousness and this consciousness leads to dismantling the structure of patriarchy. In fact, the novel is a medium of catharsis for every black woman. Celie's statement in the very beginning of the novel, where she is told by someone else about her menstrual cycle, as Celie writes, "A girl at church say you git big if you bleed every month. I don't bleed no more"(7) shows her complete ignorance about herself and ends up with the awareness of her body parts as she says,

“It mine, I say. Where the button” (75) this awareness transforms Celie completely and she breaks all the chains and enjoys her freedom by creating an atmosphere of equality. Thus, it can be said that the self-awareness and consciousness of women can reduce patriarchal oppression to some extent.

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भारत चीन सम्बन्ध : समकालीन परिप्रेक्ष्य में

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शोध आलेख सार

भारत पहला ऐसा गैर समाजवादी देश था जिसने 01 अप्रैल, 1950 को चीन जनवादी गणराज्य के साथ राजनीतिक सम्बन्ध स्थापित किये, उस समय नेहरू जी प्रधानमंत्री थे और उन्होंने 1954 में चीन का दौरा किया। भारत ने हमेशा चीन पर भरोसा दिखाया पर चीन कभी भी उस विश्वास पर खरा नहीं उतरा, 1954 में नेहरू चीन की यात्रा करते हैं बदले में चाइना 1962 युद्ध जैसे संघर्ष की स्थिति पैदा कर भारत के विश्वास पर गहरा अघात करता है। इसके बाद भी भारत चाइना सहित अपने सभी पड़ोसी देशों के साथ एक विनम्र सम्बन्ध स्थापित करने का प्रयास करता है। चाइना के अघात को भूलते हुए 1988 में तत्कालीन प्रधानमंत्री श्री राजीव गांधी ने द्विपक्षीय सम्बन्धों में सुधार का प्रयास किया इसी तरह 1993 में प्रधानमंत्री श्री नरसिम्हा राव ने चीन की मात्रा कर वास्तविक नियंत्रण रेखा पर अमन चैन के लिए करार पर हस्ताक्षर किया यह और बात है कि आज तक वास्तविक नियंत्रण रेखा पर अमन चैन स्थिरता जैसा कुछ वास्तविक प्रतीक नहीं होता देखा जैसे तो दोनों के प्रमुखों ने एक दूसरे देशों की यात्रा करके यह जरूर प्रयास किया कि दोनों देशों से सम्बन्ध सुधरे पर वास्तविक दौर पर सम्बन्ध सुधार वैसे ही रहा जैसे 1954 में नेहरू जी ने चीन की यात्रा कि बदले ने चीन ने 1962 का युद्ध भारत को उपहार में दिया पर समय बदल चुका है भारत की स्थिति किसी भी पहलू पर कैसी है ये तो चाइना अच्छी तरह जानता है लेकिन उसके बाद भी चीन ऐतिहासिक गलतियों को दोहराता है, चाइना जहाँ अपनी ऐतिहासिक गलतियाँ बार-बार करता है भारत वही अपनी-अपनी अच्छाई की नीतियाँ उसके साथ बार-बार दोहराता है। यदि दोनों देशों के राष्ट्र प्रमुखों की यात्रा को ध्यान दिया जाए, तो प्रधानमंत्री के तौर पर वाजपेयी जी 2003 में चीन की यात्रा करते हैं, प्रधानमंत्री वे जियाबाओ 2005 और 2010 में भारत की यात्रा करते हैं, राष्ट्रपति हू जिंताओं 2006 भारत की यात्रा की, प्रधानमंत्री मनमोहन सिंह 2008 और 2013 में चीन की यात्रा की, प्रधानमंत्री ली किचियांग ने 2013 में भारत की यात्रा की, राष्ट्रपति शी जिनपिंग ने 2014 में भारत की यात्रा की अब यहाँ देखने वाली बात है कि केवल ये सभी यात्रायें चाइना की तरफ से औपचारिक हो रही क्योंकि कि चाइना की भूमिका नियंत्रण रेखा पर आज भी वैसे ही है जैसे 1962 में था। यह भारत की अपनी शान्ति प्रियता की नीति है कि वह किसी भी बड़े संघर्ष को अपने धैर्य के चलते नाकाम कर देता है। वरना नियंत्रण रेखा पर चाइना जैसी गतिविधि को अंजाम देता है अगर भारत अपनी धैर्यता का परिचय नहीं देता वो जरूर चाइना की नकारात्मक भूमिका सीमा पर किसी बड़े संघर्ष का रूप ले लेती है।

मुख्य शब्द : शान्ति प्रियता की नीति, औपचारिक वार्ता नियंत्रण रेखा पर संघर्ष की स्थिति, भारत का सहयोगात्मक रवैया।

भारत चीन सम्बन्ध : समकालीन परिप्रेक्ष्य में

भारत चीन सम्बन्ध समकालीन परिप्रेक्ष्य में ऐतिहासिक तौर पर देखा जाए तो नेहरू जी की 1954 में चीन यात्रा प्रभावशाली नहीं कही जा सकती क्योंकि 1962 में चीन ने भारत पर आक्रमण किया जो सुनियोजित थी। फिर 1988 से जब प्रधानमंत्री राजीव गांधी ने चीन की यात्रा की तो सम्बन्धों का नया अध्याय जरूर आरम्भ हुआ उसके बाद एक सिलसिला सा शुरू हुआ समय-समय पर दोनों देशों के राष्ट्राध्यक्ष, प्रधानमंत्री एक दूसरे के देशों की यात्रा करते

दिखे। भारत चाइना सम्बन्ध में अगर कुछ सकारात्मक है तो वह यह कि दोनों देशों में व्यापारिक सम्बन्ध बहुत बड़े स्तर पर है और इस स्तर पर दोनों एक दूसरे की जरूरत है। जहाँ तक भारत की बात है तो यह भारत की नीति रही कि वह अपने पड़ोसियों के साथ सम्बन्ध को बेहतर रखने का प्रयास हमेशा करता है, पर चाइना की मानसिकता कभी भी भारत को लेकर स्पष्ट नहीं दिखी ऐसा इसलिए क्योंकि चाइना ने व्यापारिक सम्बन्धों को केवल लेन-देन के स्तर पर रखा जिसमें भावनाएं कभी शामिल नहीं किया जबकि भारत ने नेहरु काल से अब तक उसके साथ भावनात्मक रूप से जुड़ने का प्रयास किया, क्योंकि भारत इस बात को अच्छी तरह जानता है कि नियंत्रण देखा पर चाइना का सहयोग नकारात्मक है ऐसे में भारत यदि चाइना की तरह ही उससे पेश आता है तो यह दोनों देशों के नागरिकों के लिए अच्छा नहीं होगा वैसे भी आज हम जिस टाइम पीरियड में हैं विकास हमारा लक्ष्य है, प्रगति हमारा पथ है हम अपने देश के बेकसूर नागरिकों युद्ध जैसी त्रासदी नहीं दे सकते तो यहाँ भारत अपनी शान्ति प्रियता को बनाये रखने की चेष्टा 1962 से लेकर अब तक कर रहा पर चाइना का रवैया भारत को हमेशा नियंत्रण रेखा पर उकसाने वाला होता है जैसे अभी हाल के कुछ वर्षों में चाइना का रवैया नियंत्रण रेखा पर बेहद नकारात्मक रहा। जून 2020 गलवान में भारत व चीन के बीच संघर्ष की जो स्थिति सामने आयी उसमें हमारे देश भारत के 20 सैनिक मारे गये जबकि चाइना कुछ भी स्पष्ट करने से बचता रहा फिर कई महीनों बाद उसने यह स्पष्ट किया कि उसके भी सैनिक मारे गये हैं जबकि गलवान संघर्ष से पहले दोनों देशों के बीच सैन्य स्तर पर कई वार्ताएं हुई पर चाइना का रवैया कभी भी इस चीजों को लेकर स्पष्ट नहीं रहा है। अतः संघर्ष जैसी स्थिति पैदा हुई। कई अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर भारत ने चाइना के नकारात्मक रवैये की आलोचना की, अगस्त 2022 में भारतीय विदेश मंत्री श्री जयशंकर थाईलैण्ड संयुक्त आयोग की बैठक के दौरान चाइना के व्यवहार को उन्होंने तब व्यक्त किया जब वह चुलालोंग कार्न विश्वविद्यालय में, इण्डियाज विजन ऑफ इण्डो-पैसिफिक पर व्याख्यान दे रहे थे उन्होंने कहा कि भारत चीन सम्बन्ध अत्यन्त कठिन दौर से गुजर रहा और जब तक चाइना भारत के साथ नहीं आयेगा तब तक एशियन संचुरी नहीं होगी साथ में उन्होंने यह भी कहा कि चीन सीमा पर जो भी कर रहा उससे दोनों के सम्बन्ध ठीक न होकर खराब ही हो रहे हैं। जबकि एशियन संचुरी के लिए दोनों का सम्बन्ध स्वस्थ होना आवश्यक है। इस प्रकार चाइना के हर व्यवहार को नजर-अन्दाज कर भारत चाइना को गले लगाने के लिए तत्पर दिखता है पर चीन कभी भी भारत के प्रति भावनात्मक सहयोग नहीं करता। भारत सीमा पर आतंकवाद से भी परेशान है और जब भारत ने यू0एन0 के मंच से इन आतंकियों या आतंकी समूहों को प्रतिबन्धित करने की बात की चाइना की भूमिका यहाँ भी नकारात्मक रही उसने कभी भी इस मुद्दे पर भारत का समर्थन नहीं किया कि भारत आतंकवाद से पीड़ित है इतना ही यदि भारत ने कभी किसी आतंकी विशेष का नाम भी लिया तो भी चाइना ने भारत का सहयोग नहीं किया। जबकि यहाँ उल्लेखनीय है कि चाइना के साथ भारत का सम्बन्ध मात्र व्यापारिक ही नहीं है बल्कि शैक्षिक और सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्ध भी भारत चाइना के साथ रखता है इसके बाद भी चाइना कभी भी भारत का भावनात्मक सहयोगी नहीं बन पाया। पिछले कुछ वर्षों में भारत और चीन के बीच व्यापार और आर्थिक सम्बन्धों में बहुत प्रगति हुई है। सन् 2021-22 में दोनों देशों के बीच 115 अरब डॉलर का व्यापार हुआ। इसी तरह दोनों के बीच सांस्कृतिक सम्बन्धी भी बहुत अच्छे हैं, भारत चीन के बारे में कहा जाता है कि दोनों ही समाज मात्र नहीं है वे सभ्यताएं हैं ये सटीक तौर पर नहीं कहा जा सकता कि दोनों के बीच सांस्कृतिक आदान-प्रदान कब आरम्भ हुआ लेकिन यह स्पष्ट है कि दोनों देशों के बीच सांस्कृतिक आदान-प्रदान अत्यन्त प्राचीन है इसी प्रकार दोनों देशों के बीच शैक्षिक स्तर पर भी सम्बन्ध है दोनों देशों के विद्यार्थी एक दूसरे के देश में जाकर शिक्षा ग्रहण कर रहे हैं। अब भारत की तरफ से चीन के साथ सम्बन्ध हमेशा बेहतर बनाने का प्रयास किया गया लेकिन चीन ने कभी भी भारत को अपना पूर्ण सहयोग नहीं दिया पर जैसा कि श्री जयशंकर कहते हैं कि “एशियन संचुरी के लिए यह आवश्यक है कि भारत व चीन साथ आये तो अब यह जरूरी है कि चाइना इस बात को समझे कि आपसी सहयोग में भावनात्मक ईमानदारी भी अत्यन्त आवश्यक है और इस बात को समझकर चीन भारत को सहयोग करे।

लेकिन चीन आरम्भ से ही भारत को भावनात्मक स्तर पर सहयोग नहीं किया। चीन ने भारत के किसी भी उद्देश्य को आरम्भ से ही सकारात्मक दृष्टि से नहीं देखा उसकी दृष्टि हमेशा भारत के लिए नकारात्मक रही दोनों के बीच विवाद की शुरुआत तिब्बत से होती है, जिसमें भारत की कोई गलती नहीं थी बस भारत ने चाइना की उस गलत इच्छा शक्ति का समर्थन नहीं किया जिसके चलते चाइना तिब्बत की स्वायत्ता को सीमित कर रहा था भारत कभी इस पक्ष में नहीं था कि चाइना तिब्बत के लिए नकारात्मक रहे और एक अच्छे पड़ोसी की तरह भारत ने तिब्बत का साथ दिया और यही से चाइना ने भारत पर दबाव बनाना आरम्भ किया। भारत की भूमिका हर स्तर पर चाहे पड़ोसी देशों के साथ हो या अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय देशों के साथ भारत हमेशा न्यायपूर्ण व्यवहार भी अपनाता है ये इतिहास है भारत का, जिसे चाइना आज तक नहीं समझ सका। लेकिन यह भी सत्य है कि 1962 का दौर कुछ और या आज का कुछ और है भारत सक्षम है चाइना से किसी भी स्तर पर निपटने के लिए लेकिन भारत बचता है किसी बड़े संघर्ष से क्योंकि “युद्ध भारत की प्रकृति नहीं” अहिंसा शान्ति प्रियता अपील प्रतिनिधि मण्डल, वर्ताए यह कुछ ऐसे बिन्दु है जिन पर भारत सबसे ज्यादा भरोसा करता है।

जब चीन ने तिब्बत की स्वायत्ता को पूरी तरह समाप्त कर दिया और भारत के साथ लगती उत्तरी सीमाओं पर चीनी सेना तैनात की तो भारत ने उसकी वैधानिक स्थिति को स्वीकार कर लिया उस समय के वर्तमान प्रधानमंत्री नेहरु जी ने तब कहा था “हमारे लिए महत्वपूर्ण है कि हम महान देश चीन के साथ मैत्रीपूर्ण सम्बन्ध बनाये रखें, हमारी सहानुभूति तब भी तिब्बत की जनता के साथ है, हम तिब्बत के साथ भी मैत्रीपूर्ण सम्बन्ध की इच्छा रखते हैं। नेहरु जी के इस कथन से स्पष्ट है कि भारत अपने पड़ोसियों के साथ आदर सम्मान और न्यायपूर्ण व्यवहार रखता है। भारत ने केवल चाइना की वैधानिक स्थिति को स्वीकार किया लेकिन कहीं पर भी चाइना के उस क्रूर व्यवहार का समर्थन नहीं किया जो व्यवहार चाइना तिब्बत के लिए उपयोग में ला रहा था। चाइना कहता नहीं है लेकिन उसका रवैया एशिया में हमेशा अमेरिका जैसा रहा अर्थात् जो हमारे नीति-अनीति में साथ नहीं वह हमारा दुश्मन है ये चाइना का एशिया में सोच है। चाइना अपने अर्थ बल पर पाकिस्तान, श्रीलंका, नेपाल, म्यांमार जैसे देशों को नियंत्रण ने ले रहा है पर वह अच्छी तरह जानता है कि भारत चाइना के जादुई सम्मोहन में आने वाले देश नहीं भारत किसी भी पहल पर अन्याय का साथ नहीं देता है। भारत समयानुसार चुप रह सकता है, विरोध कर सकता है पर वह अन्याय के सामने झुक नहीं सकता यह चाइना अच्छी तरह जानता है। 1999 के बाद भारत चाइना सम्बन्ध में जरूर कुछ सुधार दिखे पर वह सुधार चाइना के व्यवहार के देखते अवसरवादी व्यवहार कहा जा सकता है। भारत परमाणु परीक्षण करता है और फिर उत्पन्न तनाव को कम करने के लिए चाइना के साथ सम्बन्धों के सुधार का प्रयास करता है और तब चाइना का रूप सकारात्मक दिखता है भारत का प्रयोजन भी सफल ही रहा क्योंकि भारत ने कभी भी परमाणु परीक्षण विरोधी सन्धि पर हस्ताक्षर यह कह कर नहीं किया कि एशिया के देश या अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर जो देश परमाणु सम्पन्न है उनके समक्ष भारत अपनी सुरक्षा को लेकर कैसे आश्वस्त हो सकता है। इसलिए भारत परमाणु परीक्षण करता है और जब वह चाइना की ओर मैत्रीपूर्ण व्यवहार हेतु आगे बढ़ता है तो चाइना का रुख स्वभाविक हो जाना समय की आवश्यकता थी जैसा लगता है। समय-समय पर चीन के वक्तव्य भी उसकी अवसरवादिता को दर्शाते रहे जैसे 1999 के दौर में जब भारत चाइना से सम्बन्ध सुधार की गुजाइश कर रहा था तो उस समय चीन के विदेश मंत्री का यह कथन ध्यान देने योग्य है वह कहते हैं कि “एशिया में दो महत्वपूर्ण देश पाकिस्तान और इण्डिया है जिनसे चाइना अपने सम्बन्धों में कुछ सुधार का इच्छुक है।

वह कुटनीतिक वार्ता की वह कुछ सुधार चाहता है पूरी तरह नहीं और चाइना का यह कुछ सुधार आज तक जारी है। चाइना समान बना रहा और उन सामनों के बेचने हेतु भारत का बाजार आतुर दिखता है। जबकि ऐसा नहीं है कि चाइना भारत की शक्ति का अनुभव नहीं करता यह अनुभव बहुत अच्छी तरह करता है। बस स्वीकार नहीं करता है और उसके द्वारा भारत के रास्ते में जो रोड़े अटकाये जाते हैं उसके पीछे चाइना का केवल एक मकसद होता है

कि दुनिया भर में इण्डिया चाहे कितना भी शक्तिशाली देश हो पर एशिया में चाइना उसे कुछ नहीं समझता। यह एक प्रकार का मनोवैज्ञानिक राजनीतिक कूटनीति का प्रयोग चाइना द्वारा भारत पर किया जाता है। जबकि चाइना के इस व्यवहार का असर केवल भारत के आस-पास के देशों पर ही पड़ रहा क्योंकि वह चाइना के कर्ज की बोझ से दबे हैं और वह चाइना की हॉ में हॉ मिला रहे जबकि अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर चाइना क्या कर रहा यह सब को दिख रहा और भारत क्या कर रहा वह भी सबको दिख रहा। देखा जाए तो दोनों देशों के बीच केवल व्यापारिक सम्बन्ध ही है बाकी किसी भी तरह का सम्बन्ध दोनों देशों के बीच सकारात्मक नहीं दिखता ऐसे कई मुद्दे हैं जहाँ दोनों के बीच असहमति खुलकर आती है जैसे परमाणु परीक्षण पर रोक तथा CTBT पर हस्ताक्षर करने के मामले में असहमति उसके अलावा पाकिस्तान को चाइना जिस तरह की सहायता दे रहा केवल उसके पीछे एक ही मकसद है चाइना का कि पाकिस्तान जितना सशक्त होगा वह उतना ही भारत को परेशान करेगा पाकिस्तान द्वारा जिस प्रकार का रवैया भारत के लिए होता है उसमें चाइना का सबसे बड़ा सहयोग है। पाकिस्तान के बाद चाइना ने भारत को परेशान करने के लिए अब नेपाल का भी उपयोग कर रहा भारत के पड़ोसी देशों की जिस प्रकार की घेराबंदी चाइना कर रहा उसके पीछे उसका एकमात्र उद्देश्य भारत पर मनोवैज्ञानिक दबाव बनाना है। पाकिस्तान व नेपाल उसके इस उद्देश्य पूर्ति में बहुत सहायक हैं। चाइना द्वारा इस तरह के मानसिक दबाव के बाद भी भारत ने अपनी शान्ति प्रियता और अहिंसा के आचरण को कभी नहीं छोड़ा। अतः ऐसे कई मुद्दे आये जहाँ चाइना ने भारत के साथ सहमति व्यक्त किया हाल के दशकों में देखा जाये तो चीन ने कारगिल संघर्ष के दौरान पाकिस्तान पर पीछे हटने का दबाव बनाया था। 2004 में उसने सिक्किम को भारत का अभिन्न अंग माना और इन दशकों में दोनों को लगा कि एक दूसरे के साथ तनाव कम करने में ही भलाई, भारत तो पहले से ही इस बात को स्वीकार कर रहा हॉ चाइना जरूर इस बात को मजबूरी में स्वीकार करता है कि भारत के साथ रिश्ते ठीक करने में ही उसकी भलाई है। भारत चीन सम्बन्ध के संदर्भ में क्वाड का वर्णन भी महत्वपूर्ण हो जाता है, क्वाड जो कि चार देश अमेरिका, जापान, आस्ट्रेलिया व भारत का संगठन है जिसका प्राथमिक उद्देश्य स्वतंत्र मुक्त इंडो-पैसिफिक क्षेत्र के लिए सहयोग सुनिश्चित करना और क्वाड समूह अस्तित्व में इसलिए आता है क्योंकि काफी समय से चाइना वर्चस्ववादी नीति पर कार्य कर रहा है। अतः 2007 में क्वाड अस्तित्व में आया जो कहीं न कहीं चाइना की नीतियों को अघात करने वाला समूह है और अब चाइना अमेरिका, जापान, आस्ट्रेलिया व भारत के इस समूह के विरुद्ध चुप रहने वाला देश नहीं हो सकता क्योंकि उसे पता है कि उस पर नियंत्रण हेतु यह संगठन कार्य कर रहा। अब रही बात भारत की चाइना जब भी भारत को इस तरह के किसी में संगठन में सक्रिय होते देखता है तो वह किसी न किसी तरह भारत को उलझाने का प्रयास करता है और यह उलझाने सीमा विवाद के रूप में भी आता है। चीन क्वाड की तुलना नाटो से करता है कोविड के दौरान और उसके बाद चीन की जो विवादास्पद छवि अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर बनी विश्व के देश चीन पर लगाम लगाने की कोशिश करने लगे ऐसे में चाइना क्यों चुप बैठता उसने भी जहाँ उसे लगा वह देशों को नियन्त्रित कर सकता है उसने किया उदाहरण के तौर पर देखा जाए तो कोविड काल में अमेरिका चाइना के बीच व्यापारिक युद्ध जैसी स्थिति उत्पन्न हो गयी थी हॉ यह जरूर कि अमेरिका में नये राष्ट्रपति 'जो बाइडन' के आने के बाद दोनों देशों की आक्रमकता में कमी आयी इसी प्रकार चाइना ने भारत को भी नियन्त्रित करने का प्रयास उसी दौर में किया जब वह अमेरिका से व्यापारिक युद्ध कर रहा था तो वह भारत पर भी दबाव के मकसद में सीमा पर तनाव की स्थिति पैदा कर रहा था ये है चाइना की विध्वंसक नीतियाँ चाइना सुधरेगा या नहीं यह तो भविष्य की बात है पर भारत चाइना परिदृश्य में पूरी दुनिया को यह देखने की जरूरत है कि वह चाइना की विध्वंसक नीतियों के बीच संतुलन कैसे स्थापित करते हैं। क्वाड की बात 2007 में जापान ने किया। 2017 में यह सक्रिय हुआ और कोविड की स्थिति के बाद क्वाड की सक्रियता को जब उच्च करने की बात की जाने लगी तो चाइना को लगा कि वह देश जो क्वाड की सहभागिता में सक्रिय है उन्हें नियन्त्रित किया जाए और फिर उसने भारतीय सीमा विवाद को तीव्र किया और अमेरिका के साथ व्यापारिक युद्ध में सक्रिय सहभागिता दिखाई साथ ही आस्ट्रेलिया को उसने शाब्दिक धमकी दी। अतः यहाँ यह स्पष्ट है

कि चाइना में कितना सुधार होगा यह तो नहीं कहा जा सकता पर इतना जरूर है कि भारत उसके साथ कैसे संतुलन स्थापित करेगा यह एक सोचने वाली बात है।

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शहर की अवधारणा और ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की कविता

कुमार मंगलम
सहायक अध्यापक,
उत्तराखण्ड मुक्त विश्वविद्यालय, हल्द्वानी

सारांश

हिंदी कविता के लिए शहर अथवा गाँव क्यों आवश्यक है? कोई भी रचना नगर अथवा ग्राम्य –संस्कृति को उसके सम्पूर्णता में कैसे रेखांकित कर सकता है? ये अपने परिसीमाओं और जीवन-शैली में अभिव्यक्त होते हैं। ये जन-जीवन और मनःमस्तिष्क पर हावी है, और बड़ी तेजी से बदलाव की चुनौतियों को उछालते हैं। हिंदी में गाँव के प्रति एक अतिरिक्त और कुछ हद तक रूमानी आग्रह रहा है, और शहर को हेय दृष्टि से या नकारात्मक रूपक के रूप में ही देखा जाता रहा है। इन बिन्दुओं के आलोक में इस आलेख में ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की कविताओं में कविता और नगर व कविता और गाँव के सम्बन्ध को रेखांकित करने की कोशिश की गयी है।

हिंदी के कवि ज्ञानेन्द्रपति अपने सुदीर्घ काव्य-यात्रा में शहर और गाँव के जैविक और अविभाज्य सम्बन्ध को अपनी काव्य सृजन के लिए उपयुक्त मानते हैं। इस आलेख में उनकी कविता के उन्हीं चिन्हों को तलाशने की कोशिश की गयी है। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति के कवि-कर्म में देखे-अनदेखे जीवन-क्षेत्रों में घूमने की ललक शुरू से मौजूद रही है। वे सुगम के सहचर न होकर जीवन के उबड़खाबड़ में भटकने और देखे हुए दृश्य के बाहर और रह गए दृश्य के अदभुत चितरे हैं। उनकी कविताओं में आया हुआ नगर-चित्र और ग्राम्य-जीवन एकहरा नहीं बल्कि जीवन के सम्पूर्ण विन्यास को पकड़ने की सजग और सयास कोशिश है।

मुख्य शब्द: गांधी, नेहरू, अम्बेडकर, ज्ञानेन्द्रपति, निराला, देवीप्रसाद मिश्र, शहर, गाँव, कलकत्ता, बनारस, पटना, झारखण्ड, भूमण्डलीकरण, प्रेम, राजनीति, हिंदी कविता इत्यादि

“For me, India begins and ends in the villages”¹ -Gandhi

“The old indian social structure which has so powerfully influenced our people...was based on three concepts: the autonomous village community: caste; and the joint family system”² - Neharu

“The Hindu village is the working plant of the Hindu social order. One can see there the Hindu social order in operation in full swing.”³ –Ambedkar

आजादी के बाद के भारत ने अपने बनने की प्रक्रिया में सबसे अधिक स्थान नेहरू के विचारों को दिया और आजादी के स्वप्नदर्शी अन्य विचारकों यथा गाँधी और आम्बेडकर के विचार नेहरूवियन मॉडल में उपेक्षित होते चले गए। आम्बेडकर ने गाँव को अज्ञानता का महाकूप और संकीर्ण मानसिकता का गढ़ कहा था। “गाँव अज्ञानता का महाकूप और संकीर्ण मानसिकता का गढ़ है। गाँव गणराज्य और हिन्दू साम्राज्यवाद का प्रतीक तथा दलितों के शोषण की व्यवस्था है। असमानता तथा शोषण की बुनियाद पर खड़े गाँव में लोकतंत्र सम्भव ही नहीं है।”⁴ वहीं गांधी का मानना है कि भारत की आत्मा गाँवों में बसती है। “भारत की आत्मा गाँवों में बसती है। गांधी गाँव के जीवन में भरतीय सभ्यता का सूक्ष्म रूप देखते थे। गांधी जी हिन्दू धर्म में सुधार के समर्थक थे और गाँव गणराज्य की कल्पना से भारत को पश्चिमी आधुनिकता और अतिविकसित तकनीकी के दुष्परिणामों से बचाना चाहते थे।”⁵ गांधी गाँवों में भारतीयता की मूल आत्मा को देखते थे और आधुनिकता की अंधी दौड़ से उत्पन्न मूल्यों के गिरावट को बचाने वाले संस्थानिक ढांचा वे गाँव को समझते थे। नेहरू गाँव को सामंती अवशेष और सामंती जीवन का निशानी मानते थे। “नेहरू आधुनिकता के पक्षधर थे तथा गाँव-देहात को पिछड़ेपन की निशानी मानते थे। गाँव औद्योगीकरण तथा शहरीकरण के लिए केवल कच्चा माल उपलब्ध कराने का एजेंट मात्र बना रहा।”⁶ नेहरू ने आजादी के बाद जो भारत के विकास का स्वप्न देखा वह शहरों में ही फलीभूत होने वाला स्वप्न था। उन्होंने गाँवों को विकसित करने के लिए कई योजनायें तो बनाईं, लेकिन बिचौलिये के आने से वे योजनायें धरातल पर उतर न सकीं, उधर शहरों में नेहरू मॉडल के चलते उद्योग-धंधे आदि ने खूब तरक्की की।

इस औद्योगीकरण और शहरीकरण के दौर में गाँव सिर्फ कच्चा माल निर्यातक बन कर रह गया। उदारीकरण के बाद तो गाँव शहरों में विलीन होने लगा, कुछ सेज के आसपास, कुछ नगर-निगम तो कुछ शहरों-कस्बों के विस्तार में गाँव भेट चढ़ गए। कुछ गाँवों के नामो-निशान विस्थापन की वजह से, उद्योग के लिए कच्चा माल उगाहने की वजह से तो कुछ बांध, जल-विद्युत परियोजना इत्यदि की वजहों से मिट गया और फिर इन गाँवों का पुनः पर्यावास हो न सका। गाँव में इस शहरीकरण के दबाव की वजह से एक नई सामाजिकता का उदय होता है, जहाँ परम्परा का क्षरण और बेहद खराब और मिलावटी संस्करण के साथ आधुनिकता मौजूद है। नई आर्थिक नीति, जोत के खेत कम होते गए, खेती से पलायन, शहरीकरण के चलते सिर्फ गाँवों की अर्थव्यवस्था ही नहीं उसके सांस्कृतिक रूप में भी तेजी से क्षरण हुआ है। गाँवों की सामूहिकता में बदलाव धीरे-धीरे अजनबीपन के रूप में लक्षित होने लगा है। अब गाँवों में भी अलगाव और टूटन दिखने लगा है। सामाजिक विसंगति के विद्रूप चेहरे का वासस्थान गाँव भी है। इन्टरनेट और टीवी के माध्यम से बाजार की पहुँच अब गाँवों में भी है, बाजार ने गाँव के मूल्यों पर भी हमला बोला है, बाजार के साथ गाँव में कितनी विद्रूपता पहुँची है, इसकी बानगी आज के गाँवों में देखा जा सकता है, अब गाँव में सिर्फ स्त्रियाँ, बूढ़े और बच्चे ही रहते हैं। गाँव के त्योहारों में जवान अतिथि की तरह आते हैं और परदेशी की तरह वापस शहर लौट जाते हैं। ठीक इसी तरह गाँवों में जैसे-जैसे शहर का अतिक्रमण होता गया वैसे ही शहरों में गाँवों का भी अतिक्रमण होता गया है। शहरों में जो ग्रामीण आये, वे तुरंत ही शहराती नहीं हो गए, उनके साथ गंवई मूल्य आज भी मौजूद है। शहर का मध्यवर्ग जो अभी पूरी तरह से शहराती नहीं हुआ है, उसमें अभी भी भीतर कहीं गंवई मूल्य मौजूद है। अब स्थिति यह है कि गाँव न शहर हुआ और ना ही शहर के सारे लोग शहराती हो पाए। आजादी के सत्तर साल बाद हमने एक ऐसे कंपोजिट कल्चर को जन्म दिया जो एक साथ अधुनातन और पुरातन दोनों है। शहर में युवाओं के लिए चमक-दमक, रोजगार, शिक्षा और स्वास्थ्य के सुविधा का आकर्षण है तो गाँव में गाँव की सांस्कृतिक इकाई और मूल्य को लाश की तरह अपने बूढ़े काँधे पर ढोने, उसके टूटते जाने और गाँव में सिर्फ बच्चे और बूढ़ों के रह जाने का क्रूर यथार्थ है। गाँव अब ग्रामीण विस्थापन, गंवई मूल्यों के बिखराव, मध्यवर्गीय अभाव और दुश्चिंताओं के साथ-साथ दुर्घर्ष जिजीविषा का भौगोलिक स्थान है।

हिंदी कविता के लिए शहर अथवा गाँव क्यों आवश्यक है? कोई भी रचना नगर अथवा ग्राम्य –संस्कृति को उसके सम्पूर्णता में कैसे रेखांकित कर सकता है? ये अपने परिसीमाओं और जीवन-शैली में अभिव्यक्त होते हैं। ये जन-जीवन और मनःमस्तिष्क पर हावी है, और बड़ी तेजी से बदलाव की चुनौतियों को उछालते हैं। हिंदी में गाँव के प्रति एक अतिरिक्त और कुछ हद तक रुमानी आग्रह रहा है, और शहर को हेय दृष्टि से या नकारात्मक रूपक के रूप में ही देखा जाता रहा है। हिंदी कविता में शहर एवम् गाँव के द्वंद्व का स्वर अमूमन अज्ञेय की कविता साँप और पन्त की कविता भारतमाता ग्रामवासिनी से निर्मित होता है। तथापि समकालीनता का बहुलांश स्वर अज्ञेय की बहुचर्चित कविता 'साँप' कविता के इर्द-गिर्द ही घूमता प्रतीत होता है।

“साँप!

तुम सभ्य तो हुए नहीं

नगर में बसना

भी तुम्हें नहीं आया।

एक बात पूछूँ—(उत्तर दोगे?)

तब कैसे सीखा डँसनाकृ

विष कहाँ पाया?”⁷

आलोचक कृष्णमोहन साँप कविता पर विचार करते हुए लिखते हैं, “जैसा कि जाहिर है इसमें नागर जीवन और आधुनिक सभ्यता के बारे में कवि अपने विचार व्यक्त कर रहा है। उसका खयाल है कि किसी को काट लेने और उसमें जहर प्रवाहित कर देने का गुण-धर्म नगरों की विशेषता है, और अन्यत्र यह दुर्लभ है। प्रत्यक्ष तौर पर कवि साँप को संबोधित करते हुए पूछता है कि तुमने डँसने की कला कहाँ सीखी और इस क्रिया को घातक बनाने वाला जहर तुम्हें कहाँ से मिला। इस तरह शहर, और आधुनिक सभ्यता के साथ कवि साँप को समीकृत करता है, और उसके प्रति हमारे भय को ताजा करता है।”⁸ अब इस कविता पर गौर करें तो नगर के चरित्र के सामने एक स्थाई प्रतिपक्ष के तौर पर गाँव की उपस्थिति मौजूद है। यानी जो नगरों का गुण-धर्म है उसके उलट गुण-धर्म की चीज गाँवों में मौजूद है। छायावादी कवि सुमित्रानंदन पन्त ने भारत को ग्रामवासिनी कहा है।

“भारतमाता ग्रामवासिनी” और “अहा! ग्राम्य-जीवन भी क्या है?” से ही गाँव अपेक्षाकृत महिमामंडित होता रहा। गाँव स्मृतियों का, मनुष्यता का, सहजता का प्रतीक बना रहा। जबकि गाँव का यथार्थ जातिवाद, घृणा, कुंठा, असुविधा, दमन और उत्पीडन के केंद्र के रूप में बन गया।

भारतीय शहरों के राजनैतिक और सांस्कृतिक रूपक को उपरोक्त बातों के आलोक में देखा जा सकता है, जबकि कविताओं में अभिव्यक्त नगर-चित्र बहुधा भिन्न होते हैं। यहाँ शहरों के साथ गाँवों की बायनरी अनिवार्य घटक के रूप में शामिल होता है, इन्हें अलग कर के नहीं देखा जा सकता। शहर और गाँव अनिवार्यतः एक दुसरे से अविभाज्य रूप से जुड़े हुए हैं और एक दुसरे के पूरक हैं। राजेश जोशी लिखते हैं, “कविता का नगर चाहे बहुत भिन्न हो, उसमें कल्पना का तत्व बहुत अधिक या कम हो, लेकिन बाहर स्थित नगर से उसकी शकल थोड़ी-बहुत मिलती है। जब भी वास्तविक शहर शब्दों में रूपांतरित होता है, उसका चेहरा-मोहरा वही नहीं रहता जो उसका वास्तविक चेहरा है। यह शहर का पुनर्रचित चेहरा है। यह कविता का नगर है।”⁹

ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की कविताओं में विभिन्न शहरों के विभिन्न चित्र मौजूद हैं। इनकी कविताओं में प्रमुखता से पटना, कलकत्ता और बनारस प्रमुखता से स्थान पाते हैं। “शब्द लिखने के लिए ही यह कागज बना है” में ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की कविता का मुहावरा विराट जीवन से जीवन-द्रव्य लेकर एक विशाल कैनवस की निर्मिति करता है। ‘द्राम में एक याद’ जैसी कविता में चेतना पारिख और ‘बनानी बनर्जी’ में जहाँ बनानी बनर्जी से आत्मिक मुलाकातें हैं उन्हीं कविताओं में इन मुलाकातों के साथ उनकी राजनीतिक पक्षधरता बहुत स्पष्ट और मुखर होकर हमारे सामने विस्फारित रूप में सामने आती है। ‘द्राम में एक याद’ कविता ‘चेतना पारीक की याद’ नहीं है, वह कलकत्ते की याद है, उस कलकत्ते की जो वाम राजनीति और क्रांति का केंद्र है। याद है, इसलिए रिक्ति है वहाँ और वह रिक्ति प्रेम की नहीं क्रांति की है। विद्रोह के बाद का सूनापन इस कविता में वह रोमानियत भरती है कि बार-बार पाठक उसे प्रेम कविता में रिड्यूस कर देता है।

“इस महावन में फिर भी एक गौरैये की जगह खाली है
एक छोटी चिड़िया से एक नन्हीं पत्ती से सूनी डाली है
महाननगर के महादृहास में एक हँसी कम है
विराट धक्-धक् में एक धड़कन कम है कोरस में एक कंट कम है
तुम्हारे दो तलवे जितनी जगह लेते हैं उतनी जगह खाली है
वहाँ उगी है घास वहाँ चुई है ओस जहाँ किसी ने निगाह तक नहीं डाली है।”¹⁰
‘द्राम में एक याद’ कलकत्ता की याद है, चेतना पारीक की याद नहीं, इसी वजह से वे कलकत्ता का अविकल प्रस्तुति देते हैं—
“उतना ही शोर है इस शहर में वैसा ही ट्रैफिक जाम है
भीड़-भाड़ धक्का-मुक्का टेल-पेल ताम-झाम है
ट्यूब रेल बन रही चल रही द्राम है
विकल है कलकत्ता दौड़ता अनवरत अविराम है।”¹¹

‘बनानी बनर्जी’ कविता प्रेम की नहीं गहन राजनैतिक बल्कि क्रांति की कविता है। बनानी बनर्जी द्वारा शरद बाबू से प्रार्थना कर अपने जीवन की कहानी कहलवाने का आग्रह हो या रविन्द्र की शब्दावली में सजल मेघ और उज्ज्वल रौद्र की आकांक्षा प्रेम की नहीं क्रांति की कहानी कहती है। यहाँ ज्ञानेन्द्रपति प्रेम की चाशनी में क्रांति के, मनुष्यता के असफल होने के अवसाद की कहानी कहते हैं।

ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की आरंभिक कविताएँ जो उनके आरंभिक संग्रह भिन्नसार में संकलित हैं, उनमें पटना और कलकत्ता तथा बाद के संग्रहों में बनारस के नगर-चित्र मिलते हैं। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति के नगर में पर्यावरणीय चिंता के साथ-साथ नगर के अधिक मानवीय सरोकार को बचाए रखने की चिंता भी मौजूद है। एक छोटी कविता से इसे समझा जा सकता है—

“नदी के किनारे नगर बसते हैं
नगर के बसने के बाद

नगर के किनारे से
नदी बहती है।¹²

इस संकलन में पटना और कलकत्ता का नगर-चित्र बहुतायत में है, लेकिन इस नगर-चित्र में गाँव से एक आपसदरी का सम्बन्ध मौजूद है। यानी नगर की चिंताओं में ज्ञानेन्द्रपति गाँव से दूर नहीं होते बल्कि वे उस अविभाज्यता की तलाश करते हैं, जिसमें नगर का अस्तित्व गाँव से जुड़ा हुआ है। भिनसार में एक कविता है— पटना का गोलघर, इस कविता में किसान के स्वप्न और आकांक्षा का जो मार्मिक चित्रण किया है, वैसा चित्रण आगे चलकर देवीप्रसाद मिश्र की कविता में दिखता है। देवीप्रसाद मिश्र की कविता है—

“भूमिहीन किसान जब
मकबरे में घुसा तो
अंदाजने लगा यह
कितने रकबे में है।”¹³
ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की कविता को अब देखें—
“गंगा से आया किसान
थपथपाता है इसका विशाल पेट
डरते-डरते
और हिसाब गुनता है कि इसमें
आखिर कितना आता होगा अनाज
इसको भरने में कितने गाँवों के फेफड़े हँफते होंगे
कि बीच में ही घबरा कर
दिखाता है अपने बच्चे को
देखो, गंगा पार वहाँ उस कोने पर
है अपना गाँव
उस ओर जिधर
जा रहा है स्टीमर का धुआँ।”¹⁴

भिनसार शीर्षक संकलन में पटना में घटित हो रहे सम्पूर्ण क्रांति और उसके असफलताओं को लेकर लिखी गयी कविता भी उल्लेखनीय है। इन कविताओं को पढ़ते हुए ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की राजनीतिक प्रतिबद्धता को साफ-साफ समझा जा सकता है। 15 अगस्त, 1972, पटना रू 18 मार्च, 1974, पटना रू 18 मार्च, 1975, जे पी की प्रतिमा, अगस्त 1986, पटना रू गांधी मैदान इत्यदि कविता में जे पी आन्दोलन के केंद्र पटना की अनेक छवियाँ विन्यस्त हैं, इसमें रैलियाँ हैं, छात्र आन्दोलन है, एक असफल क्रांति का देखती आँख की दिखावनी है। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति एक कवि के रूप में नहीं बल्कि एक आंदोलनकारी के रूप में इन सब में शामिल हैं। जो परिवर्तन की आकांक्षा के साथ है।

“दूर अभी भी गोलियाँ चल रही हैं
और मेरी मुट्टी में वह पत्थर है जिसे मैं जानता हूँ कहाँ मारना है
आखिरी बार
मेरी मुट्टी में यह कविता नहीं काला पत्थर है
बिल्कुल ठीक जगह फेंके जाने को तना
इस पर उगी हुई खून की लकीरें बेचौन नसों की तरह धड़कती हैं।”¹⁵

बड़े शहरों की तन्हाई और छोटे शहरों की गुंडागर्दी दोनों के बीच बनारस अपने आप में एक कस्बाई मिजाज को पालने वाला शहर है। बनारस में बड़े शहर की तन्हाई बहुत कम या परोक्ष रूप में मौजूद है और गुंडागर्दी के स्वरूप यहाँ बदलते रहे हैं लेकिन इसके बीच यह जितना शहर है, उतना ही गाँव या कस्बा भी है। भारतीय सभ्यता का एक लघुत्तम रूप बनारस में देखा जा सकता है। भारतीयता की अवधारणा एक संश्लिष्ट अवधारणा है, इसके बनने में विविध प्रकार के मत-मतान्तरों का योग रहा है। बनारस का धर्म, शिक्षा, व्यापार, राजनीति,

आदि से घनिष्ठ सम्बन्ध रहा है। इस वजह से इसका इतिहास बहुआयामी है। कई बार इतिहास इतना वस्तुनिष्ठ नहीं होता कि वह यथार्थ के संघनित तर्कों को रेखांकित कर सके। जब इतिहास के पन्ने से कुछ छुट रहा होता है अथवा जो इतिहास में सम्मिलित नहीं हो पाता है उसे साहित्य अपने पन्नों में जगह देता है। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की बनारस विषयक कविताएँ वैकल्पिक स्पेस का सृजन करती हैं। इसमें इतिहास, पुराण, स्थापत्य, स्मृति, त्रासदी, उन्मुक्त परिहास है। इसमें बेचौन संघर्ष है और सुकून की अड्डेबाजियाँ भी हैं। अतीत मोह है तो नई चुनौतियों से उलझता-जूझता विमर्श भी है। गंगा-बीती में पर्यावरणीय चिंताओं के साथ-साथ गलियों-गालियों का जनपद बनारस एक साथ अभिव्यक्त हुआ है। बनारस एक साथ प्राचीन और आधुनिक दोनों है। इसी वजह से इसमें एक द्वंद्व है। बनारस के रचाव की जब भी बात होगी तो उस परम्परा की बात होगी जो अतीत का प्रगतिशील या अग्रगामी हिस्सा है। इसी वजह से ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की कविताओं में विगत से वर्तमान के अंकुरण की सतत प्रक्रिया से उपजा द्वंद्वात्मक निषेध जैसी ध्वनि प्रमुख है। आलोचक जयप्रकाश 'गंगातट' पर लिखते हुए इस ओर संकेत करते हैं, "ज्ञानेन्द्रपति के प्रेक्षण की एक उल्लेखनीय विशेषता यह है कि वे किसी दृश्य को फोटोग्राफिक प्रेक्षण की तरह निर्विकार या प्रकृतवादी तरीके से नहीं, बल्कि उसकी समूची आन्तरिक द्वंद्वात्मकता में पकड़ते हैं। इस प्रयत्न में दृश्य के परस्पर पूरक या विरुद्धार्थी आशयों को अगल-बगल रख कर उनके बीच उत्पन्न विसंगति को उभार देते हैं। यह विसंगति अपने आप एक काव्यात्मक आशय बन जाती है। इस तरह वे विलोम प्रत्ययों के युग्म कविता का कथ्य निर्मित करते हैं।"¹⁶

हेरोडोटस ने कहा है कि, "भूगोल को एतिहासिक और इतिहास को भौगोलिक परिप्रेक्ष्य में ही पढ़ा जाना चाहिए।"¹⁷ ज्ञानेन्द्रपति अपनी एक कविता से अपनी स्थिति को भी साफ कर देते हैं। वे 'बीच कहीं' शीर्षक कविता में अपनी उपस्थिति को रेखांकित करते हैं—

"मल्लाह और घाटिया पुरोहित
मचलियाँ और घोंघे
गंगा
किन्हीं को जीविका देती है
किन्हीं को जीवन
इन्हीं के बीच कहीं
है एक कवि
शब्दांकता बैठा गंगतीर।"¹⁸

बनारस को रचते हुए सीधे गंगा को अथवा गंगा-घाट को लेकर कुछ कविताएँ संबोधित हैं। इन कविताओं में गंगा और गंगा-घाट की चमक-दमक के पीछे के सच को रेखांकित करती हैं। 'मानव-चित्त के अकूत कलुष से करिखायी' में और 'उसका सूर्य होगा उत्तरायण' में गंगा की स्थिति बिल्कुल साफ है। इन कविताओं में आप शर-शैय्या, भेक-भैय्या, सूरजसोखी इत्यादि कविताओं को रख सकते हैं।

"मोक्षदायिनी गंगा अब मोक्षकामिनी
नाले में बदली निर्वाक बही जाती है बहावहीन
मानव-चित्त के अकूत कलुष से करिखायी
आह! कितनी मकर संक्रन्तियाँ बीतेंगी कि उसका सूर्य होगा उत्तरायण, शर-शैय्या से"¹⁹

कुछ नगर-चित्र का है, जो बनारस से सम्बंधित है। इन कविताओं में बनारस शहर की छवियाँ हैं। जैसे बड़ा दिन-लम्बी रात, अड़ी, आजाद पार्क इत्यादि। एक कविता है 'एक ह्रस्व हुई दीर्घिका' इस कविता में प्राचीन बनारस के इतिहास को पढ़ा जा सकता है। बनारस किसी दीर्घिका(तालाब) की ही भांति सिमटता चला जा रहा है। किसे ख्याल है जो आज का मैदागिन है कभी वहाँ मन्दाकिनी नाम की तालाब हुआ करती थी, अब उसके चिन्ह भी देखने को नहीं मिलता है। प्रिंसेप की तस्वीरों को देखें तो शायद पता चले।

"एक ह्रस्व हुई दीर्घिका है—
मन्दाकिनी का मैदागिन-अवशेष—

कम्पनीबाग-नगर मध्य के म्युन्सिपल पार्क-का केंद्रबिंदुबीती
 वह जो काई-कवलित नन्हा-सा तालाब
 कि मानो बड़ा-सा एक चहबच्चा
 कि जो है विख्यात मैदागिन चौराहे का नाम-मूल-
 काल-कृतरी
 एक ह्रस्व हुई दीर्घिका है।²⁰

‘गंगातट’ और ‘गंगा-बीती’ ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की सर्वाधिक चर्चित कृतियां हैं। इन दोनों कृतियों में गंगा और बनारस केंद्र में हैं। एक तरह से गंगा बीती, गंगातट का विस्तार है। इन दोनों संग्रहों में ज्ञानेन्द्रपति का कवि-द्रष्टा विस्तार पाता है। हिंदी क्षेत्र में राजनीति का प्रभुत्व इतना अधिक है कि सबकुछ राजनीति के वृत्त के आसपास ही सिमटने लगता है। यहाँ तक कि कविता और विचार पर भी राजनीति हावी है। ऐसे में कवि ज्ञानेन्द्रपति पर्यावरण विमर्श को पर्यावरणीय चिंता के साथ कविता के केंद्र में लाते हैं। फिर गंगा या बनारस कोई इकाई नहीं एक प्रतिनिधि पाठ के रूप में तब्दील होकर हमारे बीच एक बड़े चिंता के तौर पर उपस्थित होते हैं। प्रकृति अपने सामान्य अर्थ में मानवेत्तर ही नहीं मनुष्य के साहचर्य के साथ इन कविताओं में मौजूद है। हालाँकि इन कविताओं में राजनीति का स्वर भी मुखरता और प्रतिबद्धता के साथ साथ चलता है। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति उपभोग के लक्ष्मण रेखा का शिनाख्त करते हैं और उसका एक गांधीवादी रूपक इन कविताओं में तलाशते हैं, जिनके गुणसूत्र हमारे औपनिषदिक मानस में पहले से मौजूद है।

‘गंगातट’ की कविताओं को पढ़ते हुए आलोचक डॉ. नामवर सिंह ने सैलानी की दृष्टि से देखे गए बनारस की बात करते हैं तो राजेश जोशी इन कविताओं में ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की दूसरी नागरिकता की कविता बताते हैं किन्तु गंगा-बीती की कविताओं में ज्ञानेन्द्रपति नामवर सिंह की स्थापना सैलानी दृष्टि को अपने गहन पर्यवेक्षण दृष्टि से और राजेश जोशी की स्थापना दूसरी नागरिकता को प्राथमिक नागरिकता से अपदस्थ कर देते हैं। गंगा-बीती की पहली ही कविता नौका-विहार इस अपदस्थ करने का सबसे सबल उदहारण है। यहाँ सैलानी-दृष्टि और नागरिक कर्तव्य से अधिक एक सजग कवि की चिंता अधिक दिखती है। वे इस कविता में शहर के सहृदय और कुलीन-शालीन नागरिकों को भी नहीं बख्शाते। भारतेंदु ने भारत-दुर्दशा पर भारत भाइयों को रोने के लिए आह्वान किया था लेकिन यहाँ गंगा-दुर्दशा में ज्ञानेन्द्रपति किसका आह्वान करें, सहृदय तो नाले में तब्दील होती गंगा में बुढ़वामंगल मनाने में व्यस्त हैं। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति के पास रोने का विकल्प नहीं है, वे करुणा-सिक्त-मन से दर्ज कर रहे हैं, बनारस को, गंगा को और अपने समय को-

“बीमार है और तीमारदार के बगैर, इससे क्या
 नदी का भी मन करता हैकृनहाये
 करियाये पानी वाली नदी
 उजियार रातों में
 चाँदनी से नहाती है
 उस समय नौका-विहार करते घूमते हैं
 नगर के सुरुचि-संपन्न लोग
 अघायी दिखती सुरुचि से ढँके भोग-भूखी क्रूरता
 कि नदी मर रही है और वे बजरे पर बुढ़वामंगल मना रहे हैं
 शहर के कुलीन-शालीन, शहर के सहृदय।²¹”

ज्ञानेन्द्रपति इस कविता में एक सूचना देते हैं गंगा मर रही है, वहीं गंगातट में शामिल कविता नदी और साबुन को याद करें, जहाँ नदी एक साबुन की टिकिया से हार जाती है। यह अंतर है गंगातट और गंगाबीती की कविताओं में। यह सिर्फ देखने का अंतर नहीं है, यहाँ कवि नदी के साथ-साथ जी रहा है।

“आह! लेकिन
 स्वार्थी कारखानों का तेजाबी पेशाब झेलते
 बैंगनी हो गयी तुम्हारी शुभ्र त्वचा

हिमालय के होते भी तुम्हारे सिरहाने
हथेली-भर की एक साबुन की टिकिया से
हार गईं तुम युद्ध²²

ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की गंगा विषयक और बनारस विषयक कविताओं के विस्तार की बानगी गंगातट में शामिल 'कबिरा
खड़ा बाजार में' और गंगाबीती में शामिल 'ह्रस्व हुई दीर्घिका' में देखें—

“लहरतारा!
गंगा का गुप्त संगी!
कभी मीलों फैंले निर्मल सरोवर का ज्लावाशेष
अब एक बड़ी-सी गंदी गड़ही
जिसकी जर्जर देह में जलात्मा सड़ रही²³
और
एक ह्रस्व हुई दीर्घिका है—
मन्दाकिनी का मैदागिन-अवशेषकृ
कम्पनीबागकृनगर-मध्य के म्युनिसिपल पार्ककृका केंद्रबिंदु
वह जो काई-कलवित नन्हा-सा तालाब कि मानो बड़ा-सा एक चहबच्चा
कि जो है विख्यात मैदागिन चौराहे का नाम-मूलकृ
काल-कृतरी
एक ह्रस्व हुई दीर्घिका है।²⁴

अब अगर सिर्फ सैलानी और दूसरी नागरिकता की दृष्टि होती तो लहरतारा अथवा मैदागिन के इतिहास में दिलचस्पी नहीं होती। सैलानी किसी दृश्य को उपर से देखते हैं लेकिन इतिहास के बोझिल पन्नों की यात्रा दीवानगी से ओत-प्रोत इतिहासकार या शोधार्थी ही करता है। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति यहाँ अपनी कविताओं में शहर का एक वैकल्पिक इतिहास लिख रहे हैं। गंगातट और गंगाबीती में मौजूद शहर दरअसल भूमंडलीकरण के बरक्स लोक का प्रतिरोध है जिसे ज्ञानेन्द्रपति बनारस के माध्यम से दर्ज कर रहे हैं। बनारस यहाँ विकल्प है। बनारस एक शहर नहीं प्रतीक है प्राचीन सभ्यता का, नगर का, कस्बा का, लोक का, जीवन का। यह सनातन प्रतिपक्ष है। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति बनारस को कविता के लिए चुनते हैं। बनारस बहाना है, वे बनारस के बहाने जो कह रहे हैं वह यह है—

“काशी करवट कि करवट! कुख्यात
जहाँ कभी
चलते थे आरे मोक्षकामी दुर्मर जरा-जर्जर गरदनों पर
कि अब जिनके सामने ही
दिन-दिन-भर बल्कि देर रात तक
चलता रहता वीडियो गेम का कोई मनोहिंसक खेल नन्ही दुकनिया में
जिसके स्क्रीन के आगे बैठे रहते गुच्छे-के-गुच्छे बच्चे
उदग्रग्रीव व्यग्रमन
काशी-करवट के सामने काशी की नई करवट!
कहना मुश्किल दोनों में कौन ज्यादा हिंसक ज्यादा भीषण
वृद्ध-वधी अतीत कि बाल-वधी वर्तमान?²⁵

यह अनायास तो बिल्कुल नहीं है कि इक्कीसवीं सदी के दहलीज पर प्रकृति और सभ्यता के द्वंद्वस्थलों को स्थानिकता के ठोस जमीन पर वैश्विक हलचलों को भावक-चित्त से नहीं जीवन-बोध से चीन्हते और बेलगाम साम्राज्यवादी पूँजीवाद, भूमंडलीकरण और उदारीकरण के प्रतिरोध को गंगा-तट में दर्ज करने वाला कवि समय के विस्फारित और क्रूर यथार्थ से मुँह मोड़ लेता। गंगा-बीती में वे इस गांगेय-नगर को और गंगा को देखते हैं और गंगू के निगाह से देखते हैं जो अधिक निर्भीक और निष्कंप है। यही वजह है कि इसमें राजनैतिक मुखरता

की कविताएँ अधिक है। यह अधिक मुखर है, यह मन-दर्पण की नहीं आत्म-गौरव के जमीन पर युग-सत्य को परखने की कोशिश है।

“यह तो है ही संसद की मार्फत
लोकतंत्र पर बड़ी पूँजी का कब्जा है अब
लोकतंत्र बना है लाभ-लोभ-तंत्र कुछ का
सांसदों में अधिसंख्य करोड़पति या कि अरबपति हैं सीधे-सीधे
पूँजीधर अब नेपथ्य में नहीं, मंच पर हैं
नीति-रीति के निर्धारक
निर्णायक भारतीय समय के वर्तमान-भविष्य के
ऐसे में गुजर कहाँ गरीब की
आम आदमी की अहमियत ही क्या
इस समय
संदेह सब से बड़ा नैतिक अपराध, सवालकृदंडनीय नियमभंग
आन्दोलनकृराजद्रोह, जिसकी सजा कुछ भी हो सकती है
सीधी-सी बात रू गति-प्रगति के रास्ते कछुओं को आड़े नहीं आने दिया जाएगा
तोड़ दिया जाएगा कठिन पीठ का कवच
पूरी नृशंसता से, जरूरी हुआ तो, —समझ रखिए
संभल रहिए”²⁶

इन संग्रहों के अतिरिक्त जो उनके अन्य संग्रह हैं यथा संशयात्मा में कलकत्ता और बनारस से सम्बंधित कविताएँ हैं, मनु को बनाती मनई जो कि प्रेम कविताओं और स्त्री जीवन से सम्बंधित कविताएँ हैं उनमें भी बनारस कहीं-कहीं झाँकता है। इनके नये संग्रह कविता-भविता में भी राजाराम अथवा पत्रकारिता दिवस जैसी कविताओं में भी बनारस मौजूद है। अभी साखी के तेतीसवें अंक में कोरोना सम्बंधित कविताओं में भी बनारस मौजूद है। वे राजनैतिक होते हुए भी, स्मृतियों में जाते हुए भी, महामारी से जूझते हुए भी उन सभी को दर्ज करते हैं जो दृश्य और स्थानिकता से निकलता है, वे उनमें रहते हुए भी अपर होते हैं। कहते हैं जिन्होंने अपने परिवेश को समझ लिया वे अपने परिदृश्य को समझ लेते हैं। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति अपने समय को समझने के लिए कोई लम्बी यात्रा नहीं करते, वे अपने आस-पास को, अपने नगर को देखते हैं और उसी से-उसी में अपनी अभिव्यक्ति को पाते हैं। ‘अबके, नागपंचमी में’ शीर्षक कविता इस बात को पुष्ट करेगी—

“नाग ले जी! नाग ले लो
बड़े गुरु का! छोटे गुरु का!
बड़ा गुरु!/? नहीं नहीं!
वह तो महान वैयाकरण पाणिनि है, आज के दिन
श्रष्टाध्यायी का रचयिता!
और जो छोटा गुरु
पतंजलि है — श्रमहाभाष्य का कर्ता!
यहाँ, बनारस के जैतपुरा में
जो अतिशय प्राचीन नागकूप है—
दरअस्ल, चारो तरफ से उतरती सीढ़ियों वाली एक बावड़ी
नागकूप विख्यात—
कायम है जिसका महातम
कहते हैं, जिसके चौकोर जल के नीचे से
पाताल को जाता एक गुप्त रास्ता है
जो पहुँचता सीधे नागलोक
यही नागकूप हैओ कर्कोटक नागतीर्थ पुराणोक्त
जिसके पावन पड़ोस में

कहते हैं, पाणिनि और पतंजलि ने रचीं अपनी अमर कृतियाँ
वह दिव्य स्थल जिसका तेज
कठिन से कठिन काल-सर्प-दोष को झट कर देता भस्मीभूत
उसी के प्राण-प्रतिनिधि आज के दिन
दुआरे-दुआरे दुरित दूर करते घूमने वाले
नन्हे-मुन्ने पाणिनि और पतंजलि
बड़े गुरु और छोटे गुरु
विद्वान् और दयावान्!²⁷

समकालीन कविता का बहुलांश अपने आरम्भ से ही नागर-बोध की रही है, यह अनायास नहीं है कि ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की कविताओं में नागर-चित्र बहुलांश में मौजूद है, तथापि ये कविताएँ अपनी जनपदीयता को नहीं छोड़ती जिन्हें हम कई नागर-बोध की कविता समझ रहे होते हैं वे कविताएँ अपनी जनपदीय चेतना से उसका प्रत्याख्यान रचती हैं तो कई बार अपने नागर-चित्र में एक बड़े विजन से अपने समय का वैकल्पिक पाठ तैयार करती हैं। बनारस से सम्बंधित कविताएँ सिर्फ बनारस का चित्रण भर नहीं है, वे भूमंडलीकरण का प्रत्याख्यान भी है, एक सांस्कृतिक पाठ भी है और विस्मृत होते बनारस को सुरक्षित रखने का संग्रहालय भी है। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की रचनाओं में एक परस्परिकता के गुणसूत्र मौजूद है, जिससे उनमें एक औपन्यासिक वितान बनता है। उस खासकिस्म की न्यूक्लियस को तलाशते ही ज्ञानेन्द्रपति की रचना संवादधर्मी हो जाती हैं। उनसे पाठक का साझापन बनने लगता है। फिर तद्भव-तत्सम-देशज शब्दावली प्रचुर कविता, कविता के सौंदर्य के बढ़ाने के कारक होते हैं, उसमें बाधक नहीं। ज्ञानेन्द्रपति समय से संवाद करने वाले और तमाम केंद्रकों में हाशिए पर रह गए चीजों को दर्ज कर एक वैकल्पिक रचनाकार-चिंतक बन जाते हैं, जहां उनकी रचनाएँ सभ्यता-समीक्षा का पाठ निरंतर तैयार करती हैं।

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मनुष्य माने जाने की जद्दोजहद – नालासोपारा

डॉ० आभा त्रिपाठी
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सारांश

पोस्ट बॉक्स नं 203 नालासोपारा में चित्रा मुद्गल स्त्री-पुरुष पहचान से इतर जन्में विनोद उर्फ बिन्नी उर्फ बिमली की कहानी उपन्यास विधा के माध्यम से कहती हैं। समाज ऐसे मनुष्य को किन्नर (किम्+नर) हिजड़ा आदि पहचान देकर एक अलग खॉचे में रखता है। उनकी जगह समाज की मुख्य धारा से अलग ऐसे लोगों के बीच है जो अपने-अपने घर तथा समाज से बहिष्कृत हैं। अच्छे खाते-पीते परिवार से संबंधित होते हुए भी सबके सामने हाथ फैलाने को बाध्य हैं। जीने के संकट उनके सामने भी हैं। उनका जीवन उनके लिए प्रतिपल शर्मिंदगी का पर्याय बन जाता है। मुख्य धारा से कटा यह पूरा समुदाय शिक्षा से वंचित है, संपत्ति के अधिकार से वंचित है, परिवार के स्नेह से वंचित है, कुल-गोत्र की पहचान से वंचित है। हमारी आख्यान परम्परा में इस वर्ग से जुड़ी अनेक कहानियाँ मौजूद हैं। समाज में स्त्री-पुरुष से इतर पहचान के साथ जन्म लेना एक भयावह त्रासदी है। विनोद इस त्रासदी को जीवन भर भुगतता है। विनोद ही क्यों उसके समुदाय के सभी मनुष्य पीड़ा की गहरी सरणि से गुजरते हैं। उनके घर-परिवार वाले भी गहरी यन्त्रणा से गुजरते हैं। सामाजिक-पारिवारिक दबाव के कारण वे भले ही लिंग विकलांग शिशु को किन्नर समाज को सौंप कर लांछना से मुक्त होने की कोशिश करते हैं किन्तु मन की लांछना प्रतिपल अग्नि बन कर भीतर धधकती रहती है। विनोद की माँ बा प्रतिपल इस अग्नि में जलती है, अपने को धिक्कारती है। उपन्यास में विनोद की परिणति किसी दुर्घटना का परिणाम न होकर सोची-समझी करतूत है। चंडीगढ़ में उसकी स्वीकार्यता देखकर उसके नियोक्ता डोर खींचकर गति अवरुद्ध करने की तैयारी करते हैं। उसे तुरंत दिल्ली बुलाया जाता है और वहाँ माँ की बीमारी के बहाने मुंबई का टिकट थमा कर ठिकाने लगे दिया जाता है। चेतना को कुन्द करने और जाग्रत को सुलाने का यह जवाब है हमारी व्यवस्था का। व्यवस्था चाहती है कि केवल वे ठेकेदार बने रहें, सब कुछ करते रहने का दम भरते रहें। जनता केवल उनके आगे-पीछे घूमती रहे, हाथ फैलाती रहे। वे दाता होने का भ्रम पाले रहें। असल में बौद्धिक चरित्र को विकसित होने का मौका देने का अर्थ है अपनी सत्ता के सामने प्रश्न उठाना और सत्ताएं ऐसे गैर जरूरी प्रश्नों को सुनने की जहमत नहीं उठाती हैं। वे यह सिद्ध करने की कोशिश करती हैं कि किसी विनोद में यह कूवत ही नहीं है कि बिना उनकी अनुमति के वे कुछ भी कर सकें, किसी प्रतिष्ठित अखबार में साप्ताहिक कालम लिख सकें, सिर उठा के जी सकें, आत्मनिर्भर बन सकें, उनका तो उनकी इच्छा के बिना सांस लेना भी मुश्किल है।

Key word: जद्दोजहद, किन्नर, लांछना, लिंग विकलांग, इतर, मुख्य धारा, विमर्श, हाशिए, संस्कृति, बहिष्कृत, उपेक्षित, बेजुबान, भयावह पीड़ा, सरणि, चेतना, नियोक्ता, कुन्द बौद्धिक, आत्मनिर्भर, आख्यान, विज्ञापन, कचोट, जननांग दोषी, छटपटाहट, मुक्ति, आत्ममंथन।

उपन्यास कथा का विस्तृत और सशक्त माध्यम है। बड़े फलक पर लंबी और इससे जुड़ी अनेक कहानियों के द्वारा एक आख्यान का रूपाकार ग्रहण करना तथा प्रभाव डालना संभव हो पाता है। शायद यही कारण है कि चित्रा मुद्गल उपन्यास विधा के माध्यम से मानव समाज की एक बड़ी ज्वलंत समस्या को उठाती है। उत्तर आधुनिक समय में विमर्शों का दौर भी मौका दे रहा है वंचितों को, हाशिए पर खड़े लोगों को अपनी बात कहने का। यह बात स्वयं उनके द्वारा भी कही जा रही है तथा लेखन में लब्ध प्रतिष्ठ कथाकारों द्वारा भी कही जा रही है। मैनेजर पाण्डेय का कथन है, "उपन्यास ने साहित्य की संस्कृति का स्वरूप बदला है। भारतीय समाज के जो हिस्से, समुदाय और व्यक्ति मुख्यधारा से अलग हाशिए पर रहने के लिए मजबूर थे, वे साहित्य-संसार के भी हाशिए पर ही रहने के लिए अभिशप्त थे। मुख्यधारा से प्रायः बहिष्कृत, उपेक्षित, अदृश्य और बेजुबान जन को उपन्यास में जगह मिली है। यही नहीं पहले जो साहित्य में कहीं नहीं होते थे वे उपन्यास के माध्यम से साहित्य संसार के नागरिक बनने लगे और नायक भी।"¹ पोस्ट बॉक्स नं 203 नाला सोपारा में चित्रा मुद्गल विनोद उर्फ बिन्नी उर्फ बिमली की कहानी कहती हैं, कहानी उस मनुष्य की है जो स्त्री-पुरुष पहचान से इतर जन्मा

है। समाज ऐसे मनुष्य को किन्नर (किम्+नर) हिजड़ा आदि नाम देकर एक अलग खाँचे में रख देता है। किन्नर शब्द वस्तुतः किन्नौर वासियों की पहचान से जुड़ा है, कब लिंग विकलांग मनुष्य का पर्याय बन गया कहा नहीं जा सकता है। विनोद को चंडीगढ़ में किन्नर बिरादरी को संबोधित करने के पूर्व हिदायत दी जाती है कि वह किन्नर शब्द के इस्तेमाल से बचे क्योंकि चंडीगढ़ तथा हिमाचल में ज्यादा दूरी नहीं है। समाज के पास लिंग विकलांग मनुष्य के लिए कोई जगह नहीं है। उनकी जगह समाज की मुख्य धारा से अलग ऐसे ही लोगों के बीच है जो अपने-अपने घर तथा समाज से बहिष्कृत हैं अच्छे, खाते-पीते परिवार से संबंध रखते हुए भी सबके सामने हाथ फैलाने को बाध्य हैं। जीने के सँकट उनके सामने भी है। उनका जीवन उनके लिए प्रतिपल शर्मिंदगी का पर्याय बन जाता है। मुख्यधारा से कटा यह पूरा समुदाय शिक्षा से वंचित है, संपत्ति के अधिकार से वंचित है, परिवार के स्नेह से वंचित है, कुल-गोत्र की पहचान से वंचित है। हमारी आख्यान परम्परा में इस वर्ग से जुड़ी कहानियाँ मौजूद हैं। महाभारत में अर्जुन का वृहन्नला हो जाना अप्सरा के शाप का परिणाम है तो अम्बा का शिखण्डी हो जाना भीष्म के प्रति प्रतिशोध की प्रतिज्ञा का परिणाम है। किन्तु विनोद न तो अर्जुन है जिसे महाभारत का युद्ध जीतना है और न अम्बा ही जिसे भीष्म की मृत्यु का कारण बनना है। उसे तो बस मनुष्य रूप में अपनी पहचान पानी है, पढ़ना-लिखना है, अपनी बा का प्यारा पाना है, पूनम जोशी से प्यार भरा रिश्ता निभाना है, ज्योत्सना को स्मृतियों में बसाए रखना है, उससे विवाह करने के स्वप्न देखना है, आत्मनिर्भर होकर घर-परिवार की जिम्मेदारी में हाँथ बँटाना है। समाज में स्त्री-पुरुष से इतर पहचान के साथ जन्म लेना एक भयावह त्रासदी है। विनोद इस त्रासदी को जीवन भर भुगतता है। विनोद ही क्यों उसके समुदाय के सभी मनुष्य पीड़ा की गहरी सरणि से गुजरते हैं। घर परिवार वाले भी गहरी यन्त्रणा से गुजरते हैं। सामाजिक-पारिवारिक दबाव के कारण भले ही लिंग विकलांग शिशु को किन्नर समाज को सौंप कर लांछना से मुक्त होने की कोशिश करते हैं किन्तु मन की लांछना प्रतिपल अग्नि बन कर भीतर धधकती है। विनोद की माँ बा प्रतिपल इस अग्नि में जलती हैं अपने को धिक्कारती हैं। उपन्यास के अन्त में हम उन्हें प्रायश्चित्त स्वरूप अपनी भूल स्वीकारते हुए भी देखते हैं। बा गंभीर रूप से बीमार है। उनके बचने की संभावना नहीं है। मरने के पूर्व वे विनोद के प्रति किए गए व्यवहार के लिए क्षमा याचना करती हैं। उन्हें मालूम है कि उनका मँझला बेटा विनोद शाह टाइम्स ऑफ इण्डिया पढ़ना पसंद करता है। इस कारण वे टाइम्स ऑफ इण्डिया के प्रथम पृष्ठ पर एक क्लासीफाइड विज्ञापन प्रकाशित कराती हैं जिसमें वे अपने लिंग विकलांग पुत्र विनोद शाह से माफी माँगी है, उसे सम्पत्ति का अधिकारी बनाने की उद्घोषणा करती हैं, अपनी मृत्यु के उपरान्त क्रिया कर्म विनोद शाह के उपलब्ध न होने तक रोकने की अपील करती हैं। तीनों सन्तानों के द्वारा मुखाग्नि प्रदान किए जाने संकल्प देती हैं। इस विज्ञापन के सबसे उल्लेखनीय पक्ष दो बिन्दु हैं—

1. शव को तब तक शवगृह में सुरक्षित रखा जाए जब तक विनोद क्रियाकर्म के लिए उपलब्ध न हो जाय।
2. उनके पति हरीन्द्र शाह उनकी अन्तिम इच्छा का सम्मान करेंगे।

विज्ञापन प्रकाशित होने से पूर्व ही उनकी मृत्यु हो चुकी है। इसका दुखद पक्ष यह है कि माँ तथा पुत्र की मुलाकात जीते जी नहीं हो पाती है। वह माँ जो अपने पुत्र को चंपा बाई को सौंपकर एक पल भी चैन नहीं पाती है। पुत्र भी माँ को देखने के लिए व्याकुल है। दिल्ली से मुंबई की उड़ान भरता है लेकिन घर नहीं पहुँच पाता है। शिकार हो जाता है किन्नरों की आपसी रंजिश का। मिठी नदी में उसकी फूली लाश बरामद होती है। शिनाख्त नहीं हो पाती क्योंकि सिर बुरी तरह कुचला हुआ है। सारी जद्दोजहद कहानी ही बनकर रह जाती है, अनिर्णीत। विनोद कई बार मरने के लिए सोचता है लेकिन मरने के बाद भी वह किन्नर के रूप में ही पहचाना जाए यह उसे मंजूर नहीं है। कैसे और किस रूप में जन्म मिले यह तो चुन नहीं पाया किन्तु मृत्यु चुनने का अधिकार तो उसे है। लेखिका उसकी अन्तर्वेदना को कैसे अभिव्यक्त करती है, "शहर में मरूँगा तो लाश किन्नरों के हाथ लगेगी। किन्नरों के विधि-विधान से मौत का निपटारा होगा। किन्नर के रूप में मैं मरना नहीं चाहता। अपनी मर्जी से मर सकता हूँ तो मौत का निपटारा भी मेरी मर्जी से ही होना चाहिए। ऊँचे पहाड़ पर जाकर मरना उचित होगा। हजारों फीट गहरी अलंध्य घाटी में कौन खोजेगा मेरी लाश को? लाश के टुकड़ों से चिपककर तुझे भी छाती कूटने का मौका नहीं मिलेगा। यही तो चाहता हूँ मैं।"² लेकिन विडम्बना कितनी गहरी है कि वह मारा जाता है अपने ही शहर मुंबई में और पहचाना जाता है किन्नर के रूप में, नाम से शिनाख्त नहीं हो पाती और छाती कूटने के लिए बा भी जिंदा नहीं।

माँ और संतान का रिश्ता हर रिश्ते से विलक्षण होता है, खास होता है। विनोद और बा पत्र के माध्यम से जुड़े हैं। विनोद को बा पोस्ट ऑफिस का पता देती है जिससे दोनों के बीच होने वाले पत्राचार की किसी को भनक न लगे। उपन्यास में 23 जुलाई 2011 से 24 दिसम्बर 2011 के बीच लिखे गए सत्रह पत्रों का उल्लेख है। प्रथम सात पत्र मोहन बाबा नगर, बदर पुर, दिल्ली के पते से लिखे गए हैं। आठवाँ पत्र लाजपत नगर, दिल्ली से लिखा जाता है। 5 दिनों में आठ पत्र एम0एल0ए0 हॉस्टल चंडीगढ़ से लिखे जाते हैं जिनमें से एक दिन में वह तीन पत्र माँ को लिखता है। एक पत्र में समय लिखता है, झपकी ले लेने के बाद एक में लिखता है— रात्रि का तीसरा पहर। आखिरी पत्र वह पोस्ट नहीं कर पाता है लिख कर अपने पास रख लेता है सोचता है खुद ही अपने साथ लेकर जाएगा तथा अपने मुँह से पढ़ कर सुनाएगा। विनोद अपनी माँ को पत्र में हर घटना की, हर समस्या की, अपने इर्द-गिर्द रहने वाले हर व्यक्ति की सूचना देता है। किन्नरों के बीच रहता विनोद माँ से उसी खास संबंध के नाते पूछता है, “तेरी कोख, बा तुझसे कभी लड़ती नहीं है कि तूने मेरे बिन्नी दीकरा के साथ ऐसा बर्ताव क्यों किया।”³ कितनी कचोट है विनोद के मन की। लिंग विकलांगता के कारण घर से बेघर कर दिया जाता है। सजा पाता है उस गलती की जो उसने नहीं की है। अपनी पीड़ा वह माँ से पत्र में बँटता है, “जिस नरक में तूने और पप्पा ने धकेला है मुझे, वह एक अन्धा कुँआ है जिसमें सिर्फ साँप-बिच्छू रहते हैं। साँप-बिच्छू बनकर वह पैदा नहीं हुए होंगे। बस, इस कुएं ने उन्हें आदमी नहीं रहने दिया।”⁴ जननांग दोषी होना कितना बड़ा दोष है, कलंक है कि विनोद के पिता ने उसे चंपाबाई को साँपकर उसकी मृत्यु की कहानी गढ़ी। विनोद का मन इस समस्या की तह में जाकर सोचता है। चंडीगढ़ में प्रेस कॉन्फ्रेंस के लिए जाते समय विनोद को आशंका है कि कहीं पिता तक उसकी सक्रियता की सूचना अखबारों द्वारा न हो जाए तथा पिता के द्वारा किए गए संबंध पर पटाक्षेप का परदा पुनः न उठ जाय, “सात पुस्तों तक भी दाग न धुलें, ऐसे कलंक से अपने प्रतिष्ठित परिवार, कुटुम्ब और समाज की नजरों से बचाने के लिए पप्पा ने मेरी मृत्यु का नाटक रचा, मीडिया पर उसकी सच्चाई प्रकट होते ही कहीं पप्पा को हृदयाघात न हो जाए।”⁵ लिंग विकलांगता कैसे एक जीते-जागते मनुष्य को परिवार से समाज से काट देती है नाला सोपारा इसका यथार्थ कहता है। विनोद के बड़े भाई का उसके प्रति किया जाने वाला व्यवहार बड़ा ही रूखा तथा संवेदनहीन है वह उसे घर से निकाल दिए जाने के बाद भी उसकी काली परछाईं से सशक्त रहता है। वह घर से उसकी यादों को भी मिटा देना चाहता है। उसका चित्र, उसकी पसंद की वस्तुयें कुछ भी घर में नहीं रहने देना चाहता है। माँ पर झुंझलाता है, अलग गृहस्थी बसाता है कि उसके जननांग दोष का प्रभाव उसकी आगामी संतान पर न पड़ जाये।

यह माँ है जो विनोद को छोड़ कर भी नहीं मुक्त हो पाती है स्मृतियाँ उसे और बाँध लेती है। उसका संबंध परिवार के अन्य सदस्यों से अलग है। उसका मन प्रतिपल उसे लाँछित करता है बिन्नी की यादों से छुटकारा पाने के लिए घर वाले घर बदल लेते हैं लेकिन यादें यहाँ भी डेरा डाल लेती हैं। विनोद के मामा का उसके पिता से कहा गया कथन “सही किया बानवी (बहनोई) घर बदल लिया। आदमी दुःख से लड़े कि घर से। घर दुःख को गीला किए रहता है। सूखने ही नहीं देता उसे।”⁶ स्मृतियों के इसी सच को उद्घाटित करता है। माँ नए घर में भी उसकी तस्वीर ही नहीं स्कूल बैग, पानी की बोतल भी सँभालती दिखती है।

माँ का सपना है उसका पुत्र महान गणितज्ञ बने। विनोद में भी शिक्षा की ललक है। अपनी पढ़ाई **iwjh** करके वह अपनी पहचान बनाना चाहता है। याद करता है अपने अतीत को कि यदि उसे घर से बेघर नहीं होना पड़ता तो वह अब तक डिग्री हासिल कर चुका होता और आगे एम0फिल तथा गणित में पी0एच0डी0 की सोचता है, नेट पास करके किसी कॉलेज में एडहॉक पर पढ़ाने की जुगत लगाता। बा को पत्र में लिखता है, “बा पढ़ने के लिए छटपटा रहा हूँ। जाने गणितज्ञ हो पाऊँगा भी या नहीं। जिन्दगी में कितना समय बह गया। उसकी मनमानी रोक भी नहीं सकता था।”⁷ पूनम जोशी को भी पढ़ने के लिए प्रेरित करता है। उसने आत्ममंथन से यह सत्य पाया है कि शिक्षा का कोई विकल्प नहीं है। उसे मुक्ति के उपाय के रूप में देखता है। पूनम से उसका कथन है, “तुम इतना ता पढ़लो कि विश्व के कुछ अच्छे उपन्यास पढ़ सको। हम आपस में उनके चरित्रों पर बात कर सकें। पढ़ाई ही हमारी मुक्ति का रास्ता है। कोई रास्ता छोड़ा ही नहीं गया हमारे लिए।”⁸ पढ़ने की ललक उसमें अजीब छटपटाहट पैदा करती है। वह चौदह वर्ष का किशोर था जब परिवार से किन्नर समुदाय में शामिल होता है। वह अपने को उस समुदाय से जोड़ ही नहीं पाता जिसमें जबरन शामिल किया गया है। किन्नर समुदाय में भी जीने की एक व्यवस्था है। वहाँ भी परिवार की तरह एक मुखिया है जिसे सरदार कहा जाता है। वे अलग-अलग धार्मिक पृष्ठभूमि से आए हुए लोग हैं लेकिन लिंगीय कमी उन्हें एक प्लेटफॉर्म पर ला खड़ा करती है। समुदाय के सदस्य नाच-गाकर पैसे कमाते हैं जिसका एक बड़ा हिस्सा सरदार को सौंपा जाता है। सरदार द्वारा दिए गए आसरे का भुगतान है यह, एक आपसी समझौता। विनोद भी उसे इस हेतु पन्द्रह सौ

रूपये महीना देता है। एक बार उसने ठिकाने से भाग जाने की कोशिश की थी। दिल्ली से अलीगढ़ जाकर बेकरी में काम करना शुरू किया लेकिन इतना मजबूत नेटवर्क है इस बिरादरी का कि दो ही तीन दिन में ढूँढ़ लिया जाता है। कम्प्यूटर क्लास में दाखिले हेतु जाने से पूर्व पूनम विनोद को सलाह देती है कि सरदार का आशीर्वाद लेकर जाए क्योंकि सरदार को चले द्वारा नजर अन्दाज किया जाना बर्दाश्त नहीं है। विनोद के अपने तर्क हैं उसे सरदार की यह तानाशाही स्वीकार नहीं है। उसने सरदार से कोई गुन्डा नहीं बँधवाया है, वह तो उसकी जबरन कैद का शिकार है। उसके और चम्पाबाई के बीच हुई साँट-गाँठ का नतीजा भुगतान हुआ। एक असहज माहौल में रहकर जीने की कोशिश करता हुआ किशोर से युवा होता मनुष्य। अपनी बा को पत्र में अपनी मनः स्थिति से परिचित कराता है, "बात-बात पर ताली पीटना मेरी स्वाभाविक प्रकृति नहीं है। स्ट्रैण लक्षण मुझमें कभी नहीं रहे। अब भी नहीं है और जो लक्षण मुझमें नहीं है उन्हें सिर्फ इसलिए स्वीकारूँ कि मेरी बिरादरी के शेष सभी, उन हाव-भावों को अपना चुके हैं।" किन्नर समुदाय जी-जान से कोशिश करता है कि वह उनके तौर तरीके अपना ले, उनकी तरह जीना सीख ले। समुदाय के अनुरूप व्यवहार करना प्रारम्भ करे किन्तु विनोद का स्वाभिमानी मन इसे स्वीकार नहीं कर पाता है। उसे राह पर लाए जाने के लिए किए गए उपाय बड़े अमानवीय हैं जिसमें मारना-पीटना गाली देना भी शामिल है। उसकी व्यथा उपन्यास में इस तरह स्थान पाती है, "उनके लात, घूँसे, थप्पड़ और कानों में गर्म तेल सी टपकती किसी भी संबंध को न बखाने वाली अश्लील गालियों के बावजूद न मैं मटक-मटक कर ताली पीटने को राजी हुआ, न सलमे-सितारे वाली साड़ियाँ लपेट लिपिस्टिक लगा कानों में बूंदे लटकाने को।"¹⁰ बचपन से पड़ी आदतें उसकी दिनचर्या में अभी भी शामिल है। रोज सुबह स्नान करके कृष्ण का ध्यान करना भी वह नहीं भूलता है उसके संगी-साथी उसकी इस आदत पर उपहास करते हैं। उनकी दृष्टि में यह संत-महात्माओं जैसा व्यवहार है उनकी अपनी बिरादरी का कायदा-कानून नहीं है। विनोद कम्प्यूटर कोर्स में दाखिला लेता है जिससे वह उस कैद से मुक्त हो सके। इंदिरा गाँधी मुक्त विश्वविद्यालय से पत्राचार माध्यम से बोर्ड की परीक्षा में शामिल होना चाहता है। माँ को पत्र लिख कर माँ के नाम के कॉलम में उसका नाम भरने की अनुमति चाहता है। आर्थिक रूप से स्वावलंबी होने के लिए सोसायटी में गाड़ियाँ धोता है। किन्नरों द्वारा पैसे कमाने के लिए किए जाने वाले कार्यों को करने की जगह मेहनत को तरजीह देता है। संघर्ष से घबराता नहीं है। उसकी मंजिल है मनुष्य के रूप में पहचान तथा परिवार के सदस्य के रूप में स्वीकृति। वह अपने समुदाय के अन्य किन्नरों को भी पढ़ना-लिखना सिखाता है उनमें शिक्षा के प्रति जागरूकता जगाने की कोशिश करता है।

भारत वर्ष में लोकतांत्रिक व्यवस्था को शासन के लिए अपनाया गया है। चित्रा मुद्गल इस मुद्दे से जुड़ी राजनीति को भी उपन्यास में अंकित करती है। लोकतान्त्रिक व्यवस्था में अलग-अलग राजनीतिक दल क्रियाशील रहते हैं अतः वे अपनी क्रियाशीलता लाभ के कार्यों में इस्तेमाल करते हैं। वास्तव में दिखाने की कोशिश यह होती है कि वे राजनीतिक दल वंचित समुदाय के हित में संलग्न हैं किन्तु भीतर की बात कुछ और होती है। इस उपन्यास में किन्नरों की समस्या के प्रति आवाज उठाने को तैयार एक राजनीतिक दल के विधायक विनोद को मोहरे की तरह इस्तेमाल करते हैं। किन्नरों के प्रति उनकी संवेदना केवल पार्टी हित में जागती है। विधायक जी के लिए काम करने वाले तिवारी जी विनोद से कहते हैं, साथ देंगे किन्नर हमारा तो हम उनके आरक्षण की मुहिम चलाएंगे। जोड़ेंगे उन्हें विकास के समान अवसरों से शिक्षा, रोजगार, सम्पत्ति, ऋण, बूढ़ों की पेंशन, बेरोजगार युवाओं का भत्ता, लेकिन ताली एक हाथ से नहीं बजती। संगठित होना पड़ेगा। आवाज उठानी पड़ेगी। देशव्यापी आन्दोलन छेड़ना होगा। जेलें भरनी पड़ेंगी, धरने देने होंगे।¹¹ चित्रा मुद्गल भारतीय राजनीति के बदरंग चेहरे को उघाड़ कर सामने रख देती हैं, मुलम्मा हटा कर असलियत सामने लाती है, पूरे ढोंग का सच कहती है। इस व्यवस्था ने समस्या को भुनाने की तरकीबें सीख ली हैं। वह हर समस्या का फायदा उठाना जानती हैं। उसके लिए हर व्यक्ति बस वोट है। विनोद को नेतृत्व के लिए तैयार किया जाता है। वास्तव में नजर एक पूरे समुदाय पर है। उनकी समस्या से उनका कोई लेना-देना नहीं है न उन्हें दूर करना ही उनका उद्देश्य है वे तो बस यह चाहते हैं कि यह वर्ग उनकी बातों में आकर उनके अनुसार क्रियाशील हो जाए उनके हाथ की कठपुतली बन जाए, वे आवश्यकतानुसार फायदे का खेल खेलें, खेल के खिलाड़ी तैयार करें, जिसे चाहे सामने लाएं जिसे चाहें अँधेरे में धकेल दें, जिसे चाहे जीवन से दूर कर दें। विनोद की अति सक्रियता उन्हें स्वीकार नहीं है। विनोद को तो अपनी समस्या का समाधान अपनी तरह से चाहिए। यह तो व्यवस्था स्वीकार कर ही नहीं सकती कि उसमें कोई विचलन हो फलतः विनोद भी धीरे से रास्ते से हटा दिया जाता है। माँ को देखने के लिए मुंबई गया विनोद वहीं मार दिया जाता है। संवेदना के दो छोर बिना मिले ही निष्प्राण हो जाते हैं। यह समस्या जस की तस बनी रहती है। मुश्किल तो यही है कि इस पूरे वर्ग में भी वह छटपटाहट नहीं है जो

विनोद के भीतर है। हालात को बदलने की जद्दोजहद जैसी उसमें है अन्य पात्र तो उस व्यवस्था के साथ कंडीशंड स्थिति में हैं हम जैसे हैं केवल वैसे ही जीते चले जाएं यह बात विनोद को स्वीकार नहीं। विनोद के भीतर की इसी हलचल का फायदा व्यवस्था उठा लेना चाहती है। उसे तो एक नेता खड़ा करना है। विनोद से तिवारी जी का कथन है, “इतने खुदगर्ज न बनो। खुद पढ़ लिख कर आत्म निर्भर होना चाहते हो। शेष बिरादरी को कुएं का मेढ़क बने रहने के लिए विवश कर रहे हो.... दलितों के लिए अम्बेडकर पैदा हो सकते हैं तो किन्नरों के लिए विनोद क्यों नहीं पैदा हो सकता।”¹² वह जिस प्रकार भी संभव हो विनोद का इस्तेमाल करना चाहता है। वह उसकी क्षमता पहचान जाता है। उसके रहने का इन्तजाम विधायक जी के आवास के बेसमेन्ट में किया जाता है। छल से चंडीगढ़ भेज दिया जाता है। विधायक जी विनोद से अपने साथ चंडीगढ़ चलने की बात करते हैं। वह कपड़े इत्यादि लेकर आता है तो पता चलता है कि वे जा चुके हैं और अब वह दूसरी गाड़ी से जाएगा। इसी प्रकार उससे दूसरे दिन वापस आने की बात कही गई थी किन्तु दूसरे दिन विधायक जी उससे बिना बताए वापस दिल्ली आ जाते हैं और वह पाँच दिन चंडीगढ़ में एक विशेष प्रयोजन से रोक दिया जाता है। विनोद को प्रसन्न करने के लिए तिवारी विधायक जी के हवाले से कहते हैं, “विधायक जी ने पंचम से तुम्हारी भूरि-भूरि प्रशंसा की है कि तुम देश के किन्नरों को समाज के सम्माननीय दर्जा दिलाने के पक्षधर हो। संकल्पित हो पार्टी ने तय किया है, तुम्हारे जज्बे का आदर करेगी। चुनाव दूर होकर भी दूर नहीं है। पैसे-कौड़ी की चिन्ता मसला नहीं।”¹³ विनोद को समझा-बुझाकर, क्या कहना है, क्या नहीं कहना है एक सभा में भेजा गया है लेकिन विनोद जो अपनी पहचान के लिए संघर्षरत है जिसके भीतर अपने ही घर में रहने के अधिकार की आँधी चल रही है, वह अपने दिल की बात कहता है उसे तो वहाँ उपस्थित हर व्यक्ति में, हर बच्चे में छिपा बैठा विनोद दिखाई दे रहा है। वह उनसे कहता है, वो जो आपको इन्सान नहीं समझते आपके जीने-मरने से उन्हें कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता। अन्धेरे के बावजूद वो आपकी मैयत को कन्धा देने नहीं पहुँचते। आँसू नहीं बहाते। रूढ़िद-ढाँढ नाच-गाने आशीषने पहुँचते हैं आप, उन्हीं के घर दूसरे रोज पहुँच कर देखिए? घर का दरवाजा आपके मुँह पर भेड़ दिया जाएगा।”¹⁴ और सभा समाप्त होने पर विनोद की क्या खबर ली जाती है। उसकी लानत-मलानत करते हुए किन्नरों के बीच स्वाभिमान का पाठ पढ़ाने को उसके द्वारा किए गए अपराध के रूप में दिखाया जाता है।

विनोद को पहचान देने के लिए आधार कार्ड बनता है बिमली सहगल के नाम से। विनोद को यह स्वीकार्य नहीं है न वह अपने को बिमली नाम से जोड़ पाता है न सहगल उपनाम से। उसे बिमली संबोधन सुनना पसंद नहीं है। उसे तो अपने भीतर के पुरुष की ही पहचान चाहिए, बचपन से वह पड़ोस में रहने वाली ज्योत्स्ना के प्रति आकर्षित है। किन्नरों के बीच रहते हुए वह पूनम जोशी जिसके भीतर एक भरी पूरी स्त्री जिंदा है के प्रति भावानात्मक लगाव महसूस करता है वह एक बड़े वाजिब सवाल के प्रति हमारा ध्यान आकृष्ट करता है वह है मनुष्य होने के नाते स्त्री-पुरुष माने जाने का सवाल, इससे इतर किसी पहचान को वह सिर से खारिज कर देता है, “लिंग दोषी सभी लिंग से स्त्री-पुरुष नहीं है तो क्या मनुष्य नहीं है? पेशाब भी करते हैं, पाखाने भी जाते हैं। हाँ उन सबकी तरह वीर्य नहीं उगल सकते हैं। मैथुन नहीं कर सकते। इसका मतलब यह नहीं, ये मनुष्य नहीं है।”¹⁵

उपन्यास में किन्नर समुदाय से जुड़े एक अन्य भयावह और घृणित सत्य का उद्घाटन भी किया गया है। उपन्यास में पूनम जोशी से जुड़ी घटना के माध्यम से किन्नरों के शारीरिक शोषण का यथार्थ उद्घाटित किया गया है। पूनम नटखट और कुशल नचनियाँ हैं। बाईल्ला (स्ट्रेण) हाव-भाव और अटक-मटक से भरी हुई। तीन बरस की अवस्था से तुलसी बाई के साथ है। उसे अपने माँ-बाप की भी याद नहीं है। किन्नर दल में शामिल होने पर सरदार “चुनौटी” कहकर पुकारते थे। पूनम को यह संबोधन खिल्ली उड़ता सा लगता था। सरदार को वर्जित करके वह अपना नाम खुद चुनती है— “पूनम”। अपने माँ-बाप का नाम भी खुद चुनती है— कविता जोशी तथा बलराज जोशी। कथक नृत्य में पारंगत पूनम का नृत्य विधायक जी के फॉर्म हाउस में उनके विदेश से आए भतीजे तथा उसके मित्रों के मनोरंजन हेतु रखा जाता है। जहाँ नृत्य के उपरान्त वे सब बारी-बारी से उसका बलात्कार करते हैं उसके पूर्व वे हिजड़ों का गुप्तांग देखने के लिए उसे दबोचते हैं। उन्हें असली-नकली औरत का फर्क देखना है। इसके लिए रकम चाहे जितनी लग जाए वे देने के लिए तैयार हैं। उसके रसीले होंठ कुतर डाले, उसकी टाँगे खींच कर धुरी-काँटे से उसके शरीर की चीर-फाड़ करते हैं और इस तरह पाशविकता का नृशंस कृत्य करके भोजन का स्वाद लेते हैं। घटना की सूचना विधायक जी तक पहुँचने पर वे सब किसी अज्ञात स्थान पर सुरक्षित भेज दिए गए और पूनम जोशी को अस्पताल में भर्ती करा दिया गया और विधायक जी जवान खून के बहकने की बात स्वीकार करके पूनम के इलाज के सम्पूर्ण खर्च को वहन करने का दायित्व लेते हैं।

पूनम के संदर्भ में विनोद अपने सरदार पर भी प्रश्न चिन्ह उठाता है क्योंकि सरदार जेल से छुड़वा दिए जान की एवज में शान्त रहता है पुलिस में शिकायत तक दर्ज नहीं कराता है।

एक स्वस्थ समानाधिकार प्राप्त समाज में हर व्यक्ति की समान उपयोगिता, स्थिति तथा सत्ता होनी चाहिए। हम ऐसा समाज कब निर्मित कर पाएंगे जब किसी भी व्यक्ति को अपने जन्म पर शर्मिन्दगी न महसूस हो। उसका होना ही महत्वपूर्ण हो फिर वह स्त्री हो पुरुष हो या कुछ और हो। उपन्यास में लेखिका इस बेहद जरूरी संदर्भ को कुछ यूँ दर्ज करती है, “जननांग विकलांगता बहुत बड़ा दोष है लेकिन इतना बड़ा भी नहीं कि तुम मान लो कि तुम धड़ का मात्र वही निचला हिस्सा भर हो। मस्तिष्क नहीं हो, दिल नहीं हो, धड़कन नहीं हो, आँख नहीं हो। तुम्हारे हाथ-पैर नहीं हैं। हैं, हैं, हैं, हैं, सब वैसा ही है, जैसे औरों के हैं। यौन सुख लेने-देने से वंचित हो तुम, वात्सल्य सुख से नहीं सोचो।”¹⁶ कुछ इसी तरह के सवाल डॉ० प्रदीप पाटकर, “मैं लक्ष्मी के बहाने” में कहते हैं, “हिजड़ों को अगर ठीक से जान लिया जाय तो उनकी इनसानियत, उनकी विशेषताएँ, बुद्धिमत्ता कला-कृशलता सब कुछ हमारे जैसा ही है, यह सीधा-सा सच समझने के लिए हमें और कितने साल लगेंगे? हिजड़ों के पास कोई चारा ही नहीं कि वे शरीर बेचने, भीख माँगने के अलावा भी कुछ कर सकें तो फिर उन्हें धमकी देकर डराना या यह कहना कि वे अपराध आदि करना छोड़ दें तो हम उन्हें अपना सकते हैं, कहाँ तक उचित है? परन्तु सच यही है कि हमने उन्हें अभी तक समाज में अपनाया नहीं है। असल में दोनों को एक-दूसरे को अपनाते समय हमें बहुत से बदलाव अपनी मानसिकता में करने होंगे।”¹⁷ और मानसिकता में बदलाव इतनी आसानी से और शत-प्रतिशत तो नहीं ही संभव है। उपन्यास में विनोद की परिणति किसी दुर्घटना का परिणाम न हो कर सोची-समझी करतूत है। चंडीगढ़ में उसकी स्वीकार्यता देखकर उसके नियोक्ता डोर खींचकर गति अवरूद्ध करने की तैयारी करते हैं। उसे तुरंत दिल्ली बुलाया जाता है और वहाँ से माँ की बीमारी के बहाने मुंबई का टिकट थमा कर ठिकाने लगा दिया जाता है। यह जवाब है हमारी व्यवस्था का चेतना को कुंद करने का। जाग्रत को सुलाने का। व्यवस्था चाहती है कि केवल वे ठेकेदार बने रहें सब कुछ करने का दम भरते रहें तथा जनता केवल उनके आगे-पीछे घूमती रहे, हाथ फैलाती रहे वे दाता होने का भ्रम पाले रहें। असल में बौद्धिक चरित्र को विकसित होने का मौका देने का अर्थ है अपनी सत्ता के सामने प्रश्न खड़ा करना और सत्ताएं ऐसे गैर जरूरी प्रश्नों को सुनने की जहमत नहीं उठाती हैं और अपने कार्यों से यह सिद्ध करती हैं कि किसी विनोद में यह कूबत नहीं है कि बिना उनकी अनुमति के वे किसी प्रतिष्ठित अखबार में साप्ताहिक कॉलम लिख सकें, सिर उठाकर जी सकें, आत्मनिर्भर बन सकें, उनका तो उनकी इच्छा के बिना साँस लेना भी दूभर है।

संदर्भ सूत्र

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मार्क्सवादी आलोचना में डॉ० रामविलास शर्मा का योगदान

सोनी सिंह
प्रवक्ता, हिन्दी विभाग,
सुर्यबक्स पाल स्मारक महाविद्यालय,
बनकटी, बस्ती, उत्तर प्रदेश

सारांश

डॉ० रामविलास शर्मा हिन्दी के प्रख्यात मार्क्सवादी समीक्षक, विचारक, भाषाविद् और कवि हैं। वे पूँजीवाद को सम्पूर्ण विश्व के लिए खतरा मानते हैं। डॉ० शर्मा, कला और साहित्य में भेद नहीं करते, वे मानते हैं कि साहित्य का शिल्प, उसके विभिन्न रूप सामाजिक विकास से ही संभव हुए हैं। वे मानते हैं कि भाषा कभी भी विचार शून्य नहीं हो सकती है। वे आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल की आलोचना पद्धति से बहुत प्रभावित हैं। भारतेन्दु युग को वे हिन्दी भाषी जनता का जातीय साहित्य मानते हैं। महावीर प्रसाद द्विवेदी को इसलिए महत्व देते थे की वह पुरानी व्यवस्था को बदलने की मांग के समर्थक थे। उन्होंने प्रेम की अपेक्षा करुणा को महत्व दिया। डॉ० शर्मा को प्रेमचंद इसलिए प्रिय लेखक लगते हैं कि उन्होंने साम्राज्यवादियों के द्वारा फैलाए गए भ्रमों को छिन्न-भिन्न कर दिया। प्रेमचंद की आवाज भारतीय जनता की अजय आवाज थी। निराला के स्वाधीनता प्रेम नारी व प्रकृति के मोहक चित्र, नए मानवतावाद के प्रतिष्ठापक, सौंदर्य उल्लास के कवि के रूप में स्वीकार किया। डॉ० शर्मा ने तीन कवियों मुक्तिबोध, शमशेर, और नागार्जुन का भी मूल्यांकन किया, उनकी इतिहास दृष्टि मार्क्सवादी थी। वे मानते थे कि भाषा का अध्ययन, उसकी ध्वनि-प्रकृति, भाव-प्रकृति, मूल्य शब्द भण्डार को दृष्टि में रखकर करना चाहिए। उनकी विवेचना पद्धति पर आचार्य शुक्ल का प्रभाव है। प्रतिपक्ष की मान्यताओं का खण्डन, व्यंग भर्त्सना करते हैं, किन्तु अपने मत को प्रमाणिक मानकर निर्णय करते हैं।

डॉ० रामविलास शर्मा हिन्दी के प्रख्यात मार्क्सवादी समीक्षक, विचारक, भाषाविद् एवं कवि हैं। इनका कृतित्व हिन्दी की उवलब्धि है। प्रेमचन्द (1941 ई०), भारतेन्दु युग (1943 ई०), निराला (1946 ई०), प्रगति और परम्परा (1949 ई०), साहित्य और संस्कृति (1946 ई०), प्रेमचन्द और उनका युग (1952 ई०), भारतेन्दु हरिश्चन्द (1953 ई०), भाषा, साहित्य और संस्कृति (1954 ई०), प्रगतिशील साहित्य की समस्याएं (1954 ई०), आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल और हिन्दी आलाचना (1955 ई०), लोक जीवन और साहित्य (1955 ई०), स्वाधीनता और राष्ट्रीयता साहित्य (1956 ई०), आस्था और सौन्दर्य (1961 ई०), भाषा और समाज (1961 ई०), साहित्य स्थायी मूल्य और मूल्यांकन (1968 ई०), निराला की साहित्य साधना प्र०स० (1969 ई०), निराला की साहित्य साधना द्वितीय खण्ड (1972 ई०), भारतेन्दु युग और हिन्दी साहित्य की विकास परम्परा (1975 ई०), निराला की साहित्य साधना तृ०ख० (1976 ई०), महावीरप्रसाद द्विवेदी और हिन्दी नवजागरण (1977 ई०), नयी कविता और अस्तित्ववाद (1978 ई०), भारत के प्राचीन भाषा-परिवार और हिन्दी (तीन खण्ड 1979, 1980 एवं 1981 ई०), परम्परा का मूल्यांकन (1981 ई०), भाषा युग बोध कविता (1981 ई०), भारत में अंग्रेजी राज और मार्क्सवाद (दो खण्ड 1982 ई०), कथा-विवेचना और गद्य-शिल्प (1982 ई०), मार्क्सवाद और प्रगतिशील साहित्य (1984 ई०), लोक जागरण और हिन्दी साहित्य (1985 ई०), (सम्पादित), हिन्दी जाति का साहित्य (1986 ई०), भारतीय साहित्य के इतिहास कह समस्यायें (1986 ई०), मार्क्स और निछड़े हुए समाज (1986 ई०) आदि अनेक कृतियाँ प्रकाशित हो चुकी हैं। 'मानव सभ्यता का विकास' और अठारह सौ सत्तावन की राज्य क्रान्ति, पंचरत्न (1980 ई०), घर की बात शीर्षक से अपने परिवार का इतिहास भी प्रस्तुत किया है। खण्ड-1, स्वाधीनता संग्राम: बदलते परिदृश्य 2, भारतीय इतिहास और ऐतिहासिक भौतिकवाद भी प्रकाशित हो चुके हैं।

डॉ० शर्मा ने लिखा है कि 'चाहे मनुष्य के प्राकृतिक परिवेश का सवाल हो चाहे पूँजी के केंद्रीकरण का, एक द्रव्य संसार के निर्माण और इस संसार के भीतर तेजी से बढ़ते अंतर विरोधियों का सवाल हो, हर मुद्दे पर मार्क्सवाद की स्थापना खरी उतरी है। मार्क्सवादी अप्रासंगिक नहीं है अपराधिक है मानव-जाति के भविष्य के लिए

पूँजीवाद। पूँजीवाद संसार का पुनर्गठन कैसे करें, यह हम मार्क्सवाद से सीखते हैं।' डॉ० शर्मा की चेतावनी है विदेशी पूँजी को बुलावा देकर सोवियत संघ जैसा राष्ट्र अपनी एकता की रक्षा नहीं कर पाया, उस रास्ते पर चलकर भारत अपनी एकता की रक्षा कर सकेगा, इसमें बहुत संदेह है। आपकी पश्चिम एशिया और इतिहास दर्शन की कृतियां हैं।

इतिहास—दृष्टि

डॉ० शर्मा की इतिहास—दृष्टि मार्क्सवादी है। इतिहास के भौतिकवादी व्याख्या प्रस्तुत करते हैं। द्वन्द्व न्याय के आधार पर सामाजिक विकास की विवेचना करते हैं सामाजिक यथार्थ को महत्व देते हैं। उन्होंने कबीर, तुलसी, मीरा, भारतेन्दु, महावीर प्रसाद द्विवेदी, रामचंद्र शुक्ल, प्रेमचंद, वृंदावन लाल वर्मा, निराला, प्रसाद नरेंद्र शर्मा, केदार, शमशेर, मुक्तिबोध, नागार्जुन आदि को मत देते हुए अपने सिद्धांतों को व्यावहारिक स्तर पर पुष्ट किया है। डॉ० शर्मा कहते हैं कि शुक्ल जी का आदिकाल वास्तविक मध्यकाल है, हिंदी जनपदों के इतिहास का सांमत काल है। (हिन्दी जाति का साहित्य, पृष्ठ—122)

आचार्य शुक्ल ने जिसे 'पूर्व मध्य काल' कहा है, उसे डॉ० शर्मा 'लोक जागरण काल' कहते हैं। इसी काल से डॉ० शर्मा हिन्दी साहित्य के आधुनिक काल की शुरुआत मानते हैं। शुक्लजी ने भारतेन्दु—युग से आधुनिक—युग का आरम्भ माना है। डॉ० शर्मा इसे 'लोक जागरण का दूसरा उत्थान मानते हैं। उनके अनुसार 1857 के स्वतन्त्रता संग्राम से हिन्दी—प्रदेश में नव जागरण का आरम्भ मानना चाहिए। आचार्य महावीरप्रसाद द्विवेदी का युग 'हिन्दी नव जागरण' का युग है। सामन्तवादी सामाजिक ढाँचे के भीतर व्यापारिक पूँजीवाद के विकास के साथ आरम्भ होने वाले व्यापक सांस्कृतिक जागरण से ही वे आधुनिक काल की शुरुआत मान लेते हैं। उनकी दृष्टि में भारतीय साहित्य की मौलिक धारा यथार्थवादी है। प्रगतिशील दृष्टि और यथार्थवादी चेतना को आधार बनाकर उन्होंने पूरी ऐतिहासिक परम्परा का मूल्यांकन किया है।

साहित्य और कला—चिन्तन

डॉ० शर्मा ने कहा है कि — 'कला के विषय वस्तु ना वेदांत यों का ब्रह्म है। न हेगेल का निरपेक्ष विचार। मनुष्य का इंद्रिय बोध, उसके भाव, उसके विचार, उसका सौंदर्य—बोध कला की विषयवस्तु है। 'डॉ० शर्मा कला और साहित्य में भेद नहीं करते। 'साहित्य के सभी तत्व समान रूप से परिवर्तनशील नहीं हैं। युग बदलने पर जहां विचारों में अधिक परिवर्तन होता है जहां इंद्रियबोध और भाव—जगत में अपेक्षाकृत स्थायित्व रहता है। डॉ० शर्मा शाश्वत सत्य जैसी कोई चीज नहीं मानते। साहित्य का शिल्प उसके विभिन्न रूप सामाजिक विकास से ही संभव हुए हैं। जनता तक साहित्य पहुँचाने के साधनों में जो परिवर्तन हुए, उनका प्रभाव उनके प्रभाव उनके रूपों पर भी पड़ा। वे कहते हैं कि 'साहित्य में रूप और वस्तु एक दूसरे से सम्बद्ध ही नहीं, एक दूसरे को प्रभावित भी करते हैं।' निर्णायक भूमिका हमेशा विषय—वस्तु की ही होती है। साहित्य में विषय—वस्तु को भाषा से अलग नहीं किया जा सकता, इसलिए भाषा की चर्चा करना ही काफी है। 'भाषा विचार शून्य नहीं हो सकती। इसलिए भाषा का विश्लेषण विचारों के विश्लेषण के अभाव में अधूरा माना जायेगा। इन्द्रियाबोध की परिष्कृत होकर भाव—जगत का निर्माण करता है। सौन्दर्य की इस वस्तुगत सत्ता, सामाजिक विकास से उसके सापेक्ष सम्बन्ध, कला और साहित्य के रूपों के अनुसार उसकी विषय—वस्तु की विविधता को ध्यान में रखकर ही हम सौन्दर्य—शास्त्र का सही विवेचन कर सकते हैं। (सामालोचक सौन्दर्य शास्त्र विशेषांक)

डॉ० शर्मा आचार्य रामचन्द्र शुक्ल की आलाचना—पद्धति से विशेष प्रभावित है। शुक्ल जी की आलाचना गम्भीर है, इसलिए कि उसका आधार वस्तुवादी है। शुक्ल जी की गम्भीरता का दूसरा कारण उनकी तर्क और चिन्तन—पद्धति है। इस पद्धति को हम द्वन्द्व नाम दें, तो अनुचित न होगा। विरोधी लगने वाली वस्तुओं का सामंजस्य जहचानना, उन्हें गतिशील और विकासमान देखना, संसार के विभिन्न भौतिक और मानसिक व्यापारों का परस्पर सम्बन्ध स्थापित करके उनका अध्ययन करना इस पद्धति की विशेषताएं हैं।

समीक्षा

डॉ० शर्मा ने लिखा है कि 'भारतेन्दु युग का साहित्य हिन्दी भाषी जनता का जातीय साहित्य है। वह हमारे जातीय नवजागरण का साहित्य है। भारतेन्दु-युग की जिन्दादिली उसके व्यंग्य और हास्य, उसके सरल, सरस गद्य और लो-संस्कृति से उसकी निकटता से सभी परिचित है। ये उसकी जातीय विशेषताएँ हैं अंग्रेजी साम्राज्यवाद और अंग्रेजी साहित्य एक ह वस्तु नहीं है। भारतेन्दु-युग के साहित्य ने केवल अंग्रेजी साहित्य से वरन् बंगला साहित्य से भी प्रेरणा पायी है। लेकिन उसके साहित्य की जड़े इस धरती में हैं और ऊपर बतायी हुई उसकी जातीय विशेषताएँ उसकी अपनी मौलिक हैं। 2 महावीरप्रसाद द्विवेदी को डॉ० शर्मा ने इसलिए महत्व दिया कि वे पुरानी व्यवस्था का बदलने की मांग के समर्थक थे। "साहित्य में जो रीति-विरोधी क्रान्ति शुरू हुई, उसका पहला चरण है द्विवेदी-युग और उसी का विकास छायावाद और प्रगतिवाद में होता है। ये तीनों युग एक दूसरे से भिन्न हैं, साथ ही एक दूसरे के पूरक भी हैं। द्विवेदी युग की भूमिका आधुनिक साहित्य का मार्ग प्रशस्त करने वाले अग्रदल की भूमिका है। 3 'प्रेम' की अपेक्षा 'करुणा' को अधिक महत्व दिया। डॉ० शर्मा आचार्य शुक्ल के विचारों पर लिखते हैं- 'उनकी शैली तार्किक विवेचन के लिए उपयुक्त होने के साथ आवश्यकतानुसार आवेशपूर्ण और आलंकारिक भी है और उसकी एक विशेषता जीवन का संचित अनुभव प्रकट करने वाली वाक्यावली है। शब्द-चयन में उर्दू के प्रचलित शब्दों से उन्हें परहेज नहीं है। उनका व्यक्तित्व एक सहृदय और विनोदी, साहित्य प्रेमी और संसार-प्रेमी मनुष्य का है, पुस्तक सेवी सन्यासी का नहीं। उनकी निर्भीकता, दृढ़ता, गहन अध्यवसाय और आत्मविश्वास के गुण उनके काव्य-सिद्धान्तों और साहित्यालोचन की ही तरह हिन्दी-प्रेमियों के लिए शिक्षाप्रद और प्रेरणा-दायक है। 4 प्रेमचंद भी डॉ० शर्मा के प्रिय लेखक हैं। उन्होंने "साम्राज्यवादियों और फैलाए गए भ्रमों को छिन्न-भिन्न कर दिया।" उनका साहित्य तत्कालीन हिंदुस्तान और उसके स्वाधीनता-आंदोलन का प्रतिबिम्ब है। उन्हें जीवन के विविध क्षेत्रों का विस्तृत ज्ञान था और वे समस्याओं को यथार्थ रूप से प्रस्तुत करते थे। वे महाजनी सभ्यता के विरोधी थे। वे जनता को लूटने वाली उन सभी तत्वों को पहचानते थे जो धर्म और देश-सेवा का मुखौटा लगाकर जनता को चुस्ती रहती है। वे भारतीय जनता के उज्ज्वल भविष्य की पेशगी थे। 5 डॉ० शर्मा ने लिखा है कि- 'प्रेमचंद की आवाज सुनकर हमें अपने देश और जनता पर गर्व होता है, उस जातीय संस्कृति पर गर्व होता है, जिसे प्रेमचंद सँवार रहे थे। प्रेमचंद की आवाज उस समय उठी थी जब पहले महायुद्ध में मानवध्वंसी तोपों की गड़गड़ाहट हवा में गूँज रही थी आज भी जब विश्व पर तीसरे महायुद्ध के बादल छाए हुए हैं उस स्वाधीनता-संग्राम के सैनिक की वाणी विश्व शांति की रक्षा के लिए जनता का आह्वान करती है। प्रेमचंद की आवाज भारत की अजेय जनता की आवाज है। इसलिए प्रेमचन्द आज भी हमारे साथ हैं। 6

डॉ० शर्मा की निराला-सम्बन्धी समीक्षा उनके समीक्षक-व्यक्तित्व के चरम उत्कर्ष की साक्षी है। तीन खण्डों में 'निराला की साहित्य साधना लिखा। शर्मा ने निराला के गद्य को भी उचित महत्व दिया है। डॉ० शर्मा ने कहा है कि - निराला की रचना-प्रक्रिया का स्रोत है, उनका भावबोध। यह भावबोध उनकी विचारधारा से सम्बद्ध है। किन्तु उसका प्रतिबिम्ब नहीं है। निराला का स्वाधीनता-प्रेम उनके साहित्य में अप्रत्याशित नये-नये रूपों में व्यक्त होती है। उनकी आस्था के प्रतीक अनेक हैं, उनका अधिष्ठान एक है। उनकी दार्शनिक मान्यताएँ अनेक अन्तर्विरोधों को पार करती हुई नारी और प्रकृति के मोहक चित्रों के साथ साहित्य में व्यक्त होता है। नए मानवतावाद के प्रतिष्ठापक निराला के साहित्य में मनुष्य वीर, क्रान्तिकारी योद्धा, कवि, निरन्तर, संघर्षशील, साथ ही अन्तर्द्वन्द्व, ग्लानि और पराजय से पीड़ित साधारण मनुष्य भी है। निराला सौन्दर्य और उल्लास के कवि हैं, दुख और मृत्यु के भी। 7 डॉ० शर्मा ने तीन कवियों-मुक्तिबोध, शमशेर और नागार्जन का मुल्यांकन किया है। मुक्तिबोध में उनके आत्म-संघर्ष के अनेक स्तर हैं। एक स्तर है- निम्न वर्ग की भूमि को छोड़कर सर्वहारा वर्ग से तादात्म्य स्थापित करने का। दूसरा स्तर है- मन के दुःस्वप्नों-पाप-बोध, मृत्यु-चिन्तन, आसामान्य मानसिक स्थिति से कनकलकर स्वयं को और संसार को वस्तुगत रूप से देखने का। तीसरा स्तर है अपनी काव्यकला को निरन्तर विकसित करने का। 8 मुक्तिबोध और शमशेर के आत्म-संघर्ष की तुलना करते हुए डॉ० शर्मा कहते हैं कि - 'मुक्तिबोध मनोविश्लेषण शास्त्र से प्रभावित होकर अन्तर्मन की गुफा में ज्ञान के मणि और रत्न ढूँढ़ते थे और शमशेर इतने आत्म-मुग्ध नहीं, जितने मुक्तिबोध थे। मुक्तिबोध अस्तित्ववाद की ओर खिंचे और अपने-पराये अनेक पापों का मैल मन से धोते रहे। शमशेर नयी कविता के उन तमाम लेखकों से अलग हैं तो अस्तित्ववाद से

प्रभावित है। उनका आत्म-संघर्ष है, उत्तर छायावादी काव्यबोध को लेकर। 9 नागार्जुन का काव्य इसलिए महत्वपूर्ण है कि उसमें दृढ़ क्रान्ति भावना विद्यमान है। वह लोक-संस्कृति के निकट है। आलाचकों ने चाहे नागार्जुन के विषय में कम लिखा हो किन्तु कवियों ने उन्हें काव्य का विषय बना दिया है।

भाषा-चिन्तन

डॉ० शर्मा भाषा-विज्ञान के अध्ययन की अब तक की प्रचलित सभी पद्धतियों-विवरणात्मक भाषा विज्ञान, ऐतिहासिक भाषा-विज्ञान, परिणामी भाषा-विज्ञान, समाजीभाषा-विज्ञान (सोशियोलिंग्विस्टिक्स) को किसी न किसी विन्दु पर त्रुटिपूर्ण मानते हैं। आपकी दृष्टि में भाषा संस्कृति का एक अंग है। इसलिए उसके विकास का अध्ययन संस्कृति के विकास के आधार पर ही किया जाना चाहिए। आपकी मान्यता है-भाषा का अध्ययन उसकी ध्वनि-प्रकृति, भाव-प्रकृति और मूल शब्द-भण्डार को दृष्टि में रखकर करना चाहिए आदिम साम्यवादी व्यवस्था से लेकर आधुनिक जातियों कि निर्माण तक समाज के गठन में उसके ढांचे में छेदों के परस्पर सम्बन्ध में, अनेक समाजों से संघर्ष सा हेलमेल में जो परिवर्तन हुए हैं, वे सब भाषा में प्रतिबिम्बित होते हैं और उसका विकास निर्धारित करते हैं। 10 भारोपीय परिवार की संस्कृत, लैटिन, ग्रीक, स्लाव आदि भाषाएं वस्तुतः स्वतन्त्र कुलो की भाषाएं हैं। आर्येतर भाषा-समुदायों के ज्ञान के बिना न तो भारतीय आर्य भाषाओं का विवेचन सम्भव है न यूरोप की भाषाओं का।

मूल्यांकन

डॉ० शर्मा के विवेचन-पद्धति पर भी आचार्य शुक्ल का प्रभाव स्पष्ट है। अपने विचारों को तर्कपूर्ण शैली में सोदाहरण सामने रखते हैं। आवश्यकतानुसार प्रतिपक्ष की मान्यताओं का खण्डन करते हैं। अपने प्रश्न को उभारने के लिए तुलनात्मक विवेचन के साथ ही व्यंग्य, विद्रूप और भर्त्सना से भी काम लेते हैं किन्तु अन्त में अपने तम को ही प्रामाणिक मानकर दो टूक निर्णय करते हैं।

डॉ० शर्मा भाववादी चिन्तन के विरुद्ध उनकी धारणाएँ बद्धमूल हो चुकी हैं। वस्तुतः भाव-वाद का द्वन्द्व भी समाप्त होना चाहिए। अमूर्त तत्वों की कल्पना भी मूर्त के आधार पर ही की जाती है। गोचर जगत् के संघर्षों से ऊबरकर ही मनुष्य अगोचर और रहस्यमय लोक की कल्पना करता है। वह भी उसकी आकांक्षा की ही सृष्टि है। इसी प्रकार अमूर्त और अगोचर के साथ व्यक्तिगत सम्बन्ध स्थापित करते की आकांक्षा से ही वह उसे मूर्त कर लेता है। इसलिए दोनों सृष्टियाँ मानवीय ही कही जायेगी। पदार्थवाद को महत्व इसलिए दिया जाता है कि इसके स्वीकार से सामाजिक व्यवस्था में परोक्ष सत्ता के हस्तक्षेप का आधार खत्म हो जाता है और सारी विषमता के कारण रूप में मनुष्य आ जाता है। तब किसी से यह नहीं कहा जा सकता कि गरीब और अमीर बनाने वाला कोई और है। ऐसी स्थिति में शोषित और पीड़ित वर्ग को न्याय के लिए संघर्ष करने का ठोस आधार मिल जाता है। यदि भाववादी चिन्तक शुद्ध चैतन्य को सामाजिक भेद-भाव का नियामक न मानकर शुद्ध मुक्त, सर्व-निरपेक्ष तत्वमात्र प्रमाणित करें और सामाजिक भेद-भाव के सभी आयामों का मूल कारण मनुष्य को ही मानें तो पदार्थवाद और भाववाद की दूरी व्यवहार के धरातल पर कम हो सकती है। वस्तुतः सामाजिक न्याय के मार्ग में पुनर्जन्म और कर्म-सिद्धान्त की मान्यता विशेष रूप से बाधक हुई है। ईश्वर की सत्ता न मानने वाले दार्शनिक भी दससे मुक्त नहीं हो सके हैं। सभी भाववादी विचारक समता विरोधी रहे हों, ऐसा भी नहीं कहा जा सकता है। आखिर कबीर जैसा क्रान्तिकारी भी भाववादी ही था। ध्यान रखना होगा कि मनुष्य की सर्वश्रेष्ठता का घोष करने वाले व्यास पदार्थवादी नहीं थे। हाँ, यह अवश्य सत्य है कि हमारा व्यापक सरोकार गोचर और यथार्थ जगत् से ही है। जन साधारण के सुख-दुख, योग-क्षेम, जय-पराजय आदि का मूल स्रोत यथार्थ जगत् से ही है। अतः जन साधारण को केन्द्र में रखकर रचित साहित्य भी यथार्थ जगत् से ही सम्बद्ध होना चाहिए। यथार्थ जगत् की समस्याएं समाज की स्थिति और व्यवस्था से जुड़ी हुई हैं। इसलिए ऐसी व्यवस्था, जो सामान्य जन के हितों की उपेक्षा करने वाली हो, उसका विरोध होना चाहिए। यह विरोध कला और साहित्य के स्तर पर रचनात्मक तरीके से भी हो सकता है। उन्होंने साहित्य की गतिशील चेतना का विश्लेषण किया है। बद्धमूल जीवन-दृष्टि के बावजूद डॉ० शर्मा का विवेक आग्रह-ग्रस्त नहीं है।

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