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# Civil Services Day

**Meenakshi Hooja**

21st April is Civil services day . In the very difficult times of the Covid 19 pandemic , it can be said and felt quite visibly , that like other professions and institutions , the civil services have risen to the occasion in dealing with the crisis that has unexpectedly gripped one country  after another, including ours .

The history of administration , as also of the  civil services in India  can be,  and is, traced back to ancient times , especially to the Mauryan period (approximately 322 to 185 BCE ) and the famous treatise Arthashastra of Kautilya / Chanakya . Many of the institutions like territorial Provinces with capitals , Mahamatyas ,  Council of ministers, Sachivs , Departments headed by officers , Policing and intelligence systems , a sophisticated civil service , municipal governance can be seen continuing  from those days , though  in a  considerably modified form. The systems continued to evolve , but some new aspects were introduced during the days of the rule of the Sultans  and more so during the Mughal rule from mid 16th to early 18th century . As it became an empire there were territorial  Subhas or Provinces ,  Sarkars and Parganas ,and separate  Departments for various activities, Including Wazirs for  land administration and revenue collection, Kotwals , Qanungoes  and large number  other revenue and civil officials at the ground and field level . The land  measurements , records and tax system in cash or kind on agriculture and crops also developed substantially  during this time, led by Raja Todar Mal  . Many of the designations are there even today .

With the advent of the British through the East India Company from mid seventeenth century and  more definitely after the Battle of Plassey and Buxar ( June 1757 and 1764)  and the Company gaining Diwani rights , newer systems of Government and Administration began to be set up , although the earlier institutions did provide the basic structure . .More changes took place once the British Government took over the reigns  directly through the  Government of India Act of 1858 ,  after  what they called the Mutiny and what has rightly been regarded by Indians  as the First war of Independence.

To a large extent , the Civil services of today have their origins and their background in how they evolved during British times . The East India Company had what is oft called the patronage system , i.e. the senior civil servants were  appointed on the basis of recommendations of the Court of Directors , and in fact were very young in age . They were often called Writers and that is why the  Secretariat is known as the Writers Building in Kolkata , where the British first established their control . The system of Covenanted and Uncovenanted civil service was laid down by Lord Cornwallis , known as  the  Father of Civil services in India . The senior ones, mostly British , had to sign a covenant and were  part of the  prestigious Covenanted  civil service . During the Company times , this was known as the  Hon'ble East India Company Service  or the HEICS . While the Governor General and Governors of Provinces were mostly from the higher sections of the aristocracy  , the other officers largely belonged to this service . They were  chiefly responsible for the spread of the Empire , along with the military forces . The system of District Administration , office of the Collector and District Magistrate evolved and substantially developed  during this period .  One of the best accounts of the civil services , both in terms of individuals and general governance is available in Philip Mason's two volume  book The Men who Ruled India . The most famous of these Company officers is the famous quartet of Elphinstone, Metcalfe ,Munro and Malcom . The civil service below these senior persons , who manned all the top posts , at the central level or the Presidency /Province and District level , were the uncovenanted civil servants , mostly Indians ,  who carried out Ministerial or clerical and field  work  and in a way helped in communicating the orders and directions in the local language .

After the British Government directly  took over the reigns of the Raj from Company by the Government of India Act of 1858,  much continued in the system of administration , but the pattern of recruitment to the top levels of Civil services changed . The system of selection through open competition on merit rather than patronage , championed by Lord Macaulay  was introduced not only for India but for other colonies also . The pattern of examination , subjects and standards for the exams much favoured the study of Classics , Greek and Latin and history ,  the age , the minimum qualifications were laid down . Thus were laid the foundations of what was to be known as the Indian Civil service and the officers jocularly referred to as Competition Wallahs ,  that ran the Empire for about another hundred years . The second half of the 19th century is said to be the Golden Age where again the District remained the basic unit of Administration.

With the turn of the century much changed. Indians had already started getting selected in the ICS , appearing in the exam from London with Shri Satyendra Nath Tagore being the first Indian to be selected in the year 1863 . Later the exams also started being held in India  from 1922 as more and more Indians started getting selected and by 1939 , ie before the outbreak of the Second world war the Percentage of Indians was almost 50 % . The  Federal Public Service Commission was set up  as per recommendations of the Lee Commission for recruitment and the scheme of examination , papers etc were also modified .  The Services were divided into All India Services and Central Services . Recruitment to the Provincial Civil Services became a regular feature with opportunities to hold senior assignments. The system of recruitment to lower level posts and promotions also began to get more set with rules and regulations in place .

The advent of Gandhi , the rise of nationalism ,  the various Reforms Commissions  and passage of the Acts of 1909, 1919 , the Jallianwala massacre , the demand for dominion status  changed many things for the ICS . From almost rulers , they now had to work under Indian political leaders also, though in a limited way ,and national issues were now dominant . This led to the growing centralisation of the decision making process and Governments at the Central level and Province level became more important. For the district officers it was no longer their full fledged Raj . In such a scenario there was a growing lack of interest amongst the Britishers to try for the ICS .

The Indians who got selected to the ICS , were looked upon with both awe and admiration as well as a little doubt about   their full loyalties to the country , especially as it marched towards Independence . However soon any such doubts were put aside and those of the ICS who chose to serve the Indian Dominion were continued with full faith and confidence. A good account  of the role played by Indian  officers of the ICS can be read in the book  The Civil Servant In India edited by KL Panjabi  ( 1965 ) where many distinguished officers have shared their experiences.

At the time of Independence ,  with strong support from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel , the All India Services , based on the pattern of the ICS and the IP ( Indian Police ) , renamed the Indian Administrative Service and Indian Police Service ,as also the Indian Forest Service,  were retained and made a part of the Constitution with adequate service safeguards . The Public Service Commision became the Union Public Service Commision and carried the responsibility for recruitment  interalia to the All India Services ie  IAS , IPS and the IFS (Indian Forest Service)   and the higher

levels of Central services like Railways, Customs, Income tax , Audit and Accounts , Defence Accounts , Posts and Telegraphs , Information and Broadcasting and others .

The examination pattern of compulsory and optional subjects , different for different categories of services followed by an interview became the standard method of selection , with initially the upper age limit quite low and varying for services . Gradually changes were introduced as per requirements and the examination was opened to amongst others , Medical and Engineering students. Later what used to be called the IAS etc examination , came to be called the Civil Services Examination with the system of preliminaries also introduced . In the wake of Indira Sawhney judgement , reservations were also provided for non creamy layer candidates belonging to the OBCs which was earlier given only to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes .

The impact of these changes has been that the services have become more broad based with intake from all sections of society . Further with the growth of education amongst women , their numbers have also increased . This trend is seen in recruitment to the State Level Services and in other levels also . Some of the States also provide for reservation of women within the reserved categories .

From the year 2006, 21st April is celebrated as Civil Services Day to mark the first address of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel to the Administrative Service Officers in 1947 at Metcalfe House , Delhi which then housed the Training Academy . Every year a function is organised by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances at the national level , while similar functions and activities are also organised at State level and below . it is an occasion for the civil servants to rededicate themselves to the cause of service and renew their commitment to duty and excellence . Awards for performances , innovations are also given on this annual day .

As we talk and think about Civil Services today , many broad and general issues and questions inevitably cross the mind . How responsive , diligent , and effective is their performance . Are they able to carry out the responsibilities and duties with honesty , integrity , and fairness as expected of them . What types of equations are there with the Ministers and other public representatives , considering that in our democratic set up the civil services work under the political executive , which is responsible to the legislature and the people's representatives . Much has been written and talked about these topics , including corruption , lack of sensitivity to

citizens' matters and the problems faced by the civil servants themselves , like arbitrary transfer and postings , harassment , as also political interference in day to day work . Yet there are innumerable examples and illustrations of civil servants , performing their jobs with utmost sincerity , achieving results against all odds  and working day and night to fight disasters and emergencies . One such of the many accounts penned by the officers themselves, retired and serving is in the book Bureaucracy and Society: The IAS at work edited by Dr Rakesh Hooja ( Rawat 2009 ) .

Along with the Health and Medical services and under the guidance of the political representatives, the civil servants have pitched in with their best of abilities and dedication to fight against Covid 19 Pandemic today. Therefore it is again  the time  for the Civil Services , to truly dedicate and rededicate themselves to the cause of the country and work  in our context of democracy and rule of law, according to the enduring values  of honesty , integrity , grit and determination , fairness and uprightness , but above all  with concern and care for the people  with a human touch .

# Accelerating the Development of Small Firms in Rajasthan's Smaller Towns

**Subhash Mathur & Subodh Mathur**

For many years, Rajasthan's economy has been growing at about the national average. If Rajasthan does not do better in the future, we will not be an all-prosperous State by 2047. The main reason is that Rajasthan's economy does not create enough reasonably paying jobs, particularly for those without a good college education. That's a major problem because there are and will be plenty of such people.

Young people in Rajasthan will continue to move out of villages, and often move to large towns such as Jaipur and Jodhpur, hoping that their children will have better prospects. But such towns are already too crowded, and their further expansion creates its own problems.

Rajasthan will have to make many changes in its economy to lift itself up to prosperity. Fortunately, the Rajasthan government is working to make one important change. This is to aggressively promote Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). A new draft Government policy supports this idea. It states:

"MSME sector not only plays a crucial role in providing greater employment opportunities at comparatively lower capital cost as compared to large industries but also helps in industrialization of rural & backward areas, thereby reducing regional imbalances and assuring more equitable distribution of national income and wealth ... the State Government desires to usher in a new era of growth for its MSMEs."

Good idea, which is consistent with the Union government's national plans.

Liftup India 2047 will assist MSMEs to grow in Rajasthan. We will do the same in West Bengal, Odisha, and add more states later.

Initially, we will assist the existing MSMEs in selected smaller towns (population under or around 3 lakhs) in different parts of each state. Our

selected towns will be "growth-ready," meaning they meet our three objective criteria. First, they have adequate physical (road, rail), human (health, education), and digital infrastructure. Second, they have enough land and water for town expansion. Third, they have ongoing MSMEs with growth potential.

We want these towns to grow fast by absorbing some of the migrants from nearby villages, so that the migrants don't go to large, far-away towns. Initially, we will assist the existing MSMEs in our selected towns, and later support entrepreneurs to set up new MSMEs in these towns.

Our aim is to at least double, within about 7 years, the total output from all the MSMEs in each town, which will create a significant number of new reasonably paying jobs. And there will be good opportunities for self-employment.

Initially, we have selected Churu, Kotputli, and Bundi to work in, and will gradually add other smaller, growth-ready towns. Later, we will work in other types of smaller Rajasthan towns.

Liftup India2047 consists of a group of motivated people of different backgrounds and ages who have come together as volunteers to promote India's economic development. We are a new type of a non-profit group. We are production-oriented, inspired by successful non-profit groups such as Amul and SEWA. A key difference is that they help only their members, but we have no membership and will assist all MSMEs.

Our work will be catalytic and facilitative. We will function as a "proactive helpdesk" assisting MSMEs with the financial, marketing, technical, and administrative/regulatory issues they face. We will "handhold" the MSMEs but not provide any resources ourselves. We will have adequate local capacity in each town, but bring in additional resources as needed.

We will help the MSMEs to do better by enabling them to take full advantage of existing government schemes for MSMEs. Further, we will bring in non-government State and national groups and people who want to help MSMEs.

In this way, we will help the existing MSMEs to grow by improving their financial strength, and assist interested entrepreneurs to set up new units.

We have completed the step of defining the "project concept and broad

operational modalities." By the end of August 2022, we will complete "a detailed ground reality assessment" and define "the initial activities of the helpdesk."

We plan to begin full-scale implementation by the end of December 2022. After that, we will continue to promote MSMEs in Rajasthan, taking advantage of new opportunities as they arise. And we are developing other projects that we will implement in Rajasthan's smaller towns.

Subhash Mathur, a senior retired Central government officer, is the head of Liftup India2047, a new  organisation being registered as a non-profit company in Jaipur. Subodh Mathur is an economist and author of *India's Path to Prosperity 2022-2047: A Workable Agenda for the Next 10-15 Years*.

# Electoral Violence and the Survival of Nigerian Democracy in the Fourth Republic, 1999-2015: A Historical Analysis

**Adesote Samson Adesola**

## Abstract

Electoral process in the post-colonial Nigeriawas characterised by violence, which was both pre and post. Recent manifestations of electoral violence,most importantly between 1999 and 2015 in the Fourth Republic assumed an unprecedented magnitude, resulting in the loss and displacement of many innocent lives. However, with the adoption of technology especially in the build up to the 2015 general elections, the rate of electoral violence was minimized. The paper historicizes electoral violence and its implications on the survival of democracy in Nigeria with major emphasis on the Fourth Republic between 1999 and 2015. It argues that the high incidence of electoral violence since the birth of the Fourth Republic in 1999 was as a result of the nature and kind of party politics being played, neo-patrimonial character of the Nigerian state, weak institutionalization of democratic architectures and inefficient electoral management body. The paper, therefore, submits that the survival of Nigerian democracy in the ongoing republic can only be possible through strict adherence to the ideals and principles of electoral process as practiced in advanced democratic societies such as the United States of America and Great Britain.

**Keywords:** Violence, Election, Electoral Violence, Democracy.

## Introduction

Without doubt, in every stable democratic society, election remains the essential ingredient of transitory process from one civilian administration to another. Elections have become an integral part of representative democracy that by and large prevails across the world. Lindberg (2003) explains that every modern vision of representative democracy entails the notion

of elections as the primary means of selection of political decision makers. Therefore, it is incomprehensible in contemporary times to think of democracy without linking it to the idea and practice of elections. Ojo (2007), argues that election is the 'hallmark of democracy' while Chiroro (2005) sees it as the 'heart of the democratic order'. In all, elections constitute a core component of democracy.

The electoral process in Nigeria in particular and Africa in general especially since the beginning of the 21st century is characterized by different forms of violence. It is important to emphasize here that though violence has been a long-standing feature of the democratization process in the post-colonial Nigeria, its recent manifestations especially since the birth of the Fourth Republic has assumed an unprecedented magnitude thus constituting a major threat to the survival democracy. Fundamentally, there is no doubt the fact that electoral violence remains a major source of political instability in a democratic society with palpable threats of deconsolidation. For instance, Adigun Agbaje and Said Adejumobi argued that violence has become infused in political processes in most new democracies in Africa especially with respect to the 21st century. For example, according to the 2008 Amnesty International Report, 'the violent struggle for power, even in states which do not descend into armed conflict, still remains an important component of political life in Africa.

Having survived decades of military dictatorship which was characterized by despotism, violation of fundamental human rights, financial profligacy among others, Nigeria eventually returned to civil rule on May 29, 1999 which culminated in the birth of the Fourth Republic. The republic, which started amidst great hope and expectations is yet to significantly convince the generality of the Nigerian populace its democratic success especially with respect to the conduct of free, fair and credible elections devoid of election violence (pre and post). Within the space of these sixteen years of civil rule, political transition from one civilian administration to another since 2003 at all levels of government (that is, federal, state and local) has not only been very rough, but also very turbulent. This is noticeable in the various cases of electoral violence which has claimed several lives, displacement of innocent people and wanton destruction of property. In fact, the conduct of general elections between 2003 and 2011 has been retrogressive rather than progressive. It is against this background that this workseeks to historicize electoral violence and the survival of democracy in Nigeria's Fourth Republic between 1999 and 2015. The paper adopted historical and analytical approaches, utilising materials from both primary and secondary sources.

**Conceptual Clarification of Some Terminologies**

It is very significant to conceptualise some major key concepts based on their relevance in this paper. Among these concepts include, violence, electoral violence, election and democracy

**Violence:** The word violence has been viewed by scholars, researchers and political scientists from different perspectives.However, in this paper, violence is seen in terms of both violation of human rights and social injustice. This paper therefore examined one major type of violence (electoral violence) that have greatly led to loss of lives, wanton destruction of property, massive displacement of innocent lives as well as threat to the survival of democracy in Nigerian's Fourth Republic. Gilula and Daniels (1969) as cited in Wikipedia (2010) defineviolence as 'destructive aggression'. This conceptualization of violence implies the use of physical force to injure persons or property; and this is the core of most definitions of violence. According to World Health Organization, violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation (WHO, 2002).

**Election**: Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary (2006) defines election as: "the act or process of organizing systematic (s) election (permitting mass participation and method of choosing) a person or persons by vote for a public office position in which state authority is exercised". According to Roberts and Edwards (1991) cited in Omotola (2007)election is: "A method for the selection of persons to fill certain offices through choices made by an electorate; those (citizens who are qualified to vote under the rules and procedures of the electoral system"

**Electoral Violence**: According to Fischer (2002), electoral violence (conflict) is any random or organized act that seeks to determine, delay, or otherwise influence an electoral process through threat, verbal intimidation, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, forced "protection," blackmail, destruction of property, or assassination. Fischer's definition has been modified by Megan Reif (2010)as cited in Majekodunmi, R &Adejuwon, K.D (2012)where electoral violence is defined thus:

*any spontaneous or organized act by candidates, party supporters, election authorities, voters, or any other actor that occurs during an electoral process, from*

*the date of voter registration to the date of inauguration of a new government, that uses physical harm, intimidation, blackmail, verbal abuse, violent demonstrations, psychological manipulation, or other coercive tactics aimed at exploiting, disrupting, determining, hastening, delaying, reversing, or otherwise influencing an electoral process and its outcome.* Also, Igbuzor (2010) sees electoral violence as:

*"any act of violence perpetuated in the course of political activities, including pre, during and post election periods, and may include any of the following acts: thuggery, use of force to disrupt political meetings or voting at polling stations, or the use of dangerous weapons to intimidate voters and other electoral process or to cause bodily harm or injury to any person connected with electoral processes".* International Foundation for Election Systems (2011) defines electoral violence as

*"any violence (harm) or threat of violence (harm) that is aimed at any person or property involved in the election process, or at disrupting any part of the electoral or political process during the election period"*

According to Albert (2007) electoral violence has to do with *all forms of organized acts or threats – physical, psychological, and structural – aimed at intimidating, harming, blackmailing a political stakeholder before, during and after an election with a view to determining, delaying, or otherwise influencing an electoral process*

These above definitions of electoral violence typically captured the deeper nature and stages of electoral violence in Nigeria especially since the birth of the Fourth Republic in 1999.

**Democracy**: Democracy which started in Ancient Greek city state of Athenswas derived from the Greek words "Demos" meaning "people" and "Kratos" implying "rule". Thus when put together, democracy in Ancient Greek means "rule by the people(Cambridge Encyclopaedia 1990). Dahl et al (2003) cited in Abimbola &Adesote (2012) explain that equality and freedom remain the most important characteristics of democracy since ancient times. They however defined democracy as an egalitarian form of government in which all the citizens of a nation together determine public policy, the laws and the actions of their state, requiring that all citizens (meeting certain qualifications) have an equal opportunity to express their opinion (Abimbola &Adesote, 2012).

**Historicising Electoral Violence in Nigeria, 1951-1993: An Overview**

The historical trajectory of political violence (electoral violence inclusive) in Nigeria could be traced to the colonial period. This means that thorough understanding of the problem of electoral violence in Nigeria requires situating it within its political history.Some scholars in the extant literature have argued that colonial settings laid the foundation for post-colonial political conflict in Nigeria. This argument was hinged on a number of British political experiments during the colonial period as could be seen in the introduction of the elective principle in 1922 as well as the emergence of the 1946 Richards constitution. For instance, the elective principle, though to a very large extent was non-violent, was a restrictive franchise, which was limited to Lagos and Calabar with income and residential qualifications, and could be a potential basis for violence (Omotola, 2007). The first major incidence of dissatisfaction as regard the conduct of elections during the colonial period was during 1951 regional Houses of Assembly elections. The elections which were held based on the then electoral systemintroduced by the 1951 constitution led to widespread dissatisfaction among majority of Nigerians in 1952. Thus, in 1953, there was increase in the intensity of political agitation (Falola, et. al, 1991). In other words, the emergence of political development in 1950s marked the genesis of electoral violence in Nigeria.

The first and immediate post-colonial electoral violence in Nigeria occurred during the 1964 general elections, the first election to be conducted after independence. The Northern People's Congress needed the elections to consolidate its power at the centre. The Action Group (AG) also needed it in order to dislodge Chief S.L Akintola from power in the West. The NCNC on its own also wanted to improve its bargaining strength in the East.It became obvious that all the major political parties were adequately anxious to participate in the elections (Falola et. al, 1991). By the middle of 1964, two major political alliances had emerged from all the manoeuvres. The NPC and the NNDP founded the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA). The AG and the NCNC constituted themselves into the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA). The 1964 federal election was contested between these major alliances (Ige, 1995). Two main coalitions contested these elections: the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA) made up of the NPC and some other minor parties; the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) comprising the NCNC, AG, NEPU and UMBC (Falola, et al, 1991).

The campaigns by these coalitions generated much bitterness, acrimony and violence, especially in the west.The elections which were said to have

been massively rigged through different means led to widespread violence/conflicts in the west following the announcement of results by the Chairman of Federal Electoral Commission, named Mr. Esua. This argument could be corroborated with the address of President, Dr. Nnamdi-Azikiwe and the then Inspector General Police, Mr. Louis Edet. Azikiwe in his Dawn broadcast to the nation, expressedthat the head of state condemned the way and manner the electioneering was conducted. He explained that the politicians in power have no right to employ instruments of power in order to perpetuate their stay in office. He cited instances where Nigerian citizens had been deprived of their constitutional right to freedom of association. He warned the politicians that: "If they have decided to destroy our national unity, they should summon a round table conference to decide how our national asserts should be divided for it is better that we should disintegrate in peace and not in pieces" (Anifowose, 1972).Also, the Inspector General of Police, Louis Edet made a nation-wide broadcast reporting that incidents involving violence had reached alarming proportions. He appealed to the politicians to protect Nigeria's enviable reputation as a bastion of democracy in Africa (Anifowose, 1972).The attendant consequences of the violence such as arson, looting, killing, wanton destruction of properties and the total collapse of public order mostly especially in the Western Region, were unprecedented. For example, at Ishokun, Ilesha, twenty school children were murdered on the ground that they were in town to combat an impending riot. Also, at Isho, a village few miles from Owo, sixteen people were killed. As it was in the west, so also it went on in the Middle Belt. A good example was the second Tiv riot of 1964 (Anifowose, 1972).

The second major electoral violence in the post-colonial Nigeria was traced to the Western Regional election in October 1965. The announcement of the election results by the Federal Electoral Commission, which led to the victory of Chief S.L Akintola of the Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP) as against the wishes of many people who expected that Chief Adegbenro of the UPGA led to large-scale widespread violence in the whole of Western Region on the ground that there were irregularities in the election results.The decision of the federal government to recognise the results of the election thus gave Chief Akintola the power to form a new government. This development forced the members of UPGA to embark on a spontaneous and violent demonstration known as "operation *wet e*" – an operation which required the spraying of houses, cars and persons with petrol and then setting fire to them (Ige, 1995). There were series of protests and demonstrations carried out by angry students, market women, farmers and other groups in most towns and villages throughout

the western region, and these were accompanied by looting, arson, killing on an unprecedented scale and burning of houses, vehicles and shops. Anti-governmental placards were displayed, party slogan- Awo! Awo! UPGA!  UPGA! -as well as war songs were advanced. In some cases, the demonstration ended in clashes with anti-riot police squad, who did not hesitate to shoot. A typical song by the angry demonstrators was "*E jeki a muraogun, eleyi l on je iya*(let us prepare for war, this is an insulting behaviours) (Anifowose, 1972). The high rate of electoral violence in the 1964 and 1965 elections contributed largely to the collapse of the First Republic in 1966 (Osaghae 1998; Akinwumi 2004).

Another major electoral violence occurred during the Second Republic (1979–1983). During the republic, which barely lasted for four years, two major general elections were conducted, namely the 1979 and 1983 elections. The conduct of the two elections witnessed various cases of electoral violence across the country. The structure of politics, despite the alteration in the structure of the federation from three (and later four) regions of the first republic, to nineteen states, was still largely driven by ethno-religious forces, where each party maintained its strong hold in a given regional/ ethnic domain (Omotola,2007). For example, the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) dominated the Northern region, the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN) dominated the Western region while the National Council of Nigeria Citizen (NCNC) dominated the Eastern region (Abimbola &Adesote, 2012). The National Party of Nigeria (NPN), obviously NPC's successor, controlled the federal government between 1979 and 1983. In the 1983 elections, it wanted to extend its reach to other regions, either by hook or by crook. The attempt to achieve this underscored the massive rigging of the 1983 elections, which resulted in an unprecedented outbreak of violence in the Western egion, where the Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), AG'S successor, held sway (Omotola,2007). In the then Oyo and Ondo States, the two UPN states were declared for the NPN. This announcement led to unprecedented violence, in which a writer simply described it as 'the house of war' (Barbarinsa 2002). Although Ondo state was later returned to UPN at the Election Tribunal, series of violence that characterised the disputed election results following various cases of alleged irregularities led to the collapse of the republic on 31 December 1983, in which Major General Muhammadu Buhari (who was then the Chief of Army Staff) decided to seize power. This ushered in the emergence of the second phase of military rule in the country which lasted till 1999.

This discourse would be incomplete without having a cursory look at the electoral process during the aborted Third Republic. Prior to the Presiden-

tial election in 1993, the local government,House of Assembly and gubernatorial elections had already been conducted in preparation for the birth of the republic, which were not only peaceful, but also devoid of pre and post electoral violence. The presidential election, which was held on June 12, 1993, and contested by Chief M.K.O Abiola of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and Alhaji Bashir Tofa of the National Republican Convention (NRC), and described both local observer as the fairest election in the post-colonial Nigeria was eventually annulled by the military regime of General Ibrahim Babangida. The annulment of the election caused series of crises especially in the Western part of Nigeria championed by some groups such as NADECO among others. The post electoral violence which followed the annulment of the June 12, 1993 election was what forced Gen. Ibrahim Babangida to form an Interim National Government (ING) headed by Ernest Shonekan, who was later overthrown in what was regarded as peaceful coup on November 17 1993 by General Sani Abacha.

**Historical Analysis of Electoral Violence in the Fourth Republic, 1999-2015**

Before we begin to examine various cases of electoral violence that have plagued the Fourth Republic since 1999, it is imperative to briefly have a glimpse of the birth of the republic.The process that eventually culminatedin the birth of the Fourth Republic began as a result of the sudden death of late General Sanni Abacha on June 8, 1998,which paved way for the emergence of General Abdulsalam Abubakar as the new Head of State of Nigeria.Subsequent upon his emergence, Gen Abdulsalam announced that he would hand over power to the democratically elected president on May 29, 1999. In the pursuance of the political transition programme, General Abubakar, dissolved the initial five political parties registered by the Abacha's regime, cancelled all the elections that were conducted and thus, set up another electoral body known as Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC).  The electoral body was set up initially to grant provisional registration to nine political parties, with the condition that after the local government elections of that year, those that had 10% votes and above in at least 24 states of the Federation would qualify to contest the subsequent State and Federal elections. Eventually, only three political parties that is, the Alliance for Democracy (AD), All Peoples Party (APP) and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) that were registered (Dode, 2010 ; Abimbola & Adesote, 2012).

Within nine months of inception, the regime of General Abdulsalam successfully completed a transition to civilian administration by conducting

several elections including the presidential election of April1999 and thus handing over power to Chief Olusegun Obasanjo of the PDP on May 29, 1999. The emergence of Chief Olusegun Obasanjo as the third executive president of Nigeria of marked the genesis of the Fourth Republic. The need therefore to nurture the nascent democracy to maturity such that it could no longer be reversed or eroded like what happened during second republic became a major challenge to the new government.

The conduct of free, fair and credible periodic elections by unbiased electoral body including its umpire as well as other electoral officials and the adherence to democratic principles of governance remain major factors responsible for the avoidance of electoral violence in any democratic society. These two major factors were the challenges which the Fourth Republic had been contending with since its birth in 1999 up till 2015. It is against this backdrop that we shall examine various electoral violence vis-à-vis elections that were conducted in Nigeria since the birth of the Fourth Republic with major emphasis on the 2003, 2007, 2011 and 2015 elections.

After the 1999 general elections, four general elections were conducted under a civilian administration in the country in which one can say that democracy was actually consolidated.In other words, the years between 2003 and 2015 witnessed successful transition of one civilian administration to another.For instance, in 2003, a presidential election was conducted and the incumbent president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo of the PDP was declared winner by INEC. Also, in 2007, late Alhaji Umaru Yar'Adua of the PDP wasdeclared by INEC as the President elect. In April 2011, presidential election was conducted and won by Dr. Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP, who was initially sworn in first as, Acting President following the critical condition of late president Umaru Yar'Adua, and later as a substantive President in 2010 after the death of President Yar'Adua. While civilian to civilian transition between 2003 and 2011 was intra party affairs (that is between PDP), in 2015, civilian to civilian transition changed to inter party affair (that is from PDP to APC).

Although democracy was consolidated in the period between 2003 and 2015 because, there was no military welcome back, various general elections conducted during this period were characterized by of different forms of electoral malpractices and irregularities which sparked off various cases of electoral violence that led to killings and displacement of many innocent lives and wanton destruction of property that worth billions of naira.Effort would be made to cite various cases of electoral violence that took place in Nigeria between 2003 and 2015.

Scholars have argued that one of the fundamental problems facing majority of post-colonial African states is that of how to sustain and consolidate their democracy through credible elections (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1989). Evidences have shown that in the whole of African continent, only few states could lay claim to have genuinely conducted free and fair elections that were universally perceived. Thus, election administration that will achieve governmental legitimacy and as well prevent electoral violence after polls has always been a major serious concern to not only electoral scholars (Kolawole, 2007), but also many lovers of democracy. It is on this submission that the three general elections that were conducted in Nigeria stands.

The first major general election to be conducted by a civilian administration in the Nigeria's Fourth Republic was held in 2003 under the administration of President Chief Olusegun Obasanjo. The 2003 general election was said to have been one of the most corrupt and fraudulent elections to be conducted in the post-colonial Nigeria (Kurfi, 2005). The election was also characterised by different types of electoral frauds which range from ballot stuffing, intimidation, killing, and assassination among others. The election was a triumph of violence. A number of people have argued that there were no elections in 2003 but merely the intimidation of voters and the selection of already decided winners by elites and caucuses (Abimbola&Adesote, 2012). Both internal and external observers were unanimous on the unfairness of the competition in the electoral process which was said to have been manipulated by the so-called ruling party, Peoples' Democratic Party. For example, according to the Human Right Watch's report, between April and May 2003, about one hundred people were said to have been killed and many more injured during federal and state elections in Nigeria and that most of the violence was perpetrated by the ruling PDP and its supporters (Human Rights Watch, 2004). The subsequent local government election which was conducted across the country in the following year also witnessed electoral violence. USIP noted that violence during the 2003 election cycle was more blatant and widespread and marked the unchecked proliferation of another worrisome development; the hiring and arming of militias to serve narrow political ends.

Also, the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), a coalition of over ninety civil society groups, in its report on the 2003 general elections, gave a vote of no confidence in the elections. The group declared in its report that "…Twenty-nine of the registered political parties that either contested or did not contest the elections have variously rejected the results as announced by the INEC declaring the results as fraudulent. Both Domestic

and International Election Observers documented massive irregularities that characterised the elections and refused to endorse the elections as free and fair. Some political parties and their candidates decided to challenge some of the results before the various Election Petition tribunals and have gone ahead to do so while others declared "mass action" to pressure a government without popular mandate to abdicate power" (TMG,2003). This could be corroborated with the submission of Agbaje and Adejumobi (2006), who argued that the electoral fraud that was staged in 2003 general elections was more sophisticated than that of 1983 general elections.

In 2007, the second election under the Fourth Republic was conducted. Rather than getting better, in spite of series of negative reports by both internal and external observers against the 2003 general elections, the 2007 general elections turned out to be the worst election to have been conducted in the post-colonial Nigeria in particular and the Fourth Republic in general. In the run-up to the elections, there were several incidence of pre-electoral violence leading to political killings, bombings and armed clashes between supporters of rival political parties. Evidences showed that between June and August 2006, about three gubernatorial candidates were assassinated (Omotosho, 2007) among which Dr. Ayo Daramola, PDP gubernatorial candidate of Ekiti State was among.

The outcome of the general elections of 2007 was said to be flawed.In fact, the 2007 general election was worse than the 1999 and 2003 elections. The scale of electoral violence (pre and post) was unprecedented. Several cases of pre-electoral violence in the 2007 election were captured by IFES-Nigeria and the Human Right Watch. For instance, the IFES-Nigeria collected, documented and reported different incidences of electoral violence in Nigeria, and thus put the total at 967, which included 18 deaths from January 13 – April 30 2007 (IFES-Nigeria, 2007). The Human Rights Watch also highlighted incidence of pre-electoral violence in the run-up to Nigeria's April 2007 elections which was beset by political killings, bombings and armed clashes between supporters of rival political factions (Human Rights Watch, 2007).Instances of irregularities in the conduct of the election which invariably engendered electoral violence were noticeable in the recourse to courts by aggrieved parties as well as the reports of various local and foreign observers, electoral scholars and even in the speech of elected president.

Animashaun(2008), argued that there were massive irregularities in the 2007 general elections and it was characterised by inflation of voting figures, declaration of result where elections were never held or not conclu-

sive, intimidation of voters as well as manipulation of the security services. According to former governor of Anambra State, Dr Chukwuemeka Ezeife, while commenting generally on the status of democracy in Nigeria as cited in Adeyemo (2009) opined that:

*...democracy is associated with elections.How have the elections gone since 1999 tilldate? The 1999 elections were disputed but it was vastly better than the 2003 elections. People shouted foul about the 2003 election but that was infinitely better than the nonelectionof 2007. Each election has been worse, more flawed than the one before it. We cannot be getting a democracy by running further away from it.*

Late President Umaru Yar'Adua also at his inaugural speech admitted that the 2007 general elections were flawed (Abimbola &Adesote, 2012). The evidence of this was seen in the various steps he took subsequently after its assumption. First, he inaugurated twenty-one members of Electoral Reform Committee, headed by justice Uwais to see to the problem of electoral process in the country. Second, he ensured the Independence of Judiciary which was noticeable in the various judgements dispensed at both Tribunal and Appeal courts over electoral irregularities. Examples of this were the loss of Edo, Ekiti, Osun and Ondo States to Action Congress of Nigeria (CAN) and Labour Party respectively (LP), which were initially declared to have been won by PDP according to INEC(Aniekwe, et al, 2011)).

Although the 2011 and 2015 general elections were generally acceptable by both local and foreign observers to be very fair when compared with the 2003 and 2007 general elections which conducted under the Fourth Republic, the election witnessed two major stages of electoral violence, the pre-election period (that is, period of registration, campaign, election day) andthe post-election period (that is, after the announcement of results). At the state level, there were several cases of pre-electoral violence which led to the brutal murder of some people. A good example of this was the case of pre-electoral violence in Akwa Ibom state in March 22, 2011 which led to the setting up of Presidential Investigation Panel to investigate the remote and immediate causes of the violence and proffer solutions to nip future occurrence in the bud and the way forward.According to a report, some parts of the Akwa Ibom state, particularly in Ikot Ekpene and Uyo were engulfed by a reign of violence which was unprecedented. Thus, by the time the dust of the mayhem settled, according to officially confirmed Police report two supporters of the PDP, Etop Nicholas Idiong, a trader and Daniel Udo Akpan, a commercial motorcyclist, were brutally murdered in Ikot Ekpene while several people sustained various degrees of injuries.

Also, NsemoItaEkong, an Akwa Ibom Transport Company bus driver was recovered shot dead in his vehicle on Abak road and several persons were injured in Uyo.Other loses suffered included property worth billions of Naira which were destroyed during the politically motivated rampage. The property included: 200 brand new Peugeot 307 cars; 500 brand new tricycles; the Goodluck/Sambo Campaign office which was burnt down by the rampaging mob; Fortune International High School owned by Senator Aloysius Etok which was razed down with school children in session and over 20 Toyota Hiace buses belonging to the PDP and Godswill 2011 Campaign Organization, nine Hilux jeeps belonging to the Government of Akwa Ibom State which were either completely destroyed or vandalized (Official Gazette of Government of Akwa Ibom State, 2012).

At the national level, the announcement of the April 2011 Presidential election result by INEC in which President Dr. Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP was declared the winner led to violence (post electoral violence) especially in some parts of Northern Nigeria, such as Bauchi, Yobe, Maiduguri, Kaduna among others. The post electoral violence that accompanied the 2011 general election resulted in the killing of about ten corps members in Bauchi state (Abimbola &Adesote, 2012). Beside this, there were other cases of electoral violence over the 2011 election. It was a result of the magnitude of the pre-election violence in Akwa Ibom State and the mayhem that had rocked several parts of the country before and after the April 2011 general elections that compelled President Goodluck Jonathan to set up a 22-man panel under the chairmanship of Sheikh Ahmed Lemu to look into the various crises. Specifically, the Panel was mandated to identify those responsible for the pre-election violence in Akwa Ibom State as well as the other electoral violence that greeted the election especially in some Northern states in the country.

The 2015 general elections were recorded less electoral violence due to the series of electoral reforms that were introduced and implemented by INEC. It is imperative to point out here that the process of electoral reform had started since the appointment of Prof. Attahiru Jega as the new INEC Chairman in 2010. The electoral reforms were initially implemented during the 2011 general elections, but took a new dimension in the build up to the 2015 general elections, in which Permanent Voter's Card (PVC) and Card Reader were adopted as major instruments for the conduct of the elections. Its adoption helped to reduce high incidence of electoral violence compared with previous elections conducted during the Fourth Republic. The 2015 general elections which were conducted amidst fear of violence, killings and electoral fraud and irregularities by the Nige-

rian populace turned out to be the best elections ever conducted in the post-independence Nigeria. With respect to the presidential election in particular, the outcome of the election resulted in the defeat of the then incumbent President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan of the PDP by the incumbent President, General Muhammadu Buhari (retd) of the APC (Adesote and Ofogbor, 2018).

**Electoral violence and the Survival of Nigerian Democracy in the Fourth**

**Republic: Lessons from other West African countries**

The importance of free, fair and credible election in the sustainability of democracy in a democratic society cannot be overemphasized. This is because, it not only offers a government a unique opportunity for legitimacy, but, also serves as a transitory process in stable democracies. This is one of the reasons why scholars such as Adigun Agbaje, 2006,and Shola Omotola, 2007argued that free and fair elections are critical element in the survival of democracy. Besides, in a liberal democracy, electoral process always gives room for the formation of groups popularly called political parties which are expected to possess some basic characteristics like political ideology, sincere political manifestoes, party discipline, strong internal democracy among others (Abimbola &Adesote, 2012). Competition among these political parties is seen as part and parcel of democracy because it helps to strengthen the quality and level of their service to the people. It is when politics is not being played according to the acceptable democratic principles that it generates into unprecedented violence.

Historically, the use of violence (pre and post) in elections is not peculiar to recent and emerging democracies in developing world in general and Africa in particular. For example, in the eighteenth and nineteenth century England and America, there were documented cases of electoral violence where force and intimidation were used as a tactical means of winning elections (Seymour C, et al, 1918). One basic fact remains that violence in elections has always been a major threat to the sustenance or stability of a democracy. With respect to African continent, new democracies in this continent especially since the 1990s which was termed as the third wave of democracy have been confronted with series of electoral violence that had resulted in the killing/death and displacement of many innocent lives. Examples of this are noticeable in the cases of Zimbabwe, 2000, 2005, 2008; Zanzibar 2005, 2010; Kenya, 2007, among others (Chaturvedi, 2005,Khadiagala 2008, Waki Report 2008, and USIP, 2010).For example, the 1998 elections in Lesotho led to a post election conflict nearly brought the country

to a civil war situation. This situation was only contained through the diplomatic and military interventions of South Africa and Botswana. In 2007, the elections were similarly accompanied by violence (Matlosa, 2007). Also, the disputed presidential elections in 2007 in Kenya threw her into a postelection violence which, in only two months, claimed more than 1200 lives and displaced an estimated 350,000 people (USIP, 2010).

More importantly, high degrees of conflict or continuous electoral violence are capable of creating political unrest and as result instability; and slow the sustenance and consolidation of democracy as well as development. This could be seen in what happened in some of the countries in African mentioned above.For instance, an analysis by Afrobarometer of Africans' view of democracy suggests that poor elections are to blame for dissatisfaction with elections as means to attain political representation. Thus, among the eighteen countries surveyed by Afrobarometer, the three countries where elections have been relatively free of violence—Ghana, Botswana, and Namibia—are the most satisfied with elections as a means to engage the government. On the other hand, Zimbabwe, Nigeria and Zambia, where elections have been more violent and controversial, are the least satisfied (Afrobarometer, 2006). The implication of this lack of satisfaction is democratic instability.

The survival of democracy in some countries in West Africa in particular and Africa in general had been threatened due to electoral violence. A good examplewas the case of Cote d' Ivoire in the 2010/2011 presidential elections between the then incumbent president, Laurent Gbagbo and the current president, Alassane Quattara, in which the former refused to concede defeat and thus refused to step down on the ground that the elections were characterized by irregularities. His refusal to concede defeat sparked of violence in the country. It was the intervention of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) cum the United Nations that eventually forced Gbagbo to set down.  Also, in 2016, there was electoral dispute between the then president of the Gambia,Yahya  Jammeh and the incumbent President, Adama Barrow, in which the former refused to concede defeat. The refusal of Yahya Jammeh initially sparked off post-electoral violence which threatened the country's democracy. However, in order to save the country's democracy, the leaders of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) decided to intervene. The intervention of ECOWAS led to the restoration of peace into the country.

The above examples of several cases of electoral violence in some countries in West Africa in particular and Africa in general and how it had

threatened the consolidation and sustainability of their democracy should serve as big lessons to Nigeria especially as she prepares for 2023 general elections. The notion that "better a sham election than no election at all"- for the purposes of ensuring the continuity of democracy as well as the view that worst civilian government is better than the best military regime should not be taken for granted. Therefore, strict adherence to democratic ideals and principles of electoral process are critical to the survival of democracy.

**Conclusion**

The above discourse has critically examined the historical trajectory of electoral violence and the survival of democracy in Nigeria, with major emphasis on theFourth Republic.It argues that the foundation of electoral violence in Nigeria was traced to the colonial period, but took a new dimension in the post-colonial period. It explains that the fall of the First and Second republics in the post-colonial Nigeria was as a result of electoral violence, caused by massive electoral irregularities. With respect to the Fourth Republic, the paper identifies and discusses several cases of electoral violence that occurred between 1999 and 2015. It also argues that despite the fact that the most recent electoral exercise in the country, the 2011 and 2015 general elections showed elements of improvement and possibly restoration of hope in the democratization processwhich was though applauded by both local and foreign observers,there were records of post-election violence. The paper submits that, for democracy to survive in Nigeria,strict adherence to the ideals and principles of electoral process as practised in advanced democratic societies such as the United States of America and Great Britain is paramount.

Importantly, electoral competition should not be seen as a do or die affairs as championed by former President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo during the build to the 2007 general elections. A good sportsmanship is expected to be displayed by all the political players. A good example could be seen in the 2015 general elections in which the then incumbent President, Dr Goodluck Jonathan did not only conceded defeat but also peacefully handed over power to the then opposition party (now ruling) under the leadership of President Muhammadu Buhari. The legacy already laid in 2015 occasioned by the adoption of PVC and Card Reader  should be consolidated and improved upon as Nigeria prepares for another round of general elections in 2023.

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# Learners Perspective on Current State of Education

**Dr. Arti Sharma**

## Abstract

The purpose of the present study is to gain an in-depth understanding of the perception of learners on the current state of education in India. Exploratory research design has been used. Data was collected using an online questionnaire. The findings reveal that majority of the participants feel that education is not meeting their expectations in terms of development of critical consciousness, moral values, leadership qualities and entrepreneurial skills. Positive response was given by majority of the respondents regarding improvement in communication abilities. Majority of the respondents were in support of privatization of education. However, concern was expressed about perpetuation of social inequality due to privatization. The findings will prove to be useful for bridging the gap between policy and practice. Based on the results, the study recommends that extensive analysis of structural and qualitative features should be undertaken before attempting revision in educational spaces.

**Keywords:** Education, Critical Consciousness, Moral Values, Privatization, Education, Perception

## Introduction

Education is one of the vital organs of superstructure of society which plays an important role in shaping the societal values. It is the learning process which develops the ability to undertake critical analysis of any phenomena or event taking place in society. Education provides the required skills and values for becoming an active member of society and is also an important agency of socialization. It socializes the children according to the social and cultural norms of society and also prepares them to earn their livelihood in future. Moreover, it is also a mechanism of social control which prepares the young minds to take rational decisions and

adjust according to the changing life circumstances. The societal needs have given rise to the formal system of education in contemporary societies. According to Petrovskwi (2011), "The ideology of the mass education is one of the key segments of the ideology of a mass society. It is based on the assumption that all people have equal chances of success and that school stimulates individuals to develop their intellectual, emotional, ethical and aesthetic abilities and characteristics as a whole." The views of Petrovskwi establish the importance of education in context of all round development of personality. In this sense education is the defining element of control and change in society. Indian is a democratic country which has moved from an agrarian society to an industrial society and correspondingly new value frameworks and lifestyles have emerged. In modern industrial society achieved status assumes importance and education is the chief means for transforming social relationships and for availing better employment opportunities. The educational opportunities available for individual constitute important determinants of achieving success. It is imperative that the members of society are prepared to adjust according to these changes. Critical thinking, development of morality and good communication abilities are the fundamental skills, which every student enrolled in formal education system is expected to possess. For accelerating economic growth, it is also essential that the basic traits of innovation and entrepreneurship are inculcated and nurtured among the students so they can meet the challenges of future societies. Basu (2014) argues that, "In emerging economies such as India, there is an urgent need for development and promotion of effective indigenous entrepreneurship education systems." Although entrepreneurship abilities are inherent but it is essential that education is designed in a manner so as to give right direction to the entrepreneurial ability. The Indian Education System is book driven and there is not enough emphasis on either innovation or entrepreneurship. According to Patel (2013)"India continues to face severe challenges regarding education system. Inspite of the growing investment in education over the years , 25% of its population is still illiterate. The quality of education, whether at primary or higher level, is significantly poor as compared with major developing nations. Whatever our students are learning now is mostly redundant. The syllabus needs to be skill based rather than focussing on mugging up of large chunks of theory". The new information society is changing at a rapid rate and education is important to keep pace with the changes in society. Jain (2019) reports in the study conducted on college students that 14.9 percent respondents strongly disagree and 29 percent disagree, that education promotes entrepreneurial mindset. 27 percent respondents are neutral and 14.7 percent agree that education is aiding in the development of entrepreneurial abilities. Thus

majority of the respondents opine that education does not develop entrepreneurial abilities. The same study also reports that a thin majority of respondents feel that education is helping in development of better communication skills. Ghonge et al, (2020) opine that "There is tremendous growth of education in India in all aspects but it does not satisfy the global demands of market". The present system of education has become dysfunctional for the contemporary society. Such situations generate ideological debates about the role of education in society. New knowledge has to be generated through innovation, research and discovery for the development of society. This paper aims to examine the system of education in context of needs and realities of Indian society.

Along with curriculum another issue which needs attention is the privatization of education. To cater to the demands of growing young population large number of government and private institutions have come up. In the era of globalization the government has withdrawn from service sector to reduce the expenditure and also to provide a more responsive, accountable and efficient system of education. Due to paucity of funds with the government, privatization of education is being encouraged. Sociologically privatization is related to the social class structure. Those who have the ability to pay take admissions in private schools which results in perpetuation of inequality in society. In the present education system there is differential treatment for each segment of society. The OCED report(2012) states that "Equity as inclusion means ensuring that all students reach at least a basic minimum level of skills. Equitable education systems are fair and inclusive and support their students to reach their learning potential without either formally or informally pre-setting barriers or lowering expectations. Equity as fairness implies that personal or socio-economic circumstances, such as gender, ethnic origin or family background are not obstacles to educational success." The present scenario of Indian education system is presenting just the reverse picture where the wealthy and the affluent have access to good quality education while the less privileged are deprived of educational opportunities right from the initial stages. There is dichotomy in the present system of education in India. Moreover, the education which is being provided does not match with needs and expectations of the society. In a country like India where a number of caste and class based inequalities exist simultaneously, it is essential that educational reforms are accorded top priority.

It is a well- known fact that the performance of students studying in private schools is better than the government schools. Several factors are attributed to this reality. Apart from strict monitoring systems and efficient

management the private schools have definite guidelines for selection of students. The fee structure is also higher than the state run schools hence the students from relatively better familial background take who can afford to provide educational resources for their children. The government schools are open for all students and specific guidelines except age criteria at entry level is not well defined. The government schools provide education to the masses from all backgrounds but they are not able to maintain quality of education which is being imparted. Singh (2015) argues that "The institutions and other developmental programs for weaker classes are still facing resource constraints, which are further aggravated by ignorance, poverty and disadvantages of the people they serve. This is resulting in widening divides and in keeping many educated from weaker and disadvantages sections outside the job and employment markets. The challenge of these marginalized and deprived to the system of education is enormous." It can be argued that this type of education system is actually perpetuating inequality. According to Madan (2016) "If there is considerable social inequality in a society, like what we see in ours, the consequences of a privately paid for education will closely parallel the distribution of the ability to pay. Those with more money will be the ones who pay for higher qualities and levels of education. Those with less money will remain lower down the ladder. If those at the top seek to become more powerful and seek to increase only their own personal wealth then this society, which already has a pyramidical structure of inequality, will tend to become even more narrowly pyramidical. The growth of privatized education will favour those at the upper levels of the pyramid and weaken those at the lower levels."The very purpose of equality through education is being defeated. Several schemes and policies have been formulated to ensure equality of opportunity but efforts for ensuring equality of outcomes are lacking. The Indian education system is reproducing class domination. There are internal contradictions between the constitutional commitments of equality and actual realities of Indian Educational System. Contemporary Indian society is facing a number of challenge in terms of reframing the policies and programmes which have to move beyond the goals of universalization, infra-structural issues and shortage of faculty. This paper aims to examine the system of education in context of needs and realities of Indian society.

**New Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020)**

The New Education Policy 2020 (NEP2020) has been launched by the Government of India which aims towards major reforms in the educational system. This policy aims to take develop Indian Education System in a

manner so that it is second to none by 2040. The major target is to provide equitable access to the highest-quality education to all learners irrespective of their of socio-economic background. The policy recognizes that education is a great leveler and also the best instrument for inclusion and upward mobility. According to this policy " the purpose of the education system is to develop good human beings capable of rational thought and action, possessing compassion and empathy, courage and resilience, scientific temper, creative imagination, with sound ethical moorings and values. It aims at producing engaged, productive, and contributing citizens for building an equitable, inclusive, and plural society as envisaged by our Constitution". (NEP2020,MHRD). This policy clearly envisions three major thematic changes. It seeks to shift from content centered curriculum to application based learning. It recommends change in assessment model to ensure all round development of students. Experiential learning will be emphasized with focus on development of skills required for becoming global citizens (NEP 2020, MHRD). The much awaited New Education Policy 2020 has come at the appropriate time and the objectives also match with the contemporary needs of Indian society. The policy document is well drafted but the success will depend on its proper implementation and addressing the challenges in practice.

**Theoretical Framework**

The study is guided by the functional analysis of Education as examined by Durkheim and Parsons. Durkheim (1956) states that "education is important for society as an integrative and regulative mechanism that binds the people together and helps them to develop consciousness of their responsibilities and relationships within the wider society. The purpose of formal education is to provide each individual with the knowledge and capabilities that are essential for meaningful participation in particular societal contexts."This implies that education plays a very important role in socialization and social control. Education prepares the individual as future citizens of society. Similarly Parsons (1961) has also emphasized that education primarily serves two important functions. One is allocation and the other is socialization. These two functions together contribute to the maintenance of the social system. The process of schooling through delineates the individuals for various positions in the society through the mechanisms of grading, selection tests and exams. Further, schooling contributes to development of individual personality by inculcating the necessary cultural norms for successful participation in general social life and also for specialized roles related to the position which a person occupies in society.Thus education fulfills the function of socialization, social

integration, social placement and social adjustment in accordance with the needs of the society.

## Significance of the Study

The New Education Policy 2020 aims to make the education system learner centric and also develop those qualities among the learners which will make them competent citizens with rational mind capable of taking informed decisions. For this purpose the areas of intervention have to be identified so to make adequate modifications in the curriculum. Since the policy proposes to revamp and revise the entire education structure and curriculum, it is essential that the perception of students regarding the present education system is analyzed.This paper can serve as a reference document for influencing the policies and programmes while introducing educational reforms.

## Research Objectives

The study has been conducted with the following objectives:

- To investigate whether education is inculcating skill sets necessary for all round development.

- To analyze the relevance of privatization of education in Indian context

## Method

This research study is qualitative in nature. It is the outcome of an online survey and review of studies conducted on analyzing the challenges of Indian education system from the perspective of learners enrolled in higher education institutes. Purposive sampling method has been used. Data has been collected from 100 students. The inclusion criteria was the students who were enrolled in regular courses. The learners enrolled in distance education were excluded from the sample. Percentage analysis of data has been undertaken.

## Sample Characteristics

The sample consisted of 50 percent female and 50 percent male respondents. The respondents were in the age group of 18-25 years. The median age is 21 years.  61 percent respondents were enrolled in government institutions while 39 percent respondents are continuing their education in

private institutions.

**Findings**

The questions in the survey were asked in context of Indian Education System.

**Graph1:Development of Critical Consciousness**
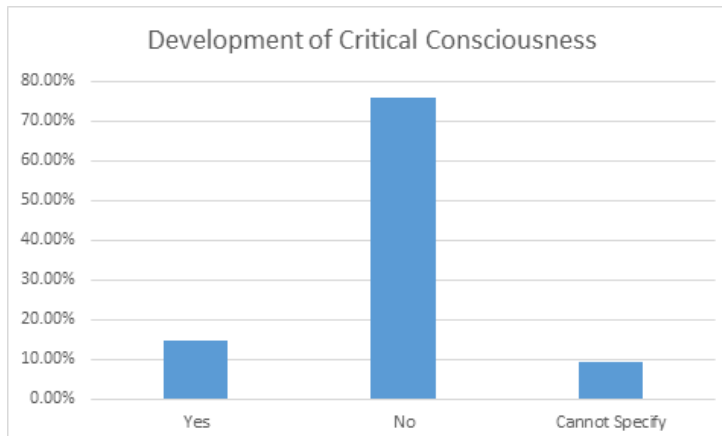


Graph 1 reveals that 76 percent respondents feel that Indian education system does not develop critical consciousness, 14.6 percent opined that this system aids in the development of critical consciousness while 9.3 percent were not able to specify.

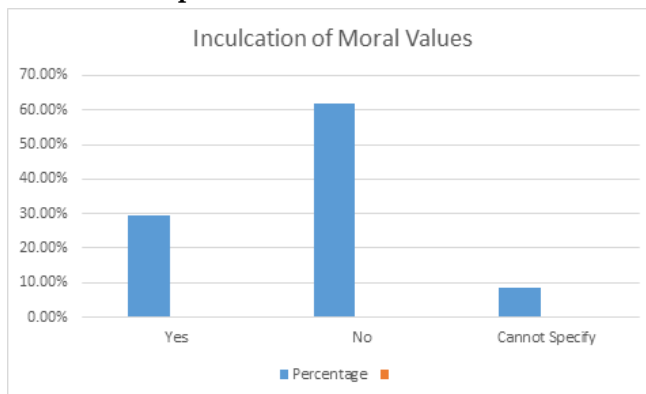**Graph2: Inculcation of Moral Values**

Table 2 shows that 62 percent respondents disagree that the education system inculcates moral values among the learners, 29.33 percent agreed that moral values are inculcated and 8.6 percent were not any to give any opinion

**Graph 3:Development of Leadership Qualities**
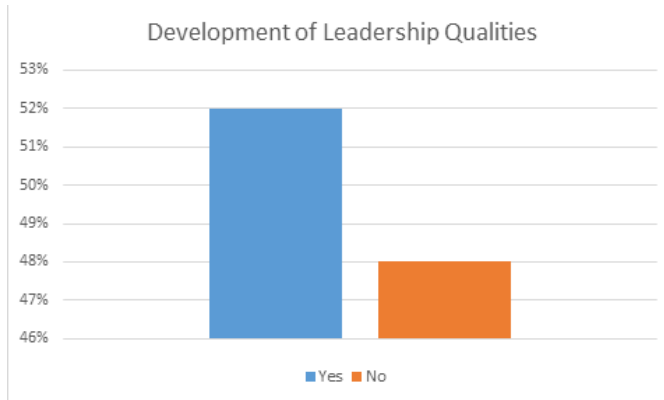


Graph 3 depicts that 52 percent respondents are of the view that the education system develops leadership qualities while 48 percent are of contrary opinion.

**Graph 4: Improvement in Communication Skills and Social Interaction**
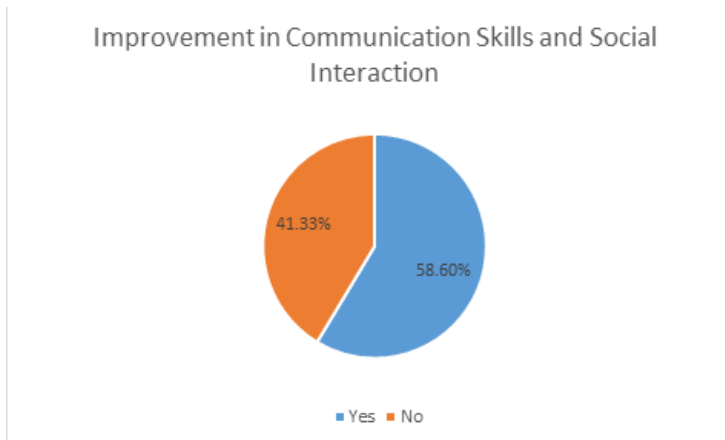


Graph 4 reveals that 58.6 percent respondents opine that communication and interactive skills are improved while 41.33 percent do not support the idea that education system plays any role in improving the communication skills and social interaction.

**Graph 5:Encouragement to Innovation**
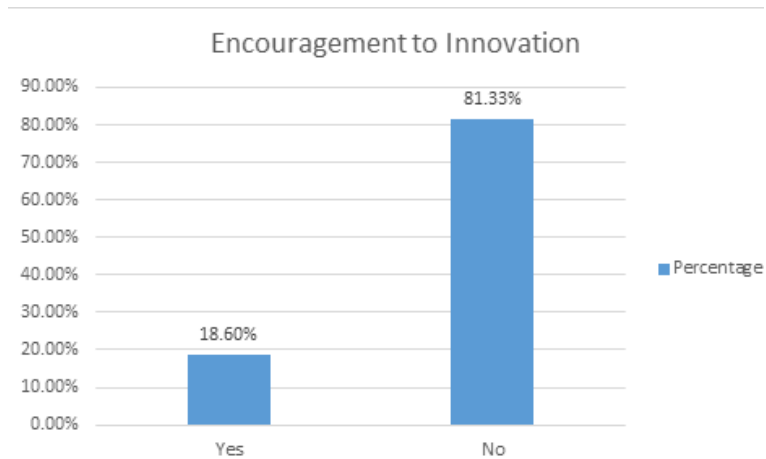


Graph 5 depicts that 81.33 percent respondents are of the opinion that education system does not encourage innovation while 18.6 percent opine that education encourages innovation.

**Graph 6:Development of Entrepreneurial Skills**
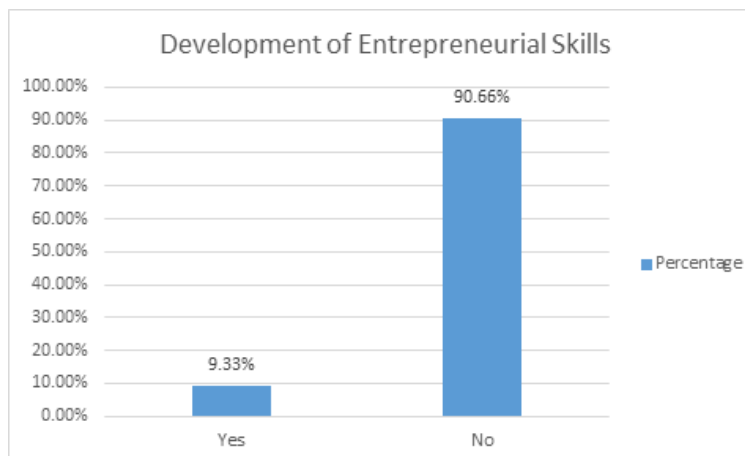


Graph 6 reveals that 90.66 percent respondents are of the opinion that education does not develop entrepreneurial skills among students while 9.33 percent view that education system helps in developing entrepreneurial abilities.

**Graph 7:Opinion about Privatization of Education**
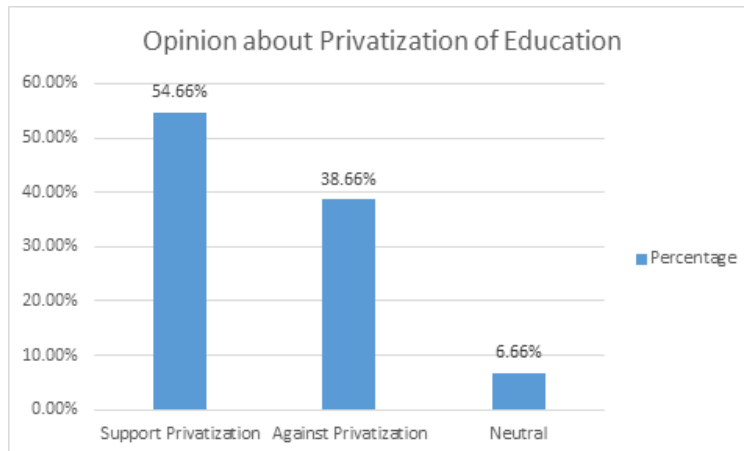


Graph 7 shows that 54.6 percent support privatization of education while 38.66 percent are against privatization of education. 10 percent of the respondents were neutral.

**Graph 8:Creation of Inequality due to Privatization of Education**
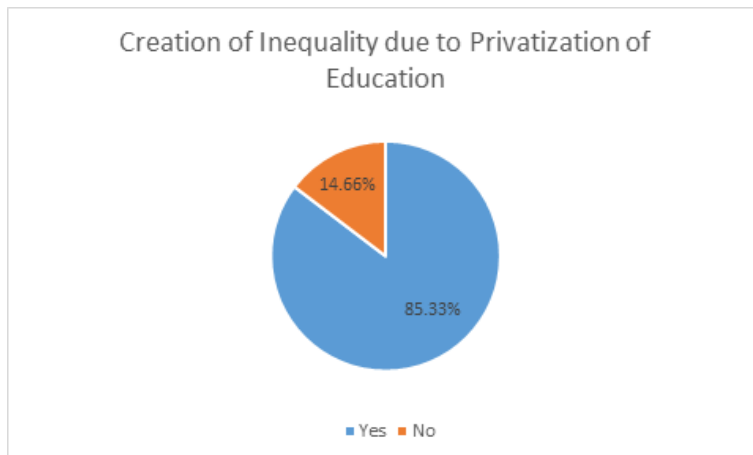


Graph 8 shows that 85.33 percent respondents share the opinion the privatization of education creates inequality in society while 14.66 percent respondents opine that privatization of education does not create inequality.

## Discussion

The findings of the study reveal that majority of the respondents feel that the present system of education has failed to develop critical consciousness, moral values and entrepreneurial mind-set among the students. To some extent the present system improves the communication skills and also develops leadership qualities. Similar findings have been reported in the study conducted by Jain (2020) where the students have identified similar drawbacks of education. The respondents are supportive of privatization of education as they realize that the government does not have sufficient resources to cater to the needs of huge population. At the same time majority of the respondents opine that the parallel systems of government funded and private funded educational institutions create inequality in society. The findings also relate to the arguments presented in work of Madan (2016). The findings indicate there is widespread dissatisfaction regarding the objectives and outcome of education in India. The youth unrest and rising unemployment rate of the graduates and post graduates points to the visible disconnect between education and realities of Indian society. The findings of the study may be a useful for the stakeholders involved in the process of revamping and redesigning educational system in India. The findings may also prove to be useful for bridging the gap between policy and practice.

## Conclusion

Indian Education system is under severe criticism due to its overindulgence on theoretical knowledge and rote memory. There is an urgent need to make changes in the Indian Education System. The revisions in educational spaces have to be preceded by extensive analysis of the qualitative features of the structural and curricular aspects of education from the viewpoints of all stakeholders like the students, teachers, parents and administrators. It is recommended that application based knowledge should be emphasized at all levels of education and comprehensive review of existing syllabi should be undertaken. The mechanism of implementation of NEP2020 has to be outlined clearly to minimize the uncertainties and challenges in achieving the goals.

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## Web Resources

https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf

# Marwar State towards Protection of Woman Rights during 18ᵗʰ Century With special reference to Sanad Parwana Bahis of Marwar

**Rajshree Shekhawat & Prof. Sharad Rathore**

Crimes against women from the last few decades have been a debatable topic for people all over the world. Violence against women is a way through which they could be in a subordinate position as compared to men. The unequal power relation between two genders has its roots in history. Historically if we see there have always been enormous incidences which show the violent measures taken against women or girls in many ways. My paper will be dealing with the crimes affecting the lives of women in Marwar during 18ᵗʰ Century and what steps did state took towards criminality with special reference to *SanadParwanaBahis* of Marwar.

*SanadParwanas'*are the primary sources of Marwar, which gives information about the social condition of people living in Marwarduring the medieval period. These *bahis* were started during the period of Maharaja-RamSingh in year V.S. 1820 (A.D. 1763) and the last *bahi* is from Maharaja Sardar Singh's period of V.S. 1967 (A.D. 1910).Sanadsare basically the orders which were issued by the state against any incident which happened during that period. The complaints done by the public on social, cultural, religious or private matter were called *parwanas*. The *parwanas* were sent in form of letters to the *daftarhajuri* department of *Marwar* state where the Maharaja after hearing the complaints used to send letter of order based on the complaints which was called *sanad*. Therefore,*sanad* were the orders passed and *parwanas* were the complaints made and *Sanad Parwana Bahis* of Marwar are the copies of all the orders and complaints in form of *Bahis*. They are written in Mahajani script and the date, day and year of decision are written above every order.

The *panchayat* system during the 18ᵗʰ Century worked as a link between the *Darbar* and the people of village. Sanad Parwana Bahi has mention of two types of *Panchayats*, (i) the village *panchayat* and (ii) the caste *panchayat*. Their members are called *panchas*. The caste *panchayat* has been mentioned as *'nyatpanchayat'* in *sanadparwanas*.

The important role of the *panchayat* was to arbitrate in social and economic matters inside their village. The disputes related to ownership fields, land, cultivation, and other problems; the issues related to personal life of people in village such as marriage, engagements, remarriages, *nata*, ownership of property, polygamy etc.; and the disputes related to trade and business and lastly complaints regarding theft, murders, abduction, robbery are considered by the members of the *nyat* and village *panchayat*. These complaints are either taken up by the parties directly to the *Panchayat* or they are sent to the *Panchayat* by the state administration to mediate into the matter and inform about it again to the administration.

If we talk about the common women in Marwar who had no royal status or any relation with the state or powerful status in the society; can we even imagine that they had right to speak and put their opinions in front of the state? After reading *SanadParwana* I came across many day to day incidences where the common women filed complaintsagainst the injustice which happened with them. Not only this, but we can also see how the state took immediate actions against the complaints filed. The crimes such as rape, murders, selling of girls and women by their family members, abduction, female infanticide, molestation and exploitation of women by men, women beaten by husband and the customs of polygamy prevalent during the time gave women a degrading status in the society. All such incidents are mentioned in the documents. One thing to note in these documents is that there is no name of any women or a girl mentioned in the documents. Women are always introduced in documents by her husband's or father's name or any other male family member of woman for example *'Lichma Ri Lugai'* (wife of *Lichma*) or *'JewanRiMaa'* (mother of Jewan) etc.

Women from the ancient times were seen as an epitome of sacrifice but even in those times she had equal rights in society and had due respect in the family. During the medieval period with the advent of Muslims in India, the condition of women in society started deteriorating. The impact of Mughal culture was seen in all Indian princely states and Marwar was not aloof from those conditions. The princely states of Marwar accepted the Mughal sovereignty and worked on higher posts in Mughal courts. In such circumstances the impact of their culture could be seen on the Rajput rulers and other officials of Marwar. The change in culture also had an impact on the life of women connected to the royalty and also the women of lower strata as they always followed the royalty. The common people accepted customs and traditions which their ruler followed. The Rajputs got attracted toward the new Mughal customs such as the *pardah* system,

the practice of polygamy and of keeping beautiful women in the court. All this deteriorated the status of women in society which also affected the condition of common women in Marwar. As the public was highly influence by and preached what royalty followed therefore the concept of polygamy and *pardah* was also followed by public and in few cases men also started keeping more than one women. All this encouraged the concept of keeping more than one women or leaving the wife and bringing another women without getting married. The concept of *nata* among the lower castes started taking place.

Nata was the custom mostly prevalent among the lower sections of the society during the medieval period in Marwar. In this custom widow women were remarried by their parents and for which the boy's family used to give them money and clothes as a custom of '*reet*'. When a widow was remarried through *nata* in another family then her dead husband's family had to give a "*VairKaKagad*" which was permission in form of a letter and also that from now on they have no responsibility of the woman. Sometimes even unmarried girls were given in *nata* to the married men for money. If any man did *Nata* with another woman or kept another woman in his house without marriage which is mentioned as *'Ghar Mai Ghali' in Sanad Parwana Bahis* which means "kept in the house"; despite of having a wife then he was duty bound by the state to maintain all the expenses of his first wife for all her life. Such examples can be seen in SanadParwana-Bahis were the state ordered men to handle his wives daily expenses even if they were not living together anymore.

In today's world where women are still fighting for their rights, specially lower class women who have less powers and are subordinated in male dominated society, there was a time where these women openly talked about the injustice they suffered and demanded their rights from the state. This shows how the society worked during the medieval period in Marwar. Lower class women filing complaints against the men of higher status such as a Zamindar or Brahman can be seen which throws light on the judicial system of the state. However people during the medieval period were divided among different castes same as the society today but were all equal in front of the state, there was no discrimination among the criminals. The state had the authority to punish the person of any caste or class if he or she was found guilty.

Further I have mentioned four most common practices against woman during the medieval period those are Polygamy, killing of girl child, selling of girls and Sati system.

A document of **Pargana Merta of V.S 1842 (A.D 1785),** during the month of *maha/ maagh* (January/February) is found in which the wife of a man namedAalamfiled a complaintagainst her husbandthat he left her without giving her any explanation or reason and threw her out of the house. She also informs the state that Aalam after leaving her; keptanother woman in the house. She also demanded living expenditure such as food and clothing expenses from his husband as she had no other means of living. After the state got to know about the incident, orders were passed for Aalam that he had to provide his wife with food and clothes for all her life so that she could live a stable life after he leaves her.This shows that women rights were given priority in Marwar during the medieval period, the women was not forced to live with her husband in any unfavorable circumstances and was free to live alone and thestate also made arrangements for her living expenses to lead a sustainable life.Also, it can be noted that the women herself didn't demanded to live with her husband again rather just demanded her daily expenses and the state also supported her decision.

**The image shown below is taken from Sanad Parwana Bahi No. 33 V.S. 1842**
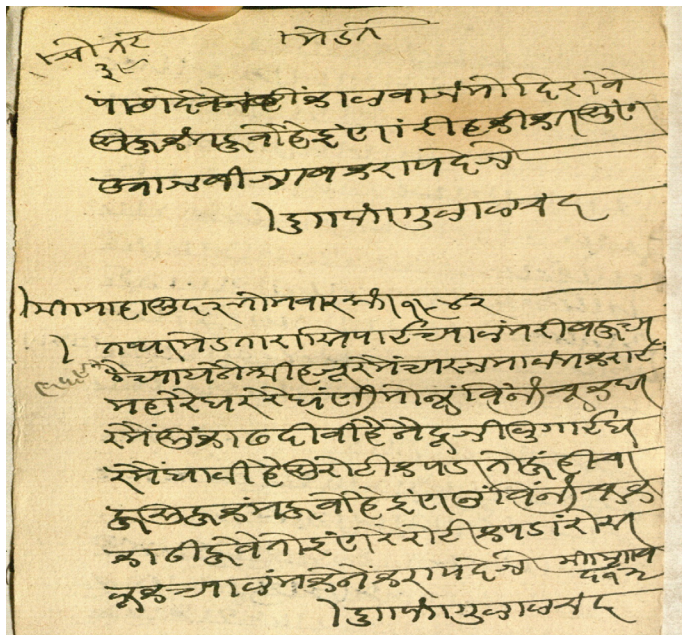
The incidence written in the Sanad no. 33 of V.S. 1842 is as follows:

**'Maha Sudhi 2 (duj) Bhomwar[1] V.S. 1842'**

**"Tatha Merta Ra Sipahi Aalam Ri Bahu[2] Athe Aay Ne Shree Hajur Mai Araj Malam Karai Mhare Ghar Re Dhani[3] Monu Bina Chook[4] Ghar Mai Su Kaad Divi Hai Ne Duji Lugai[5] Ghar Mai Ghali Hai Su Roti Kapda Toh Hu He Chahu Su Hukam Hua Hai In Nu Bina Chook Kaadi Hui Toh In Re Roti Kapda Ro Saluk[6] Aalam Kane Karaye Dejo."**

The status of women in rural society in Marwar is clearly mentioned by Dr. Shashi Arora in her work *'Rajasthan Mai Nari Ki Stithi'*. The agriculture and the business class during the medieval period had different marriage customs as compared to that of the higher class. Nata was prevalent among them and before marriage there was a custom of doing *sagai* (engagement) in which the boy side of the family used to give money, clothes and jewellery to the girl and her family. This tradition was called '*reet'* and it differed according to the status of family and customs in every caste.

**Killing of Girl Child**

Killing of girl child or female infanticide is a major problem all over India. A girl is not accepted with open hearts in the family; she is denied the right to live and is even killed by her own family members as she is seen as a burden on the family. A family to escape the burden of the marriage expenses of a daughter would kill their own girl child. A boy is always welcomed as he always carry forward a family's legacy and a girl was always considered as a problem for their family as they were to be protected from evil eyes of other men and were to be married with huge expenses which the family was not willing to give. The higher authorities ofMarwar were well aware of such incidences which happened during the medieval period and had strict punishments for the person found guilty. An incident of *chaitra* (April/May) month during the year V.S 1822 (A.D 1765) is found where a person whose name wasJagat Singh Jetawat from village Sisarwada killed her new born girl child; on which the state ordered to throw Jagat Singh out of the state. In such cases the property of the person

1       Bhomwar: Tuesday
2       Alam Ri Bahu: Alam's Wife
3       Dhani: Husband
4       Bina Chook: without any reason or mistake
5       Duji Lugai: another women
6       Saluk: arrangement

found guilty was also confiscated.

**The image shown below is taken from Sanad Parwana Bahi No. 3 V.S. 1822**
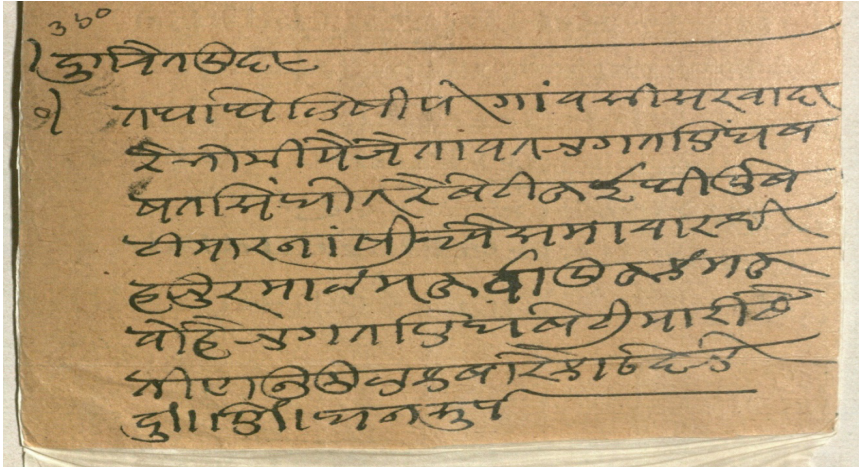


**Selling of Girls**

Selling of minor girls and married women for money is not only a matter of concern for today's society but it was also prevalent during the medieval period in Marwar. Minor girls and married women were sold by their own family members sometimes uncle, brother or even father and her husband used to sell them for money. One such incident found in the *Sanad Parwana Bahis* is as follows:

A document of *ashad* (June/July) month during V.S. 1824 (A.D.1767) of *pargana*Merta(village Dasawas)is given in which a man named Tulchidas sold her daughter in 6 (six) rupees during the year V.S. 1814 (A.D. 1757) but in V.S. 1824 after ten years the girl escaped to her father's house. It is also mentioned that the girl was abducted in between by the Mer community people of village Shamgarh. This information was given by Tulchidas in the complaint he made to the state also he stated that he will go and give five rupees to the Mer's and take her daughter back. The higher authority passed orders (*sanad*) that the man who bought the girl (whose name is not mentioned in the documents) now has no right on her as the girl didn't wanted to stay with him and also gave permission to Tulsidas to get her daughter back. The state also ordered the Mer's of Shamgarh

that the money which Tulsidas will offer them should be taken by them and should not claim any other rights on the girl.

**Sati System**

Another problem faces by the women in Marwar was the practice of *sati* in society. *Sati* was most commonly practiced in Rajasthan during the medieval period. The meaning of *sati* is Immortal or Truth, a widow who willingly burn herself with the corpse of her husband was called *sati*. The concept of sati was prevalent among the Rajputs specially the royal families. This custom was prevalent even in the ancient period as found in many inscriptions but it started to increase during the Muslim invasions in this area; the Muslims after killing any ruler would take away all the queens and other ladies of the defeated dynasty therefore to protect their dignity women willingly burnt themselves with the body of their husband. But this gradually took a horrific turn when widows were forced toburn themselves, this also passed to the other classes of society. As said earlier that the common people were highly influenced by the customs and practices which the royalty followed therefore people forced widows in their families to end their lives with their husbands as it was believed that they has no life after that and through this they would accompany their husband to heaven. G.N. Sharma explained that "this is why the action is always termed as 'Sahagamana' or ascending together to heaven". Some instances of women or girls burning themselves with their son or brother had also been found. Lachiram who was a Goad Brahman by caste lost his son; on this Lacchiram's daughter became *sati* along with her brother. The higher authorities got to know about the incident and orders were passed that if any such incident happens again then the family members of that women or girls will be thrown out of the village and their property will be confiscated. This shows how strict state was towards such incidences.

Sanad Parwana Bahis are an important source to know about the society in Marwar, the life of people in Marwar, the incidence which occurred during the period and how the public reacted to the injustice that happened to them. The atrocities which women and girls faced during the medieval period were enormous and few are still practiced by people in small areas of Rajasthan. These documents also tell us that how people had faith in law and order of state and that woman had rights to stand against the injustice they faced. State played a major role in the life of common people during this period. Women were powerful enough to demand their rights which were listened and fulfilled by the state. If any woman was not willing to live with his husband than she had the say

in the society, she could request the state for separation. Also demand of husband's property after his death by women can also be seen in the documents.

All the above mentioned incidences of selling a girl, killing a girl child, polygamy and *Sati* system are only few examples which throws light upon situations women faced during the period. Other crimes against women which are described in the *Sanad Parwana Bahi* are abduction, abortion without the consent of the pregnant woman which is mentioned in the documents as '*adhuronakhayo*', selling for money, sexual assault etc. Some women were also disrespected by calling them with inappropriate words such as '*raand*' and '*chudail*' the mention of which can also be found in SanadParwanaBahis.Men were dominant in the society and women been supressed by the dominant head were not mere bearers but they had the courage to stand against the injustice.Although it cannot be said that the life of common women in Marwar was hassle free but steps taken by the state and local authorities towards the justice for women are appreciable.

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# Reproductive Rights, Reproductive Wrongs: A Literature Review

**Yuttika Singh & Sonali Srivastava**

## Abstract

This paper is an attempt to raise consciousness about the concerns affecting women's reproductive rights. Women in India, as well as various developed and third world countries are staging low-key protests to protect their reproductive rights. This paper based on secondary data includes investigation of a number of literature reviews and case studies acquired throughout the exercise. In several cases, the honourable judiciary had to intervene to defend women's reproductive rights. The presence of orthodoxy, social stigma, son preference, and prevalence of cultural beliefs play a pivotal part in a woman's decision to conceive or abort a child. Other family members such as parents, in-laws and even peers impose their thought processes on the female, eventually affecting her decision. Taking such decisions which are influenced by others cannot be regarded as a part of one's independence. Depending on the quality of their relationship and the level of support they receive from their husband, women are compelled to terminate pregnancies. Due to restrictive legislation and a fear of disgrace, they are forced to use illegal abortion procedures, putting their health at risk. In many circumstances, using contraceptive pills without consulting a doctor or turning to an inexperienced health worker to perform an abortion leads in the death or injury of the mother, foetus, or both. Because abortion is still one of the leading causes of maternal mortality, the government should step in and take some substantial measures to mitigate the looming threat to women's health.

**Keywords :** reproductive rights, influential decision, orthodoxy, social stigma and abortion

## Introduction

"No woman can call herself free until she can choose consciously whether

she will or will not be a mother." – Margaret Sanger

Margaret Sanger coined the term "birth control" in 1914 and went on a mission to make women aware of contraceptives and ill effects of frequent pregnancies.Sheargued that the ability to control family size is one of the major factors which can contribute to ending the cycle of women's poverty.

Reproductive rights as defined by WHO "… rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have information to do so, and right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. They also include the right of all to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence."

According to WHO, reproductive rights include the following rights:

• Right to legal or safe abortion.

• Right to control one's reproductive functions.

• Right to access in order to make reproductive choices free of coercion, discrimination and violence.

• Right to access education about contraception and sexually transmitted diseases and freedom from coerced sterilization and contraception.

• Right to protect from gender based practices such as female genital cutting and male genital mutilation.

Women's control over their own childbearing was identified as a critical aspect of reproductive rights in the Cairo Agenda. Despite the fact that India was one of the first countries in the world to build legal and legislative frameworks ensuring access to contraception and abortion, women have yet to fully enjoy these rights. As a result, individuals face a number of challenges in terms of decision-making, contraception access, and health services, among other challenges. (Reproductive Rights in Indian Courts)

**Reproductive Rights as Human Rights**

Reproductive rights were recognized as an inseparable component of Human Rights by the United Nations International Conference on Human

Rights in 1968. Reproductive rights are crucial because they reduce prejudice while also providing gender equality and rights to health, choice, life, and equality. The right to a freely and informed choice in contraception was also recognized in the National Population Policy of 2000.

In case of violations of such right, the repercussions reverberate in the society and manifest in the form of inadequate legal, social and political representation of women's rights and issues. For women to be able to participate like men in all spheres of public life they should be empowered with choice and control over their fertility decisions.

Article 39(a) of the Indian constitution mandates that the government promote equal access to justice and free legal aid as a means of ensuring that all citizens have equal access to justice.

**Legislations and reproductive rights in India and other countries**

The Indian Constitution stresses the importance of health, dignity, freedom from torture and ill treatment, and privacy in protecting women's rights. India is also a signatory to various international conventions like the Vienna Declaration, International Conference on Population and Development(ICPD), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); World Conference on Women (WCW); the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR),etc. These agreements, to their credit, acknowledge reproductive and sexual rights as inextricably linked to human rights.We present here some landmark judgements from around the world that maintained reproductive and sexual autonomy beyond abortion rights.

Suchita Srivastava v. Chandigarh Administration, 2009

Reproductive rights are indeed an essential consideration of a woman's right to privacy, dignity, and bodily integrity, according to the Court.

Devika Biswas v. Union of India

The judgment given by the Supreme Court against sterilization camps for women held that policies by Government should be made gender neutral.

Hallo Bi v. State of Madhya Pradesh and Ors

The Court affirmed women's reproductive rights in 2013, ruling that the

decision to give birth is a woman's personal right, and that no one else should be allowed to interfere with her decision to carry or abort the child.

Justice K.S. Puttaswamy and Anr. Vs Union of India and Ors

In 2017, the Supreme Court in its landmark judgment held that, "Privacy includes at its core the preservation of personal intimacies, the sanctity of family life, marriage, procreation, the home and sexual orientation... Privacy safeguards individual autonomy and recognises the ability of the individual to control vital aspects of his or her life."

Independent Thought v. Union of India, 2017

The Court held that "The human rights of a girl child are very much alive and kicking whether she is married or not and deserve recognition and acceptance."

Josephine Oundo Ongwen vs. Attorney General & 4 Others (Centre for Reproductive rights)

The court ruled in 2018 that the neglect, physical and verbal abuse of women seeking maternity health care services is a violation of their rights as stipulated by Kenyan law and international human rights instruments.

Mellet vs. Ireland; Whelan vs. Ireland (Centre for reproductive rights)

In a landmark judgment in 2017, the United Nations Human Rights Committee stated that Ireland's severe abortion restriction is responsible for women being subjected to cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment.

R.R. vs. Poland (Centre for reproductive rights)

In 2011 the European court of human rights in a verdict proclaimed that Poland's denial of legal reproductive care is a violation of human rights.

P. and S. vs. Poland (European court of Human Rights)

In 2013, the European Court of Human Rights established guidelines for teenage rights to reproductive health services, highlighting adolescents' vulnerability and affirming young people's reproductive autonomy.

These rulings have left an indelible mark on women's sexual and repro-

ductive rights. These rights must be maintained as they are a crucial part of girls and women's right to equality, physical integrity, and life. Human rights and the right to personal liberty are mirrored in reproductive rights.

## Reproductive Rights and Social Stigmas

In thecontext of India, reproductive rights are something out of the patriarchal pedagogy. In such kind of societal structure,reproductive rights are coupled with a tremendous taboo. Majority of females are unaware about their rights. When a girl child is born she is socialized to become a good wife and mother. Having an abortion or getting a choice in the conception of a child is considered a sin. Males or other family members, rather than the female herself, make reproductive decisions in most families. Even if difficulties or abnormalities arise, women are hesitant to induce abortion since cultural and religious teachings have instilled this fear in them. The life of the foetus is more valuable than the life of the mother herself. In a male-dominated culture, pregnancy is also seen as a tool to exert control over a woman's life.

Unmarried women, who lack reproductive rights due to cultural and social restrictions, face a worsening scenario. In India, reproductive rights are inversely proportional to marriage. Without a husband, a woman has no choice to conceive.  Social traditions will prevent her from living a decent life if she conceives which could lead to a decision to abort or commit suicide.

The approval of the partner or parents is required for running basic medical tests, such as sonography. A woman cannot have an abortion without her partner's agreement. Since both the male and female are accountable for the pregnancy, a collaborative choice should be made. Is dominating this decision, however, the best option? Isn't it true that because a foetus is a part of a woman's body, they should have sole control over their reproduction choices? In a developing country like ours, such questions must be investigated to see whether we are capable of ensuring that every woman has access to this basic right.

"The ability of women to participate equally in the economic and social life of the nation has been facilitated by their ability to control their reproductive lives."
Justice Sandra Day O'Conor

## Review of Literature

## Sex Equality Arguments for Reproductive Rights: Their Critical Basis and Evolving Constitutional Expression

Reva Beth Siegel

Siegel emphasized the importance of family and culture in establishing the structure of men and women's sex roles in society and limiting women's life choices. On the one hand, men's sexual liberty, pleasure expression, and decision-making are valued more than women's. Gender-based sexual expression rules, on the other hand, deprive women of their freedom and dignity in diverse relationships. As a result, women are frequently regarded as a sexual minority, robbing them of their equal sexual freedom. In practice, equal rights protect a woman's liberty throughout her life and allow her to attain the status of equal citizen in a society. Equal and dignified access to gender justice is hampered by a restricted view of reproduction.

## Abortion and Personhood

Joseph S. Spoerl

The author of this paper critically examines American philosopher Mary Anne Warren's idea of personhood. According to Warren, a newborn or foetus lacks the attributes of a person and hence does not have the same rights as a person. As a result, abortion is as routine as getting a haircut. Famous philosophers Boethius and Saint Thomas, on the other hand, regarded an entity with a rational essence as a person. They reasoned that because a foetus is eventually changed into a human through appropriate indoctrination, it must be accorded human rights. Mary, according to the author, is unable to explain whether a person is sleeping, unconscious, in a coma, or sedated, and is unable to perform above qualities whether they are sleeping, unconscious, in a coma, or sedated. According to Mary, a human enters and exits personhood several times throughout their lives, yet she is unable to establish her thesis. As a result, the author declared that abortion is the same as killing a human being.

## A Half-written Promise

Jayna Kothari, et al

The writers are concerned about the lack of emphasis placed to and recognition of reproductive rights problems in India by political parties.

Menstrual health and hygiene, child marriage, female foeticide, and sex selection are all examples of restricted reproductive rights. The authors suggest that sexual and reproductive rights should cover a broader range of issues, including maternal fatalities, adolescent sexuality, the prohibition of coerced medical procedures, and gender discrimination and treatment access. Despite the fact that the law guarantees women the right to make decisions alone about their bodies, medical practitioners frequently need them to obtain approval from their parents or spouses. As a result, the number of cases of unsafe abortion is on the rise, as women are left with no other choice.

### Role-Players in Abortion Decision-Making in the Accra Metropolis, Ghana

Akwasi Kumi - Kyereme, et. al.

The writers of this study based on the global issue of illegal abortion. Abortion is the most common form of contraception in underdeveloped countries. One out of every five pregnancies is aborted, according to the author, for a variety of reasons including personal needs/concerns, the interests of the potential kid, existing child/children, sexual partner, and extended family. According to this study, the decision to induce abortion is frequently affected by the pregnant woman's mother, her male partner, and others (friends, neighbor, health worker etc.). In many circumstances, females seek confirmation that they are not doing anything wrong because of the social, religious, and cultural factors that influence abortion.

### Realizing Reproductive Choice and Rights Abortion and Contraception in India

Anju Malhotra et al.

In a study on decision-making capacity among Madhya Pradesh women, it was discovered that family members have a significant influence on women's ability to have abortions. The study discovered a correlation between contraceptive access and abortion, and showed that a lack of information, limited access, and familial disapproval are all substantial impediments to women exercising their rights. The authors claimed that abortion services need to be restructured and that concerns other than abortion legalization should be considered. They continued by stating that developing countries such as India must address social, health, and gender-based hurdles in order to address gender disparities, access to rights.

## Abortion Law and Policy around the World: In Search of Decriminalization

Marge Berer

The paper examines the advantages and disadvantages of abortion laws and policies in various nations. Restriction and criminalization, according to the author, violated it all over the world. Some countries, such as Canada, have decriminalized abortion while maintaining a low mortality rate. According to the author, the origins of criminality can be traced back to the colonial era, when technology and medical facilities for safe abortion were unavailable. Because circumstances have changed, the author advocated for decriminalization rather than legalization of abortion. She went on to say that a lack of understanding and deficiencies in policy made it difficult for women to choose a safe and inexpensive abortion method. The author concluded that policy changes are urgently needed to make abortion reasonable and accessible to women, based on various instances and protests occurring around the world.

### Social Perspective: Abortion and Female Behavior

Winston P.Nagan

The process of abortion has been examined from the perspectives of both the fetus and the woman in this paper. The author has gathered instances from numerous abortion verdicts around the world and critically evaluated them.Abortion, from the standpoint of the fetus, is a violation of the right to life, but we must also consider the right to privacy of women. Each individual has some control over his or her body and organs, and we cannot regard a female and a fetus to be biologically and psychologically separate units. As a result, women have complete control over whether or not to have an abortion. There are two points of view: first, no one accepts abortion unless they are the one who initiates it, and second, abortion is an unavoidable phenomenon, similar to poverty and illness, that exists in society whether we embrace it or not. According to Robert Bryne, legalizing abortion would jeopardize the value of life, which would eventually lead to euthanasia, with only those who contribute to society having the right to live. As a result, the author concentrated on the legal, social, and moral aspects of abortion.

# The Role of Intimate Partners in Women's Reasons for Seeking Abortion

Karuna S. Chibber, et al

The role of a spouse in inducing abortion has been discussed by the author. According to the author, the spouse may not directly influence the decision, but is somehow responsible for it in the background. Relationship problems are also a major reason for inducing pregnancies. Intimate partner violence is also a factor in the choice to get an abortion. Emotional pressure also played a significant role in abortion induction. Females do not want to lose their partners or burden them financially. Some also believe that it is a joint decision and they do not want to take it alone. The paper also pointed out some of the study's limitations, such as low participation, difficulty in generalizing because abortion is induced at different gestation weeks, and the need for a more in-depth qualitative study to determine whether a partner's influence on decision-making is real.

## Discussion

The answer to the limits and pressures that women experience on the route to making decisions about their own bodies should not be judicial intervention. *A 30-year-old domestic helper said that her in-laws are refusing to speak to her because she underwent a tubectomy. Her in-laws believe she has committed a sin for which God will punish their entire family. She went on to say that feeding two children in an urban setting on such a meager wage is really challenging for her. Her work was being harmed by her regular use of contraceptive tablets and aborting the undesired pregnancy. She is pleased that she chose the correct course, despite her family's opposition.* In a democracy like India, everyone has a say in how decisions are made, and failing to follow this paradigm leads to the framework being called into question. The right to reproduction remains a critical facet of family and community welfare in all societies, regardless of culture, because it supports gender equality. It is especially crucial to engage rural women in discussions on such issues, as they are typically the silent victims of traditional norms and orthodoxy. *A 35-year-old woman, married with two children, recounts having to abort several times with pills since her spouse was unwilling to use protection. Her reproductive organs have been significantly harmed by her long and frequent usage of contraceptive tablets. According to her, the spouse neglected her health in order to appease his male ego, and she now needs to undergo surgery to remove her uterus. Her health conditions and doctors' counsel had compelled her to do so.* As Hillary Clinton correctly stated, "You cannot have mater-

nal health without reproductive health. And reproductive health includes contraception and family planning and access to legal, safe abortion." Because of family members meddling in the name of safety, women are expected to ask permission before consulting a health professional. The lack of awareness and use of illegitimate reproductive rights is due to the taboo connected with sex education and adolescent sexuality. Abortion is related with cultural, moral, and ethical difficulties.Karen Horney, in a discussion on womb envy said that women were envious of males for their power in society rather than a manhood they would never be able to have. Womb envy, she argued, develops when men find they are not really in control and dominant in women's life as they thought they were. *A 24-year-old newlywed woman confronts that the pressure from in-laws and relatives to plan a family had already begun as she approached our first anniversary. The couple delayed planning a family only because of the husband wants to put his time into his career currently. She stated unequivocally that her husband and his family make the majority of the decisionsboth inside and outside the domestic sphere.* There is a never-ending argument about the rights of women and foetus, which is often contradictory. Modifying and upgrading the legislative framework can lead to more dignified reproductive rights access. *A 45-year-old mother of daughters shares her decision to abort her pregnancy. She asserts she could not have done it without the support of her parents, and that her in-laws and husband wanted her to have a son to ensure the family's future. She got sterilized with her parents' support since she was afraid of becoming pregnant again.* The orthodoxy and dogmatization-based societal thinking must be upgraded. New policies enabling safe and fair access for women in their reproductive decisions should be pushed, keeping the right to privacy at the forefront.

**Conclusion**

In theory, Planned Parenthood provides birth control and even abortion rights to women, but in effect, men continue to fight against women's access. As a result, men seek to impose as much control over the female body as possible, and having power over women is nothing new for men, as power dynamics between sexes are taught from an early age all around us. There have been instances of religious interference, as well as cases of double oppression based on women's economic and social status. Women are unable to access reproductive health care and information due to these restrictions. One of the most important aspects of personal autonomy is the ability to make decisions without being influenced by others and without having to face any discrimination. On the one hand, science and medicine technology is rapidly advancing; on the other hand, restrictions and ta-

boos surrounding women's bodily autonomy persist. Other than medical reasons for abortion, the law and political machinery frequently fail to recognise the other reasons like forced pregnancy as a result of marital rape. History has it that women could create generations of rulers and soldiers, which enraged men, who sought to compensate by seeking more power.

The study confirms the point made by NasimPedrad during an SNL show,

"If men could get pregnant, abortion clinics would be like Starbucks — there would be two on every block, four in every airport, and the morning-after pill would come in different flavors like sea salt and cool ranch."

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# Role of Shaikh Nūr al-Dīn (Reh.A.) in preaching the message of Islam: A Study

**Mohmad Ilham Shiekh**

## Abstract

Kashmir is known for the valley of Saints and *Rishīs*, therefore the valley is being given the title of *Pir-i Waer* (Valley of Saints). In this valley with the passage of time, various friends of Allāh (s.w.t) arrive, starting from Haḍrat Abdul Rahman Bulbul Shah (Reh.A.), who enlightens the valley of Kashmir with Islām. In the similar way, one of the luminous personality born in Kashmir, known by the name of Shaikh Nūr al-Dīn (Reh.A.). He is one of the Kashmiri *Sufi* and *Da'i* of Islam commonly known as Shaikh al-ʿĀlam (Reh.A.), who has considerable impact on the people of Kashmir from centuries. He is to be considered as the reformer of Islām in Kashmir. At his time, Hindu religion was at its highest peak and he struggled throughout his life for the cause of Islām. He worked day and night for the propagation of Islāmic message to the masses. He propounded the message of the *Qurān* and *Ḥadīth* in a Kashmiri language in the form of Poetry commonly known as "*Shruks*", so that the people of Kashmir may understand the message of *Qurān* and *Ḥadīth* in their mother language and follow it for guidance. He uses his poetry as a tool to spread the true knowledge of Islām. He deliberates and expounds the mortal preaching as a base for the enrichment of harmonious life. He contributed a lot for the Kashmiri people that cover all aspects of Islāmic life. The present article seeks to study his role in preaching the message of Islām and introduce his personality as the great Islamic Preacher of Kashmir.

**Keywords:** *Preacher, Islam, Kashmir, Poetry, Shaikh al-*Ālam*, Shruks.*

## I. Introduction

Shaikh Nūr al-Dīn (Reh.A.) was undoubtedly one of the great personality of Kashmir, who was generally known in a common dialect as Nund Rishi, Shaikh al-ʿĀlam, Alamdaar-i Kashmir, Taaj-ul Awliya, (the crown of saints of Kashmir) whom Kashmiri Pandits call out of love as Shahzanand. He was born on 10th of *Dhul Ḥajjah* (12th month of Islamic Calender) 779 A.H. corresponding to 10th of

December, 1377 A.D. on Thursday at the time of *Chasht* at Khai village, Jogipo-ra, Kulgam. He was born of a virtuous couple, Shaikh Salar-ud Din and Sadra, known for their piousness and Allāh-fearing. Later, he busied himself completely in meditation, prayers, remembrance of Allāh [(s.w.t)] and ascetic practices. In his late youth, he chose a cave as his dwelling near his birthplace for all his usual prac-tices and meditations. After twelve years of leaving from cave life, Shaikh Nūr al-Dīn [(Reh.A.)] along with some disciples exclusively visited the valley of Kashmir, living for longer times at many places and preaching his simple message of truth, piety, purity, fear of Allāh [(s.w.t)] and love for the whole humanity. Shaikh Nūr al-Din [(Reh.A.)] lived for sixty three years and few months and passed away in Rupawan village of Chrar-i Sharief on 26th *Jamad al-sani* 842 A.H. (corresponding to 1439 A.D.) during the reign of Sultan Zain al-Ābidīn Budshah. In the last rituals all well known Islāmic personalities as well as king reached Chrar-i Sharief. He was buried at Chrar-i Sharief. By the formal orders of king Budshah his shrine was constructed and his tomb stands at Charar-i Sharief in the district of Budgam in Kashmir and draws large crowds. *Shams al-Ārifīn* or 'the sun of the pious' is the chronogram while gives the date of his demise. i.e. 842 A.H.

## II. Shaikh Nūr al-Dīn [(Reh.A.)] as a Poet

Shaikh Nūr al-Din [(Reh.A.)] has his own style of preaching the message of Islam. He is the role model for his society and he chose poetry as a vehicle for propagating his understanding of religion and life to the people around him. So we can say that his art is not for art's sake but for the sake of life. So he need not be a craftsman but a person who says what he believes in. In this context, Prof. Shafi Shouq holds that:

> "Understanding Shiakh Nūr al-Din's poetry means understanding the language of his poetry... The *Shruk* is grounded in the phonological, se-mantic and semiological structure of the 15th century Kashmir: no ap-proach other than linguistic, can, therefore, be reliable in understanding and evaluating the *Shruk*".

Shaikh Nūr al-Din [(Reh.A.)] is among the first one's who used the Kashmiri language for propagating the message of Islam to the common people. It was because of his wise sayings that people of Kashmir understand the spiritual literary knowledge in a simple way that comprehend the total crux of the life. His art of propagating the message in the form of poetry attracted the people in a greater way. The poetic love of Shaikh al-Ālam is very noteworthy and beneficial in its effect. The poet-ical articulation of his great effort has made the linguistic and cultural mystery acceptable among the people. It can be said that Shaikh al-Ālam was among the great personalities, whose influence imprints so deep on Kashmir's culture, liter-

ature and language that he becomes an integral part of the Kashmiri identity. His whole life and teachings provides a viewpoint for a discussion on social, religious, cultural, moral poetry, its categorization, evaluation, admiration and impact with all its evidences and in all its manifestations.

The personality of Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] is actually reflected in his poetry. He lives in his poetry. Many times he addresses his own self and discusses different issues. In one *Shruk* he says:

*Nasr Baba paan pusher jaan aafreenas*

*Tavay saet tchaley aayinas mal*

*Duh youd krawakh wadnas rivnas*

*Tavay Hazrat raty seenas tal*

O Baba Nasr, submit your will to Allāh [(s.w.t)]

Because of it, your heart become pure

Spend whole of day in sincere worship

So Muḥammad [(s.a.w)] will intersession you

He used first and second person pronouns (i and you) in his poetry and mostly avoids the use of third person and saves the poet from detaching from the poet. He says:

Ha nundyo hindan hinz kaami trautou

Trautou te prautou haq sinz wath

Hazrat Muḥammad mata mashray tou

*Asinin douzakhas timan rozi kath*

O Nund, left the activities of Hindus

Follow the way of Truth, i.e. Allāh [(s.w.t)]

Don't forget Prophet Muḥammad [(s.a.w)]

We would be in a hell, but He [(s.a.w)] ashamed because of us

Shaikh's [(Reh.A.)] poetry is directly and studiedly moral and the addressee is nearly always present in his verse. Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] was very much concerned about various facets of technical elements in his poetry. This is the reason that he chose compact, clear, complete and simple proverbial style for his poetry. Being a Sufi saint, most of his poetry revolves around the themes of love, truth, unity, harmony and peace. The themes of his poetry may be divided into the following broad categories:

- •      Religious (Islāmic) Poetry
- •      Devotional poetry
- •      Ethical Poetry
- •      Love for the Humanity
- •      Communal Harmony
- •      Mysticism.

Shaikh al-ʿĀlam's [(Reh.A.)] poetry is full of warnings against the evil practices, and advises the people how to eradicate these evils. The people must take advantage from his valuable and purposeful message for developing their personalities. The poetry presented by Shaikh is completely based on Islāmic teachings. The teachings of Shaikh are based on unity, love, communal harmony, equality and honesty.

### III. Shaikh Nūr al-Dīn [(Reh.A.)] as a *Da'i* (Preacher) of Islam

The period of Shaikh al-ʿĀlam [(Reh.A.)] witnessed the days of intense cultural assimilation because Islām had yet to overcome the resistance of the local Hindus and Brahmans who still enjoyed all the privileges of the ruling class and dominated the Royal Court. Due to these Hindu courtiers the common masses could not get the training and education which would have enabled them to understand the fundamentals of Islām. Under these circumstances, there was urgent need of a religious scholar who could express the teachings of Islām in the local language so as to enable the unlettered masses to comprehend it properly. In that setting the Shaikh Nūr al-Dīn [(Reh.A.)] emerged as the instrument of change. Although the reformation of people of Kashmir was started by Mir Sayyid Ali Hamdāni [(Reh.A.)] but it got boost at the Shaikh [(Reh.A.)].

The whole *Ummah* has the responsibility of instillation, justice, enjoying the right and forbidden the wrong i.e. '*Amr-bil Ma'ruf wa Nahi 'Anil Munkar'*. In this context, the sayings of Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] have the great importance. He performed this difficult task with sincerity. The Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] expressed his philosophy through *Shruks*. He was one of those spiritualists who lit the lamp of ethical knowledge for the benefit of humanity. His aim was to illuminate the world with his philosophy of universal brotherhood, based on conviction and brotherhood.

Shaikh Nūr al-Din [(Reh.A.)] played a significant role in the spread of Islāmic tenets and Islāmic values in the process of acculturation and even Islāmization of Kashmir in its strict religious sense. It is true that Kashmir had come in contact with Islām long before the Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] assumed the role of a missionary, but it was mainly through his poetry, composed in a local language, that a dynamic and creative interaction was established between the great tradition of Islām, as repre-

sented by the Sufis and *'Ulamā* and the local peasant society.

Unlike the Saint missionaries from Central Asia and Persia, Shaikh [Reh.A.] was capable of entering into a meaningful dialogue with the local people regarding matters ranging from ontology to immediate social concerns. Islām has always been capable of establishing a vital link between its teachings and society. It is only amply borne out by the creative role of Shaikh [Reh.A.] as the matter of Kashmiri identity, but simultaneously it is reflected in the social response that his popular mystical poetry generated among the people. His massage was not confined to one race or one class, but addressed to mankind as a whole. He expressed his thought in the simple language of his people, clothing his ideas with and examples familiar from their experience. He taught the common people to practice religion not merely as a creed, but to make it life.

The Shaikh [Reh.A.] was not against the norms of the world and its social system but rather reshaped the social order so meticulously informing his individual relations with humanity as to enter into the commitment of Allāh [s.w.t]. According to the philosophy of Shaikh [Reh.A.], Lust, anger and covetousness are three gates of hell. Jealousy, lack of interest, irritability and living upon others' fortunes leads to misery and immoral character. Gambling, drinking, harshness of speed and misuse of wealth leads to calamity. Meditate on your own self and recite the sacred name of Allāh [s.w.t] with full control on all the senses. To live on the fruits of your own labour, do your work without disturbing others. Learn to sit in a natural manner, becoming steady, calm and detached, the more you sit still, the steadier your mind will become.

Shaikh Nūr al-Din [Reh.A.] is to be considered as the commentator of *Qurān* (*Mufassir*) in the Kashmiri terminology. As he had translated the *Qurān* and *Ḥadīth* in a Kashmiri language in the form of Poetry commonly known as '*Shruks*', so that the people of Kashmir may understand the *Qurān* and *Ḥadīth* in their mother language. He contributed a lot for the Kashmiri people that cover all aspects of Islāmic life. In the system of Islāmic thought,Shaikh [Reh.A.] has steadfast faith in Allāh [s.w.t] and his poetry reflects the commitment towards Islāmic concepts. Shaikh al-ʿĀlam [Reh.A.] has given the message to people as prescribed by Islām. In the field of Beliefs (Īmāniyāt) contain *Tawḥīd*, *Risālāh* and Āḳhirah. *Tawḥīd* is the fundamental belief in Islām which means oneness of Allāh [s.w.t], Allāh [s.w.t] knows the past, present and the future of every creature. The Shaikh [Reh.A.] expressed the *Tawḥīd* in one of his *Shruk* as:

<div align="center">

Suy aus ti suy ho aasi

Suy suy kaer zi ha zuwoo

Suy saarie andeshi kaasi

</div>

<div align="center">65</div>

*Hanaa zuwoo paayas peto*

He was and He shall be

May for only Him my dear-self be

Alone, He will remove thy fears and doubts

Be perceptible to some extent O, me !

*Risalāh* means having belief in Prophethood of Prohet Muḥammad [(s.a.w)].A Life of Prophet Muḥammad [(s.a.w)] is the best and perfect model for the believers as the *Qurān* has said:

> "Indeed in the Messenger of Allāh (Muḥammad [(s.a.w)]) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in (the Meeting with) Allāh [(s.w.t)] and the Last Day and remembers Allāh [(s.w.t)] much".

The Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] described the concept of *Risalāh* in his *Shruk as*:

Muḥammad ti Tchoor yaar barhaq ganzrukh

Timan nish andnay dunyihiq niyaay

Jaan ti paan youd timan path binzrakh

Suy chai tour kich baed rahkay

Anis athiwoul pay keth sezrakh

*Yamath na wizrakh peer sinz jaay*

Let thou take Muhammad [(s.a.w)] and His four friends as paragons of life.

Solution to all the affairs will thou get from them.

Devote the being to their defined doctrine. A vast empire will thou find in Here-after.

Able not a blind be to impel without a staff.

Thus shall not thou be righteous without Thy Prophet.

One shalt pledge devotion to such a prophet. Whose era has brimmed in with divinity all the spheres?

Āḵẖirah means Life after death. Anyone who worship Allāh [(s.w.t)] and obeys his commandments will be rewarded with Paradise (*Jannah*), a permanent place of happiness; the person who does not abide will be sent to Hell (*Jahannam*), a place of harsh punishment and suffering. Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] forwarded various *Shruks* for Āḵẖirah, one of the *Shruk* he says as:

Tati kya karakh roz mahsharay

yeti khaasan ti aaman aasi talwas

Moul palzini gobras tami gatkaaray

*Ṣabr rozi ni saabiran tim ti khen tras*

What shalt thou do on the day of resurrection.

When rank & file shalt be with lurking fear.

Each one shalt be looking for his ownself &

The patient ones shalt lose the sense of patience.

A large portion of Shaikh's [(Reh.A.)] teachings are about worship (*Ibādah).* The *Ibādah* includes *Ṣalāh* (Prayer), *Ṣawm* (Fasting), *Zakāh* (almsgiving) and *Ḥajj* (pilgrimage). *Ibādah* is a practical devotion and demonstration of faith, and keeps a believer in constant connection with his Creator, Allah. The virtues of *Ibādah* are long lasting and numerous which cannot be measured. It develops in a believer the qualities of steadfastness, self-discipline and obedience to the Truth, leading an individual to be honest, patient and truthful in the relationships of life. It develops a believer's moral and spiritual standard and keeps an individual away from selfishness, greed, extravagance and other vices.

The same message of *Ibādah* has described by the Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] in these *Shruks* as:

Subah phol tai raat gayi ada

Ati kehu roodukh rada dith

Bang ti salat tooruk nada

Tati keho aakho nada dith

Farz ti sunnat kar mali ada

*Jannatas ninyoo nada dith*

Night has ended, dawn has cracked,

You sluggard, still in bed!

The muezzin's call is a call from there,

Remember your promise made at your birth?

Dear, perform your duties and sunnah,

Then will you be welcome in Paradise.

Islāmi kaamiyan doh din barsay

Ilmacha lari kalmia chi zeal trav

Roza Nimaz Ḥajj Zakāh sar saa

*Yus kar kongul suy kar krav*

Let thou perform the duties-divine whole heartedly.

Thy defined doctrine is the vault of thy knowledge house.

Be bound to the fundamentals of thy doctrine.

As the one who sows, shalt reap thus.

In the field of *Múāmlāt* (transactions) and *Múāshirat* (Social affairs), Shaikh's [Reh.A.] contribution is worth mentioning. *Múāmlāt*, i.e. matters such as selling and buying. A Muslim should be well versed in the individual responsibilities. As *Qurān* mentions at many places as :

> "Those that turn (to Allāh [s.w.t]) in repentance; that serve Him, and praise Him; that wander in devotion to the Cause of Allāh [s.w.t]; that bow down and prostrate themselves in prayer; that enjoin good and forbid evil; and observe the limits set by Allāh [s.w.t]; (these do rejoice). So proclaim the glad tidings to the Believers".

Similarly, same point has been made in a tradition(*Ḥadīth*) as*:*

"A believer ought to open the gate of good and close the door of evil".

It signifies that every member of the society should have a strong sense of responsibility towards the society. No one should remain apathetic on considering any evil or injustice. One should feel the pain of others in own heart. That is why the social responsibility has been correlated with acts of worship in Islām. Regarding social affairs, the Shaikh [Reh.A.] said in his *Shruk*:

Musalmaan yim hinduit pakan

Shak na kyah karan , kyah karan bov

Yaqeen chuk kufruk musalmaani thekan

Seena chuk na saaf chuk bad khuy

Guh yim livan ti neemach chakan

Tim qayamach doh woothan siyah roy

Muslims who Hinduise their lives

By adherence to superstitions and customs

They believe in paganism only boast as Muslims

They are insincere and vicious people

They who paint their houses with cow dung

They who waste the delicious food items

They all shall be presented with blackfaces

On the day of judgement before the Allāh (s.w.t)

*Akhlāqiyāt* (Good Morals) is a subject of Islām that deals with the knowledge of virtues and the ways how to acquire them, a knowledge of the rules of human behaviour, a knowledge of standard for assessing the human acts done out of free will and passing the judgment of good and bad on those acts and deciding the award or punishment, provided the belief precedes the act and provided the individual doesn't violate the virtuous deeds which prevent him from earning the pleasure of Allāh (s.w.t). Allāh (s.w.t) says:

> "Verily those who believe and do righteous deeds, they are the best of the creatures, their reward is with their Lord- Gardens of Eternity, through which streams flow; they will abide therein for ever. Allāh (s.w.t) is well pleased with them and they are well pleased with Him. That is for such who fear their Lord".

A *Ḥadīth* of Prophet Muḥammad (s.a.w) illustrated the concept of *Akhlāq* as:

> "Dearest and nearest to me on the day of judgment is one who possess good moral character, most hated to me and farthest from me on the day of judgment is one who possess bad moral character".

In the similar way, Shaikh (Reh.A.) used to express this message in his *Shruk* as*:*

Dil chuy gaad ti houkh mo thaawun

Zikr hund poon dis lasiyo tavay

Nimaz chay zameenas phal zan wawun

*Adabach nend karus khasiyu tavay*

Your heart is like a fish, deny it not water

It needs the water of *Iman* to live.

Prayer is a seed sown into the earth,

Tend it with reverence to make it grow.

Pooz dapaan pan zan natakh

Apuz wanaan lagi ras

Muḥammad trawith iblees ratakh

*Khuday wuchuy khatakh kas*

As a leaf you'll shake while speaking the truth.

Telling a fiction is an exciting thing.

If Muḥammad you renounce and to Satan you turn,

He will see it all - how will you escape His eye?

These are the universal messages of Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] to whole of the humanity in general and to the people of Kashmir in particular for attainment of peace of mind and soul in this world as well as hereafter.

In the above discussion, the Shaikh al-ʿĀlam's [(Reh.A.)] life is discussed precisely. He was actually a valuable asset for the people of Kashmir. He struggled mostly throughout his life for the cause of Islām. He used his poetry in forwarding the message of truth i.e. Islām. His poetry is of worth mentioning. His message universally applied for whole of the humanity to achieve salvation in this world as well as hereafter, hence proved the great Islamic Preacher of Kashmir.

**Conclusion**

Islām is the complete way of life. To follow the religion of Islām is to follow the *Qurān* and *Ḥadīth*. Whoever follows it whole heartedly would be dignified in the sight of Allāh [(s.w.t)]. Shaikh al-ʿĀlam [(Reh.A.)] was one of the followers of Islām. He lays stress on the unity of Allāh [(s.w.t)]. Allāh [(s.w.t)] is the ultimate cause and the sole-existent of all being, the only self-subsisting reality. He acquires the fullness of being, all the attributes of Allah mentioned in the *Qurān* inhere in Him with full essence. He is the perfect being of goodness and beauty: the Supreme of love. The poetry of Shaikh [(Reh.A.)] is great exhibition of Allāh's [(s.w.t)] greatness, where the topics of his theme says, Allāh [(s.w.t)] is the Creator of all in this world and commands with full authority.

Shaikh al-ʿĀlam [(Reh.A.)] is a religious scholar of high repute and there is no doubt that he is a perfect believer (*Mu'min*) and his approach to Allāh [(s.w.t)] is totally according to Islāmic Shariah based on the teachings of *Qurān* and *Ḥadīth*. He stressed on the five pillars of Islām in his *Kalām* in a detailed way. i.e. *Imān*, *Ṣalāh*, *Ṣawm*, *Zakāh* and *Ḥajj*. They play an important role in building the character. They purify the inner self of an individual and get sufficient courage to control his lower self. In most of the *Shruks* of Shaikh [(Reh.A.)], stress has been laid on the control of one's self i.e. desires, the main source of man's destruction. Shaikh

al-ʿĀlam (Reh.A.) is regarded as a reformer of his society. He fought throughout his entire life against all the vices of his society. As a poet, he is regarded as the poet of the humanity. His life is full of guidance and teachings for the whole humanity in a right direction. These teachings include all the aspects of human life and are based on the principle of *ʿAmr bil Marūf Wa Nahī ʿAnil Munkar*, to enjoin Good and forbid wrong. Comprehensively, he worked for the establishment of a just socio-moral order in the world.

After studying the poetry of Shaikh al-ʿĀlam (Reh.A.), it can be summed up that Shaikh (Reh.A.) is one of the greatest Sufi poet & religious scholar of the sub-continent. His message is clear, indepth and pure, free of duality based on the teachings of *Qurān* & *Ḥadīth* and his message are universal. He wanted to guide *Kashmiris* and through *Kashmiris* the whole of humanity to the right path i.e. Islam. But unfortunately the message of this great personality is restricted to Kashmir only and is not introduced to the whole world. The teaching of Shaikh (Reh.A.) demonstrates an individual in particular and the society in general how to live in this world to be a good human being.

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# Role of Non-Government Organization towards the upliftment of traditional embroidery craft of Barmer

**Garima Tiwari & Radha Kashyap**

## Abstract

India is a land of rich culture and traditions. Each state of the country holds importance towards its traditional craft. The skill of handicraft is transferred from one generation to another as an important part of the family legacy. Rajasthan is one of the states wherein the Barmer district is known for its intricate traditional embroidery craft. This craft is majorly practiced by the women artisans of Barmer residing in the small villages. Due to lack of education and knowledge, these artisans are facing many challenges. Thepresence of middlemen in the marketing chain is one of the constraints in the handicraft sector. However, there are NGOs that are contributing tothe development of the artisan community. A study was conducted to assess the role of NGO inthe upliftment of traditional crafts and artisans of Barmer. This research paper is a case study of an NGO named GraminVikasChetnaSansthan working under the guidance of Mr. Vikram Singh and President awardee Dr.Ruma Devi who are rigorously working towards the upliftment of women artisans. This paper will give insights into the steps taken by NGO towards development in form of social changes and upliftment of the traditional embroidery craft of Barmer.

**Keywords**: Craft upliftment, embroidery, women artisans, traditional craft, Non Government Organization.

## Introduction

In India, *Rajasthani* culture is known for its diversity and so is Indian craftsmanship. Every community in Rajasthan excels in its specialty. Flamboyant embroidery is an age-old tradition of Rajasthan and it has been conserved with sincerity and dedication by the artisans.

Barmer is one of the massive but underdeveloped regions on the map because of climatic conditions, limited resources for agriculture, and poor literacy rate. The handicrafts here are mainly the creative work of the financially weaker sections of society.These artisans of embroidery craft are suffering because of a disorganized market, lack of education, inadequate funds, lack of knowledge of the latest technologies, deficiency of market knowledge, etc.

Artisans form the backbone of the handicraft sector and are delivering their best through hard work as well as unique skills. Even though these artisans have to face many challenges in providing a supportable living for themselves and their families in the existing economy.

Few of such challenges are the growing cost of producing goods, insufficient working capital, transporting raw material from other places, non-existence of appropriate training amenities, feeble marketing approach, little remunerations of the hard-working artisans, competition worldwide, and negligence by central and state governments and absence of interest by succeeding generation.

The NGOs though worked for the upliftment of the artisan's difficult circumstances. Still, there is a need for these organizations to function more rigorously in the modern marketing environment. MoreNGOss, need to step forward and support the artisans to withstand the changing form of challenges being thrown by the system.

The objective of the study is to explore the role of NGO towards the upliftment of traditional embroidery craft by the women artisans of Barmer Rajasthan.

**Review of Literature**

Ojha and Mishra (2013), examined the probability on opportunities, exposure and support with the help of non-government organisation named as URMUL. The study aimed to understand the initiatives indulged by URMUL on embroidery craft artisans in Bikaner city of Rajasthan. The case study method was used to analyze five cases that were selected using the purposive sampling technique. The findings of the study stated that there are visiblechangesconcerningthe socioeconomic status of women artisans. These women artisans are getting assignments and projects on a continued basis resulting in income in their hands. URMUL also ensures regular payments and wages to be received by the artisans for their hard work.

Middlemenin the supply chain are now negligible leading to fewerearn- ingsin terms of profit. The women artisans with help of URMUL devel- oped the capabilities of self-radiance self-sufficiency through the training of skill development.

Jhadhav (2015) examined the role of NGO in rural development. The study aimed to understand the holistic and collaborative approach of NGO working for the benefit of rural artisans. The rural areas of Rajasthan were selected to study wherein the descriptive conceptual mode method was followed to collect detailed information. The study results revealed that rural population is connecting through the world through the mode of NGO efforts. They are being introduced to the new technologies and modern changes beneficial for the rural population to uplift their living standards. NGOs are also creating awareness among the rural population concerning various schemes designed by the government for their devel- opment.

Shah and Patel (2019) conducted a study about various non-government organisations working for the promotion, revival, and preservation of the handicraft sector. The study was conducted in the Surendranagar district of Gujarat. The data was collected from rural artisans involved in various handicrafts practiced in this locality. Around 400 artisans were selected through a random sampling method and an interview schedule was used as a tool for data collection. The results of the study stated that the rise number of projects and programmesorganised by Government organisa- tions but very few have knowledge ballot it. Therefore, non-government organisations are coming forward and creating awareness about schemes that are beneficial for the artisans. There is scope to fill the gap between Government organisation and rural artisans, hence NGOs have to work hard to act as a bridge between these entities.

**Research Methodology**

The western part of Rajasthan was selected for conducting the study, spe- cifically Barmer district located in the region of Thar desert. One non-gov- ernment organizations were selected to collect the data. The Case Study method was used to collect the data fan rom organization, focusing on functions to support the embroidery craft and artisans of Barmer.

**Results and Discussion**

Gramin Vikas evam Chetna Sansthan (GVCS), a grassroots NGO aimed at

promoting the craft work of women artisans was founded in 1998 in the city of Barmer. It was founded by Mr. Vikram Singh, a social activist, and Secretary. This organization is a non-profit and non-political association of socially inclined members who are working for the upliftment of women from *dalits*(people belonging to the lowest stratum castes in India) and marginalized communities of Barmer.

The NGO is working for the overall development of the women population of Barmer who are deprived of basicnecessities of life without any discrimination on the cast system or community biasness. The main focus area is to uplift and improves the livelihood of women artisans by giving them assistance and up-gradation of already existing traditional embroidery skill among them.

Rooted in the handicraft center of Rajasthan, GVCS empowers skilled women artisans by connecting them to urban markets where their talent and skill are appreciated. The organisation has collectivized women, and artisans, through the medium of Self Help Groups (SHGs). These SHGs enact as platforms for knowledge building, where women artisans are trained and oriented to develop quality designs through workshops, training, and meetings. Along with knowledge sharing; SHGs are federated into a Central Womens' Manch which works for collective marketing of the products developed by member women through liasoning with buyers and craft houses The organisation is working with more than 22,000 women artisans from the villages surrounding the Barmer district of Rajasthan.

Along with working on its core focus which is women empowerment by helping them attain financial independence through the promotion of handicraftsthat offer viable home-based employment to women, the organisation also works on other programmes which include; SHG formation, disaster management, and relief work, fodder supply for drought-affected livestock, adult literacy and education programmes for women. Due to its strong women-centric programme, the organisation also encourages equitable participation of both sexes in panchayat and village governance activities allowing for the participation of women in decision-makingprocesses. Their vision is the creation of an equitable society devoid of exploitation and deprivation of any kind.

Handicraft Programme:The key programme of the organisation is enabling women to achieve financial independence through ugh collectivization of women artisans in SHGs, upskilling them on the basis of market

needs through training and workshops, and market linkages with buyers thereby eliminating margin-eating middlemen and ensuring that women get a fair price for their hard work. Women artisans use traditional techniques of applique-cut work and patchwork to develop intricately embroidered garments. This traditional application of designing is re-calibrated according to market demand and the women artisans are trained on these market-driven designs through the organisations' workshops and training. The products developed by women artisans associated with GVCS are recognized by Craftmark and Fair Trade India.

The organisation possesses an in-house workshop and training center for the skill development of artisans. The network of women SHGs ensures that GVCS has a reasonable production capacity allowing for delivery of products in stipulated timelines to linked buyers.

The profits earned in the process are used to upscale the project by linking more women artisans and ensuring wider community outreach and development. While GVCS ensures that the artisans get a fair price through the organization-rooted orders where the artisans work on predefined wages; it also empowers SHGs to develop direct linkages with buyers.

Initially, the organisation struggled to convince women to join SHGs and work for a living as women in Rajasthan's male-dominated society are not accorded many choices or rights. The purdah system makes matters worse. Rural areas of Rajasthan indeed present a paradoxical situation where on the one hand women are expected to practice the purdah system in front of male members of the family and society but at the same time due to a lack of toilets and baths, they have to bathe in open spaces. It was an uphill task to convince women and their families to participate in this income-generating activity. However, the NGO workers preserved and developed a network of women SHGs through constant encouragement.

Women artisans now participate in outdoor training and meetings and are even recognizedon urban fashion platforms for their work. Another struggle that the NGO fought was ensuring that the artisans got recognition for their work. While the big companies had started placing orders with GVCS, they still wanted the artisans to be in the background. To allow the artisans to get their fair share of the limelight and recognition for their efforts, the NGO arranges for the participation of its artisans in various trade fairs, exhibitions, and even fashion shows. A journey that started with 10 women in an SHG of *Rawatsar* village has now covered 75 villages and 22,000 women. These women earn an average of INR 10-15,000 per

month as compared to INR 2000/month which they earned previously when middlemen were involved in the system. The payment terms are decided by the group leaders of each SHG as the group representatives. The secretary, Mr. Vikram Singh reported that they never want to demotivate and discourage any women artisan because of monetary reasons as it is one of the objectives of the organisation to support and empower women artisans of Barmer. Therefore, they try to convince and satisfy each group to work as well as take orders with motivational conversation and counseling.

regularlyreaches its ever-growing network of artisans, the NGO has streamlined a weekly system whereby a designated day is fixed for each village enroute of the organization's mobile van. The women from the respective village gather at the predecided spot where they submit their previous work for which they are paid and are provided new assignments. This system ensures that the artisans have regular work and earnings. It also guarantees that the existing orders get completed within the stipulated time.

The organisation at any given time has 7-8 orders from different buyers. Exhibitions and trade fairs are important platforms for developing buyer linkages. The organisation takes orders for different products. The artisans actively develop many products in home furnishings and apparel categories. Popular among them are cushion covers, bed covers, saris, dupattas, and kurtas.

Due to the handmade nature of the products, the production duration depends upon the nature of the handiwork and product type. On an average, it takes upwards of three months to fulfill a large order. GVCS, however, maintains a stock of regular items which it can deliver within a few days of receiving the order.

GVCS has a streamlined marketing process that begins with selling through its own shops in Barmer and Jaipur cities. Along with regular orders from these two stores, another crucial aspect is developing buyer linkages which are done through exhibitions and trade fairs. The prices of products vary due to the diverse product range. The annual turnover of GVCS is over INR 2 crore, however, older SHGs associated with the organisation have successfully developed independent buyer linkages and undertake business individually.

GVCS constantly challenges norms from the orthodox social norms of

the village to the conventional middlemen-centric distribution system and now the form of traditional embroidery. Conventionally the applique work form of embroidery was performed on only cotton fabrics, but GVCS artisans experimented with other fabrics too. This embroidery work is now undertaken on silk fabrics also. This was well-received among the fashion community as the artisans have started receiving orders for embroidery work on all sorts of silk fabrics such as *Tussar, Maheshwari, Chanderi*, etc. along with other handloom fabrics too.

To fulfill orders and to develop quality products, the organisation needs quality inputs. These are sourced from various parts of the country. The needles and threads are sourced from Jaipur and Delhi and the fabrics are mostly from South India. Depending upon the orders received, GVCS places orders for the raw materials accordingly.

The organization conducts workshops from time to time for education and development of motif bank that includes various designs of motifs, patterns as well as layouts. Women artisans from various SHGs are selected based on their creative skills. The main aim of organizing such workshops is to upgrade the designing skills of women artisans by introducing them tothe latest trends in the market demanded by existing customers. Experts from the field are called from the industry who conducts an interactive cum experimenting exercise which enable women artisan to understand the need of the market. These designs are recorded in form of a file book which is developed by the women artisans using basic tools like pencil, sharpeners, pens, erasers and scales. In the workshop, traditional designs are adopted and modified according to the need of the client. For participating in these workshops payment is given to women artisans as a stipend.

The motifs designs which were produced during the workshop by the artisans are sketched by master artisans of the group in proper proportions and measurement as per the requirements. The developed designs are converted into*khakha*(tracing paper with small holes are punched on the outline of the motifs) on tracing paper. Samples are prepared by the artisans using combinations of embroidery stitches which are further used to showcase in front of buyers/clients while receiving the orders.

The organisation has been successful in ensuring recognition of the talented local artisans at the national level and it is now working to enable artisans to earn international fame. Small quantities of products have been exported to the US and some countries in Europe.

GVCS has exhibited the works of its 22,000 plus artisans on various national and international platforms. Some of them are mentioned below:

- Heimtextil fair in Germany

- Singapore Craft Fair

- London Fashion Week

- Annual participation at Tribes Fashion Show

- Annual participation at IHGF Spring/Summer and Autumn/ Winter Festivals held at Noida

**Conclusion**

The findings of the study revealed that NGO,GVCS is relentlessly working for ensuring sustainable livelihoods, recognition of women artisans, and empowering them in carving out a unique identity for themselves. The NGO has in the truest sense led to emerging of women leaders from within the community. Women associated with GVCS have emerged as master artisans, entrepreneurs, and primary manufacturers. Not only do these roles require skill and knowledge but also professional acumen and business sense. The transformation brought by GVCS in the lives of these women is phenomenal**.**

NGOis also contributing to supporting the women artisans of Barmer by assisting them to develop market linkages and offering finance mechanisms. It was reported by one of the officials from the NGO that they also conduct training programmes, workshops, and health check-up camps for the women artisans. To impart knowledge related to designing, assistance is provided by NGO, to develop products according to the commercial market. This helps women artisans to increase their sales and profit.

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# Mental Health Literacy and Prevailing Attitudes in the Educated Population of Urban India

**Esha S. Thakran**

## Abstract

Mental health, a critical part of overall healthcare, refers to activities related to mental well-being, such as prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of people affected by mental disorders. Devising an effective mental health strategy requires a clear understanding of the prevalence, awareness and attitude towards mental health in any given section of society. My research focused on these aspects amongst the educated population of urban India. The findings clearly indicate that while the incidence of mental health is quite high in this group, the level of awareness of what actually constitutes a mental health problem is very low. Furthermore, the lack of awareness, social stigma and trivialization of mental health issues leads to very few people actually seeking help when they need it. These findings hold true across different age groups (15–30-year-olds and 40+-year-olds). Further research would need to include the urban poor and the rural populations. If India wishes to achieve its social goals and realize its economic potential, mental health needs to be a top priority for both the public and private sectors. These findings further embolden the call for action for more mental health literacy and a comprehensive mental health strategy for India.

## Introduction

Mental health is a vital component of human well-being. It is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as "a state of well-being in which every individual realizes [their] own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to [their] community." (World Health Organization, 2020). With the advent of the mental health movement, the degree of severity of mental illness has become a global concern. Economic and epidemio-

logical estimates point to the burden of mental illness on not just health and welfare, but global economic structures (Arias et al., 2022). The World Health Organization (WHO) research indicates that nearly half of the world's population is affected by some form of mental illness, incurring a global cost of nearly $2.5 trillion, projected to rise over $6 trillion by 2030 (Trautmann, S. et al, 2016). These include direct costs (33.34%), including medical costs of care, hospitalisations, and outpatient visits, as well as indirect costs (66.67%), including income loss and declining productivity associated with disability (Trautmann, S. et al, 2016). Mental illness is estimated to contribute to 16% of the total Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) lost for Years Lived with Disability, that is, approximately 418 million DALYs (Arias, D. t al. 2022). Recent years have seen an increase of mental disorders contributing to DALYs in India, jumping 2.2% in the past two decades (Srilakshmi et al. 2020), creating an increased risk of disability and premature mortality in nearly every measure of sociodemographic development (Arias, D. t al. 2022). These statistics will be further exacerbated by the detrimental psychiatric and psychological effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, the prevalence of environmental pathogens in India may increase the risk of epigenetic mental disorders associated with genetic polymorphisms.

Not unlike other eastern countries, understanding attitudes towards mental illness in India is not straightforward. The doctrine of *cultural relativism* is critical in assessing attitudes towards mental illness in India, which comprises a diverse set of cultural and philosophical mechanisms that are not compatible with the western schools of thinking (Michelle et al, 2010).

This hinders India from forming a consistent model of mental health. Aside from the biomedical foundation underlying western thinking, several Indians subscribe to Ayurveda, a traditional system of medicine which ascribes mental illness to an imbalance of humours (Michelle et al, 2010). Hindu cultural psychology supported a system of values and attitudes that prioritized family, caste, and one's responsibilities (Michelle et al, 2010). A local support and healing system protected and confined those with mental illness, supplemented by academic physicians, village practitioners of magical and religious medical arts, and priests and monks stationed in regional temples and religious institution (Fàbrega, 2001)s. Charaka Samhita, one of the foundational texts of traditional Indian medicine mentions mental illness and health, details a moral (karma and *dharma)*, spiritual and theosophical substructure with regards to physiology, pathogenesis, embryology, therapeutics, and medical practice physiology, pathogenesis, embryology, therapeutics, and medical practice (Fàbre-

ga, 2001). In these texts, organic constituents and somatic conditions (i.e., medical and surgical diseases) include mental and behavioral manifestations (Fàbrega, 2001). Five varieties of mental illness are described: four endogenous or constitutional insanities (involving the humours) and one exogenous or accidental insanity (caused by outside forces and spirits). Branches of Ayurveda were dedicated to the treatment of mental illness, namely *bhitavidya, apasmara* and *unmada* (Fàbrega, 2001). These terms, that translate to 'mental illness', 'insanity', and 'study of spirit possession' have significantly negative connotations.

Consequently, attitudes towards mental illness in India today are still very negative. The incidence of mental illness in India remains undoubtedly significant, with about 10 million suffering from mental illness nationwide (Weiss *et al.*, 2001; Khandelwal *et al.*, 2004; Math *et al.*, 2007). However, it is estimated that nearly 70% of these people do not seek help for these disorders, and cannot recognise it in others (Srilakshmi et al. 2020). There are two plausible, and potentially interdependent factors that may contribute to this phenomenon.

First, a lack of Mental Health Literacy (MHL). First introduced by Jorm et al. in 1997, MHL refers to "knowledge and beliefs about mental disorders, which aid in their recognition, management and prevention" (Jorm, A.F., et al. 1997). Few studies in India have explored MHL.

Second, a substantial stigma or taboo around the topic of mental health. In India, mental disorders are understood through a blend of biomedicine, traditional medical practices, and supernatural beliefs (Fàbrega, 2001). These varying perspectives shape the way mental disorders are perceived, expressed, and treated, including the levels of stigma and discrimination surrounding the disorders. Negative attitudes towards mental illness are often linked to seeking treatment through allopathic methods, while a more positive outlook is associated with seeking informal help (Rahul S., et al. 2013). Stigma can cause families to hide the affected individual and their condition, leading to delayed or prevented access to appropriate treatment due to shame or beliefs about the cause of the disorder, such as perceived sins or wrongdoing (Rahul S., et al. 2013).

**Method**

Conceptually, conducting a survey would aid in gathering information regarding the level of awareness and also help gather data regarding the attitude/views of the educated urban population, who have no dearth of

information regarding mental issues, especially in this day and age, given the deep penetration of internet access in this segment of Indian society. Keeping in mind the above-mentioned points, the following research questions were formulated.

Q1.     What is the level of awareness about what constitutes mental health illness?

Q2.     How many have actually experienced mental health related issues?

Q3.     How many of those who recognize and acknowledge their mental health condition actually seek help/treatment?

Q4.     What stops them from seeking help/treatment?

Q5.     Do the level of awareness and the attitudes about mental health vary across different age groups?

To answer the research questions, the study was conducted in three stages. The sample was collected through convenience sampling. In the first part of the study, participants were asked to participate in an interview with open ended questions, and consisted of $N = 31$ and focused on the first four questions. The participants varied in age from 18 to 72 years ($M = 45$, $SD = 18.65$) and consisted of 7 males and 24 females. An a priori power analysis was conducted using G*Power version 3.1.9.7 to determine the minimum sample size required to test the hypothesis. The results indicated that the sample size yielded an effect size (Cohen's d) of 0.50 with an observed power of 0.82. This would be considered a medium effect study. A significance criterion of $\alpha = 0.05$, was $N = 31$ for an independent samples T-test. Thus, the obtained sample size of $N = 31$ is adequate.

The contents and format of the interview included questions pertaining to only three conditions – low self-esteem, performance anxiety and sleep problems. The reason for focusing on these three conditions was simply that they are better understood (as opposed to more complex conditions such as PTSD or schizophrenia). Furthermore, low self-esteem, performance anxiety and sleep problems can often indicate more significant underlying psychological issues. They are well accepted in society as common conditions without always being classified as "mental illnesses", and hence were expected to help remove the chance of answers being biased due to social stigma.

Second, based on the lack of promising results from the first phase of the study, we administered the Mental Health Literacy Scale. The variation used in this study is MHLq-YA, which includes 29 items and tests 4 dimensions, (1) knowledge of mental health problems, (2) erroneous beliefs/ stereotypes, (3) help-seeking and first aid skills, and (4) self-help strategies. These items are measured on a Likert scale (ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). Cronbach's Alpha for the total scale in the adaptation study was 0.84.

After analysing the results of the first survey, an independent t-test was designed to help determine the association between personal experience and education with attitudes towards mental health. For this purpose, we surveyed two age groups of only well-educated urban-dwellers from the National Capital Region (NCR) of India: 15-to-30-year-olds (N = 104), and those over the age of 40 (N = 101). A sufficient gap was intentionally left between the two age groups to ensure there was no overlap. The participants of this survey included both men (45%) and women (55%) from a wide variety of professions. Both samples of 104 and 101 participants would have a power of 0.99 to detect an effect size of 0.50, and are therefore sufficient for the present study. An online survey was created to collect data from the sample. The survey consisted of 6 sections – ethical information and informed consent, demographic information (age and gender), descriptive questions, and a debriefing section. The survey consisted of 6 sections – ethical information and informed consent, demographic information (age and gender), a vignette describing a hypothetical situation, a character description vignette, questions assessing the dependent variables, and a debriefing section.

**Procedure**

The interviews were taken in the participant's homes. Beginning at a mutually agreed upon time and following rapport formation, the questions were asked. The survey was circulated via email and text. It was self-administered, and was preceded by ethical information and participants' consent. Once collected, the categorical data obtained coded ordinally to meet the requirement of continuous data for analysis using the statistical software, Jamovi, version 2.3.21.

**Ethical Guidelines**

The study adhered to design and procedural ethical standards. The questionnaire was designed to prevent distress to participants. Participants

were assured anonymity as no personally identifying information was collected. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw their participation at any point, and their informed consent to use their responses for the study was obtained.

## Results

The 31 subjects in the interview round were asked questions to assess their awareness of the incidence and recognition of mental health illness. The 31 participants of this survey included 27% who were below 25 years of age, and 73% above 25 years; 77% were women, and 23% men; all were urban dwellers, based in the National Capital Region (NCR); 29% were students and 71% adults from all walks of life. The findings of this survey revealed that the level of awareness about whether these three conditions (low self-esteem, performance anxiety and sleep problems) constitute a mental health issue is relatively low across different age groups, with an average of 43% of participants able to identify one of the three given factors as indicators of mental illnesses *(Table4)*. A higher number of participants in the younger group have actually experienced two of the three conditions, low self-esteem, performance anxiety and sleep problems (47% versus 34%) *(Table1)***.** Both older and younger populations claimed to be open to seeking professional help if they were experiencing any of these three conditions *(Table 5)*. However, only half of the sample who reportedly experienced mental health problems had actually sought help when they actually experienced any of these conditions *(Table 3)*. Further:

**(a) The level of awareness of what constitutes mental health illness is very low.** Very few people (29%) were able to articulate a reasonable definition of mental health illness; the remaining 71% either left the question blank or provided vague/incorrect definitions. 24% failed to identify anxiety, 46% failed to identify Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD) and 34% failed to identify Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) as mental health issues.

**(b) The incidence of mental health illness is quite high.** A majority of the participants (68%) admitted to having experienced at least one of the 12 mental health issues that were listed in the survey. Interestingly, 90% of the respondents claimed to know others who had experienced a mental health illness *(Table 2)* (Note: the survey did not attempt to determine the severity of the illnesses.)

**(c) However, few actually sought help for the issue they had faced.** Only 37% of those who admitted to having faced a mental health challenge had actually sought help, implying that 67% were left untreated. Of those that sought help, only 25% reached out to professionals, and the rest relied on non-professional resources (such as family, friends and self-help books). Contrast this with people who face even non-life-threatening physical conditions (a persistent cough, high fever, etc.) for which almost 100% of the people would seek professional help/consultation.

**(d) Lastly, the participants cited a number of factors that contribute to the failure to seek help for mental illnesses.** The three biggest drivers of this phenomena seem to be the failure to recognize/admit that they were facing a mental health issue (cited by 70% of the participants), social stigma about mental illnesses (cited by 60%), and the trivialization of the issue (cited by 50%). Other contributing factors included lack of resources such as money, time, availability of qualified professionals, etc. (cited by 27% of the respondents), and apathy regarding the condition (also cited by 27%).

The Mental health Literacy Scale was administered to the same sample of 31 participants consisting of adults aged 18-72. The range of scores obtained were 20 to 50 with mean score for the sample was 35 out of a possible 100, with standard deviation of 7. According to the scales norms, M = 3 and SD = 7 indicate limited knowledge and understanding of mental health issues.

Next, an independent sample t-test was done to determine whether:

**H1**: Personal experience with mental illness is positively associated with more accepting attitudes towards mental health.

**H2**: Education level is positively associated with more positive attitudes towards mental health.

The independent variables (IV) were **personal experience with mental illness and education level**, and the dependent variable (DV) was **positive attitude towards mental illness.**

Before proceeding with the T-tests, assumption checks were carried out. To check for normality and equality of variances, Shapiro-Wilk and Levene's Tests were conducted for both DV's, guilt and punishment. In both cases Levene's Test was insignificant ($p=0.76$ and $p=0.99$ respectively), suggesting no violation of homogeneity of variance. Moreover, the stan-

dardised residuals aligned along a Q-Q plot.

However, in both cases, the Shapiro-Wilk Test was significant ($W$=0.941, $p$<0.001 for perceived guilt and $W$=0.907, $p$<0.001 for positive attitude towards mental illness), implying that the assumption of normality was violated. Due to this, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was conducted in both cases and the hypotheses were modified to compare medians instead of means.

**H1: Personal experience with mental illness is positively associated with more accepting attitudes towards mental health.**

The results of the test were significant: $U$=552, $p$=0.002, $r$=0.385. This implies a significant difference in the medians of personal experience with mental health and accepting attitudes towards mental health.

Therefore, the null hypothesis that there exists no positive association of personal experience and accepting attitudes towards mental illness was rejected. The effect size $r$=0.385, calculated through the Rank-Biserial Correlation due to the non-normal data, indicates a moderate effect of the independent variable (personal experience with mental health) on the dependent variable (accepting attitudes towards mental health).

**H2: Education level is positively associated with more positive attitudes towards mental health.**

The results of the test were not significant: $U$=851, $p$=0.675, $r$=0.051. This implies no significant difference in the medians of education and positive attitudes towards mental health.

Therefore, the null hypothesis that there exists no relationship between education and positive attitudes towards mental health could not be rejected. The effect size $r$ = 0.051, calculated through the Rank-Biserial Correlation due to the non-normal data, indicates a negligible effect of the independent variable (personal experience with mental health) on the dependent variable (accepting attitudes towards mental health).

**Discussion**

Mental health is vital for humans to flourish both individually and as a society. This makes the global threat of increasing mental illness a critical issue to solve. This fact is further solidified when taking India's example,

as demonstrated by the present study. In addition, the younger genera-
tion is exposed to new stresses, driven by the ever-increasing use of social
media, trend towards nuclear families and heightened competition.

The first segment of the study showed a lack of literacy regarding men-
tal illness, and discrepancies in reported actions taken against the same,
perhaps due to social-desirability or acquiescence inherent in self-report
measures. The awareness of stage fright/performance anxiety as a psy-
chological condition was particularly low in both groups, but especially in
the younger population. Lack of awareness, insufficient facilities and re-
sources for treatment, and an unhelpful attitude (even in the well-educat-
ed segments of society) could be making the problem much worse. Var-
ious attributes of specific individuals (ability to manage one's thoughts,
emotions, behaviours and interactions with others) are determinants of
mental health (WHO, 2019). Further analysis of such attributes could defi-
nitely provide an insight into the onset of mental health issues among
individuals. These findings are congruent with previous research work
which clearly indicates that many members of the general public are un-
able to identify the various psychological disorders and signs of distress
(Jorm, 2000).

Most participants reported having experienced some form of deviation
from normal mental health, and recounted others they knew were ex-
periencing mental illness as well. However, this was truer for younger
populations. This indicates that the incidence of these conditions, and po-
tentially more serious underlying conditions, may be higher among the
younger age group. This, in turn, would indicate that the problem might
be a growing one in the general population.

Further, though 40% to 50% of people of all age groups were open to seek-
ing help in the incidence of mental illness, only half that number had actu-
ally sought help when faced with a problem. This again seems to indicate
that some combination of trivialization of mental health issues, apathy,
and social stigma might be deterring people from seeking help. The re-
sults could also indicate that the perception of individuals regarding the
skills and abilities of mental health professionals may not be clear and
could be one of the causes for not seeking help. Similar conclusion was
also drawn by Saha (2018).

Next, the Mental Literacy Scale also did not produce promising results.
The implications of the low mental health literacy score are that the group
may have difficulty recognizing and managing mental health issues, and

may be less likely to seek help when needed. This highlights the need for increased education and awareness about mental health in this population.

The independent t-test study aimed to understand how personal experience with mental illness and education can influence attitudes towards mental illness. The results indicated that the difference between personal experience and attitudes towards mental illness was significant. However, the difference between education and attitudes towards mental illness was insignificant.

As mentioned above, the difference in education and positive attitudes towards mental health was insignificant. This may be attributable to the societal, theological and cultural ideologies surrounding mental illness. Mental illness has shared negative connotations even in traditional Indian medicine. Further, the community-based structure of Indian society creates pressure for 'keeping-up appearances', creating a culture of constantly presenting one's best self in society. This might also contribute to the tendency to conceal mental illnesses and resist seeking help.

However, the difference between personal experience and attitudes towards mental illness was significant. This may be due to a sense of empathy that arises when one has experienced mental illness themselves, making them more understanding and sensitive regarding the issue.

**Limitations**

The study used self-report measures. These are subject to social desirability bias, where individuals may respond in a way that they believe is socially desirable rather than truthful. Secondly, self-report measures may be subject to memory biases, where individuals may not accurately recall past experiences or events. Thirdly, self-report measures may suffer from response bias, where individuals may respond in a way that is influenced by how the questions are phrased or framed.

Data was collected through convenience sampling, and thus represented part of the population belonging to the same demographic. This might have led to nonresponse and under coverage bias, wherein the sample was not representative of the population of interest as they were not covered by the sampling frame of the survey (Cobben et al., 2005), decreasing the validity of research results, and potentially leading to researcher bias in systemic investigation (Formplus, 2020). However, these differences of

attitudes in different demographics are beyond the scope of this study, which focused on the urban population. Future studies should focus on urban populations of other areas in India.

The participants who were included in the t-test did so in varying environments, and there was no control for priming and participants could have been distracted by external factors during the survey. Future research could consider conducting the study in a controlled setting to strengthen internal validity. Further research can also aim to use a more diverse sample to improve external validity. This would address the problem of unrepresentative data due to under coverage bias, and account for demographic differences in attitudes towards mental health, hence giving more generalisable results.

Furthermore, it should be noted that my research focused on only the well-educated urban population; exclusion of the uneducated urban poor or the rural population was maintained. These populations face tremendous economic and social stresses, yet have virtually no access to mental health resources. People migrating from rural to urban areas in search of a livelihood, who form a large component of the "economically weaker section" in urban areas, may be especially vulnerable. Such ideas would have to be explored in further research since the domains of urban vs rural, educated vs uneducated sections, and well-off vs economically weaker sections function under different mechanisms.

**Conclusion**

Mental health, a critical part of overall healthcare, refers to activities related to mental well-being, such as prevention, treatment and rehabilitation of people affected by mental disorders. The results indicate low MHL in the urban population of India. Increasing MHL should become a priority for India to ensure personal and societal welfare.

This unrecognized and largely untreated mental health problem in urban India could potentially grow into a much bigger crisis over time. The findings of my research highlight the need for conducting further studies to help develop a comprehensive mental health strategy.

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# Appendix

## Table 1

Experience with either mental health issue

|  | 10 to 30 year age group | 40+ age group |
|---|---|---|
| Low self-esteem | 56% | 30% |
| Performance anxiety | 47% | 30% |
| Sleep problems | 38% | 42% |

## Table 2

Personally know others (family/friends) who have experienced the given conditions (low self-esteem, performance anxiety and sleep problems)

|  | 10 to 30 year age group | 40+ age group |
|---|---|---|
| Yes - know others | 73% | 67% |
| No – don't know others | 27% | 33% |

## Table 3

Percentage of those who actively sought help when faced with mental illness

|  | 10 to 30 year age group | 40+ age group |
|---|---|---|
| Yes – would seek help | 26.5% | 26% |
| No – would not seek help | 73.5% | 74% |

**Table 4**

Percentage of those aware of whether these conditions constitute a mental health issue

|  | 10 to 30 year age group | 40+ age group |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Low self-esteem | 52% | 54% |
| Performance anxiety | 5% | 24% |
| Sleep problems | 58% | 65% |

**Table 5**

Percentage of those open to seeking professional help if they were experiencing any of the given conditions

|  | 10 to 30 year age group | 40+ age group |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Low self-esteem | 43% | 41% |
| Performance anxiety | 47% | 36% |
| Sleep problems | 50% | 52% |

# Paradigms of Anxiety: A Theoretical Perspective

**Tanaya Trikha & Mridula Sharma**

## Abstract

Anxiety is a healthy reaction that is essential to our survival. Our bodies are geared up to either confront or flee danger as a result of anxiety. In addition to motivating us to act, anxiety may also provide a mild thrill, such as when we ride a roller coaster or participate in a fast-paced competitive game. Anxiety can do both of these things. If we were incapable of feeling fear, our world would be more perilous. However, anxiety becomes a problem when it becomes the usual rather than the exception and/or when our attempts to control it (for example, by avoiding situations, abusing drugs or alcohol, or relying on strict routines) begin to affect our ability to carry out our commitments to our families, coworkers, and social groups. The present research has focused on presenting different aspects of anxiety to facilitate a better understanding of the concept and serve as a means to devise effective intervention strategies.

**Keywords:** Anxiety, Behavior, Cognitive, Perspective, Theories.

## The Paradigms of Anxiety

"Our anxiety does not come from thinking about the future, but from wanting to control it." - Khalil Gibran

Often convoyed by nervous behavior, anxiety is an emotional state marked by an unpleasant state of inner upheaval. The American Psychological Association (APA) defines anxiety as "an emotion characterized by feelings of tension, worried thoughts and physical changes like increased blood pressure."

Anxiety is a feeling of edginess and vexation, usually generalized and distributed as an exaggerated reaction to a situation that is subjectively seen as alarming. It is oftentimes accompanied by muscular tension, uneasiness, weariness and difficulty in concentration. Anxiety is often closely

associated with fear but the two are not synonymous. Fear is a response to a actual or sensed proximate danger; while anxiety involves the anticipation of a future threat. People experiencing anxiety may retreat from settings or conditions which have given rise to anxiety in the past. Anxiety can be experienced with prolonged and persistent symptoms that deteriorate the quality of life, also referred to as chronic (or generalized) anxiety. On the other hand, it can also be experienced in short surges with unpredictable, exhausting and draining panic attacks, called acute anxiety.

Symptoms of anxiety may vary in their nature and impact from one person to another. Anxiety can cause physiological, psychological, behavioral, emotional and cognitive effects on an individual which may include neurological, digestive and respiratory problems; the tendency to harm oneself; avoiding the situations that have proven to be unpleasant in the past; feelings of dread or apprehension and; thoughts about the suspended dangers in one's environment.

**Theories of Anxiety**

**Psychoanalytical Theories**

Psychoanalytical theories of anxiety have been chiefly propounded by Sigmund Freud. In his early works, Freud referred to anxiety as a consequence of libido transformation through repression. In later formulations, Freud deduced that anxiety arises as a result of the conflict between ego and id. However, later psychoanalysts such as Sullivan (1953) laid more emphasis on the role of social environment in generating anxiety in an individual.

**Behaviorial Theories**

According to the views Pavlov and Watson, anxiety is essentially a result of classical conditioning. They regarded anxiety as a mediating mechanism which makes individuals avoid noxious stimuli. Later behaviourists such as Dollard, Miller (1950) & Mowrer (1953) postulated that anxiety can be the result of certain unfulfilled primary drives and can thus act as a secondary drive eventually that may lead to drive reduction. This drive reduction may reinforce the anxious responses and increase its future probability of occurrence.

The multi-level behavioral theory of anxiety (Staats & Eifert, 1990), lays two basic assumptions: (i) that there is an emotional foundation for all anxious behaviors and, (ii) anxiety can be acquired through aversive conditioning, thus stating that anxiety is not necessarily the result of a traumatic experience.

## Neurophysiological Theories

The physiological/neurophysiological theories largely focus on the parts of central nervous system that are involved in the generation and maintenance of emotions particularly fear and anxiety. One of the substantial physiological theory of anxiety is that of Gray (1982). According to Gray, a complex septal-hippocampal system acts as the basis of emotions including anxiety and the mechanism that acts as an interface between emotions and cognition.

## Phenomenological/ Existential Theories

The existential theories of anxiety can be traced back to the works of Kirkegaard about 150 years ago. Anxiety in existential terms is regarded as a naturally occurring state of an individual.

The existentialists believe that human life is unpredictable and every choice an individual makes will have a consequence to which the individual needs to hold responsibility. Thus, there is always some degree of uncertainty which may cause anxiety. Anxiety is hence something that cannot be avoided, instead it needs to be dealt with. The contemporary attempts to explain phenomenological grounds of anxiety can be found chiefly in the works of Fischer (1970).

## Cognitive Theories

In the recent times, most theories of emotions have recognized a place for cognitions and theories of anxiety are no exception.

Mathews et al., (1990) believes that individual differences do exist in terms of anxiety as people differ in the structure (content) as well as the processes of their cognition. The level of anxiety people possess also has a significant impact on the contents stored in their long term memory and their mood states.

Another important contribution to the cognitive theories is Ohman's Transformation Processing Theory of Anxiety (1993). Ohman's theory comprises of 5 major aspects: (i) Stimuli (information) goes to feature detectors which then pass this information to the significance evaluators.

(ii) The significance evaluators assess the relevance of the stimulus (information) received. With the help of prior experiences and cognition, a meaning is given to the information received.

(iii) Based on the contingent reactions of the autonomic nervous system, the arousal system, the arousal system updates the significance evaluators and also sends input to the conscious perception system.

(iv) The received information then goes through the expectancy system which is a cognitive system of networks with nodes. This system directs the significance evaluators to find threats, if any, in the environment and also makes a discourse for the explanation of the information received.

(v) The conscious perception system consolidates information from the arousal system, the significance evaluators and the expectancy systems and decides a plan of action to deal with the perceived threat.

**Conclusion**

The present research focused on the perspectives aiming to explain the factors responsible for the induction and maintenance of anxiety. Psycho-analytical, behavioural, existential, cognitive and neurophysiological perspectives of anxiety were analysed and the major assumptions of the same were summarized which indicated an equivalent contribution of physical, psychological, environmental and socio-cultural factors towards the inoculation and sustenance of anxiety.

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# Prosociality in Relation to Perspective Taking, Moral Identity and Social Courage: A Study on Emerging Adults

**Avani Kavya & Sankul Sethia**

## Abstract

Prior research has shown that Moral Identity, Social Courage, and Perspective taking and empathic concern contribute to Prosocial Behaviour or prosociality. However, how these three factors interact in predicting prosocial behaviours is not yet clear. The current study proposes to illustrate and explore the specific processes of how prosocial behaviour is motivated by these factors. Findings indicated that Social courage, perspective taking and moral identity emerged as significant predictors of prosocial behavior and moral identity completely mediated the relationship between social courage and prosocial behavior.

**Keywords:** *prosocial behavior, morality, perspective taking, empathy, courage*

## Introduction

'Prosociality' is one of the most absorbing and necessary behavioural personality traits related with psychological well-being and the development of a healthier social interaction. But this stage of transition is challenging since it's possible to behave inappropriately for one's age and circumstances, which could lead to social and emotional immaturity later on. The virtue of courage is the willingness to take personal risks in order to pursue noble ideals. It is highly lauded but poorly studied. For more than two thousand years, philosophers and scientists have debated what courage is and how to define it. Although they never agree on a definition of courage, the characters hazard a guess that it must involve goodness/morality and absolutely no folly (Cooper & Hutcheson, 1997). Social courage has been found to be positively related to prosocial voice and silence in studies that have examined the role of social courage in organisational settings in terms of employee voice and silence, while it has been found

to be negatively related to defensive voice and silence as well as acquiescent voice and silence. To put it another way, social courage has a good relationship with constructive speech and silence as well as a negative relationship with destructive voice and silence. (Howard & Cogswell, 2019).

Typically, ideas of moral identity are based on Erikson's (1964) description of identity as one's firmly held self-concept. Individuals can have different moral identities with some emphasising justice (or other qualities), while others may prioritize care (Blasi 1984). According to identity theory, people evaluate their moral obligation to behave in specific circumstances based on how important their moral identity is to their overall self-concept (Aquino and Reed 2002; Blasi 1984). Similar ideas within the field of care ethics have been identified. Key issues in particular include neglecting to accept responsibility when one might, as well as the significance of preserving authenticity with oneself and others (Gilligan & Attanucci, 1988). Research on moral courage supports these ideas as well. For instance, Worline (2010) emphasized the significance of individual accountability through individuated v/s de-individuated action, as well as the significance of moral courage and ethical integrity. Similar to this, Putnam (2010) and Woodard (2010) both highlighted the need of personal accountability and authenticity in courage while making the case that personal courage is essential to any genuine decision.

Therefore, the behavioural manifestation of morally courageous action is positively correlated with the centrality of caring moral identity. For instance, Glazer and Glazer (1989, 1999) identified several participants in their seminal study of whistleblowers in industry and government who were expressly aware of the criticism they would probably face as a result of speaking up on matters of client or public safety. But, despite the high likelihood of severe, unfavorable consequences, they felt forced to proceed with whistleblowing because their moral identity was sufficiently fundamental and vital to both their professional identity and core notion of self. Also, their feeling of personal accountability and compassion were regarded as being more significant in these decisions than bureaucratic conformity.

The act of putting yourself in another person's shoes to perceive a situation or comprehend a subject is known as perspective-taking. The field of organisational behaviour is undergoing an Affective Revolution right now (Barsade, Brief, and Spataro, 2003). In the past, workplace emotions were investigated as a phenomenon of job satisfaction, but they are now understood to have important effects on an individual's performance, the

performance of others in the group, and organisational outcomes. Curiosity about the emotional subconscious processes people go through when processing information in their daily lives has driven a more recent interest in the function of emotions in the workplace (Kihlstrom, 1999). The role of affect on an individual's judgment has been found to have an impact on performance relevant outcomes (Brief & Weiss, 2002) and that positive and negative affect has an impact on helping (Isen & Baron, 1991) and prosocial behaviors (George, 1990).

**Method**

**Participants:** The sample of the study consisted of 305 emerging adults (males and females) between the age group of 21-26 years of age with at least a graduation degree and belonging to an upper-middle and higher socio-economic background with an urban domicile.

**Tools used in the study:** the following measures were used on the participants-

- Pro-socialness Scale for Adults (Caprara, Steca, Zelli & Capanna, 2005)

- This 16-item test examines prosocial behaviour in late adolescence and adulthood on a five-point Likert scale. The sentences cover emotions and activities associated with four different types of deeds: feeling sympathetic towards others, looking out for others, assisting, and sharing.

- Moral Identity Scale (Aquino & Reed, 2002)

- The scale's 10 items gauge the degree to which moral qualities influence a person's sense of self. On a Likert scale with a maximum score of 5, opinions from respondents varied from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5. (strongly agree). It consists of the Symbolization and Internalization subscales.

- Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1983)

- This 28 item scale comprises of 4 sub-scales including perspective-taking, fantasy, personal distress and empathic concern where perspective taking is described as the propensity to unconsciously acquire another person's psychological point of view.

- Woodard Pury Courage Scale: (Woodard & Pury, 2007)

- It is a 23 item scale based on a 5-point likert scale ranging from strongly disagrees to strongly agree. The WPCS can be used to assess the physical, emotional and social courage of the participants beginning from their young adulthood phase. For the present study, on the social courage sub-scale was used.

## Results

### Table 1.1

*Correlational Analyses*

| | Social Courage | Perspective Taking | Prosocial Behaviour | Moral Identity |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Social Courage** | 1 | -0.50 | .156** | .560** |
| **Perspective Taking** | - | 1 | .156** | -.006 |
| **Prosocial Behaviour** | - | - | 1 | .181** |
| **Moral Identity** | - | - | - | 1 |

**Significant at .01 level

It is evident from the above table that social courage has a significant positive correlation with prosocial behavior and moral identity. It is also apparent that perspective taking has a significant positive correlation prosocial behaviour. Prosocial behaviour was found to have a significant positive relationship with moral identity as well. No significant relation was found between social courage and perspective taking.

### Table 1.2

*Linear Regression with Social Courage as the Predictor Variable and Moral Identity as the Criterion Variable*

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standaridized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **B** | **Std. Error** | **Beta** | | |
| (Constant) | 113.306 | 2.115 | | 53.582 | .000 |
| Social Courage | .439 | .037 | .560 | 11.770 | .000 |

NOTE: Fit for model $R^2= 0.314$ Adjusted $R^2= 0.311$, F (1,303) = 138.529, p<.000

**Table 1.3**

*Linear Regression with Social Courage as the Predictor Variable and Prosocial behaviour as the Criterion Variable*

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standaridized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 71.583 | 1.739 | | 41.170 | .000 |
| Social Courage | .084 | .031 | .156 | -2.746 | .006 |

NOTE: Fit for model $R^2$= 0.24 Adjusted $R^2$= 0.21, F (1,303) = 7.542, p<.006

**Table 1.4**

Linear Regression with Perspective taking as the Predictor Variable and Prosocial behaviour as the Criterion Variable

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standaridized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 57.967 | 3.307 | | 17.530 | .000 |
| Perspective Taking | .323 | .118 | .156 | 2.742 | .006 |

NOTE: Fit for model $R^2$= 0.37 Adjusted $R^2$= 0.35, F (1,303) = 7.519, p<.006

**Table 1.5**

*Linear Regression with Moral Identity as the Predictor Variable and Prosocial behaviour as the Criterion Variable*

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standaridized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 55.834 | 3.502 | | 15.946 | .000 |
| Moral Identity | .125 | .039 | .181 | 3.201 | .002 |

NOTE: Fit for model $R^2$= 0.33 Adjusted $R^2$= 0.30, F (1,303) = 10.246, p<.002

**MEDIATION:** Based on the significant correlations and consequent regression analysis, mediation analysis was conducted as follows:

**Table 1.6**

*Mediation analysis of Moral Identity between Social Courage and Prosocial behaviour*

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

|  | Effect | BootSE | BootLLCI | BootULCI |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Moral Identity | -.0413 | .0223 | -.0883 | -.0003 |

X : social courage; Y: prosocial behaviour

**DISCUSSION:**

The purpose of this study was to examine the specific roles of perspective taking, social courage, and moral identity on the prosocial behavior of the participants. The study also acknowledged the mediating impact perspective taking and moral identity had on the relationship between social courage and the prosocial behaviour of the participants through mediation analysis.

Results (table 1.1) indicated that social courage, moral identity and perspective taking had a significant correlation with prosocial behavior (r=.156, .181 & .156 respectively). However, perspective taking did not have a significant relationship with moral identity and social courage. Regression analysis further revealed that social courage was accountable for 24%, perspective taking was accountable for 37% and moral identity was accountable for 33% variation in the prosocial behavior of the participants.

Social courage involves he ability to stand up for yourself and your beliefs, even in the face of opposition from others. It takes strength to stand up for yourself or others when doing so feels risky. Once achieved, social courage can facilitate a lot of intra and interpersonal virtues such as life satisfaction, ethical decision making and prosocial behaviors (Ayling, D., 2006; Mert et. al., 2022). It is evident that the quality of social courage is not merely exhibited for self-serving purposes but is also aimed at benefitting others, thus justifying the relationship between the two.

Individuals with a well-knit moral identity find it important to perform

behaviors that are congruent with their moral values and structure and being prosocial is an important aspects of the same. Several academics claim that during adolescence or the early stages of adulthood, morality becomes ingrained in a person's conception of themselves (Colby & Damon, 1992; Hardy & Carlo, 2005; Moshman, 2011). Moral identity, the outcome of this integration, may encourage teenagers to take helpful or moral behaviours because they feel obligated to act in ways that are consistent with their moral ideals (Blasi, 1983, 2004; Carlo, 2014). Moreover, research show that teenagers with strong moral identities are more likely to carry out prosocial behaviours like assisting neighbours (Hart, Atkins, & Donnelly, 2006; Hart & Fegley, 1995; Johnston & Krettenauer, 2011).

An alternative point of view, such as that of another person, can be used to better grasp a situation or a subject. This process is known as perspective-taking. When people have this awareness, they are more likely to consider what they can do to help others if they can. Changing one's perspective causes one to feel more emotionally connected to people and more concerned about their well-being.

Mediation analysis of moral identity between social courage and prosocial behaviour indicated that the LLCI (-.0883) and ULCI (-.0003) values do not include a zero in their range thus indicating that moral identity has a statistically significant mediating effect on the relationship between spirituality and self-compassion ($p<0.05$).

Possessing a moral identity has been identified as being proportionate to the trait of courage in several researches. Both social and personal values are essential to the courage process, as shown by theoretical models that depict courage as a process (Hutchinson et al., 2015; Koerner, 2014; Sekerka & Bagozzi, 2007). Additionally, it has been discovered that moral identity amplifies the influence of antecedents on prosocial conduct (W. Wang et al., 2017). Similar to this, Grover (2014) discovered that employee moral identity improved the link between leader sincerity and employee satisfaction. Moreover, assisting behaviors among employees are favorably correlated with increased employee satisfaction.

Prosocial behavior has been lauded as a valuable virtue by various researchers and philosophers and equal debates have been ongoing about the factors that either produce or maintain prosocial behaviors. The interpersonal aspects that contribute to prosocial behaviour have received less attention than the personal characteristics of an individual, such as spiritual convictions, empathy, and thankfulness. With attention to the

mediating roles provided by perspective taking and moral identity for the same, the current study highlighted the importance social bravery can play in instilling and promoting prosocial behaviours in people. Prosocial behaviour was found to be significantly predicted by social courage, and the relationship between the two was successfully mediated by moral identity. The results of the current study can pave the way for other studies that concentrate on the combined impact that intrapersonal and interpersonal influences might have on instilling virtues in people.

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