

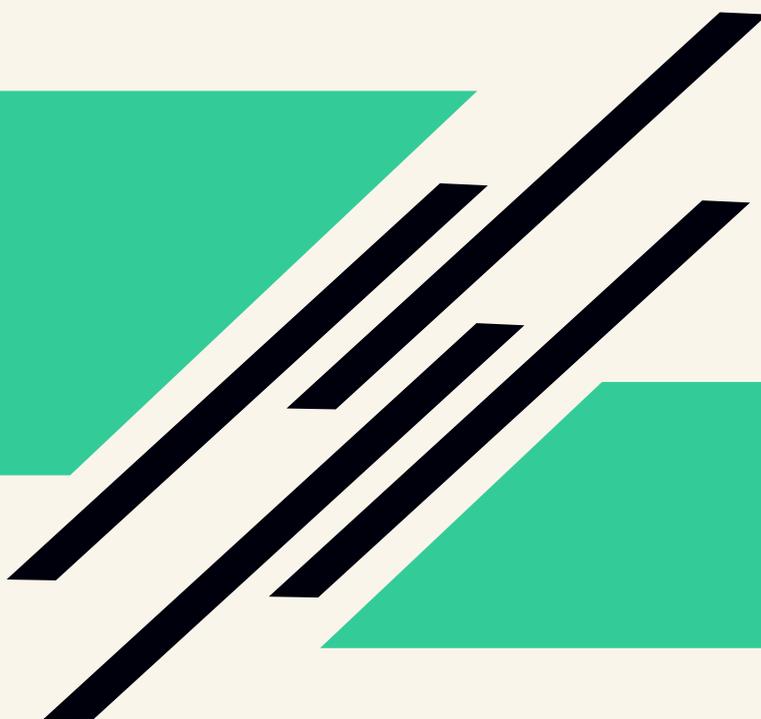
Volume XIV, August 2017

ISSN 2277-5218

NEW HORIZONS

A Multidisciplinary Research Journal

UGC Approved (No. 63439)



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DAV College for Women
Chandigarh

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Double-blind Peer Reviewed

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**This issue is dedicated to the memory of
our revered member of the Advisory Board
Noted Philosopher, Scholar, Teacher
Late Prof. Satya P. Gautam
(1951-2018)**



Mehr Chand Mahajan
DAV College for Women
Chandigarh

Mehr Chand Mahajan DAV College for Women, Chandigarh, established in 1968, is a premier institution for women's education in North India. *New Horizons*, ISSN: 2277-5218, is a UGC approved, double-blind peer reviewed multidisciplinary research journal. It is published annually by the college and has been in circulation since 2005. The objective of the journal is to provide a critical forum/interface for diverse fields of thought and facilitate academic discussions.

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A Multidisciplinary Research Journal

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**The Politics of Surprise: Encountering the Terrorist in
Peter Sattler's *Camp X-Ray***

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This paper examines the poetics and politics of the film *Camp X-Ray* (2014) through the aspect of what can be theorized as “surprise.” It is argued that the racial, gendered and ideological ramifications of the film set at Guantanamo Bay Naval Base, Cuba are presented through the multivalent notion of surprise. Surprise is the aspect that confounds the dominant ideological framework of the film's carceral universe. This universe, defined on racist and sexist foundations, is subverted by its own ideological gap. Surprise becomes a multivalent concept to describe an ideological gap, a spontaneous eruption of rebellion to the dominant among other things. The racial and gendered aspects of protagonists Amy and Ali's unlikely friendship (despite their position as guard and captive respectively) are examined through this concept.

Keywords: 9/11, Guantanamo Bay, *Camp X-Ray*, race-ethnicity, prison politics

If the period after 9/11 is marked by the tragic loss of human life not just on American soil but also on populations in Iraq and Afghanistan, then sites of mass incarceration such as Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and Abu Ghraib, Iraq seem to become metonymic for American neo-imperial policies in the war on terror. The discourse that surrounds these three war prisons is situated by and large within news and mass media reportage. In terms of alternate forms of mass media such as journalistic books, documentary films and independent internet-based media, the representation of these three prisons is concerned in general with gathering first-hand accounts of the events, capturing the testimony of atrocity committed, analyzing the paper trail that led to the sanctioning of torture methods at such sites and investigating not just the lack of legality but also the lack of ethicality of such phenomena (Danner, 2004; Fair, 2016; Greenberg and Dratel, 2005; Greenberg 2010; Hersh, 2004; Horton, 2010; Khan, 2008; Klein, 2004; Rose, 2004; Scott, 2007; Steyn, 2004). An in-depth survey of the overall literature that exists within such a discourse remains outside the scope of this paper. However, in what follows, the paper seeks to closely analyze the politics and poetics of the Sundance-released film *Camp X-Ray* (2014).

The narrative film is set in Guantanamo Bay Naval Base and is the only independent feature film based on the prison site apart from the more commercial Hollywood *Harold and Kumar Escape from Guantanamo Bay*. The Peter Sattler directed venture

situates itself in particular on the eponymous Camp X-Ray, a prison site created in the early days of the naval base. The narrative focuses on an unlikely friendship that develops between a female prison guard (Amy Cole) and a male Muslim prisoner (Ali Amir) at the detention facility, and its ensuing politics. The film seems to place the notion of external and internalized subjugation/ subjectivation in direct contrast to the idea of a certain category of dissident acts engendered through cultural transaction with the perceived enemy. If a prison such as that at Guantanamo becomes a repressive site for actual physical containment of the prisoner population, it is also, the film seems to argue, a repressive one for the enlisted military personnel. The film seeks to venture back and forth between the point of view of both Amy and Ali Amir. Beginning with news coverage of 9/11 on television at Ali Amir's residence at an undisclosed location, the narrative depicts him being captured and hooded and subsequently taken to Guantanamo. It can be conjectured based on prior existing journalistic accounts that have formed part of the global popular imaginary that Ali would have been biopolitically processed. The film seems to omit the details of such procedures and shifts focus to eight years later on the new recruit Amy's arrival at Guantanamo. Familiarizing the new army recruits to the various detention facilities, commanding officer Ransdell states the task of the guards: "You are not here to prevent them from leaving. ... You are here to prevent them from dying." It appears that biopolitical control operates with the carceral complex through not just a control over rituals of Foucauldian *disciplinary power* (as it becomes clear in the course of the film with the imposition of a ritualised prisoner routine), it also operates through a notion of subjugation of the core of biological existence itself (Foucault, 1995). While the actual prisoners have been known to have undergone multiple forms of physical and mental torture within journalistic discourse, the coverage of prisoner hunger strikes within news media, the US government's policy of force-feeding as a response and maintaining control of the overall aspect of the prisoners' daily existence is only something tangentially referred to in the film (Greenberg and Dratel, 2005; Greenberg 2010; Rose, 2004).

Significantly, the film seems to argue that a sovereign hold exists for the military personnel guarding the prisoners as well as for the prisoners. This can be visually processed by viewers through stills in the film where the soldiers engaging in an elaborate flag raising ceremony chanting the refrain "honor bound to defend freedom" are juxtaposed with the prisoners' calls to prayer. Both are social (and socialized) rituals of certain forms of community, albeit of starkly different varieties. The film seems to make the argument that there exists an affinity between the troops serving the armed forces and the prisoners serving time in illegal detention. This comparison is further extended through the notion that the guards undergo a similar form of coercion

due to elaborate “rules” set in place within the military. In the narrative structure of the film, the soldiers, after spending a considerable amount of time, are also depicted as traumatized. This is highlighted in the film, for instance, through Amy's fellow soldier Rico's transformation from a willing and eager recruit to one weary of war. His act of smoking when nervous and under duress in one of the sequences stating in a tone of enforced patriotic fervor that soldiers need to be grateful for being able to serve the cause of their country underlines this claim. His statements about the duties of a soldier and nervous body language are shown as being in contradiction and seem to lead the viewers to believe the artificiality of that claim. In this scene, Rico tells Amy about an attempted suicide on the base. Amy assumes this information to be about a prisoner only to surprisingly discover that it concerns a soldier instead. This revelation and the accompanying element of surprise that ensues seek to shatter hitherto stereotypical assumptions about the prisoner-guard binary. Surprise here functions to dislodge, according to the logic of the film, not just previously received notions about proper “courage” in war – the sort of ideological justification for courage that allows for the discursive creation of a certain type of militant hyper-masculinity – it also allows for the film to make the claim that conditions of war can dismantle the humanity and emotional well-being of the aggressors as well.

I would like to argue that this aspect of surprise at the notion that a soldier is equally traumatized by war as a prisoner is something that confounds Amy's (and the viewer's) expectations about the ideological assumption of bravery required for going to war. It sets into motion the first instance, one amongst several, where the dominant ideological framework is shown as lagging in generating a certain stereotype, in this case, of the courageous soldier. This phenomenon, something that I label as “surprise,” works in opposition to the dictum of the dominant ideological framework. For instance, if the generally received notion of the logic of war dictates a certain form of patriotism and the unthinking willingness to die for one's country, then the phenomenon of surprise would work contrary to that – to show that what is ideologically manufactured works in a manner that is sometimes at odds with the scenario that unfolds. While this outlining of surprise appears as a Marxist formulation, with “ideology” as a term having a strong connection with Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, the logic of this impulse can similarly be observed in the post-structuralist tradition as well (1978). For Jacques Derrida, for instance, this tendency was perceived through the vocabulary of something that escapes “the structurality of the structure”: to roughly paraphrase, a phenomenon that escapes the logic of the hitherto expected and received in the prevalent signifying economy (1993: 223-24). Derrida called this the “event” – albeit one that is perpetually in postponement/

deferral. He states the event to be one that is always in *l'avenir* (from *l'avenir*: the future and *a venir*: to come). In another intellectual tradition, Alan Sinfield uses both notions of ideology as well as influences from post-structuralism to formulate a similar notion for cultural materialism (1992). For Sinfield, this notion of an ideological gap is called a “faultline” that can be harnessed for its subversive power.

Yet there is more that can be said on the subject. The notion of “surprise” instead carries within itself multiple connotations. The following are just a few of these:

1. “Surprise” carries the notion of a Marxian ideological *gap*. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels variously remark on the massive effort that is inserted into the creation of an ideological space that helps sustain the means, mode and relations of production. Surprise in this scenario helps tangle the ideological space to reveal rifts that showcase not ideological might but rather the inability to completely sustain ideological dominance.
2. “Surprise” in this manner is also closely linked to the post-structuralist logic of the event as something which moves *beyond* the logic of the current epistemological framework to reveal “newness” in Homi Bhabha's terms (2000). Surprise then becomes something that resists totality, or in Derridean parlance, something that resists the totality of the total (1993). Surprise becomes an anti-totalitarian impulse to de-structure the already existing framework in favour of other forms of structuring.
3. However, “surprise” can function both in ways that can be *against* the ideological setup, as elaborated above and in manners that work *for* further enforcing the ideological/epistemological framework. For instance, the poverty or deportation of multiple populations of immigrants is a good example of surprise that works to dismantle the illusion of the ideological space that the capitalist enterprise of America churns out through the selling of the American dream. Such a “surprise” or gap from what is advertised as the American dream and the ground reality work to further enforce American capitalist machinations.
4. “Surprise” also works in a manner that showcases the modalities of power do not reach its aim in totality. Gilles Deleuze, years after Marx (and also obviously Jacques Derrida), calls this the “spontaneous”: namely, eruptions of power that do not succumb or work according to the logic of the structure of the prevailing power (Negri and Deleuze, 1990: n.p.). Spontaneity for Deleuze becomes ultimately something that gets co-opted into the power structure. However, for the notion of surprise being elaborated here, this may or may not hold true. “Surprise” may

function as something that escapes the dominant power structure but also might become something that works against co-option.

5. And lastly, “surprise” works simultaneously at not just the level of outward politics but also as a *personal* shattering of stereotypes. This can happen in a manner in which stereotypes – or previously etched out markers of identity – are dislodged to show their own existence as constructs.

This politics of “surprise” within the film is displayed most keenly in Amy's transformation. Initially eager and enthusiastic about making a difference (as she states later) and full of patriotic fervor, she is also shown to be well informed (for instance, about the Geneva conventions and the lack of its application at the detention facility). She volunteers to be a part of the Initial Reaction Force (IRF) sent to pacify a non-compliant prisoner. Upon being physically hurt in this process, she successfully uses force against the prisoner even though the prisoner is handcuffed and forced into compliance. Thus far her behavior is in sync with that expected of a new military recruit. Yet while Amy is shown to handle the situation authoritatively, the subsequent scene underlines her vulnerability as a woman in the military. She is propositioned by her superior on the very first day on the base resulting in a tightrope walk in negotiating her gendered status within army ranks versus her endeavor to make an impression based on her status as simply a soldier. That she has to quite literally and metaphorically suppress her femininity is represented, for example, in her self-fashioning as something of a sexless being. She similarly responds to queries from her mother with the retort that “I did not join the military to find a husband.”

However, in her recreation time with fellow soldiers, Amy's gendered status is shown as a debilitation. While Amy is an expert fisher in contrast to several of her male colleagues, a talent that seems to allow her to shatter the boundaries of her normative gendered role, the film's narrative arc makes clear that this is not something that would work in her favor in the carnivalesque space that gets created quite literally during the “time off.” The film seems to posit the attention of the commanding officer, Ransdell, as the so-called prize she must compete with a more feminine soldier for. The sequence entails the creation of a gender problematic: Amy's non-compliance with her gender role – something that worked in her favour within the confines of her military duties – becomes an obstacle within the space of the carnivalesque. It is her espousal of more conventional feminine roles that allows her to “win” the attention of Ransdell. Yet when an intimate encounter with Ransdell culminates in a violation of her consent, the very foundation of that gendered problematic is highlighted. The carnivalesque space that had allowed for the enforcement of Amy's status as a gendered subject in

order that she function as a non-gendered being outside of that carnivalesque space is made visible. The fact that even within the confines of this carnivalesque space she is unable to claim space as a woman outside the masculinist objectified gaze further reinforces the gendered hierarchy. Amy's gender implies that no matter what her action is, she can never be the agential subject, only the receptor of violence or discrimination.

Amy's negotiation of her gender within the army and its peripheral life gets further complicated in the logic of the film through her encounter with the prisoners. When Amy discovers that certain prisoners behave aggressively towards her, it is attributed toward the problematic construction of white femininity with respect to other religious and racial groups. "These guys just don't like girls. It's an Arab thing," explains her fellow soldier. In other words, while Amy's womanhood is something that is perceived to interfere in the efficient functioning of her duties as a soldier, the very same womanhood is something that is instrumentalized in order to sustain the construction of an orientalist version of Islam in the film. This aspect of using religion and religious taboos to use torture techniques especially designed for female soldiers has been well elaborated by Anne McClintock (2009).

Yet it is through Ali Amir that the politics of surprise is set into motion most effectively in the narrative. Ali Amir is presented as a figure that shatters the expectations associated with the discourse of the alleged terrorist. Well read, university educated, fluent in English, observant and keen, he attempts to engage Amy in conversation. On his conjecture (to Amy) that we're both stuck here, Amy replies that "[y]ou and me got nothing to say to each other." Yet the banter that ensues creates a space where "surprise" becomes a dominant trope. The warning issued to the army guards stating that they are to withhold all personal information from the prisoners (including the removal of name tags from their uniforms when they face the prisoners) is shown as hanging heavy in the background during this interaction. Ali Amir backhandedly guesses Amy's religious orientation by commenting on the Old Testament and the New Testament in the Bible. The following dialogue occurs:

Amy: You don't diss my holy book, I won't diss yours.

Ali Amir: Who chose your Christianity?... It was your parents...

Amy: Cut that Hannibal Lecter shit...

Ali: What is Hannibal Lecter?

Amy: He's a guy in a movie that talks too much. ... It's probably banned in your country anyway.

Ali: You mean in Germany?

This exchange opens up a whole plethora of associations which make use of the aspect

of surprise: the ability for received norms and dominant ideological positions within a given situational framework to either not suffice or else be completely shattered. The film tries to juxtapose the context of the prisoner's perspective with those of the soldiers to highlight certain similarities in their situation. It does so, however, based on an erasure of the available and established context of the extreme situations that the prisoners have to undergo in order to make an argument for the easy equation of the two situations. Yet, the element of surprise underlines the failure of this machinery to achieve that in totality. Surprise then becomes a mode of recognition of that failure, the sense of the gap in the production of the "normal." Within the above exchange, the first act of surprise is the very fact of a Muslim prisoner's attempt to engage in conversation with a security guard, and a female one at that (based on the assumption circulated in the film by the guards of misogynist undertones of Islam). The second aspect is Ali's successful attempt to engage Amy in a discussion. The film makes Amy's response to appear as something that is produced by Ali's intentional provocation about her religion: "You don't diss my holy book, I won't diss yours," Amy responds in a liberal-humanist stance of tolerance. Yet Ali's subsequent response that she never chose her religion allows for the implicit assumption that if she is not the agent of her religion, neither is he. In doing this, Ali's question to Amy reversely reflects the Western world's stance towards Islam's apparent flaws. Yet the task of cultural translation is shown to always be an incomplete one. When Amy asks him to not inquire about her personal beliefs or her background, it is Ali's turn to be flummoxed: he is not aware of Hannibal Lecter and its associative iconology for the popular American imaginary. However, Amy's reply makes evident that the aspect of surprise involved in cultural translation is one that is in constant motion. Amy's presumption about censorship in the Islamic world is met with a comic revelation: Ali is from Germany. This aspect of the comic is also illustrative of the means whereby the comic becomes another modality of the encounter with surprise: the dialogue is humorous to the viewers because it departs from the expected, quotidian response. Further, if the film's trajectory appears to be setting in at this point to the development of the unlikely friendship between the prisoner and guard, as the iconological reference to Hannibal Lecter seems to suggest, then it is the turn of the audience to encounter surprise. The subsequent scene depicts Ali to only have engaged Amy in dialogue in order to throw at her what is colloquially referred to in military language as a "shit cocktail" (a collection of his own faeces). The military's Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) sets in at this point and Ali's transgression is met with him being pacified through physical violence from the security personnel. If the film's narrative was using the trope of the prisoner-guard friendship thus far, the violence that ensues departs from this narratorial archetype in

order to deliver an unpleasant surprise. The exchange is illustrative of encountering surprise as witty repartee albeit one with another level of confounding the by then expected rejoinders through an enactment of physical violence as the ultimate form of surprise. In the sequences that follow, Amy succumbs to the military's hyper-masculine code of behaviour which demand that a "tough" stance be taken towards prisoner transgression. On being informed that Amy's response to call in the IRF against Ali's transgressive act is culminating in Ali's torture (sleep deprivation for a week), Amy is forced to sideline the accompanying guilt. This feature would become a characteristic response required from Amy in order to conform to the ideological demands imposed by the military.

As time progresses, Amy seems to find affinity with the prisoners rather than with her colleagues. When the prisoners are on a hunger strike, Amy's attempt at reconciliation based on her interaction with them is what allows for the hunger strikers' demands to be met successfully. The following exchange generates a space where the project of cultural transaction is set forth as a mutual one, with the subversive space created by surprise replaced with the task of imagining the other into being:

Amy: I can imagine what it would be like...

Ali: Can you?

Amy: Try to.

Ali: Then I will also try.

The first task of cultural translation becomes one where Ali and his fellow inmates' non-compliant behaviour is sought to be contextualized by Amy. Amy asks Ali why he chooses to not conform, stating that conforming would make his life in the detention facility easier. Ali's response is revelatory. He simply states, "If I'm following your rules, it means I'm agreeing that you guys have the right to give me rules." With this, Ali seems to signal that the interpellation that allows him to be labelled prisoner and captive in a space like Guantanamo is also something that requires his consent and willing participation. Ali, the film argues, *chooses* non-compliance.

Further interactions reveal background information for both characters. Amy belongs to a small town with just a high school diploma and chooses to enlist in the armed forces as a means to not just make a difference but also to get away from the restrictive life in that space. Her life trajectory is indicative and reflective of the routine military practice of scouting for recruits from small, poor, and rural geographical zones to fill in low-ranked jobs in the armed services. Ali, on the other hand, is shown as intelligent, university educated and well-travelled. The dynamic that ensues through their exchange leads to unexpected turns. Amy's interaction with Ali creates a zone of

the uncovering of her own consciousness. Her gender becomes a motif that culminates finally in the production of her dissent as well. When Ransdell assigns her the task of monitoring Ali during his shower in a blatant violation of SOP, her response is anger and a sense of injustice that aligns her with Ali rather than with the so-called protectors of her own country. When she files a report against her commanding officer for the incident and silently refuses to repeat the military ritual of chanting “Honor bound to defend freedom,” the faultiness within the ideological machinery get widened. The review of her report goes unfavorably. The officer in charge of investigating the report scoffs, “you filed against a fellow soldier because *the detainee* was uncomfortable?,” culminating in her transfer to the night shift.

The film seems to comment on the restrictions that the security personnel have to undergo at places like Guantanamo. For instance, the high ranking official who hears Amy's complaint states quite glibly that Guantanamo is not a place through which an official builds his career. There is no reward for efficient management and even a minor incident puts one in the firing line. Additionally, with Amy's transfer, the film seems to suggest that the notion of “rules” and surveillance that Amy has internalized extend to the realm of the tangible as well. The panopticism of the prison operates with the logic that co-joins the need for those wielding disciplinary power to remain invisible (and rendering the prisoner visible) with the sovereign need to publicly torture those transgressing as a medium of deterrence. The film seems to highlight the view that Ali's behavior is a direct product of his free will. It makes the liberal-humanist claim that Ali possesses a choice with regard to his compliance or dissent even when confined and subjected to dehumanizing torture. It puts forth the claim that the prisoner is free to comply or dissent, without (in the space of the film's narrative sequence) contextualizing the very aspect of power that even this rubric of choice contains. The hold of power on the biological existence of the prisoner is, in the politics of the film, sought to be disregarded in favor of a neoliberal logic of choice.

The philosopher Giles Deleuze has the following to say:

It definitely makes sense to look at the various ways individuals and groups constitute themselves as subjects through processes of subjectification: what counts in such processes is the extent to which, as they take shape, they elude both established forms of knowledge and the dominant forms of power. Even if they in turn engender new forms of power or become assimilated into new forms of knowledge. For a while, though, they have a real rebellious spontaneity. (Negri and Deleuze, n.p.)

The “rebellious spontaneity” enables both Amy and Ali to negotiate certain ideological aspects of state dominance (Negri and Deleuze n.p.). For Amy, her gender marginality makes this possible precisely when the hold of power on her should have been the strongest (during her hearing and transfer). With Ali and the rest of the

prisoners, dissidence is embedded in their hunger strikes. While force feeding becomes a way for that power to retake control, actively starving oneself to protest allows (albeit briefly) for the unraveling of power. However, this is not a dissidence which has liberating potential, for the culminating logic of the hunger strike is not just a break of the hold of power on the subject but also the erasure of that very subject through starvation and death. It is for this reason that while the film seems to posit both Amy and Ali's subject positions as equally marginal, the comparison cannot be deemed valid beyond a point. In the film's finale, the difference between Amy and Ali's positions is revealed. As Ali calculates that Amy's tenure at Guantanamo is coming to a close, the truth of Amy's privilege becomes glaringly obvious to Ali:

Ali: You and me, we are at war.

Amy: I don't see it like that.

Ali: Then you see nothing.

This last exchange between Amy and Ali leads to a position where Ali seeks to end his own life with the realization that his future is bleak and that the status of his own biological existence is not in his hands. Upon realizing that Ali has a blade in his cell that he intends to use as a weapon to kill himself, Amy's first instinct is to grab the weapon from him. While SOP dictates that she radio for help at this point, Amy decides to talk to him instead. She uses her personal history, reveals her name in a blatant violation of SOP, and discloses details about her background. And as she converses with Ali and narrates the story of visiting the zoo with her father, her fright and anguish at a tethered lion in the facility that is mistreated but not allowed to be released in the jungle becomes a metaphor for Ali's current plight as well. When they both realize the veracity of this comparison and the stakes involved, Amy is quick to share the moral lesson she learnt through the childhood visit: "If they had a choice, they should have given it to him. They should have let the lion choose." The moment of this realization becomes the moment when Amy grants the choice about his own life to Ali. Yet this also becomes a moment in which it becomes very evident that while Amy is free to choose her life's journey, Ali is not. The film ends with both moving to newer ventures. Amy takes on a new army assignment, Ali gets his wish to read the final Harry Potter book that he has been eagerly awaiting. The final book appears the same day that Amy is transferred from the detention facility. Ali begins to read the book only to find Amy's note scribbled on the pages: "I don't know if Snape's a good guy. But I know you are."

While the above note appears as a welcome declaration of faith in the prisoner by a US military personnel, it being scribbled in a children's book also is the film's way of alerting the audience of its status as narrative art. It becomes a way to highlight the

reconciliatory politics of the film been written in an artistic space in opposition to ground reality. While art becomes a realm in which the status of those who have been othered gets negotiated, the film calls attention to its fictional status as well. What is evident is the creation of a space where the possibility of exploring the politics of the war on terror is generated. Yet even within this artistic space, the realm of possibility bestows agential status to the white woman, the one with privilege to deny or grant the prisoner the very right to choose the status of his existence. The film forays to provide in-depth biographical information about Amy and thus creates her as a rounded character, while Ali's persona remains opaque and mystified. Ali becomes ensconced in a politics of signification that allows him to be processed and all his background information made accessible in a manner that renders him docile without revealing the reason for his detention. Hence, while Ali is declared by Amy as “a good guy,” the very process of that assigation – the means by which Amy's judgment of Ali seems to hold more ethical value and worth – highlights the skewed nature of the marginal status that both Amy and Ali seem to claim equally in the film.

Thus far the film seeks to build up a contextual framework within which the center – here accorded to the white woman, Amy – can speak to those at the margin – in this case, the prisoner, Ali. The dominant ideological-epistemological framework does so by positing the argument that notions of marginality and centrality are not essentially pure but can occur even within the purview of those with power (such as soldiers serving the world's strongest military) and that these points of marginality within the center work towards creating a zone of empathy with the completely marginalized prisoner. In other words, the poetics of the film seek to place the point of contact between the prisoner and the guard as one of mutual interaction of certain people similarly disempowered by the milieu in which they find themselves. However, as ambitious and ethically glorious a project as it may be, the de-contextualization in the film of some points of privilege enjoyed by Amy and others serving at the Guantanamo military base, highlight the creasing out of multiple problem areas within the space of the film.

While the film employs verisimilitude, the discrepancies of fact within the film serve to underline the process by which art imitating reality creates its own ideological space in order to make invisible certain forms of atrocity within its purview. To give a few examples: while the film is supposedly set in camp X-Ray, an earlier make-shift version of unshaded blocks of cells, the type of prison sets that are used in the film, point towards a prison block on the naval base created later. Similarly, while most of the prisoners held at Guantanamo are known to be from countries such as the United Kingdom, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, etc, there is none known so far to be from Germany

(as Ali says he is in the film). The ordeal of prisoner processing and the bio-politics of control that go along with processing prisoners within the prison is also something that is elided in the film. So too are the role of lawyers and legal interns. The classified military tribunals too – where even lawyers are not allowed to plead on behalf of the prisoners – are shown to be absent as well. Though hunger strikes do make an appearance, the very concept of why those hunger strikes take place is belittled in the film. In the narrative of the film, the prisoners at Camp X-ray go on hunger strikes to demand a piece of gym equipment. This is contrary to media reports about hunger striking which seem to make the claim of the very act of hunger strikes as a framework of dissidence and demand for fair court hearings and release. Not only do hunger strikes, according to such opinions, seek to create a space for dissent for the prisoners, they also seek to bring the cause of the plight of the prisoners to the forefront.

Further, while processing Amy's complaint about her superior Ransdell, the high-ranking official who judges her complaint claims a position at Guantanamo to be a thankless job, this is contrary to media information about the various perquisites and fame that individuals like Geoffrey Miller – hired to oversee such detention facilities – seem to have commanded. The film is also silent about torture at the prison facility. Apart from force feeding and brief mention in Ali's file of torture techniques used on him, the film is silent about the epidemic of systemic torture that the place is known to employ. The film, moreover, is completely silent over the issue of prisoner suicides that have been reported as having occurred at the military base (Horton), furnishing instead a dialogue about soldierly courage required through Rico and Amy's scene about certain soldiers engaged in such an act.

What the Sundance film thus enacts is a portrayal of the incarcerated camp site – namely, Guantanamo – as not just a place where the gendered and hierarchical stakes in the war on terror are meshed out, it also becomes a place of erasing certain nuances of such mechanics of power so that what is made available is a watered down version of what the war on terror has entailed. This erasing of the ideological nuances of power mechanics happens by way of, for instance, equating the situation of Ali Amir with that of Amy, by arguing that the soldiers' version of war-weariness is similar to the atrocities suffered by the prisoners, or by rendering the gendered complexities of women in the armed forces as equal to racism in and through the military. What becomes visible by way of these is how even though there are moments in the film that enable aspects of “surprise” – aspects which seek to tear out the ideological curtain that metaphorically governs everyday mechanisms in war – the film in and by itself remains a product of an American ideological production which overall does *not* surprise.

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Tracing Visibility of Professional Women in Colonial Punjab

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The spread of education among women in the Punjab through the initiative of the colonial state, missionaries and the social reformers created new spaces for women in the public domain. Empowered with education, women crossed the thresholds of their homes and stepped into professional roles that were gradually opening up for them. New avenues of self-exploration became possible and many women became visible in the first respectable profession acceptable for women, namely teaching. As the demand for more girls' schools grew, more women joined the professional work force which gradually included careers in medicine, political and social work and print media. Their visibility in knowledge-based professions helped raise their status in society. The “new woman” was an earner and was respected because of her education and her economic contribution to the family. The colonial period thus qualifies to be the formative phase in which the new professional woman emerged in the middle class families in Punjab. All this had a deep impact on gender relations in the Punjab.

Keywords: gender, education, professional women, colonial Punjab, Arya Samaj, Kanya Maha Vidyalaya, *Panchal Pandita*, Kinnaird College.

The annexation of Punjab in 1849 by the British saw the introduction of a new administrative framework, new means of transport and communication, new social legislation, new system of education, and a new idiom of social reform largely in response to the substantial and active presence of the Christian missionaries in the province. The “middle classes” accepted and promoted English education and got the lion's share of the new opportunities for professional, administrative and clerical employment in colonial Punjab. Hurt by the colonial insinuations of the pathetic condition of Indian women and alarmed at the success of the Christian missionaries, the male reformers worked hard to improve the degraded condition of their women. Education was seen as the key to all reform and became an important agenda in the project of reformation of women. The spread of education among women through the initiative of the colonial state, the missionaries and the social reformers created new spaces for women in the public domain. Empowered with education, women crossed the thresholds of their homes and stepped into the professional roles that were gradually opening up for them. This paper attempts to trace the emergence of professional women in the colonial Punjab and to analyze its impact on their lives.

A small but qualitative change based on education was taking place among the women in the urban areas in colonial Punjab. The leadership was initially provided by women like Sarala Devi Chaudhrani¹, Begum Jahan Ara Shahnawaz² and Lado Rani Zutshi³, who had the unique advantage of quality education, wealth, liberal family background, and backing of their male family members. These elite women served as role models for many women of the emerging middle classes who were being educated in the earliest denominational institutions started in the Punjab, namely the Kanya MahaVidyalaya (KMV), Jalandhar and the Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala (SKM), Ferozepur. With time more institutions emerged and some like the Kinnaird College in Lahore trained women for new professional roles. New avenues of self-exploration became possible and many women became visible in the first respectable profession acceptable for women, namely teaching. As the demand for more girls' schools grew, more women joined the professional work force which gradually came to include careers in medicine, political and social work, and print media. All this had a deep impact on gender relations in the Punjab.

The first reference to women working beyond their domestic sphere comes from Lala Devraj, the founder of KMV who lauded the efforts of five women in 1898. They were Mai Parvati, a great *pracharak* (preacher), his own mother Kahan Devi, who worked in the girls boarding every night for two to three hours, and Shrimati Har Devi, editor of *Bharat Bhagini*, a monthly magazine for women. He highlighted the commitment of Smt. Parmeshwari Devi of the Ropar Arya Samaj and Mai Bhagwati who had served at KMV for some years and had later founded the first *Kanya Pathshala* in Haryana in Hoshiarpur district out of her own resources (*Panchal Pandita*, 1898: 7-9). She also had the distinction of being the editor of *Sahayak*, the first Hindi magazine devoted to the cause of women's education in the Punjab (*Panchal Pandita*, 1902: 9-10).

Arya Samaj played a pioneering role in empowering women through education. It also started sending out delegations of girl students with their mentors to promote the cause of women's education. In 1905 Savitri Devi travelled extensively in South India, delivering lectures. On the way back, she attended the sessions of the Congress and the Social Conference in Benaras. In 1907 she toured Karachi with Lala Devraj and the *Karachi Chronicle* compared her with Annie Besant (Malhotra, 2002: 112). Savitri Devi went on to become the Principal of KMV and Lajjawati became the Vice Principal in 1913 to assist Savitri Devi who was keeping poor health. In 1916 Kumari Lajjawati travelled all over the United Provinces and Calcutta with Lala Devraj, and collected Rs. 15,000 for her alma mater. On Savitri Devi's death in 1918, Lajjawati became the Principal of KMV. Her oratorical skills, her commitment to women's reform and her patriotic zeal made her an iconic personality. *International Women's*

News, published in 1917, stated that Pandita Kumari Lajjawati addressed an audience of 5,000 people at Jalandhar on “India and its Future.” She spoke in Hindi on abolition of *purdah*, child marriage and equal treatment of girls with boys (illustrated in Jacobs, 2015: n.p.).

The KMV emerged as a pioneering institution which encouraged women to look beyond their domestic horizons. Its journal, the *Panchal Pandita* gives the names of twenty-five women alumni who on completion of their education did honorary service at KMV for more than six months (*Panchal Pandita*, 1911: 7-8). Shrimati Satyavati graduated from KMV in 1922, suffixed “sanatika” to her name and taught there from 1922 to 1928 (Joshi, 1910: 225-9). When Dr G. C. Narang, Minister of Local Self Government, visited the KMV in 1931, he was impressed with its functioning under the Principal Shanno Devi, who was an alumna of the institution. Narang suggested involving senior girls in the running of certain departments to train them in management skills (*The Tribune*, 14 February 1931: 14). Kumari Shiva Dua, the younger sister of Lajjawati, acquired higher education from the Government College at Lahore and was later appointed as lecturer in History in the same college (Joshi 242-6). *The Tribune* reported on a presentation lecture delivered by Mrs Sita Ram Kohli, B. A., with 42 lantern slides on “Life in Kashmir” in the Mayo School of Art (Museum). It was attended by a large number of women (22 February 1931: 7).

The Kinnaird College, another premier institution of higher education for women in Lahore, played a significant role in promoting social change in Lahore. It trained its students throughout the first half of the twentieth century with two types of skills, professional and social. The F. A. and B. A. courses at the college provided the necessary prerequisite for teachers' training. Giving a young woman some teachers' training was a kind of social insurance for her, even if she never expected to work for a salary. Many girls from Christian, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim families took advantage of this training to become the first batch of professional women in the Punjab. A child widow from an Arya Samaj family, who was enrolled in 1917, went on to become the Principal of Hans Raj Mahila Mahavidyala at Lahore, and her nieces, also Kinnaird alumnae, joined the school as teachers.

A Muslim girl enrolled in Kinnaird in 1930 related that her father wanted her to become a doctor or a lawyer, or at least to study abroad. Eventually, she did go to London for teachers' training, which was a radical step in the late 1930s for an unmarried Muslim woman to live independently, thousands of miles away from her family (Maskiell, 1985: 80). Some Muslim girls followed trends similar to those

among Christian girls by choosing a single life with a career instead of marriage. Many Muslim families allowed their daughters to attend the Government College for Women which was founded in 1922 in Lahore as it was a secular institution offering *purdah* facilities (Maskiell 79). These women also joined the teaching profession, and mostly worked in the provincial government education service. However, the number of trained Muslim women remained less than the demand for Muslim teachers and supervisors for both government and private Muslim girls' institutions until the 1940s. For example, the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam (Society for the Defense of Islam) was not able to find a qualified Muslim woman to be the Principal of the Islamia College for Women opened in Lahore in 1939, and felt obliged to hire a Christian alumna of the Kinnaird College to fill that position (Maskiell 80).

The colonial period also opened new avenues for widows who were given alternatives to lead a respectable life with dignity. The KMV had a home for widows who were imparted education as it was seen as an important tool that could keep them occupied as well as serve the community. Widows were seen as the only category of women who could meet the shortage of teachers and preachers (Grewal, 2010: 374-5). A philanthropist, Sir Ganga Ram, got a stately building constructed for an “Industrial Widows Home” in Lahore. Widows who had acquired a satisfactory measure of general education were trained as teachers and used the Lady Maclagan School as a practice school. Other widows were trained in industrial work (*Eight Quinquennial Review on the Progress of Education in India*, qtd in Walia, 2005: 184). The Lahore Seva Sadan for women appealed for funds to train more women as doctors, nurses, health visitors, and teachers (*The Tribune*, 18 February 1931: 12).

The freedom movement played an emancipatory role in bringing women out of their homes and giving them a purpose in life. The Khadi movement linked the economic independence of women with the freedom of the country. Gandhi urged women to spin, as foreign cloth had ruined millions of homes and taken away employment from millions of women (Gandhi, 1971: 248-9). Jahan Ara Shahanawaz recalls meeting Gandhi in 1931 and asking him to help emancipate women. Gandhi pointed to the many women who had assembled for the prayers and retorted that had he not already done that? She replied that it was not enough and until women got economic independence they would never get rid of slavish mentality. They were akin to a servant with the keys of the master's house (Shahnawaz, 2002: 116). Nehru advocated equal opportunities for women so that they were trained to play an effective role in all professions and spheres. He told the young women:

In particular, the habit of looking upon marriage as a profession almost and as the sole economic refuge for woman will have to go before woman can have any freedom. Freedom depends on economic conditions even more than political and if a woman is not economically free and self-earning she will have to depend on her husband or someone else, and dependents are never free. (Gopal, 1974: 219-20)

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur appealed to parents to bring their daughters up for some profession just as well as their sons. "Living by doing" should be every person's motto and each one should be fitted for that "doing." In a convocation address delivered at the Government College for Women, Amritsar, on 8 March 1952, she asked the girls who were studying to become teachers, nurses and doctors to pledge to give at least three years of service to the country before marriage. Marriage was not an end in itself and there was no reason at all why even after marriage the women should not take up part time work whether on a voluntary or a paid basis. She wanted to see women playing their part in other professions also like journalism, dairy and poultry farming, agriculture, gardening and architecture. But, for that moment, she felt that the social service, particularly health and education, needed them more than anything else (Kumar, Devi and Purthi, 1998: 204).

Gradually, through education, the detached attitude and lack of awareness of the Punjabi women was giving way to meaningful activity in public worlds, including both paid employment and political activity.⁴ In the 1930s, the provincial government adopted a policy of preference for Hindu, Sikh and Muslim women in the education service to balance the number of Christians already employed. Many Hindu women found employment through the Arya Samaj network of girls' schools in the Punjab. Even Lala Devraj advised women that earning a living was better than asking the children to beg (*Panchal Pandita*, April 1901: 13). Education as a field of employment became popular as it did not conflict with traditional norms of femininity. The hours of work were more or less fixed, and it involved less contact with men. Several informants voiced the opinion that teaching was more respectable than medicine, because the latter exposed women to the physical side of life (Maskiell 71).

The Christian Medical College for Women at Ludhiana provided Punjab with its first batch of trained medical personnel. Hospitals exclusively for women provided a clientele for female professionals in medicine. By the 1920s, the study of medicine had emerged as a professional option for some Punjabi middle-class women. Sushila Nayar not only qualified as a doctor but also cast in her lot with the freedom struggle. After studying at the Kanya Maha Vidyalaya, Savitri Devi Nanda went on to study biology, chemistry and physics at Lahore, and then medicine in London. Her self-conscious portrayal of her Kshatriya upbringing was significant for it showed the

extent to which women's careers in medicine were becoming acceptable among the high castes (Malhotra, 2003: 248-9). The colonial state wished to replace the traditional *dai* with a midwife trained in the western medical system, and many women in the emerging middle classes used this opportunity to train and fill these vacancies. Educational institutions and hospitals reserved for women made teaching and medicine respectable, for women could work within a female network.

With the spread of education came new ideas which could be disseminated through the print media. Journalism emerged as a new profession for many educated women. After the success of periodicals like the *Panchal Pandita* and the *Punjabi Bhain* published by the premier educational institutions of women, many educated young women took to creative writing for women. *Saheli*, a journal published from Amritsar, was associated with Dr Khadija Ferozuddin, a highly educated woman who observed strict *purdah*. She served in the Punjab Education Service as Professor at Government College for Women, Lahore. *Nur Jahan* from Amritsar and Lahore were two distinct journals; the first edited by Mrs Sa'adat Sultan and the one from Lahore by Hamida Sultan (Minault, 1998: 154). Muhammadi Begum edited the *Tahzib-un -Niswan*, one of the first Urdu weekly newspapers for women (Minault, 2009: 70). Bint Nazrul Baqar who grew up in Sialkot in the Punjab in the 1890s went on to become editor of *Phul*, a publication for girls started by Mumtaz Ali in 1910 (Minault, 1998: 269). Fatima Begum edited and published a woman's paper called *Khatoon* which was later called *Sharif Bibi*. Jahan Ara would often contribute to this paper (Shahnawaz 39).

Professional women thus became visible both in the public and private sectors in the first half of the twentieth century, though their participation was practically confined to health and education. The period of World War II ushered in a small but significant entry of women into clerical and secretarial occupations (Government of India, 1974: 201). It gave an impetus to women's employment in urban areas and even married women came forward to take up gainful employment (87). A matrimonial advertisement in 1941 seeking an educated girl "preferably in service" for a 27 year old Khatri boy is indicative of the changing trends (*The Tribune*, 4 Jan 1941: 11).

Thus a positive development in the colonial period was the emergence of professional women. No doubt men provided much of the initiative and leadership, but the women remained the crucial elements in the social crucible. It was the women who braved all odds and learned to read and write, and became teachers, doctors, nurses, and writers and stepped into the world of creative art. Their visibility in knowledge-based professions helped raise their status in the society. A dent was finally being made in the situation that kept women in a state of subordination through denial of knowledge and

subsequent deprivation of financial resources. Even though the number of such women was less, it was suggestive of the newer and significant trends in society. The “new woman” was an earner, and was respected because of her education, and her economic contribution to the family. Thus, she took decisions, and led a productive life. The widow too could have a meaningful, existence.

The colonial period thus qualifies to be the formative phase in which the new professional woman emerged in the middle class families in the Punjab but what she stood for took time to percolate down to the lower classes. After independence, these trends would get strengthened and accelerated, multiplying many times over.

Notes

1. Sarala Devi was the gifted niece of Rabindra Nath Tagore. Though brought up in Bengal, she was married to Rambhuj Dutta Chaudhury in 1905 when she was 33 years old and went with him to the Punjab. Ray (2002) gives a deep insight into her extraordinary life.
2. Jahan Ara Shahnawaz was born on 7 April 1896 in Baghbanpura near Lahore in the Mian family, belonging to the third largest tribe in the Punjab – the Arains. Her father, Muhammed Shafi, was a lawyer and founder member of the Muslim League. He was member of the Imperial Legislative Council and later Education and Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. Her mother Amirunnisa was well versed in English, and was the founder President of the Anjuman-i-Khawateen-i-Islam and worked for the advancement of Muslim women. The family patronized the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam which had been founded by the efforts of Jahan Ara's maternal grandfather. Shahnawaz's autobiography (2002) is a record of her experiences and her initiation into politics.
3. Lado Rani Zutshi was wife of Ladli Prasad Zutshi, a nephew of Motilal Nehru. She was a nationalist who played an important role in the country's struggle for independence.
4. The same change was observed by Borthwick in Bengal (1984).

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India's Low-carbon Pathway and the Market Mechanism

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Climate change, a threat to the existence of all forms of life on the planet, is a global, scientific and public policy issue. A wide variety of opinions exist regarding the choice of appropriate strategy for its management. India's high vulnerability to climate change coupled with its growth and development objectives has resulted in it opting for an inclusive and climate resilient economy. An appropriate policy framework – consisting of the right mix of policy choices ranging from market mechanism to government intervention – is crucial for the successful achievement of the country's objectives. This paper attempts to explore the evolution, implementation and effectiveness of various climate change induced policies and programs adopted by India over the years, in particular its market mechanism.

Keywords: climate change, India, PAT, REC

Introduction

Climate change is a global, scientific and public policy issue, with a diversity of opinions regarding choice of appropriate management strategy. Unchecked emissions of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs), in particular carbon dioxide (CO₂), and the consequent global warming has manifested itself across the globe in the form of climate change extremities and catastrophes in both the developed and developing parts of the world. Climate change poses a threat to the existence of all forms of life on the planet through its impact on ecosystem functioning, biodiversity, capital productivity and human health. Policy choices may be implemented at a global level using both the market mechanism and government intervention. Popular intervention mechanisms include emissions trading programs, emissions taxes, performance standards and technology promoting programs.

The Indian economy has witnessed rapid growth in the last few decades, characterized by accelerated industrial development and growing infrastructure requirements. The country's energy needs have increased multi-fold, fueled by the rapid growth in its

population and by its objectives of accelerated sustainable economic growth, ensuring energy access to all, accompanied by an efficient and effective transportation system and creation of a strong infrastructural base. The country's energy sector, however, is ill equipped to handle this increase, being afflicted not only with insufficient production and inefficient and inequitable distribution, but also due to a heavy dependence on GHG emitting coal and fossil fuels.

India is highly vulnerable to climate change. While its per-capita emissions are extremely low owing to its being the second largest populated country in the world, volume-wise India is the world's third largest emitter of GHG emissions, accounting for 7 percent of the total global emissions (PBL Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency and EU Joint Research Centre, 2016). Since 1990, India's emissions recorded the second greatest increase globally (after China), increasing by 280 percent or 1.5 Gt. (International Energy Agency, 2016). Owing to its vulnerability of climate change, every year India faces extreme weather events, in the form of cyclones, earthquakes, draughts, heat-waves, flash floods, landslides or cloud bursts. The country was the fourth most affected country in 2015 with a Climate Risk Index (CRI) of 15.33 (Kreft, Eckstein and Melchio, 2016).

India's growing concerns for climate change coupled with its growth and development driven energy needs has resulted in its opting for a low-carbon equitable economic growth and development, for a transition to an economy that is inclusive and climate resilient, characterized by minimized emissions and energy efficient systems. Energy accounts for about two thirds of emissions. An efficient and cleaner carbon-neutral energy system has the potential to effect substantial reduction in emissions. Policies and strategies, aimed at effecting improvements in the energy efficiency of the country as well as those aimed at increasing the share of carbon-neutral and emission mitigating renewable energy in the country's energy mix, can go a long way in assisting the country reduce its share of global emissions without compromising its growth and development objectives.

This paper attempts to explore the evolution of various climate change induced policies and programs adopted by India over the years. In particular the market mechanism being developed and promoted in this regard has been explored, and its implementation and effectiveness assessed. The paper is organized as under : Following the introduction in section 1, section 2 elaborates the theoretical framework underlying the climate change policy; section 3 highlights the strategic approaches to tackle climate change; section 4 presents an overview of India's climate change policy and section 5 discusses the various market based mechanisms used by India and section 6 concludes.

Theoretical Underpinnings of Climate Change Policy

The theoretical underpinnings of global climate change policy have a dual focus-measurement of the costs and benefits associated with the policy measures to reduce damage caused by climate variations (Goulder and Pizer, 2006).

Benefit Assessment - Climate change has a direct adverse impact on human welfare due to increased average temperatures, greater frequency of extreme temperature events, altered precipitation patterns and rise in sea levels. This negative welfare impact is categorized into market and non-market damages.

- *Market damages* are the welfare impacts arising out of changes in prices or quantities of marketed goods visible through changes in productivity. A variety of climate-dependent production functions are therefore used to model these changes, specifying production of a given commodity as a function of climate variables such as temperature and precipitation. This approach has been used in agriculture and industries such as forestry, energy services, water utilities and coastal flooding from sea-level rise (Smith and Tirpak, 1989; Yohe *et al.*, 1996; Mansur, Mendelson and Morrison, 2005).
- *Non-market damages* include the direct utility loss resulting from an inhospitable climate, as well as the welfare costs attributable to lost ecosystem services or lost biodiversity. Since it is difficult to make a direct connection between factors such as loss of biodiversity and price changes in a revealed-preference format, the use of stated-preference or interview techniques is found more appropriate to assess the willingness to pay to avoid non-market damages (Smith, 2004-2005.)

Cost Assessment - The cost of carbon dioxide emissions, the principal greenhouse gas, is measured by the substitutability of the gas with other options, in a general production function and also towards less energy intensive industries. The greater the potential for substitution, the lower the costs of meeting a given emissions-reduction target.

Applied models have taken two main approaches to the assessment of substitution options. The first approach employs “bottom-up” energy technology models which focus in great detail on the technologies of specific energy processes or products in one sector or a small group of sectors (Barretto and Kypreos, 2004) This approach suffers from an information drawback since it is unable to provide a detailed analysis of the possibility of substitution from energy in general, or on how changes in the

prices of energy-intensive goods affect intermediate and final demands for those goods.

The second approach employs “top down” economy-wide models, which include but are not limited to Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) models (Jorgenson and Wilcoxon 1993; Conrad 2002). These models trace the relationships between fuel costs, production methods, and consumer choices throughout the economy in an internally consistent way, but include much less detail on specific energy processes or products.

In recent years, attempts have been made to reduce the gap between the two types of models, with “bottom-up” models having gained scope, and “top-down” models incorporating greater detail (McFarland *et al.*, 2004).

Integrated Assessment Models

These models have been developed to combine the costs and benefits of climate change at a common platform by relating costs to benefits arising out of avoided damages. These optimization models link greenhouse gas emissions, greenhouse gas concentrations and changes in temperature or precipitation, as they consider how these changes impact upon production and utility (Nordhaus, 2005).

Strategic Approaches to Climate Change

Climate change is a global public good characterized by the fact that its influence is felt all over the world rather than in a single nation, town, or family. This puts it in a category of global economic issues characterized by the existence of weak economic and political mechanisms for resolving these issues efficiently and effectively. Similar other global public goods include intellectual property rights, international trade, macroeconomic stability, international environmental issues and transnational terrorism.

Some of the mechanisms for dealing with global public goods include the following instruments or techniques (Barrett, 2003):

- Non-cooperative or laissez-faire approaches (as is currently taken for antibiotic resistance)
- Aspirational agreements (e.g., the FCCC) or non-binding voluntary agreements (e.g., the institutional regime created in the 1980s to clean pollution in the North Sea)
- Specific and binding treaties – contracts between sovereign nations – which are the most commonly used techniques of dealing with international issues such as

the effect for the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other global environmental agreements.

- Agreements embedded in broader arrangements – e.g., TRIPS is a part of the WTO
- Regulatory and fiscal authority vested in global supranational bodies such as the WTO for trade related activities and in the IMF for international financial transactions.

Decision making in the context of global public goods has two basic issues that have to be addressed:

- *Appropriate federalism* which refers to finding the appropriate political level of decision making, since the inefficiencies associated with this global public good needs global coordination and global decision making, but implementation has to be at a local level.
- *Westphalian dilemma* according to which obligations may be imposed on a sovereign state only with its consent. There is no legal mechanism for coercion.

Climate change is an economic public good characterized by the fact that its costs and benefits do not have an obviously visible focal benefit or technological fix. This makes policy making extremely difficult since the estimation of its costs and benefits is not easy; this further exacerbates its distribution issues. For instance, in the context of climate change there is almost universal agreement that the optimal reduction of emissions will be neither zero nor 100 percent.

There are two suggested potential policy options for economic public goods such as climate change (Aldy *et al.*, 2003):

- *Quantitative Limits*: This refers to various kinds of command-and-control regulations which set quantitative limits for different members, which are partially or wholly transferable among countries. Under this approach the level of emissions of target countries is determined directly. For a quantitative approach with trading, a market economy develops markets for emissions from which a market price emerges. The Kyoto Protocol was an example of this approach, along with other international protocols such as the CFC mechanism and the US national treaty on SO₂ trading.
- *Price or Tax Mechanisms*: An alternative suggested approach is the use of harmonized prices, fees or taxes as a method of coordinating policies among

countries. Under this approach the level of emissions is determined indirectly by the level of the tax or penalty on carbon emissions. A tax might be set by aiming to limit GHG concentrations or to keep temperature changes below some level.

Climate change is global in its cause with the GHG emissions having the same impact on climate irrespective of where in the world they are emitted. Effective action thus requires strong international collaboration, as has been achieved by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol provide a valuable basis for developing an international response.

Climate Change moreover involves an externality: the emission of GHG damages others at no cost to the agent responsible for the emissions. While the standard theory of externalities points to taxation of the emitter equivalent to marginal social cost (Pigou), allocation of property rights with trading (Coase), and direct regulation; climate change is a more complex economic policy problem. There are many jurisdictions, weak representation of those most affected (future generations), long-term horizons, a global scale, major uncertainties and important interactions with other market failures.

This requires the policy framework to cover a very broad range of issues which include growth and development, industry, innovation and technological change, institutions, the international economy, demography and migration, public finance, information and uncertainty and environmental and public economics.

Policy response in addition to mitigation must also ensure adaptation. Adaptation has the potential to reduce the impact of climate change and minimize the associated risks and losses. Adaptation and mitigation are not alternatives, and must be pursued simultaneously; the cost of each will influence the choice of policies for both.

The individual countries thus need to assess their own policy positions together with an analysis of how to generate strong international action. With much of the future emissions growth likely to be in developing countries, equity demands a way of tackling climate change that does not undermine growth and poverty reduction in these countries.

The magnitude of action and investment required on part of the countries towards their contribution to mitigation would require developing countries to seek external finance, whose availability will be limited. Scaling up market mechanisms for promoting such investments is crucial (Stern, 2006).

India's Climate Change Policy: An Overview

India's commitment towards a sustainable environment and an effective policy framework are grounded in Article 48-A of the Constitution. It states that the country will strive to protect, preserve and enrich the environment while also sustaining its forests and wildlife (Govt. of India 2015). India was one of the first countries to formulate a renewable energy program in the 1970s (Dadwal, 2010).

India took its first steps towards renewable energy technologies with the creation of the Commission for Additional Sources of Energy in 1981, which was transformed into the Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources in 1992, and finally into the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) in 2006, as the only one of its kind in the world (Bhattacharya and Jana, 2009).

The ministry's primary objective is development and deployment of new and renewable energy and it is responsible for research and development, protection of intellectual property, international cooperation, promotion and coordination in the country's renewable energy sources. Today the country's renewable grid capacity comes from solar PV, wind, hydropower and biomass (Adhia, 2015). It is the result of the country's sustained efforts that its installed renewable energy capacity is 58.30 GW (as per the recent government data). According to International Energy Agency (IEA) this capacity will more than double by 2022 (PTI, 2017). Further, the government aims to increase this capacity to 175 GW by 2022 inclusive of 100 GW of solar and 60 GW of wind energy.

The Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change is the nodal agency for planning, promotion, coordination and implementation supervision of India's environmental and forestry policies and programs. Sustainable development and enhancement of human wellbeing are the primary guiding principles of the ministry. The broad objectives of the Ministry are: conservation and survey of flora, fauna, forests and wildlife; prevention and control of pollution; afforestation and regeneration of degraded areas; protection of the environment and ensuring the welfare of animals. The ministry has in place a set of legislative and regulatory measures aimed at preservation, conservation and protection of the environment.

The Energy Conservation Act (2001) was enacted to provide for efficient use of energy and its conservation. Under the provisions of the act, a statutory body – Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) was established by the Government of India in 2002 under the Ministry of Power. BEE has the reduction of the energy intensity of the country as its primary objective and assists in developing policies and strategies with an emphasis on self-regulation and market principles.

The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) was launched by India in June 2008, laying the foundation for its climate change directed policies and programs. NAPCC outlines a comprehensive policy framework and incorporates 8 national missions: National Solar Mission, National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency (NMEEE), National Mission on Sustainable Habitat, National Water Mission, National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem, National Mission for a Green India, National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture, National Mission for Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change. These 8 missions are aimed at targeting – renewable energy, energy efficiency, clean technologies, public transport, resource efficiency, afforestation, tax incentives and research and generation of strategic knowledge. Under the NAPCC, State Action Plan on Climate Change (SAPCC) has been developed by 29 of the Indian states.

As India's mitigation of its emissions are mainly sought to be achieved by effecting improvements in the energy efficiency of the country, in particular of its buildings, cities, industry and transport, NMEEE, one of the eight national missions under NAPCC, has as its primary objective the improvement in nation's energy efficiency. It aims to strengthen the market for energy efficiency through implementation of innovative business models in the energy efficiency sector. It has undertaken 4 initiatives in this regard:

- *Perform Achieve and Trade (PAT)* – an initiative to improve the energy efficiency of energy intensive sectors;
- *Energy Efficiency Financing Platform (EEFP)* – an initiative to enhance the capacity of stakeholder related to energy efficiency financing;
- *Market Transformation for Energy Efficiency (MTEE)* – an initiative to accelerate adoption of energy efficient appliances;
- *Framework for Energy Efficient Economic Development (FEEED)* – an initiative for development of fiscal instruments to promote energy efficiency.

Carbon tax, “coal cess,” of Rs. 50 was introduced by India in 2010 offering a cost-effective means of reducing fossil fuel emissions and promoting clean energy. Currently a carbon tax of Rs. 400 is imposed which is almost one-fifth (20 percent) of the cost of mining coal. A form of carbon pricing that puts a price on each ton of GHG emitted, the tax is levied on the emissions caused by combustion of fossil fuels at any point in the production cycle of the fuel. Carbon pricing discourages investments in carbon-intensive fossil fuels by making their production unprofitable. The proceeds of the tax are used to support research and development in areas of renewable energy

sources, energy efficiency and emission mitigation. The country also has in place a policy of higher taxation of petroleum products.

Internationally, India is committed to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Kyoto Protocol since 2002. India being a developing country, and thus having lower GHG emissions as well as financial and technical resources, was set no binding limits under the protocol. Still, it has always been an active participant in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) established by the Protocol. CDM projects enable developing countries like India to participate in joint GHG mitigation projects with the developed countries. For their investments in GHG mitigating projects in developing countries, the developed countries are able to earn credits or certified emission reductions (CERs), which in turn can be used by them towards the meeting of their mitigation targets under the Kyoto Protocol. To date, India has 2141 CDM projects registered to its credit, accounting for 29.4 percent of the total CDMs registered. This is second only to China, which has 56 percent of registered CDM projects.

The Paris Climate Change Agreement 2015 was ratified by India on 2nd October 2016. With 196 signatories, comprising both developing and developed countries, the Agreement is aimed at limiting the participants' emissions to relatively safe levels of 2°C with an aspiration of 1.5°C. India's own climate plan or Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to the Agreement, include targets to lower its emission intensity of GDP by 33-35 percent by 2030 below 2005 levels; to increase the share of non-fossil based power generation capacity to 40 percent of installed electric power capacity by 2030 (equivalent to 26-30 percent of generation in 2030) and to create an additional (cumulative) carbon sink 2.5-3 GtCO₂e through additional forest and tree cover by 2030. Besides these mitigating measures, India's climate plan also equally emphasizes combating measures aimed at building up its capacities to adapt to the impacts of the climate change. To achieve all this, the country's estimated financial requirements during 2015-2030 stands at US \$206 billion, with additional investments needed for disaster management (Mitra *et al.*, 2015).

India's Market-Based Mechanisms: PAT and RECs

Given the central role that is expected to be played by the industrial sector in achievement of mitigation targets of the country, apart from the regulatory measures, it is imperative to put in place market structures and incentives that are clear, long term and financially viable (Stern, 2006). A Market based cap and trade system offers something for everyone: environmentalists are assured a declining cap on CO₂ emissions; industrialists get a new market for carbon allowances and potential income

source; economists get a price for carbon determined by a market that takes into account externalities and finally the government is offered an opportunity to combat global warming without the implementation of a complex regulatory permitting scheme or imposition of a tax on fossil fuels. Harnessing of market forces is critical to the developing of the operational changes and the technological alternatives that are needed to reduce emissions, for the market forces possess the potential to encourage the development of most innovative and cost effective forms of emissions mitigation (Avi-Yonah and Uhlmann, 2009).

A major hurdle to the implementation of mitigation and adaptation measures and strategies by businesses and consumers is the lack of availability of finances and doubts about these measures' viability and profitability. To ensure active participation of the industrial sector in combating climate change and associated risks, it is essential to address these concerns. A market mechanism that reduces the costs and improves the economic viability of undertaking such mitigating and combating measures, goes a long way in attracting and encouraging industrial participants. India has pioneered two market based mechanisms – *Perform Achieve and Trade (PAT)* and *Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs)*, designed to achieve the twin objectives of improving the country's energy efficiency and of increasing the share of renewable energy in its energy mix.

Perform Achieve and Trade (PAT)

PAT, a cap-and-trade scheme, defines and assigns energy efficiency targets for energy-intensive large enterprises and facilities (called as Designated Consumers (DCs)), rewarding the achievers through issue of Energy Saving Certificates (ESCerts) and penalizing the non-achievers. Launched by NMEEE, the scheme is aimed at cost effective achievement of energy efficiency targets of the DCs, through the certification of energy savings that can be traded bilaterally or through the power exchanges. Energy Conservation Rules, 2012 (PAT Rules 2012) were framed under the Energy Conservation Act 2001 defining the procedure for establishment of energy conservation norms and standards for DCs, for assessment of their performance, compliance and issue of ESCerts, establishment of new baseline for the next cycle, reporting and verification format and timeline for various activities under PAT. The Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), a statutory body is the overall regulator and the dispute resolution agency. The process manager Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a public sector undertaking – JV of four PSUs: NTPC, PFC, REC and Power grid – facilitates implementation of energy efficiency projects.

PAT Cycle – I (2012-13 to 2014-2015)

8 industries (named Designated Consumers) were covered under the cycle-1 of PAT scheme. These DCs accounted for 25 percent of national GDP and about 45 percent of commercial energy use in India (165 metric ton of oil equivalent (mtoe) of energy). DCs included 478 plants across the industries of Aluminium, Cement, Chlor-Alkali, Pulp and Paper, fertilizers, Power Generation Plants, Steel and Railways. They were assigned a Specific Energy Consumption (SEC) target to be met over a target period of 3 years, 2012-15. Less efficient DCs were assigned a larger SEC target and more efficient units a lower target, with the targets ranging between 3.04 percent to 8.51 percent. At the end of each target period, DC's performance on SEC reduction is monitored and verified by Designated Energy Auditors (DENA) who submit their verification reports to Energy Efficiency Service Limited (EESL). While additional savings qualify for the issue of Energy Saving Certificates (ESCerts), shortfalls attract mandatory purchase of ESCerts.

The scheme's size is estimated to be about Rs. 700 billion and it is projected to avoid 19,000 MW of additional generation capacity, save 6.6 mtoe, and reduce GHG emissions by 26.21 MtCO₂e by the end of the first compliance period (March 31, 2015). Penalty for non-compliance was fixed at Rs. 10 lakhs, with the value of non-compliance being measured in terms of market value of tons of oil equivalent.

The first cycle of the scheme resulted in savings of Rs. 37,685 crores from energy consumption being saved and from avoided generation. Energy equivalent to 8.67 million tonnes of oil could be saved, exceeding the target of 6.6 mtoe by 30%. Energy consumption of 5635 MW could be avoided and the 31 million tonnes of carbon emissions were mitigated. Rs 24517 crores were invested in energy efficiency measures and technologies.

38 lakh ESCerts were issued to the 306 DCs by BEE after verification of their energy consumption. 110 DCs who failed to meet their SEC targets are required to purchase ESCerts for their compliance.

PAT Cycle – II (2016-17 to 2018-2019)

Notified on 31st March, 2016 the second phase of the scheme added 3 new sectors namely Railways, Refineries and Electricity Distribution Companies (DISCOMs). New DCs under the existing sectors have also been incorporated. 621 DCs in total have been assigned SEC targets to be achieved by 2019. 8.869 mtoe of energy savings have been targeted, translating to 5764 MW of demand being avoided.

PAT Cycle – III (2017-18 to 2019-20)

PAT scheme is currently proposed to be implemented on rolling basis, with inclusion of new DCs every year. PAT cycle – III was notified on 30th March 2017 to be effective from 1st April 2017 and has further included 116 new DCs taking the total number of DCs to 737. These 116 DCs consume about 35 mtoe and have been assigned energy saving target of 1.06 mtoe by the end of the cycle

ESCCerts Trading

To meet the requirements of Energy Conservation Rules, 2012 (PAT Rules 2012) according which ESCerts can be issued and purchased in electronic form only and only on power exchanges regulated by CERC, PATNet portal has been developed by BEE. Through this portal the DCs can upload their forms and can get ESCerts issued or can purchase them to meet their compliance requirements. Value of one ESCert is equal to one mtoe of energy consumed and is prescribed by the Central Government in consultation with BEE. For 2014-15 value per mtoe is 10968. No floor or forbearance price is defined for ESCerts, their market price to be determined in power exchanges through bidding. A DC to whom ESCerts have been issued can either sell them at power exchanges, or use them for their compliance of the next PAT cycle, however they cannot buy ESCerts. Buyer DCs can buy ESCerts up to or more than their compliance. Validity of ESCerts issued in a PAT cycle period expires after the completion of the compliance period of the immediately next PAT cycle. ESCerts purchased for compliance by DCs have to be submitted to BEE, after which they stand expired.

Trading of ESCerts issued under PAT cycle – I commenced at India Energy Exchange on 26th September 2017. Over the three trading sessions held till 10th October 2017, the trade volume increased from 10,904 to 43,078, while the number of participants increased from 39 to 52. The price decreased from Rs. 1200 to Rs. 1000 per ESCert (India Energy Exchange).

Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs)

RECs reward the producers of renewable energy. One REC certifies that 1 megawatt hour (MWh) of electricity is generated and injected into the grid from renewable energy sources. RECs are issued to the generators of renewable energy (RE), in cases where they opt to sell the electricity generated and the environment attributes related to RE generation separately, rather than selling the RE at preferential tariff fixed by the concerned Electricity Regulatory Commission. Thus, RECs are generated when the environmental attributes of RE generation are sold separately.

RECs seek to increase the proportion of renewable energy consumption in the country's total consumption as well as facilitate renewable energy purchase obligations (RPOs) amongst the various stakeholders, addressing the mismatch between the availability of renewable energy sources and the RPO obligations of obligated parties. Apart from promoting investments in RE projects, they are expected to provide an alternative mode to RE generators for recovery of their costs. (Expla_Memo_of_REC_second amendment- 25.02.13.doc, 2013).

Renewable Purchase Obligations (RPO) were set for distribution companies by State Electricity Regulating Commissions (SERC), who were so mandated by the Electricity Act 2003 (EA 2003), requiring these companies to purchase certain percentage of their total power requirements from renewable energy sources so as to enable a deeper penetration of renewable energy. The Entities failing to achieve their purchase targets can instead purchase RECs from RE producers, purchase of RECs being deemed to be purchase of renewable energy itself, and surrender them so as to meet their RPO targets. By 2022 distribution companies are required to originate 3% of their electricity from solar electricity.

RECs can be purchased or sold only in designated power exchanges so approved by the CERC, within the band of a floor price and forbearance (ceiling) price determined by CERC from time to time. While the price of the certificate is to be market driven, CERC retains the right to prescribe, from time to time, the floor price (minimum price) and forbearance price (ceiling price) separately for solar and non-solar certificates. (CERC Regulation on Renewable Energy Certificates REC, 2010; Expla_Memo_of_REC_second amendment- 25.02.13.doc, 2013). The floor and ceiling prices so fixed are intended to provide market participants with long term visibility and a competitive alternative to the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) given weak prices. (Alexandre, 2012).

RECs are tradable only at India Energy Exchange and at Power Exchange India Limited (PXIL). At the India Energy Exchange Solar RECs recorded a total cleared volume of 6,62,257 over the period Jan 2016 to September 2017, trading at Rs. 3500. The Non-solar RECs recorded a cleared volume of 63,29,196, trading at Rs. 1500 over the same period. At PXIL 33,49,446 non-solar certificates were traded at a price of Rs. 1500 per certificate, and 3,80,881 solar certificates were traded at Rs. 3500.

With the purchase price of Renewable Energy witnessing a continuous decline, and by making ESCerts and RECs tradable at the designated power exchanges, the efforts of DCs have been made more cost-effective. Early 2017, the solar and wind power tariffs

dropped to an all-time low of Rs 2.44 per unit and Rs 3.46 per unit in a tariff based competitive bidding conducted by Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) (IEA).

Summary and Conclusion

This paper examines the evolution of India's climate change policies and programs, especially the market based measures to combat climate change. India has adopted a proactive approach in addressing climate change issues, which is imperative to pursue a path of sustainable and equitable growth and development. India's growing population and rapid economic development translates into a significant increase in its energy demand, which must come from renewable energy sources. It is therefore crucial that government initiative should be supplemented by the effort of the Industrial sector.

The production of renewable energy by the country has shown substantial increase over the years – almost tripling since 1990; however, in absolute terms five times more coal was used in the country's electricity generation in 2014 than in 1990, thereby increasing the country's carbon intensity of electricity generation by 10 percent over this period (International Energy Agency, 2016). However, this was unavoidable with India committed to expanding its population's access to electricity to cover its entire population. Further India's heavy dependence on coal and fossil fuels necessitate imports of coal, crude oil and natural gas, the country's domestic resources and production being far from sufficient. Erratic international prices and availability scenario add to the country's vulnerability and cost of power generation.

The challenge clearly lies in India implementing and affecting a proper balance between its obligations to its society, to the environment and to the global world. India's climate policy has evolved in response to all these requirements. It is a right mix of quantitative and pricing approaches to the problem of global warming and climate change. The country's climate policy framework is constantly evolving and strengthening. The framework, covering both national and state levels, is both broad based and comprehensive comprising legislative and regulatory measures; taxation measures; definition and allocation of energy saving targets; trading of energy efficiency certifications, ESCerts and RECs; and real estate, transport system, and smart cities related policies.

India's market mechanism to aid its climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, PAT and REC, provides the obligated parties a cost effective mechanism of achieving their allocated targets. Perform Achieve and Trade (PAT) aims to improve energy efficiency by 1-2 percent per year for large energy intensive industries through energy trading mechanisms that run from 2012 to 2015 (Kumar and Agarwala, 2013). To date,

478 plants in eight energy demanding sectors that make up one third of the total energy consumption in India have participated and have resulted in a 4 percent to 5 percent decline in energy consumption at the end of 2015 compared to 2012 (Government of India, 2015). So far it has been widely stated that participation in REC markets is short and unsuccessful in enticing large investments because less than 2.5 percent of certificates out of the anticipated REC demand were issued. The main elements that hinder the programs ability to reach its full potential results from demand uncertainty due to the absence of long term targets, lack of compliance and the absence of future price signals to investors (Shrimali and Tirumalachetty, 2013).

The effectiveness of India's climate policy is largely a function of its successful implementation, particularly at the state level. Other causes of concern include insufficient availability of financial aid for financing and undertaking of technological improvements and other low-carbon strategies and increased uncertainties related to the implementation and availability of policy incentives.

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Hanging by the Thread: Questioning Articulation of Religious Identity in a Caste Society

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Identities have always been constructed on the shoulders of political authority, or what Gramsci simply calls *hegemony*. While the society battles with the evil of religious communalism, this paper aims at questioning the bases on which religious identity is constructed by the Hindu right in India. Stuart Hall says that construction of identity is an ongoing process. With the representation of Muslims, the Hindu right-wing attempts to perpetuate the process of construction of identity. The dichotomy of identity is a complex phenomenon that needs to be dissected in order to understand its nuances. The paper asks a pertinent question about religious identity: Is it really about religion? The answer to the question lies in the politics behind it. The politics behind *janeyu*, or that behind cow for instance, hints at complexities that go beyond religion. Through a study of fictional-historical texts like M. J. Akbar's *Blood Brothers* and Kamleshwar's *Partitions*, the paper argues that the marks of identification of a Hindu are, rather, marks of his caste identity, and not religious identity. Behind the assertion of *Vedas* and *Upanishads* in a Hindu's religious identity lies the Foucauldian power-knowledge relation that “promises” superior cultural position to the Hindu right. The religion only supplies a means to perpetuate the caste distinction for the Hindu Brahmin *self*. For the “upper” caste Brahmin, the *other* is not Muslim alone; it is also the “lower” caste Hindu. Communalism could, therefore, be as much about caste as it is about religion.

Keywords: religious-identity, communalism, caste, collective identity

Communalism is informed by identity. The collective identity of a community, whether religious or another, makes the political imagining of a people possible. The act of imagining a community goes through a process that, through representation, tries to form identities. It is, however, important to note that representation is never an inert action. It is constantly indicative of its inherent politics. But in order to understand the politics of representation and its implications in the context of communalism, it is imperative that the question be investigated in greater detail.

To start with, identity needs to be addressed as a process which is constantly in the process of being constructed as a means to represent one's self within a secure social/cultural space. The use of the term "identification" becomes more appropriate then, as it is indicative of a process and not a definite end. This process is in a

continuum that operates within the cultural space allowing constant realigning of power relations within it:

[I]dentification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation.... [T]he discursive approach sees identification as a construction, a process never completed – always 'in process.' It is not determined in the sense that it can always be...sustained or abandoned. Identification is, then, a process of articulation, a suturing, an over-determination not a subsumption. There is always 'too much' or 'too little' – an over-determination or a lack, but never a proper fit, a totality. Like all signifying practices, it is subject to the 'play', of *différance*. (Hall, 1996: 2-3)

Hall observes that identity is constructed by forging an allegiance with a community or group so as to affiliate oneself with it. It is significant to note that this identity is not that of an individual. It is, in fact, that of a group or community striving to represent certain ideals. Hall further states that such a construction is a process of articulation and is never complete. Since identification is a process located in culture and culture in itself is always in a state of flux, the process of identification, therefore, also remains under construction.

In the interrogation of identity and its communal representation, the aforesaid *construction* of identity becomes ever more problematic when the cultural variables that are used to construct identity are themselves interwoven so intricately that it becomes a complex procedure to determine *who* is being identified. It is precisely, as Hall says, because of its state of *under-construction*, that identity not only becomes a manipulation, but also seems to lose the plot.

The argument that this paper aims to put forth is that caste-based categorization prevalent in the Indian social space can hardly be ignored in the politics of religious communalism. It may not be altogether wrong to say that "religious" communalism in India is less about religion, and more about caste. Attempts at representation that imagine religion as their basis, seem to disregard the internal subdivisions that operate within a religious community. Caste, along with other cultural variables, is one of the biggest factors that internally split a religious community. Ever since the beginning of the spreading of religious communalism in India, caste and religion have worked in tandem. The monolithic precedence that is attached to religion in constructing communal identity systems is subverted when issues of caste are brought into the debate. The communal conflict in India in the pre-independence era was foundationally based on caste differences that got extended to religion (Chandra, 1984: 222). Attributing communalism to religious differences alone would then be a simplistic argument. Caste has been one of the foremost factors that govern an

individual's social status and behaviour in the Indian context. It would not be altogether wrong to say that no one is just either a Hindu or a Muslim. Along with a particular religion, an individual also belongs to a specific caste that defines his social behaviour. In light of this, it would be an anomaly to imagine a community as a homogenous entity based on their religion.

M. J. Akbar's *Blood Brothers* brings out such differences between people belonging to the same religion, but different castes. Girija Maharaj on spotting Govardhan Ahir, a *gawala*, wearing *janeyu*, the sacred thread presumably worn only by the Hindus belonging to the Brahmin caste, gets restless.

Govardhan Ahir was wearing a *janeyu*, the sacred cord, across his body, from his left shoulder to his right hip. The sacred cord was a mark of a Brahmin. It was inconceivable and unforgivable that a mere Vaishya, a lower caste *gawala*, should wear it. The three strands of a Brahmin's cord were woven from cotton gathered by Brahmins, and therefore unpolluted by the touch of a lower caste.

Long ago, the aristocratic Kshatriyas, backed by the sharp edge of swords, had extracted the right to wear a sacred thread. But compromise could not be permitted to degenerate into decay. If a mere cowherd could flaunt a sacred thread, the caste system might as well be abandoned. Without caste, there could be no social order. Without social order there could be no peace. (2006: 111-12)

Girija Maharaj, a Hindu Brahmin, is agitated by Govardhan Ahir, a lower caste, wearing a *janeyu*, while he has no problem drinking *sherbets*, a water based beverage, off the hands of Rahmatullah, a Muslim. He even scolds Govardhan Ahir when the latter refuses to consume the drink offered to him by Rahmatullah (123).

Caste is a social concept that is associated, more often, with the Hindu community. It may be surprising to note that many Muslims are also divided on the basis of caste in India. Islam, a religion that does not endorse caste-based social division, could not remain unaffected by the concept since most Indian Muslims are converts from Hinduism. Even after religious conversion, they could not shed off their caste identity. Bipin Chandra quotes Dezil Ibbetson's study of "Panjab castes:"

As a fact in the east of the Panjab conversion has absolutely *no* effect upon the caste of the convert. The Musalman, Rajput, Gujar or Jat is for all social, tribal, political, and for administrative purposes exactly as much a Rajput, Gujar or Jat as his Hindu brother. His social customs are unaltered, his tribal restrictions are unrelaxed, his rules of marriage and inheritance unchanged; and almost the only difference is that he shaves his scalplock and upper edge of his moustache, repeats the Mahomedan creed in the mosque and adds the Musalman to the Hindu wedding ceremony...he even worships the same idols as before, or has only lately ceased to do so. [Emphasis in original] (202)

He also asserts that internal division and plurality amongst the Hindus on various grounds further dilutes the possibility of homogenising them and acknowledge them as a monolithic community (198-99).

In Hindus, caste is an essential ingredient in the Vedic religion which is considered to be the basis of Hindu nationality as far as the Hindutva forces are concerned. Since the “lower” castes did not have an access to the Vedic scriptures or the Brahminical religious dogmas, their insecurity cannot be dismissed. The “upper” castes always had an unchallenged claim to the religious texts and their interpretations. Girija Maharaj testifies such a claim when he, as a Brahmin, accepts the Kshatriya claim to the *janeyu* but denies any such “privileges” to a “low” caste Ahir (Akbar 123). *Janeyu* clearly represents the hegemonic power of the upper caste Hindus in the society. Gyanendra Panday also reports a similar caste bias where *janeyu* becomes a bone of contention between different castes within the Hindu religion and lays bare the internal heterogeneity of the Hindu community:

In Muzaffarpur in 1923, 'the annoyance caused to the higher castes by the determination of Goalas, Koeris, Kurmis, etc., to wear the sacred thread and to attach “Singh”, “Rai” to their names' culminated in two riots.... In Darbhanga the move by local Gwalas to wear the sacred thread, following the example of their fraternity in Muzaffarpur and Patna districts, brought them into collision with the Brahmans and Babhans, resulting in a riot in Chak Salem village in 1922. (156)

What is interesting here is that Girija Maharaj is extremely rigid when it comes to the question of caste and is not ready to compromise, but at the same time he is not rigid in the matter of religion and is a close friend of Rahmatullah, a Muslim. In social transactions then, the caste identity appears to be playing a stronger role than the religious identity, hinting at the divide within the Hindu community. Therefore, caste, along with other divisive factors, makes homogenization and unification within a religious community a far-fetched dream, almost impossible to realize. This is, perhaps, the biggest reason that it seems unlikely for all the Hindus to unite just in the name of religion. Kancha Ilaiah also illustrates how caste is, perhaps, the most important part of a Hindu's identity. He attempts to deconstruct the psychological makeup of the Hindus who assert their caste identity vociferously:

The way [Brahmans] dress, the way they do their make-up clearly indicate to the observer that they are Brahmans. They believe philosophically and culturally that they should look different. Though that trend is changing to some extent, the notion that a Brahman should appear 'different' is an in-built cultural characteristic of a Brahman. That mental make-up of consciously being different is the first step towards establishing a caste culture. This caste culture emerged with the Brahmans and became a part of every caste. Many castes constructed their physical beings as different from one another. (180)

In such a strong hegemonic setup, the lower castes feel extremely insecure and begin to lose faith in their own religion. Religious conversion is seen by such people as a welcome respite from the hegemony of the 'upper' castes. Many Hindus belonging to lower castes converted to Islam, Christianity, Jainism, Sikhism, Buddhism etcetera, to make up for their powerlessness in caste-driven Hinduism. In these newly adopted

religions, technically, one did not belong to a particular caste and there was no religion-sanctioned caste divide. But in spite of conversion, there was no getting away from the caste tag in a social setup.

Kamleshwar in his novel, *Partitions*, attempts to highlight this “dual identity” concept when he quotes the love story of Zainab and Buta Singh where Zainab, upon an inquiry by Buta Singh about her caste and religion replies, “Hindu Rajput” and “Mussalman,” respectively (2006: 31). Kamleshwar illustrates at another instance how caste identity surpassed religious identity in certain cases. Referring to “Dehra village” he elucidates:

The village is inhabited by Sisodia Rajputs, descendants of Maharana Pratap's family, who converted to Islam during Aurangzeb's reign. These Muslim Rajputs are installing a statue of their ancestor Maharana Pratap in their village. They firmly believe that religious conversion does not negate blood ties. They have forged a dual identity for themselves. They are not merely Muslims, but Muslim Rajputs. (175)

Bipin Chandra also talks about how social groupings were based on caste, rather than on religion.

[I]n the villages of northern India, the grouping seldom took...the form of Hindu and Muslim, but that of Jat, Ahir, Rajput, Brahmin, Chamar, Bania, Muslim, etc.; in Malabar, Muslim, Nair, Ezhava, etc.; in Maharashtra, Muslim, Maratha, Mahar, Brahmin, etc. In other words, *Muslims were treated just as another social group of the caste-type and not seen in contrast to 'Hindus' but to other village castes.* [Emphasis added] (191-92)

Caste identity is seen to be perpetuated in the Indian society because of the Hindu Vedic religion that sanctifies it. Kamleshwar attacks the caste system that is an essential part of a Hindu's spiritual make-up. Salma presents her argument in front of the Adeeb highlighting the Hindus' caste-based social classification:

Every child is born from a mother's womb. Yet...Brahmins and their scriptures insult all wombs. By asserting that individuals are born from different parts of Brahma's body, they have established a faith built on the difference one human being and another.

...The Upanishads, however, were nothing but writings that on the ploy of re-establishing faith in divinity condoned misconduct within the parameters of the caste system and encouraged the kind of tyranny that was practised on society by the Brahmins. Though they were read as scriptures advocating penitence, the Upanishads merely ended up protecting Aryans of noble descent. (93)

Such a method of social grouping further problematizes the binary formula of religious communalists that imagines the communities on the basis of religious distinctions alone. It is important to understand that the communities upon which the quest for identity are based, are imagined and socially constructed making all claims of homogeneity within a community a false consciousness.

Politics over cow as “mother” and its alleged slaughter by Muslims has been taken up by the Hindu communalists to assert their identity within the *Brahminical* caste hierarchy. While the attempt is clearly aimed at cornering Muslims on the front as being the enemies of Hindus and “Indian culture,” it also, by default, alienates the “lower” caste Hindu communities like the *chamar* caste who are involved in the leather and tanning business. By calling Muslims [and Christians] “beef-eaters,” the Hindu communalists seem to alienate them and term them as enemies of the so-called “Indian-ness.” The cow, thus, becomes the means of articulation of identity by the Hindu communalists. The political use of the issue of cow slaughter was used as a means to spread communalism by Hindu communalists. Hindu nationalists constituted “Gaurakshini Sabhas” or cow-protection programmes in U.P. in the late nineteenth century. These programmes were aimed especially at Muslims who were slaughtering cows for their religious rituals (Panday, 1999: 164-65).

Govardhan Ahir, a religious zealot, comes as a saviour of cow when he attempts to awaken Hindu "pride" by asking the Hindus of Telinipara to raise their voice against the alleged cow slaughter at the hands of Muslims. There is an attempt on his part to elevate himself in the *varna* system of Hinduism as the saviour of "mother" cow, and as a descendent of Lord Krishna, instead of just a "lowly" Ahir (Akbar : 114-15).

There are clear political underpinnings to this programme of cow-protection and “brandishing” of *janeyu* undertaken by the *Ahirs* like Govardhan Ahir. Cow and the politics around it tend to become a means of articulation of identity by the community of *Gwalas* and *Ahirs*. Panday observes this assertion of identity by the community:

The recrudescence of cow-protection activities after 1910 coincided with the rise of the Ahirs' Gwala movement.... The prevention of cow-slaughter appears to have become a point of some special importance with the Gwalas (or Ahirs) in the context of their struggle to upgrade their social status. (166)

The *Gwalas'* movement of cow-protection was aimed at a revolution against the caste system at a latent level, but it contributed in a big way towards the spread of religious communalism as the direct conflict came to be seen between Hindus- the protectors of cow, and Muslims- the killers of cow. The argument between Govardhan Ahir and Girija Maharaj can be seen as the testimony to the argument of caste conflict taking the form of religious conflict. The riots that erupted between Hindus and Muslims on the issue of cow slaughter cannot, therefore, be ascribed entirely to the religious reasons – there were strong caste related reasons too, which contributed to the conflict.

As a way of settling the dispute between Hindus and Muslims on the matter of cow slaughter and sacrifice of cow during Bakr' Id, Talat Mian, a character in *Blood*

Brothers narrates the story of how Allah asked Abraham to sacrifice an animal for him after He was happy with Abraham's love and devotion for him. The animal that Abraham then sacrificed was a ram. Cows did not even exist in the Arabian Sahara, so there is no religious binding for Muslims to kill a cow. Talat Mian further adds that "Muslim began to kill cows only when beef-eaters converted [to Islam]..." (Akbar 56).

Hindu and Muslim communalists made cow slaughter an important agenda to spread religious communalism and widen the rift between the two communities. The cow-protection agenda seems to have dubious political motives since these programmes were targeting only the Muslims who were killing cows while the British carried on cow slaughter unchecked and unchallenged (Chandra 133). While Hindus contributed to the problem of communalism by targeting Muslims alone for the cow-slaughter, Muslims contributed to it by insisting on killing cows on Bakr' Id even when their religion did not necessarily demand the animal to be sacrificed.

Govardhan Ahir's character becomes a classic example of an individual invoking a specific identity according to context. His identity remains fluid throughout and asserts both caste and religious identities on different occasions. Stuart Hall calls this phenomenon of identity formation as "a strategic and positional one." Identity is not stable and is always in a state of constant flux:

[I]dentities are never unified and, in late modern times, [are] increasingly fragmented and fractured; [are] *never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions*. We need to situate the debates about identity within all those historically specific developments and practices which have disturbed the relatively 'settled' character of many populations and cultures, above all in relation to the processes of globalization, which I would argue are coterminous with modernity and the processes of forced and 'free' migration which have become a global phenomenon of the so-called 'post-colonial' world. [Emphasis added] (3-4)

Multiple cultural aspects make communalism extremely problematic since it is difficult to pinpoint the problem to a specific aspect of cultural life. Hindu and Muslim communal forces imagine a religious homogeneity. It is important to question such identity formation that is taking only one variable — religion, while ignoring all others that form an individual's cultural identity. The solution to the problem of religious communalism may be elusive, but understanding the politics behind it may curb it at social level.

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***Qissa Sassi-Punnu: A Comparative Reading
of Punjabi and Urdu Sources***

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Qissa has been a tradition of oral story-telling with its origins in Arabia and Iran before evolving into a genre of written literature. On both sides of the Indo-Pak border, a number of *qissas* are celebrated and have been part of the oral, literary and musical tradition enriching the collective culture of both countries. The significance of the tradition of *qissa* can be gauged from its enormous use as allusion or otherwise in the *Gurbani* and its explanatory literature, Sufi writings and Punjabi heritage in general. *Qissa Sassi Punnu*, originally a Sindhi romance, has been one of the most notable *qissas* adapted and popularized in the literary tradition of Punjab. From time to time, the story has been told and retold, printed and reprinted, staged and filmed, composed and sung by authors and artists alike. This epic, with a tragic love story, forms a collage of the love tales of Punjab along with other similar stories popular in the region including those of Heer Ranjha, Laila Majnu, and Mirza Sahiba, et al. The current paper discusses Punjabi *qissa* as a distinct genre and throws light on *Sassi Punnu* in relation to the *qissa* tradition in Punjab. There are diverse versions of the romance written in Punjabi and Urdu, and there are translations in English as well. Various *qissas* written in Punjabi and Urdu in general, and the *qissas* written by Hasham Shah in Punjabi vis-à-vis the one written by Salig Ram in Urdu in particular, have been taken for a comparative reading of the story. Both the versions have been analyzed and discussed to identify the similarities and differences between them. The paper does not attempt to arrive at any conclusive ending of the selected versions of the story but to identify how the two authors have approached the story in their own languages.

Keywords: *qissa*, Sassi Punnu, Hasham Shah, Salig Ram, Heer Ranjha, Laila Majnu, Mirza Sahiba, *qissa* tradition

Qissa is an Arabic word meaning an “epic legend” or “folk tale.” Originally a traditional narrative genre of Arabia and Iran, it evolved to become a part of the medieval Persian folk culture in the early eleventh century. The term has been used ubiquitously in Persian, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi and many other literatures to denote the genre and has universal appeal. It evolved as a “form of orally recited prose romance” (Hanaway, 1975: 139) and was cultivated in royal courts. “[T]he formative literary legends of...particular cultures, hitherto preserved by oral tradition” were all set to reach far-off lands even though “[t]his is not to say that a definitive written version

immediately superseded the oral” (Spooner and Hanaway, 1959: 75). While there was a discernible factual base in some of the *qissas* and their central characters, there were many fictional, fantastical and romantic elements that also came to be part of the *qissa* tradition. As a genre, it grants the natives of the region a sense of affiliation with the story, its incidents and characters. *Qissas* can usually be divided into four categories: “(1) tales about magic; (2) tales about animals; (3) tales about the realities of life; and (4) tales about love” (Kreyenbroek and Marzolph, 2010: 295). Most of the time, the theme of *qissas* involves love and separation assisted by dramatic sequences, supernatural elements and divine intervention with characters riding high on emotions.

When colonialism took emperors to unseen lands, the tradition of *qissa* relocated itself to those landscapes through the means of adoption and adaption. When Persian royalty reached the Indian subcontinent, *qissa*-narrators were part of their entourage and the genre was popularized across the subcontinent through the practice of *qissa khavani* or *dastan-goi* [story-telling]. Owing to its reputation and royal treatment in Persian literature, it was not surprising that the tradition was received enthusiastically in India too due to “a renewed interest in Sufism, which resulted in a remarkable output of mystical poetry in the regional languages (Sindhi, Punjabi) and Urdu” (Schimmel, 1995: 169). It can be observed that the tradition flourished the most in Punjabi language. *Qissas* such as *Heer* (Waris Shah, 1910), *Shirin Farhad* and *Sassi Punnu* (Hasham Shah, 1864 and n.d.), *Qissa Sohni Mahiwal* (Fazal Shah Sayyad, 1945), *Mirza Sahiban* (Peelu, 1981), *Puran Bhagat* (Kadar Yaar, n.d.) and *Loona* (Shiv Kumar Batalvi, 2003) are some of the best known works in Punjabi language, Kadar Yaar being the one who is “believed to be the first Punjabi writer to have recorded the [*qissa*] in written form” (Kumar, 2003: 131). There are many other variations of these stories which have been attempted by other poets. It is far too difficult to ascertain which versions were the original sources of these *qissas* owing to the fact that there is a lot of resemblance between them and the popular narratives in respective regions.

These *qissas*, written in verse rather than prose, became part of the oral culture on both sides of the Indo-Pak border when their descriptions of characters and incidents formed the content of *qawalies*, *ghazals*, *geets* and popular music in the two countries. Excerpts from *Heer* have been sung by innumerable renowned singers including Jagjit Singh, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, Abida Parveen, Ghulam Ali and Asa Singh Mastana, among others. *Mirza* has been a sub-genre in vocal music and is sung in a unique way. The Kuldeep Manak and Dev Tharika Wala duo extravagantly alludes to these *qissas*

for composing and singing a number of songs and *kalis*, a sub-genre of Punjabi folk music.

The importance of the *qissa* tradition can be judged from the fact that both the chief spiritual traditions of Punjab – Gurbani and Sufism – refer to these narratives. Guru Gobind Singh uses a metaphorical reference from one of the *qissas* in the *Dasam Granth*:

ਯਾਰੜੇ ਦਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੱਖਰੁ ਚੰਗਾ
ਭੱਠ ਖੇੜਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਰਹਣਾ ॥1॥ (1348)

Lying on death bed in the shade of the beloved is the bliss ultimate.
The fantastic abode of the corival is a furnace, doesn't elate. (trans. mine)

Bhai Gurdas too, in his *var 27*, titled *Laila Majnu aad Premi* [*Lovers such as Laila Majnu*], touches upon a number of legendary *qissas* about love between a man and a woman in relation to the "superior" love of a disciple for the Guru. He writes:

ਲੇਲੈ ਮਜਨੂੰ ਆਸਕੀ ਚਹੁ ਚਕੀ ਜਾਤੀ।

...

ਸਸੀ ਪੁੰਨੂੰ ਦੇਸਤੀ ਹੁਇ ਜਾਤਿ ਅਜਾਤੀ।

ਮੇਹੀਵਾਲ ਨੇ ਸੋਹਣੀ ਨੈ ਤਰਦੀ ਰਾਤੀ। (295)

The love story of Laila and Majnu is known in the four directions.

...

The bond between Sassi and Punnu, of different castes, is well known too,
And so is Sohni who used to cross river to meet Mahival at night. (trans. mine)

Sufi poets such as Shah Hussain, Bulleh Shah and Ghulam Farid have metaphorically moulded these characters from *qissas* to portray the soul's quest for God, mentioning Him as "Ranjha," "Mahival" and "Punnu" and the fluttering human soul as "Heer," "Sohni" and "Sassi" respectively. Shah Hussain writes:

ਤਖਤ ਹਜ਼ਾਰਾ ਲਗਦਾ ਪਖਿਆਰਾ

ਖੇੜਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਵਸਣਾ ਮੁਹਾਲ

ਹੁਣ ਨਈ ਹਟਦਾ, ਮਾਏ ਨੀ, ਹੁਣ ਨਈ ਹਟਦਾ

ਰਾਂਝੇ ਦੇ ਤਰਫੇ ਖਿਆਲ (92)

I love Takht Hazara,
Living at the Kheras' is arduous.
I cannot take my mind off Ranjha,
O mother! I just cannot. (trans. mine)

Sassi Punnu is one of the four *qissas* written by Hasham Shah, who "wrote many other

romantic compositions but the beauty of *Qissa Sassi Punnu* shines above all” (Malhotra and Arora, 2003: 233) and the *qissa* commands an unchallengeable position in the folklore of Punjab despite being a love tale from the Sindh region. Sindh venerates the love tale of *Sassi Punnu* “just in the way Punjab, Rajasthan, East Bengal, West Bengal and Bihar celebrate the love stories of Heer Ranjha, Dhol Maru, Gonani Bibi, Vidya Sunder and Madhva Nal Kamkandala, respectively” (Shan, 1959: 11; trans. mine). There are over seventy five versions available of *qissa Sassi Punnu* written in Punjabi (in both Gurmukhi and Shahmukhi scripts), Sindhi, Pashto, Persian, Bahawalpuri, Rajasthani and Urdu. In addition to this, Richard Temple has also translated it into English (1988).

Temple notes that the title of the *qissa* “varies as Sassi and Punnun, Saswi and Punhu and as Sossi and Punnan” (290) but Shan is in favour of the popular title *Sassi Punnu* as a standard. There are diverse opinions about the source of the story too. While many Punjabi poets opine that this tale has Punjabi origin, Temple echoes the general perception that the legend is essentially Sindhi. He further says that the legend “is naturalised in the Punjab and Kachh, besides being indigenous to Sindh” (30). Mir Karamatullah postulates that the *qissa* is based on the Greek legend of Saasi and Punvan but there has been no matching evidence in the Greek mythology (Shan 63; trans. mine). Initially Mohan Singh took an opposing stance that Sassi belonged to a Hindu-Brahmin family and the story must not be attached to Greek mythology but later on he echoed Mir's idea presenting the *qissa* of Yusuf Zulaikha, the origin of which has been attributed to Greek mythology, as evidence (Shan 64; trans. mine). Shan finds many similarities between the first parts of *Sassi Punnu* and that of the Greek story of Danae and Zeus but he eventually gives evidence in support of the tale having a Hindu origin. The names of the characters Sassi and Punnu, mean “the moon” and “the full moon” respectively in Hindi. The important role of astrology in the turning of events is more of a Hindu than Islamic practice. Moreover, the period around which the tale is set is largely pre-Islamic or at best from when the propagation of Islam had just begun in the area. But due to varying perspectives of different writers and historians, it is not easy to qualify the period of the *qissa* except that the story is at least eight hundred years old.

When it comes to the historical validity and verification of this story, the tale has been used as a mythological reference by “scholars such as Mr. Loston, who believed that the tale was completely imaginary and Sayyad Mir Hussain, who assumes it to be a tale of spirituality” (Shan 28-29; trans. mine). The story has been used in *Dasam Granth* in mythological context. On the contrary, authors such as “Kalichbeg and Burton strongly affirm the *qissa* to be based on true, historical account of the events

from the eighth-century Sindh” (Shan 28-29; trans. mine). Burton comments that “the pair are now considered as saints or holy characters; and are supposed to be still in existence under ground” (1851: 57).

The *qissa* recounts the story of a girl, who is born in the family of Jam Adam in the city of Bhambor, and it is prophesied that she would fall in love with a man outside of her tribe. To save the family from the impending disgrace, Jam Adam places the girl inside a box, her mother ties a talisman around her neck and they dispose the box off in the river Indus. The child is saved and raised by a Muslim washerman, Atta, who names her Sassi, owing to her moon-like beauty. Temple gives an account of the *qissa* on basis of his translation of Hasham's version of the tale:

Many a young washerman wished to marry her, but she refused them, saying she was a king's daughter. Presently the king heard of her beauty and wished to marry her himself, but when he saw from the amulet round her neck that she was his own daughter he was very much ashamed and sent her back to the washerman. After a while Sassi happened to see a picture of Punnun, the son of the king of Kecham, and fell in love with it. Some merchants too from Balochistan told her all about him and said they were his brethren. She thereupon locked them up in the hope that Punnun would come to rescue them. Two cameleers of the party escaped and told Hot Ali, Punnun's father, what had happened. Punnun accordingly set out, met, Sassi, lived happily with her, and refused to leave her. So his father's adherents made him drunk and carried him off from Sassi. Finding this out she went off after him on foot and died in the deserts. At her death her spirit visited Punnun and called him to her grave, and he resisting all entreaties went there, when it opened and he entered it. (24)

An alternate account describes Sassi as the daughter of “a Sindhi Brahman named Naoon” (Panjwani and Mansukhani, 2002: 128), who casts his daughter off dreading the fate when an astrologer foretells that she would wed in a Muslim family. Salig Ram identifies the Chanderbansi Rajput king Sashipal as the father of Sassi. Similarly, there is difference of opinion about the time of the prophecy about Sassi. Hasham Shah and Salig Ram, in Punjabi and Urdu respectively, opine that the astrologer prophesies after the girl is born whereas other *qissa* writers in both languages like Fazal Shah, Munshi Inderjeet and Faqir Raj Mohammed share the views that the prediction was made before Sassi's birth. There is difference of opinion among authors about the meeting of Sassi with her father. Reiterating what Hasham has written, Salig Ram, Sadhu Daya Ram, Mit Singh and Gurbaksh Singh write that the king falls for the beauty of Sassi and wants to marry her but when his sight falls on the amulet he had tied around the neck of his daughter, the truth is revealed to him and he is ashamed of his thoughts. Some writers such as Mohammed Hussain, Shahbaz Khan, Hafiz Barkhurdar and Ghulam Rasool mention exchange of correspondence between the king and the daughter through her childhood.

Punnu has been referred to as the prince of Kecham, or as the king of the state. He has also been mentioned as the chief *Hot* (name of a Baloch tribe) of Makran. While most of the authors agree upon *Hot* being the name of a tribe, some of them opine that it was a title bestowed upon Punnu and his forefathers.

Many different accounts are available about the meeting between Sassi and Punnu. While majority of the accounts including those of Hasham, Mit Singh, Sada Ram, Shahbaz Khan, Mohammed Hussain and Abdul Latif convey that Sassi falls for Punnu's beauty after seeing his painting, some accounts, including those of Ayyaz and Inderjeet maintain that it is Punnu who had heard much about her beauty and comes across her. An unnamed account from Balochistan gives the credit to a middleman who “selects” Sassi for Punnu. Other sources such as *Dastoor-e-Ishq* [*Customs of Love*] and *Punjab ke Rumani Afsane* [*Romantic Stories of Punjab*] discuss Sassi's meeting with Punnu in a series of dreams before they actually meet (Shan 54; trans. mine). Punnu's visit to Bhambor also has different versions. While Shahbaz Khan and Mohammed Hussain write that Sassi sends for Punnu because he had failed to pay back a loan, Hafiz Barkhurdar writes that Sassi arrests traders from Kecham and sends for Punnu on the condition to set his companions free (Shan 55; trans. mine). But many accounts follow the version where the opening move is made by Punnu probably because of the patriarchal social construct of according the right to initiate to the man. While some writers comment about Punnu having worked as a washerman and a tailor for Atta like Ranjha and Mahival garbing themselves as milkmen to stay closer to Heer and Sohni respectively, Hasham does not mention this anywhere. Almost all the accounts talk about a customary marriage between Sassi and Punnu while some versions suggest that Punnu was already married and had one or multiple queens. Burton and Lakh Shah go as far as to name his wife as Ayisa and Gundai respectively.

All the versions are in consensus about the tragic ending of the *qissa*, though they differ in execution. Most of the accounts cite that Punnu was captured by his brethren and tribesmen, who get him drunk during his wedding to Sassi. They continue that Sassi finds about it and runs out of her house. Both Salig Ram and Hasham reveal the tragic end of Sassi, as she rushes bare-foot “following the tracks of [Punnu's] camels, she runs in despair through desert and forests” (Schimmel, 1976: 156), repeatedly crying the name “Punnu,” without having a drop of water to drink. Amidst Sassi's pleas to the skies, the ground and the scarce vegetation, the only human presence is that of a herdsman who has been presented as a sympathetic fellow human in most of the versions. In these accounts, a supernatural element has been avoided in the depiction of Sassi's death in agony after which the compassionate shepherd digs a grave for her. Some other accounts however portray the shepherd as an opportunist

smitten by Sassi's beauty who attempts to overpower and molest her. This is followed by Sassi's screams raising a furore under the ground leading the earth to split into two and taking Sassi under Her¹ refuge. All versions give a similar account of Punnu's visit after Sassi's death. As sense returns to him, he runs in the direction where Sassi is incessantly calling from. Upon reaching the spot perplexed, when he hears about Sassi's death from the herdsman, he loses his consciousness, falls at the grave of his beloved and dies instantaneously.

Despite the similarities and differences among the variants of the *qissa*, the story essentially has a plot with a verisimilitude across the discussed versions. The differences, however significant or minuscule, owe to the story's expanse in terms of time and space and to the fact that the authors belonging to their respective spatial coordinates and temporal eras may have added the geographical, cultural and political elements as per their individual leanings towards the story. These variations however enrich the *qissa* and make the discussion about it more comprehensive and substantial.

Notes

¹In this part of the world, the earth is deified.

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A Study of the Posthuman in the Anime *Ghost in the Shell*

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This paper examines the depiction and popularization of the concept of post humanism through the playful medium Japanese animation, popularly known as “anime” with specific reference to the movie *Ghost in the Shell* (1995). This is the very first cyberpunk or cyborg-centric Japanese animation movie which invites us to entertain ideas of what it would be like to live in a world where the technology and media, today peripheral to the human body and mind, have become fused with individuals to create creatures who are no longer “human” in the currently understood sense. This paper traces the significance of the ideas expressed in this text with special focus on two characters – the Puppet Master who serves as a mouthpiece for expounding the philosophy of post humanism; and Kusanagi who struggles with the acceptance of these ideas, although she herself is a hybrid human. It focuses on the debate between humanist and post-humanist values, and the necessity of finding new paradigms of identity in a rapidly-changing world.

Keywords: anime, post humanism, cyborg, Japanese animation movies

Post humanism, the idea that human beings will in the future acquire such command over nature as to be able to alter the fundamental conditions of existence (birth, death, the limits of space, time and economics as we know them, etc.), is regarded as a twentieth-century phenomenon. However, this idea is as old as civilization. The *Epic of Gilgamesh*, the first great work of literature in history, centers on its hero's pursuit of immortality. Alchemy, with its homunculi and transmutation of elements, toys with the line between life and death, and becomes a forerunner as well, and one not unconnected to modern science — Isaac Newton having himself been an alchemist. Antecedents are also evident in the Scientific Revolution of the early seventeenth century, in the calls of Francis Bacon and René Descartes for human beings to master the forces of nature and affect all things possible, with a glimpse of the results in Bacon's *New Atlantis*.

In contemporary space and time, cyberpunk defines a postmodern framework for thinking about the implications of technology and media that is flexible enough to incorporate issues of gender, queer sexualities and ethnic and racial differences as well as developments in nationalist models of citizenship and global economic flows. Hal Foster and Rosalind Krauss suggest, “Visual culture does double service: it is both a

partial description of a social world mediated by commodity images and visual technologies, and an academic rubric for interdisciplinary convergences among art history, film theory, media analysis, and cultural studies” (1996: 6). Cyberpunk on the one hand is a culture dominated and interpreted by images, while on the other, it is a convergence of disciplinary studies. In other words, it is grounded in the interpretation of images and in the description of the gaze where the construction of subjectivity and fantasy are formed within the social and cultural condition.

This research confines itself to the very first cyberpunk or cyborg-related fiction, a Japanese animation movie *Ghost in the Shell* which invites us to entertain ideas of what it would be like to live in a world where technology and media have become a fact of life. *Ghost in the Shell* takes place in 2029 CE in a world where the biological has been fused with the cybernetic in an attempt to perfect the human capacities. Specifically, it follows the story of Major Motoko Kusanagi, a former military agent and now leader of an intelligence operation, as she and her colleagues pursue the trail of an international computer-hacking cyber-criminal, the “Puppet Master.” Kusanagi struggles with the distinction between the “ghost” (which might be roughly correlated with “mind” or “spirit”) and the “shell” (roughly correlated with “the body”) throughout the film. Particularly, she wonders about the nature of the “ghost”: what it is, how it is related to the body or shell, and how it is related to being “human.”

Several times throughout the film, Kusanagi and the viewer are confronted by one half of this two-part “mode of being” and not the other, i.e. shells without ghosts (or people who have been “ghost-hacked”), and eventually, a ghost without a shell (the Puppet Master, who turns out to be a free-floating self-aware program on the internet). Eventually, Kusanagi must define for herself what it means to exist in the boundary land between the human and the posthuman.

Bioconservatives, who include such diverse writers as Leon Kass, Francis Fukuyama, George Annas, Wesley Smith, Jeremy Rifkin, and Bill McKibben, believe that such technologies will undermine our human dignity. The setting for *Ghost in the Shell* is an information-laden landscape of humans, cyborgs, and the machines (both metaphorical and literal) of politics and industry. Fragmented, dispersed, and yet uniformly polluted with signs — an airplane, a wall plastered with flyers stuck on flyers, a polluted waterway, a dog on a bridge, designer clothes in a display window, a stoplight, a flashing advertisement, a highway, armless mannequins in a store window — the linguistic blends with the imagistic in a symbolic soup that makes an odd *non*-sense. Only the interiors — the offices, the apartments — seem to have any form of normative order. The exterior landscape is decidedly postmodern, an anxious,

uncomfortable, mechanistic exterior, one that is based in culture and not in nature (the closest image of “nature” that we receive in the film is that of a dog looking down from an overpass, and even then, it is a domestic, collared dog), one that is in a constant state of construction and deconstruction, a mash of pieces, fragments, all tied together by the boundless but physically invisible uniformity of the internet. Mass media is pervasive: cybernetic implants allow one to be constantly connected in an almost “telepathic” fashion, giving access to a practically unlimited amount of information, as well as the power to communicate nearly effortlessly through its channels. The internet mirrors or parallels the physical world in its virtual construction: the first image of the Net that we get in the film is a glowing green digital map with 3-D cylinders of data that resemble skyscrapers. The Net appears to bring order to (or reveal the order in) this chaos — as in the case of the superimposed map, acting as a filter that scrubs out unnecessary information. It is decidedly more organized and comfortable, and yet also *invisible* — the Net is something that can only be perceived with the mind, not with the eyes. The uniform chaos of the *exterior* landscape is an implicit threat to humanity — one of losing the self, losing the individual, of giving up the human to the machine amidst the chaos — as subjects struggle for a “place” in the computerized world. The contrast between the hyper-extended simulations, that heady, almost mad proliferation of signs present in the exterior landscape only performs a “Disneyland” function: in presenting itself in all this ridiculous magnitude, the interior spaces of carpeted rooms, plush chairs ordered around coffee tables and polished aquariums, even messy desks make a strange sort of sense to us now. As one collective image, they are only made to appear *more* real in comparison.

The presence of the Net has double implication: as it is presented in the beginning of the film (and several times throughout with the green graphic), the Net is an ordered map of the exterior landscape, a way of “making sense” of the disorderly exterior. In one way, the Net can be viewed as a metaphor for a “grand narrative” that orders, describes, and structures existence for the characters in the film. Yet, while the Net totalizes, it also fragments by turning individuals into voices and the voices into “noise,” by stylizing, adding, and eliminating information in the display, by calling up only the information that is requested at any particular moment. Furthermore, while the map metaphor might be read as a metaphor for an overarching totality, it might *also* be read as the ultimate *simulation* of the real. Thus, the “reality” of the exterior landscape collapses into the surrealist mass of the internet.

The loss of individuality, anxiety over essences and knowing who and what we are is articulated several times throughout the film. This is where the fear of technological

“rogress” sets in most strongly, in that the characters and audience confront the possibility that technology and media could do *violence* to the human spirit. This violence is introduced in the form of a “ghost-hack,” a process by which through the Net a hacker is able to get into the cybernetic brain of another connected Net user and *erase* or *change* the data that comprises his or her ghost. The antagonist, “Ningyo Tsukai,” or the Puppet Master, is called such because he/she/it performs a series of ghost-hacks on unsuspecting individuals, creating “fake” identities for them and erasing their “original essence.” The effects of this hack are, for all intents and purposes, purported to be permanent, irreversible. Once the individual is “deprogrammed,” he or she becomes a ghost-less shell, losing his or her sense of identity.

Though loss of the essence is, for a modernist, a loss of the self that deserves mourning, this “essence” is at the same time acknowledged as part of a greater stream of undifferentiated data. Thus, many of the characters in the film (for instance, Batou) embody *both* modern *and* postmodern perspectives. When the ghost-hacked individual is demystified (shown that his experiences were generated by the Puppet Master, and are not the actual memories of his life), what he *does* remember (the Puppet Master's insertion) is explained to be a “virtual experience.” Batou further analyzes what it *means* to have a virtual experience, and how this is typical of *all* experiences, whether they are “real” or “simulated” by pontificating, “Virtual data, dreams. All data that exists is both reality and fantasy. Whichever it is, the data a person collects in a lifetime is a tiny bit compared to the whole.” Once again, we encounter the collapse of the *particular*, the *unique* into the network of multiplicity. An individual's ghost (as collected data, reminiscent of computer RAM) is still just a drop in a sea of information, and as such, virtually indistinguishable from other forms of data.

A second underlying point of tension in the film revolves around the binary distinction between continuity and overspecialization versus variation, evolution, and change. Though change is explicitly presented as a *human* characteristic (in terms of evolution, procreation, variation), it is, curiously, humans who resist change in favor of rooting themselves in notions of authenticity, perfecting that which is given through specialization medium of the internet.

If there is a single figure in the film that most embodies the postmodern and the posthuman, it is the Puppet Master, or Project 2501. The Puppet Master (who is referred to as “he” in the film for the sake of simplicity, though the android body he eventually takes is distinctly “female”) is a “life form that was born in the sea of information,” or what can be described in modernist terms as a computer program that

became self aware and “escaped,” committing various criminal acts in its attempts not to be recaptured by its creators. The Puppet Master illuminates the film's concern with change in discussion with Kusanagi during the merging:

There's the possibility that a single virus could utterly destroy me. A mere copy doesn't offer variety or individuality.... When it comes time to die, all the data it possesses is lost, leaving behind only its genes and its offspring. All defense against catastrophic failure of an inflexible system.

The Puppet Master insists that change is not only desirable, but also *necessary* in order to ensure survival. Overspecialization, it is said several times in the film, leads to death. This also further reinforces the notion that a transition into postmodern thought is inevitable: the world around us is changing, and so, too, must the way in which we live in it, the way in which we interpret it, and the way in which we *see ourselves* in it. Depicted in a dismembered body (just torso and head), the Puppet Master is the *ultimate simulation* of the human ghost, which throughout so much of the film has been an aspect that is absolutely central to a modernist humanist definition of identity, essence. The characters in the film have a difficult time wrestling with the notion that the Puppet Master is “an autonomous life-form,” attempting to categorize him/her/it in prefabricated distinctions: a human ghost that “escaped” its shell, a self-preserving program, artificial intelligence. By categorizing the Puppet Master as a “self-preserving program,” the human characters in the film are attempting to neutralize the threat of symbolic violence on their modernist sense of self. Yet, the Puppet Master prevents such distinctions from being made and asserts, “By that argument the DNA you carry is nothing more than a self-preserving program itself.... When computers made it possible to externalize memory, you should have considered all the implications that it held.” The Puppet Master asserts that its mode of being is *no different* from a biological one. Furthermore, when asked to prove whether or not he/she/it is a life form, the Puppet Master responds, “It is impossible to prove such a thing. Especially since modern science cannot define what life is.” Since the Puppet Master is such an “aberration,” an affront to the notion that we each have a unique, distinctly human core essence, he/she/it represents a threat to any person who *believes* in this essence (which applies to all of the characters in the film *besides* the Puppet Master, at least to a certain extent). By simply *existing*, it is as if the Puppet Master is telling each character who firmly believes in the authenticity of his or her ghost that there is no authenticity, that ghosts are no more a function of humanity than they are of a machine, that they are *not* tied to individual subjectivities, and finally, that they (the personae in the film) are *not what they think they are*. Thus, the inevitable conclusion of this dilemma: in order for one of the beliefs to go on living — either the modernist

assumptions about core essences, or the postmodernist deconstruction of the “essence” in favor of “existence” — the other must be contained and/or destroyed. Hence, the police chief orders the capture of the Puppet Master, and in the event that he/she/it cannot be captured, his/her/its absolute destruction. Yet, in the schema given by the film (going back to the pervasiveness of postmodern architectures and thus the inevitability of a shift in thought that is more “postmodern”), the Puppet Master manages to elude both capture and death by embracing *change*. It takes the Puppet Master and a cyborg, Kusanagi, to put this change into effects — the merging of the human-generated and machine-generated, which eventually results in the creation of a new being. For the Puppet Master, the reflector and its reflection are indistinguishable: the “real” body is as good as its reflection (just as symbolically, the mechanical bodies of Kusanagi and the Puppet Master are reflections of the human).

Kusanagi, who still clings tentatively to her humanist values, must give up the distinction between her self and her reflection in order to become something new/other. In order to accomplish this merging (in which the “human” becomes something other than what it started out as), the representation of the human subject — the body — as well as the authentic, unified sense of individuality — the human ghost — must be destroyed. In her attempt to find the Puppet Master after his/her/its body (parts) is stolen from the police station, Kusanagi must face several physical trials that eventually end up destroying her body, not the least of which is an encounter with a huge tank. When the tank has been destroyed (incidentally, by Batou, and not by Kusanagi), Kusanagi is little more than a broken shell with an active ghost. Her body, the physical representation of the human subject, is literally destroyed in her attempt to get to the Puppet Master's body so that she may establish a network link between their positronic brains — so that she might find out for herself what the nature of his/her/its ghost is. Furthermore, in the actual merging between Kusanagi and the Puppet Master, the body itself is transfigured. While Kusanagi and the Puppet Master are mentally linked, the Puppet Master speaks using Kusanagi's body's mouth, while Kusanagi sees out of the Puppet Master's eyes. The body is no longer the property of an individual, but moreover a tool for mobility, communication, or a façade to cover over the ghost. The connection between the body and authentic humanism is severed. For Kusanagi, the Puppet Master is both a symbol of her anxiety or fear for the loss of self and the thing (object, fear) that she must embrace to overcome that anxiety. The Puppet Master proposes the ultimate destruction to the unified, individual human subject, a merging of the human and mechanical ghost: a complete joining. It is neither the loss nor the addition of one to the other, but rather a synthesis that produces something new.

But then what is this “new thing?” In many ways, this synthesis defies categorization in the terms that are available to us. The vocabulary that the Puppet Master uses to describe the merging and his/her/its purposes for merging is, curiously enough, a humanist one. He/she/it almost seems to desire the experience of humanity, to “bear offspring,” to “achieve death.” Yet, though these terms connote humanity (it may make the Puppet Master seem as if he/she/it *wants* to be human or even *more* than human), as pure signifiers there is nothing inherent in the terms that connects them to the specifically human. A program may “die;” even in our contemporary vocabulary we often talk of machines that “die” or cease to function. Though the words used to describe this “new thing” are humanist in origin, they are partially uprooted from their moorings in service of a description of something not traditionally associated with them. When Kusanagi and the Puppet Master merge, the result is neither a “human” ghost (if one can still call it a ghost) nor an “artificial” ghost generated by a computer program. The body destroyed and abandoned completely after the merging, but for Kusanagi's positronic brain (which is the “container” for the merged ghosts of the Puppet Master and Kusanagi), and the new product is re-deposited into an *arbitrary* cyborg body: that of a pre-adolescent girl, which Batou supposedly purchased on the black market (he explains to the Major that it was all he could find, and thus was not a careful choice based on what would best fit her “subjectivity”). “Here before you is neither the program called the Puppet Master, nor the woman that was called the Major,” the child tells Batou, in Kusanagi's voice. The apotheosis of the merging of the human and the program is *both* and *neither* of the components from which it was spawned. In the merging, the human and program's subjectivities are both destroyed or killed and recreated or reborn into something that is both a mixture of its parents *as well as* qualitatively different from them. Akin to Donna Haraway's cyborg, the being produced by the Puppet Master and Kusanagi's merging “has no origin story in the Western sense,” “monstrous and illegitimate,” with the capacity for transcending naturalizing discourses, allowing it “to recognize 'oneself' as fully implicated in the world,” which “frees [it] of the need to root politics in identification, vanguard parties, purity, and mothering” (2000: 71-81). The focus on liberation that Haraway's cyborg represents is reiterated in *Ghost in the Shell*: the merger is presented as a liberating solution to the problem of post humanity.

The Puppet Master invokes the notion of “slipping our bonds” — the bonds that confine us within our set limits, the categories of human and machine — and the shift to a “higher structure” — a structure that is “higher” than humanity and “higher” than programming. The word “higher” connotes superiority, both superior value and evolutionary superiority. And thus is the “offspring” that is produced from the

merging: a being that is, it is implied, more capable of living in and coping with a postmodern existence and a posthuman self. It no longer clings to notions of individuality, authenticity, and essence, but rather is able to move between, before and among the nodal points that give “shape” to the postmodern society. “A cyborg body is not innocent,” writes Haraway, “it was not born in a garden; it does not seek unitary identity and so generate antagonistic dualisms without end (or until the world ends); it takes irony for granted” (83). Freed from the call back to an origin — the erstwhile mentioned nostalgia — the cyborg does not struggle with the contradictions everywhere in a postmodern, posthuman environment, but rather embraces them as a sort of freedom.

The inevitable apotheosis: humans *must* change in order to survive or evolve. The synthesis of human and computer program is both and neither human, machine, and/or program, but a new concept of existence that is at once threatening to the “purity” of humanity, and a liberating solution to the anxiety of resolving a humanist sensibility and post humanist environment: the distinction inevitably collapses on itself. It is at the same time a celebration of becoming multiple and a lament over the loss of wholeness.

In one important sense, the “posthuman” means not the literal end of humanity, or the dramatic mutations in the human body brought on by various technologies. Rather it signifies the end of certain misguided ways of conceiving human identity and the nature of human relations to the social and natural environments, other species, and technology. (Best and Kellner, 1991: 271)

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आत्मकथा के बहाने स्त्री-संघर्ष की गाथा: गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया

डॉ. सरिता चौहान

सहायक प्रवक्ता

एमसीएम डीएवी महिला कॉलेज, चण्डीगढ़

हिन्दी की प्रसिद्ध लेखिका मैत्रेयी पुष्पा की आत्मकथा गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया मैत्रेयी के जीवन संग्राम की कलात्मक प्रस्तुति है। अपने बाहर-भीतर को पछीटने-खंगालने की प्रक्रिया में रत मैत्रेयी अपनी कहानी कहते-कहते हर उस औरत की कहानी कह गई है जिसने अपने जीवन को संग्राम की तरह लड़ा है। लेखिका ने नितांत यथार्थवादी स्तर पर स्त्री-पुरुष सम्बन्धों को व्याख्यायित करने के साथ-साथ इन सबमें समाज की भूमिका की पड़ताल भी की है। गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया की मूल समस्या आर्थिक सशक्तीकरण की नहीं है अपितु अस्तित्व-स्थापना की है। समूची आत्मकथा एक अजीब से तनाव से भरी है। समाज के छल-छद्मों को अनावृत करती गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया 'आत्महन्ता बेबाकी' से सम्बन्धों के सच का उद्घाटन करती है।

मूल शब्द: पितृसत्तात्मक समाज, अस्तित्व, अस्मिता, कुंठा, मर्यादा, शुचिता

गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया प्रसिद्ध लेखिका मैत्रेयी पुष्पा की आत्मकथा है। वास्तव में यह उनकी आत्मकथा का दूसरा भाग है। पहला भाग है—“कस्तूरी कुण्डल बसैं”। गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया मैत्रेयी के जीवन संग्राम की कलात्मक प्रस्तुति है। लेखिका ने नितांत यथार्थवादी स्तर पर स्त्री-पुरुष सम्बन्धों को व्याख्यायित करने के साथ-साथ इन सब में समाज की भूमिका की पड़ताल भी की है। इस आत्मकथा में पितृसत्ता के स्वार्थ एवं कठोरता के बरक्स स्त्री की संवेदना को प्रमुखता से उभारा गया है। आत्मकथा को पढ़ने के बाद यह तथ्य स्पष्ट हो जाता है कि मैत्रेयी की जीवन यात्रा ऐसे सत्य का आख्यान है जो अधिकांश स्त्रियों के जीवन का सत्य है।

“आत्मकथाएँ प्रायः बेईमानी की अभ्यास-पुस्तिकाएँ लगती हैं क्योंकि कभी सच कहने की हिम्मत नहीं होती तो कभी सच सुनने की। अक्सर लिहाज में कुछ बातें छोड़ दी जाती हैं तो कभी उन्हें बचा-बचाकर प्रस्तुत किया जाता है। मैत्रेयी ने इसी तनी रस्सी पर अपने को साधते हुए कुछ सच कहे हैं—अक्सर लक्ष्मण रेखाओं को लाँघ जाने का खतरा भी उठाया है” (पुष्पा, 2016: फ्लैप कवर)। सम्बन्धों की 'आत्महन्ता बेबाकी' गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया का प्राणतत्त्व है। गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया शीर्षक संकेत करता है कि प्रत्येक संवेदनशील स्त्री में एक अबोध बालिका रहती है। कृत्रिमता, कठोरता में उसका दम घुटता है। ग्रामीण परिवेश में पली-बढ़ी मैत्रेयी का मन दिल्ली की भागदौड़ भरी जिन्दगी में चैन नहीं पाता। वह ग्रामीण अंचल में लौट जाना चाहता है। मैत्री स्वीकार करती है कि “दिल्ली शहर में मुझे रहना नहीं आता” (पुष्पा, 2016: 40)। सुख-सुविधाओं, रौब-रुतबे में अनचाहे दबी मैत्रेयी के भीतर की गुड़िया कराहती है किन्तु कुछ कर नहीं पाती “लगता है कि मैं स्त्री नस्ल की

स्त्री, संतों की हमदर्द, कंचन से जुड़ाव रखने वाली भावनाओं के साथ यहाँ आई थी अनचाहे और अनजाने ही ऐसे 'सुख' में दबती चली गई कि भव्य इमारत की तरह आकर्षक और पथरीली होते जाना ही जैसे आगे की नियति हो" (पुष्पा, 2016 : 42)। लेखिका की ईमानदार आत्म-स्वीकृतियाँ पाठक को बाँध लेती हैं।

गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया को पढना एक अलग किस्म के अनुभव से होकर गुज़रना है। समूची आत्मकथा एक अजीब से तनाव से भरी है। मैत्रेयी पढ़ी-लिखी है किन्तु, घर की चौखट लॉघने से डरती है। चौखट मानो उसका पीछा करती है। गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया की समस्या आर्थिक सशक्तीकरण की नहीं है अपितु अस्तित्व-स्थापना की है। यह आत्मकथा एक यक्ष प्रश्न उठाती है कि यदि स्त्री कुछ ऐसा करना चाहती है जिससे उसे आत्मबल एवं आत्मतोष मिले तो उस कार्य को उसे क्यों नहीं करने दिया जाता? क्यों उसे हर कदम पर पितृसत्तात्मक समाज की अनुमति की बाट जोहनी पड़ती है? गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया इस प्रश्न को भी सशक्तता से रेखांकित करती है कि परम्पराएँ, मान्यताएँ एवं सामाजिक व्यवस्थाएँ नारी मन में जिन कुंठाओं को जन्म देती हैं उनके रहते क्या नारी के व्यक्तित्व का विकास सम्भव है? नारी-मन की ऐषणाओं को मैत्रेयी ने अपनी इस आत्मकथा में उन्मुक्त रूप से अभिव्यक्त किया है। वास्तव में "इक्कीसवीं सदी में भी हमारी सामाजिक संरचना में पुरुष का वर्चस्व होने के कारण स्त्री की नितान्त वैयक्तिक इच्छा-आकांक्षाओं को स्त्री के दृष्टिकोण से देखने की परम्परा का विकास आज भी नहीं हो पाया है" (शर्मा, 2015 : 10)।

गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया परिवेशगत दबावों से जूझती हर उस स्त्री की गाथा है जो अपनी लगन और संकल्पशक्ति के बल पर अपने सपनों को पा लेना चाहती है। मैत्रेयी के लिए पढ़ाई और लेखन उसके 'होने के अहसास' को बनाए रखने का माध्यम है किन्तु मैत्रेयी के पति डॉ. शर्मा को यह पसंद नहीं है। वह आहत हो जाती है जब उससे 'लिंग्विस्टिक कोर्स' के इंटरव्यूह का कॉल लेटर छिपा लिया जाता है। जब वह अपने पति से इसका कारण पूछती है तो वे कहते हैं—"तुम परेशान होती फिरोगी, मुझे चैन नहीं आएगा" (पुष्पा, 2016 : 25)। मैत्रेयी अवसन्न रह जाती है। वह पी-एच.डी. करना चाहती है किन्तु डॉ. रेखा अग्रवाल का यह कहना—"आपकी बच्ची, आपके पति, आपका घरेलु कामधाम क्या होगा आपकी रिसर्च का? आप तो अचार, बड़ी, गुड़िया भी बनाती हैं। ऐसे नहीं होती पी-एच.डी." (पुष्पा, 2016 : 19)। मैत्रेयी कुंठित हो जाती है। जब वह अपने पति से इस विषय पर बात करती है तो वो कहते हैं—"पढ़ाई के लिए अब इतना मोह, समझ में नहीं आता तुम्हारा रवैया। पति ने कहा और फिर भूल सुधार की, अरे हाँ अचम्भा किस बात का, तुम्हारे यहाँ तो औरतें चाहे जब झोला उठाकर स्कूल चल देती हैं" (पुष्पा, 2016 : 20)। मैत्रेयी अपने मकसद को पाने की ठान लेती है—"बक्से में साड़ी की तहों के नीचे अपने प्रमाणपत्र, सनदें दबा दिये थे, निकालने की ठान ली। एम.ए. में मिला प्रोफेशियंसी मैडल खोटे सिक्के सा बक्से के कोने में पड़ा था, बाहर आया" (पुष्पा, 2016 : 21)। फिर एक दिन डॉक्टर साहब ने कहा, "तुम अपने सर्टिफिकेट मुझे दे दो। अपनी अलमारी में रख लूँगा। जरूरत हो तब माँग लेना। बक्से में तो वैसे ही फट जाएँगे"

(पुष्पा, 2016 : 22)। बकौल मैत्रेयी, “प्रतिद्वन्द्वी को रास्ते से हटाने का हुनर कोई डॉ. शर्मा से सीखे” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 21)।

डॉ. पुरुषोत्तम अग्रवाल का मानना है कि “अगर किसी एक मुद्दे पर हर सभ्यता, हर परम्परा का दामन दागों से भरा है तो वह है स्त्री की अस्मिता का मुद्दा। इस न्यूनता का अहसास भी हर समाज के अचेतन में मौजूद है। इसलिए स्त्रीत्व के प्रति जागरूक और उसके प्रति आग्रहशील स्त्री से हर परम्परा डरती है” (कुमार, 2011 : 88)। संभवतः यही कारण है कि पितृकसत्ता स्त्री को अनेकानेक प्रलोभन दे उसे सहनशीलता, समर्पण, नैतिकता आदि की घुट्टी पिलाती रहती है कि कहीं वह उसकी सत्ता को चुनौती देकर उसके आधिपत्य को नकार न दे। सत्य तो यह है कि पुरुष ने स्त्री के लिए जिन मूल्यों को गढ़ा, जिन आचरणों को मान्यता दी वे सभी उसके एकछत्र साम्राज्य की स्थापना के सहायक औजार थे। स्त्री अस्मिता के मुद्दे इस समाज के लिए व्यर्थ एवं बेमानी है। यह मान लिया गया है कि मानवीय मूल्यों, नैतिकताओं और सामाजिक सरोकारों की थाती सिर्फ नारी के पास है। वे जरा सी चूकी नहीं कि समाज रसातल में गया ही समझो। स्त्री को प्रकृत्या दायम दर्जे का प्राणी सिद्ध करने की सारी मर्दाना कोशिशें आश्चर्य चकित कर देने वाली हैं।

यह विडम्बना ही है कि जब तक स्त्री पितृकसत्ता द्वारा स्थापित “प्रतिमानों का अंधानुकरण करती है तब तक वह आदर्श स्त्री की उपमाओं से अलंकृत होती है तथा उनका अतिक्रमण करते ही वह चरित्रहीन, वेश्या, कुलटा, मर्यादाहीन, संस्कारहीन जैसे अभद्र पितृक शब्दों से अपमानित होने लगती है। कुल मिलाकर इन शब्दों का रचयिता भी पुरुष ही है जिसने पितृक सत्ता को मजबूत करने हेतु मातृत्व, शील, नैतिकता, मर्यादा आदि के सिद्धांत बनाये एवं पितृक पारिवारिक अनुशासन का निर्माण किया” (कुमार, 2011 : 130)। वास्तव में ये वे मजबूत साँचे हैं जो सदियों से पुरुष प्रधान समाज के अनुकूल अनुशासित और मर्यादित स्त्रियाँ गढ़ते रहे हैं।

पार्टी में डॉ. सिद्धार्थ के साथ मैत्रेयी डांस करती है। आधुनिक समाज में यह सब सामान्य है। डॉ. शर्मा अपनी पत्नी को गंवार समझते थे किन्तु मैत्रेयी का यह आधुनिकीकरण उन्हें पसंद नहीं आता। वे मैत्रेयी को अपने व्यंग्यबाणों से आहत करते हैं, “सुनों कि लोग कह रहे हैं, मिसेज शर्मा को डॉ. शर्मा नहीं भा रहे। लोग, लोग कह रहे हैं मिसेज शर्मा को डॉ. सिद्धार्थ डुगडुगी की तरह नचा...” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 12)। मैत्रेयी आहत होती है। वह अपने पति से पूछती है कि तुम भी तो चाहते थे कि मैं मॉडर्न हो जाऊँ। लोगों की बातों को सुनकर डॉ. शर्मा आग-बबूला हो घर आते हैं। मैत्रेयी पति के गुस्से से घबरा जाती है, पर फिर यह सोचकर खुद को समझाती है, “पति क्या गलत करते हैं, मामा भी तो इसी मनोदशा में घर आते थे। नानी, मौसी और मामी भय के मारे सावधान की मुद्रा में खड़ी हो जाती। बकोशिश किसी काम में लग जाती। फसल उगाकर खिलाने वाले मामा पर आश्रित लोग... उनके ताबेदार ऐसी और इस तरह वफादारी न निभाएँ तो क्या करें? मामा फिर भी दो-चार फटकार किसी न किसी को लगा ही देते और सनसनाते चेहरे से दरौदीवार को देखते। तब नानी पास आने का खतरा उठाती, क्योंकि माँ पर हाथ उठाना मुश्किल था। माँ चिरौरी करे, पत्नी थाली परोसकर लाये, बहन पानी का लोटा भरे खड़ी हो जाए, तब मामा सामने आएँ। रोटी-सब्जी,

दही—अचार में मीनमेख निकालते हुए भोजन करें” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 10)। मैत्रेयी अपने घर—परिवारों और आस—पास के समाज में यह सब बचपन से देखती आई है, “मैं जानती हूँ परिवारों में पुरुषों का यह रवैया सामान्य हैं यदि खाने में नमक—मिर्च की कमी दिखे या ज्यादा लगे तो थाली उठाकर मोरी की ओर फेंकी जा सकती है। घर की स्त्रियाँ इस बात को अपने सामान्य डर के रूप में लेती, क्योंकि लगभग घर—घर में ऐसे डरों को बनाए रखने का चलन है। मगर स्त्रियों की छाती में थालियाँ झनझनाती हैं” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 10)।

समाज के अंतर्विरोधों पर मैत्रेयी की लेखनी खूब चली है। पति की आधुनिकता का छद्म उसे समझ में आ गया था। वह अपने पति के तथाकथित भद्र समाज पर व्यंग्य करते हुए कहती है, “तुम्हारा दोष भी क्या? सेठ—पुत्रों के साथ रहे, हीनभावना जोड़ते गए।... मैं तुम्हारी इस ग्रंथि से बहुत डरती हूँ क्योंकि उन्हीं दोस्तों ने कहा था, इस लड़की को कहाँ से ब्याह लाये, इसमें मैनेर्स नहीं ऐटीकेट्स नहीं, ब्यूटी तो खैर आसपास तक नहीं। यह शूल तुम्हें तब गड़ा था, आज तक कसकता है और उसकी टीस तुम्हे मेरे हर आचरण पर सवलिया निशान लगाने के लिए मजबूर करती है” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 35)। झाँसी अलीगढ़ की होने के कारण दिल्ली में मैत्रेयी को गंवार समझा जाता है। डॉ. सिद्धार्थ के साथ नाचकर वह शहरी लोगों के सामने भद्र और आधुनिक बनना चाहती थी किन्तु पति डॉ. शर्मा कहते हैं, “ध्यान रखना मैं इतना अंग्रेज भी नहीं कि अपनी बीबी को पराये मर्दों के साथ... आखिर हमारे भी तो संस्कार हैं” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 16)। मैत्रेयी सन्न रह जाती है। पत्नी को आधुनिकता का पाठ पढ़ाने वाले डॉ. शर्मा स्वयं कितने आधुनिक एवं भद्र हैं, पत्नी को कितना सम्मान देते हैं यह मैत्रेयी के ही शब्दों में, “प्रियतम, मेरी उसी भावना ने तुम्हारे दीक्षान्त समारोह में तुम्हारे साथ जाने की ठानी थी, तुम नहीं ले गए। मैं आहत और अपमानित हुई क्योंकि अयोग्य ठहराई गई। मैंने घर आए यू.पी.एस.सी. चेरमैन को बाहर आकर अभिवादन करना चाहा था, तुमने मुझे रसोई में सिक्कड़े रहने की हिदायत दी, मेरे मन को ठेस लगी” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 15)।

जिन्दगी की जद्दोजहद से जूझती मैत्रेयी एक आम स्त्री का प्रतिनिधित्व निस्संदेह करती है। तथाकथित भद्र समाज का अंग बनने की कोशिश करते—करते मैत्रेयी की अपनी सहजता एवं अस्मिता खो सी जाती है। मैत्रेयी परेशान हो अपराध बोध से ग्रसित हो जाती है, “अभी तो मैं अपने आप से परेशान... अपने ऊपर यहाँ का रंग चढ़ाना है और गाँव की मिट्टी मुझे छोड़ती नहीं। बस इसी बिनह पर आगे बढ़ने की योग्यता में खारिज होती जाती हूँ। रात्रिभोज का निमंत्रण पाते ही काँप उठती हूँ। मुझे छुरी—काँटे डराते हैं और प्लेट भरे खाने को हथेली पर साधकर थरथराने लगती हूँ। बैज—नान बैज का झमेला ऐसा कि हर डिश को देखकर जी मिचला जाए। माँ, मैं कितने—कितने अभिनय करूँ, हर दिन तो परीक्षाकाल है। इस परीक्षा में कमजोर साबित होते ही पति फ़ैसला सुना देते हैं, ‘यहाँ स्मार्ट औरतों को जॉब मिलता है। अभी तो तुम यहाँ के रहन—सहन का पहला पाठ...’ (पुष्पा, 2016 : 49)। ‘स्मार्ट’ औरतें मैत्रेयी पर कमेंट करती हैं—

आप दो चोटी लटकाकर झल्ली—सी क्यों बनी रहती हैं?
...जूड़ा बनाइये मिसेज शर्मा। (पुष्पा, 2016 : 49)

स्मार्ट बनने के उपक्रम में मैत्रेयी पफ़ वाला जूड़ा बनाकर पार्टी में जाती है। अचानक पार्टी में मैत्रेयी का जूड़ा खुल जाता है और पफ़ गिर जाता है। मैत्रेयी पीड़ा एवं अवसाद से भर जाती है। पार्टी में उसका मजाक बन जाता है, “तभी एक मसखरे ने पफ़ को उठा लिया और निशाना बाँधकर पति को ओर उछाल दिया। डॉ. साहब ने मुँह फेर लिया और आसपास के लोग उस पफ़ से बॉलीबाल खेलने लगे” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 51)। मैत्रेयी अपमानित हो परिपात से भर जाती है। वह सोचती है, “यह कैसी सजा है हम ग्रामीणों के लिए? क्या हम भी शहरियों से कहते हैं कि अपने फैशन छोड़कर हमारे चलन अपनाओ? क्या मैं डॉक्टर साहब से सिकुर्रा या खिल्ली जैसे गाँवों में रहते हुए धोती—कुर्ता पहनने के लिए जोर डालूंगी? कहूँगी कि बाल घुटा लो, टोपी लगा लो, तब ब्याह—शादियों में चलों मेरे संग” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 52)।

ऐसे नकारात्मक माहौल में सन् 1971 के बेहद ठंडे मौसम में मैत्रेयी की इल्माना से गर्माहट भरी मुलाकात हुई। नामी एडवोकेट की बेटी, अलीगढ़ युनीवर्सिटी में पढ़ी बेहद खूबसूरत इल्माना को देखकर डॉक्टरों का तथाकथित सम्भ्रान्त वर्ग मानों पगला सा गया। मैत्रेयी के घर में होने वाली पार्टी में इल्माना को लेकर भद्दे कमेंट किये गए। मैत्रेयी भद्र समाज की हरकतों को मुँह बाये देखती है। समाज का बेहद सलीके—तहज़ीब वाला तरक्की पसन्द पुरुष समाज एक स्त्री के बारे में कैसी ओछी सोच रखता है यह देख मैत्रेयी हैरान हो जाती है। वह कहती है, “इल्माना के गज़बनाक शबाब ने सौम्य, शिष्ट और गम्भीर सज्जनों की असलियत खोल दी। वे हमें आसपास पाकर भी नहीं झिझक रहे थे, और हम सामूहिक फ़िकराकशी से ऐसे ही परेशान जैसे सामूहिक रूप से स्त्री की शारीरिक खींचतान हो रही हो। पति भी चुप रहते। ‘अच्छी बात नहीं, अच्छी बात नहीं’ कहते हुए अप्रत्यक्ष रूप से अपने दोस्तों के पक्ष में जा खड़े होते। मैं कुछ कँटीला सा बोल देती तो डॉ. सिद्धार्थ के साथ नाचने वाली बात बीच में ले आते, जैसे मेरी चारित्रिक कमजोरी का वह शुद्ध नमूना हो और किसी भी स्त्री से जुड़ सकता हो। पुरुष विश्वसनीय और स्त्री निर्लज्ज जैसा सिद्धांत बन गया।” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 58)। डॉ. शर्मा मैत्रेयी को कहते हैं, “समझा करो, आदमी की अपनी मुद्रा कुछ नहीं होती, उसके हाव—भावों को औरत ही बाहर निकालती है।... अगर तुम्हारी भाषा में कहूँ तो शकुन्तला न होती तो दुष्यन्त न होता। द्रोपदी जवान न हुई होती तो न अर्जुन होता न दुर्योधन। सीता के होने से रावण हुआ” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 58, 59)। इस विषय में सीमोन द बोउवार का कहना है, “वायवीय परिकल्पना होते हुए भी शुचिता की सामाजिक—सांस्कृतिक—धार्मिक हदबंदियां बेहद मारक और अस्पष्ट हैं” (अग्रवाल, 2006 : 265)। मैत्रेयी की पहली बेटी नम्रता के जन्म पर अपशकुन का संकेत तवा बजाया जाता है। मैत्रेयी कहती है, “यह मानवीय ढंग की वहशी शैली। कोटि—कोटि जन्मों के पुण्य से मिलने वाली मनुष्य यौनि अगर पुरुष का रूप नहीं हैं तो माँ का गर्भ व्यर्थ। उसका प्रसव बेपीर नज़रों से देखा जाएगा” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 96)।

गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया आत्मकथा बार—बार इस बात की ओर संकेत करती है कि विवाह के बाद पुरुष स्त्री को अपनी निजी सम्पत्ति मानता है लेकिन, इस सम्पत्ति की गुणवत्ता को वह बढ़ाना नहीं चाहता। ‘स्त्री घर से निकली तो हाथ से निकली’ का पुरुषसत्तात्मक भय उसे डराता रहता है। वह

हर सम्भव प्रयास कर स्त्री पर नियंत्रण रखता है और यह सुनिश्चित करना है कि वह अपनी योग्यता को बढ़ाने के लिए प्रयास न करे। मैत्रेयी के लिए लिखना-पढ़ना संजीवनी था। लेखन उसके लिए उसके होने, उसके अस्तित्व का आधार था। लिखना न केवल उसकी रचनात्मकता को विस्तार देता है अपितु उसके विशिष्ट होने को साबित भी करता है। स्त्री-लेखन को हिंकारत की दृष्टि से देखने वाला पितृक समाज मैत्रेयी पर वर्जना के कोड़े बरसाने से बाज नहीं आता। अपने लेखन के विषय में मैत्रेयी का कहना है, “मैंने कलम थाम ली। कलम के सहारे मेरी चेतना, जिसे मैंने आत्मा की आवाज के रूप में पाया, तभी तो साहित्य के द्वार तक चली आई। सुना था साहित्य व्यक्ति के लिए स्वतंत्रता देता है। हाँ लिखकर ही तो मैंने जाना कि न मैं धर्म के खिलाफ थी, न नैतिकता के विरुद्ध। मैं तो सदियों से चली आ रही तथाकथित सामाजिक व्यवस्था से खुद को मुक्त कर रही थी” (पुष्पा, 2016 : निवेदन)। वास्तव में लेखन का यह सफ़र आसान नहीं था। लेखन का स्वप्न आँखों में बसाए जब मैत्रेयी लेखन की दुनिया में कदम रखती है तो वह पाती है कि वह, “निगाहों से निगली जा रही है” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 170)। उधर पति सोचते हैं कि वह लेखन की आड़ में रोमांस कर रही है। इल्माना मैत्रेयी को हिम्मत देते हुए कहती है, “आपको अपना रास्ता छोड़ना नहीं है। अधुरा काम करने वाले हार जाते हैं” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 182)। मैत्रेयी दृढ़ता पूर्वक, तमाम बाधाओं के बावजूद लिखती रहती है।

अपनी लेखन-यात्रा में मैत्रेयी पारिवारिक स्तर पर एक भिन्न किस्म की घरेलू हिंसा का शिकार होती है। पति द्वारा राजेन्द्र यादव की फोटो टाँगना-उतारना सम्बंधों में गहराते गाढ़े तनाव को रूपायित करता है। अपने वर्चस्व की स्थापना एवं रक्षा के प्रयास में मैत्रेयी के पति मैत्रेयी की इच्छाओं एवं आकांक्षाओं को जानबूझकर दरकिनारा करते हैं। मैत्रेयी और उसके लेखन को लेकर वे हमेशा शंकित रहते हैं। मैत्रेयी को लिखने से रोकने के लिए वह हर उपाय अपनाते हैं फिर चाहे वह मैत्रेयी को कार न देने का मामला हो या बार-बार राजेन्द्र यादव की तस्वीर उतारने-तोड़ने का। पति के व्यवहार के बारे में मैत्रेयी कहती है, “डॉ. साहब शारीरिक आघात कब देते हैं? वे दिल को निशाना बनाने वाले तीरंदाज” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 290)। गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया वास्तव में अपने वजूद, अपनी अस्मिता और अपनी पहचान को लेखन के माध्यम से व्यक्त करती एक औरत के संघर्ष की गाथा तो है ही साथ ही यह आत्मकथा नैतिक वर्जनाओं के नाम पर स्त्री को अनुशासित करती पितृसत्तात्मक राजनीति से भी हमें परिचित करवाती है। अपने बाहर-भीतर को पछीटने-खंगालने की प्रक्रिया में मैत्रेयी ने पितृक समाज को कटघरे में खड़ा किया है। इल्माना मैत्रेयी से कहती है, “मिसेज शर्मा बुर्के के भीतर मैं रोया करती। मुझे दुखी देखकर मेरी खालाजाद बहन शफिया ने शायरी की तीन किताबें मुझे दी। पढ़कर लगा, तालीमयापता, सोचपसन्द और नफासत वाले लोग औरत से ज्यादा बुर्के को पसंद करते हैं। ज्यादातर शेर नकाब और हुस्न के मेल से बनी खूबसूरती के कसीदों में थे” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 65)।

इसमें संदेह नहीं कि मानव समाज का इतिहास महिलाओं को सत्ता, प्रभुता एवं प्रसिद्धी से दूर रखने का इतिहास है। संभवतः इसीलिए लगभग प्रत्येक देश, काल, जाति और धर्म में महिलाओं को इन

सभी से दूर रखने और उन्हें पुरुष के बराबर न आने देने की अनेकानेक बाध्यताएँ रची गईं। रघुबीर सहाय द्वारा रचित कविता की निम्नांकित पंक्तियाँ इस संदर्भ में उल्लेखनीय हैं—

पढ़िए गीता बनिए सीता। फिर इन सबमें लगा पलीता।
किसी मूर्ख की हो परिणीता। निज घर बार बसाइए।
होंय कटीली। आँखें गीली। लकड़ी सीली। तबीयत ढीली।
घर की सबसे बड़ी पतीली। भर कर भात पसाइए। (कौशिक, 2004 : 111)

खेद का विषय है कि पितृकसत्ता स्त्री और पुरुष के एक ही कृत्य को अलग-अलग चश्मों से देखती है, “पूरे एम्स में शोर हो रहा है, कामिनी भाग गई, भाग गई। हम पूछते हैं डॉ. अरोरा घर से जाते तो ‘भाग गया भाग गया’ का शोर होता? नहीं न ? ठीक कह रही हो इल्माना, राजा शुद्धोधन का बेटा सिद्धार्थ अपने बीबी-बच्चे को छोड़कर भागा था। नल दमयन्ती को जंगल में सोती छोड़ कर भागा था। लोक कथाओं के गोपीचन्द भागे थे। इतिहास का राजा रतनसेन नागमती को छोड़ कर भागा था। गांधी कस्तूरबा से बेफिक्र कहीं भी चले गए। ये सब महान हो गए। इनकी वीर गाथाएँ बनीं। इनके चलाए धर्म स्थापित हुए। आम आदमी भी घर से भागता है, कहते हैं साधु हो गया। लेकिन औरत... वह घर छोड़ जाए तो बस एक ही बात कि रंडी, वेश्या हो गई” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 66-67)।

पितृसत्तात्मक समाज के दोहरे मापदंडों पर सवाल उठाती एवं स्त्री अस्मिता के प्रश्न को व्यापक मानवीय संदर्भों में देखने की मांग करती यह आत्मकथा पितृक साँचों एवं कसौटियों को खारिज करती है। अपनी आत्मकथा के पहले भाग ‘कस्तूरी कुण्डल बसै’ की तर्ज पर ही ‘गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया’ में भी मैत्रेयी ने कबीर की पंक्तियों का आश्रय लिया है। कस्तूरी कुण्डल बसै का अन्त ‘जो घर जाँरे आपना’ नामक अध्याय से होता है। मैत्रेयी आश्वस्त है कि “घर का कारागार टूट रहा है” (पुष्पा, 2003 : 332)। कस्तूरी कुण्डल बसै का जो सफर ‘जो घर जाँरे आपना’ से शुरू हुआ था वह गुड़िया भीतर गुड़िया के अडिग आत्मविश्वास ‘हम न मरहिं मारहि संसारा’ पर आकर समाप्त होता है (पुष्पा, 2016 : 332)। यह संकेत करता है कि आज की स्त्री ने अपनी ग्रंथियों से छुटकारा पाने और मार्ग में आने वाली पितृक चुनौतियों पर काबू पाने की शुरुआत कर दी है। मैत्रेयी के शब्दों में, “अब नई कथा लिखी जा रही थी” (पुष्पा, 2016 : 350)।

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गीता सन्देश भव्य तथा उदात्त ग्रंथ के रूप में

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गीता महाभारत रूपी कमल का पराग है। वेदों का सार है उपनिषद् और उपनिषदों का सार है गीता। गीता सर्वशास्त्री है। गीता में कर्म-ज्ञान-भक्ति का बड़ा मनोरम समन्वय दिखाया गया है। गीता सन्देश सार्वभौमिक, व्यावहारिक, बलप्रद तथा पवित्र बनाने वाला है। गीता किसी विशेष जाति या धर्म का ग्रंथ न होकर सम्पूर्ण मानव जाति का है। गीता में ईश्वर तथा मनुष्य-नारायण तथा नर आमने-सामने खड़े हैं और यही इसकी भव्य तथा उदात्त पृष्ठभूमि है।

मूलशब्द: गीता, उपनिषद्, विषाद, सर्वशास्त्री, ईश्वरार्पणभाव, स्वकर्म, किंकर्तव्यविमूढ़, कर्तव्योन्मुखी

भगवद्गीता का अर्थ है—भगवान् का गीत, जिसे संक्षेप में केवल 'गीता' कहते हैं। श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता जैसा कि विश्रुत ही है, महाभारत में भीष्म पर्व के 25 से 42 अध्याय तक का संकलित रूप है। 18 अध्यायों में निबद्ध 'भगवद्-गीता' के 700 श्लोक महाभारत के भीष्मपर्व से लिए गए हैं। "सन्त ज्ञानेश्वर के शब्दों में—'गीता महाभारत रूपी कमल का पराग है।' सामान्य जनता को वेदों का धर्म-तत्त्व समझाने की दृष्टि से इसकी उपयोगिता को ध्यान में रखकर इसे कामधेनु या कल्पवृक्ष भी कहा गया है" (स्वामी विदेहात्मानन्द, 2014: 9)। वेदों का सार है उपनिषद् और उपनिषदों का सार है गीता। "संस्कृत में गीत शब्द नपुंसक-लिंगी होने के कारण इसे 'गीतम्' कहते हैं, परन्तु चूँकि यह ग्रन्थ एक उपनिषद् (वेदान्त) है, अतः 'उपनिषद्' शब्द के विशेषण के रूप में यह भी स्त्रीलिंग होकर 'गीता' कहलाती है" (स्वामी विदेहात्मानन्द, 2014: 10)।

कुरुक्षेत्र के मैदान में अर्जुन को जो मोह या भ्रान्ति हुई थी, उसी को दूर करने के लिए भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण ने उनके लिए प्रहसन्निव-मानो हँसते हुए यह गीत गाया था। इसे सुनकर अर्जुन ने कहा—नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिः लब्ध-ज्ञान प्राप्त करके मेरा मोह दूर हो गया। "गीता के सम्बन्ध में एक बात और जाननी आवश्यक है। युद्धक्षेत्र में भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण ने अर्जुन को गीता का उपदेश दिया। वहाँ सुनने या लिखने वाले कौन थे? युद्धक्षेत्र में न तो व्यासदेव थे और न संजय ही, किन्तु गीता के पढ़ने से मालूम होता है कि राजा धृतराष्ट्र का अनुचर संजय अपने प्रभु को गीता सुना रहा है और महर्षि व्यास ने उसको महाभारत में श्लोक-बद्ध किया है। किन्तु उन दोनों ने किस प्रकार से सुना? आख्यायिका है कि धृतराष्ट्र अन्धे थे। कुरुक्षेत्र-युद्ध का विवरण जानने के लिए महर्षि वेदव्यास के समीप प्रार्थना करने पर व्यासदेव ने उनको दिव्य दृष्टि का वरदान देना चाहा, किन्तु उसको उन्होंने स्वीकार नहीं किया। तब महर्षि व्यास ने उनकी इच्छा-पूर्ति के लिए संजय को योग

दृष्टि प्रदान की, इसीलिए संजय युद्धक्षेत्र की सारी घटनाएँ देख सके और धृतराष्ट्र से कह सके” (स्वामी सारदानन्द, 2007: 16, 17)। श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता विश्व का अमूल्य ग्रंथ है। यह साक्षात् श्री कृष्ण के श्रीमुख से निःसृत परम रहस्यमयी दिव्य वाणी है। इसमें स्वयं श्रीकृष्ण ने अर्जुन को निमित्त बनाकर मनुष्यमात्र के कल्याण के लिए उपदेश दिया, यही उपदेश संहिता श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता है। जिसे वेदव्यास जी ने लिपिबद्ध कर जगत् के कल्याणार्थ प्रस्तुत किया है। “गीता का प्रथम दृश्य युद्धक्षेत्र का है। दोनों ओर स्वजन संबंधी और आत्मीयजन खड़े हैं— एक ओर कौरव हैं और दूसरी ओर पाण्डव, एक ओर पितामह भीष्म है तो दूसरी ओर उनके पौत्रगण, शत्रु—पक्ष में अपने आत्मीय स्वजनों को देख, उनका वध करने की बात सोचकर अर्जुन खिन्न हुए और अस्त्र त्याग करने का उन्होंने निश्चय कर लिया यथार्थ में यहीं से गीता का आरम्भ होता है” (स्वामी अपूर्वानन्द, 2014: 4)। महाभारत के अन्तर्गत होने के कारण गीता स्मृति ग्रन्थ है, किन्तु अपनी विशेषता के कारण इसकी गणना उपनिषदों की श्रेणी में होती है। “गीता के प्रत्येक अध्याय के अन्त में जो पुष्पिका आती है उसमें हम ‘इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासु उपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायां योगशास्त्रे...’ इस प्रकार उल्लेख पाते हैं। इस पर से यह दिखाई देता है कि गीता का वास्तविक नाम है श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतोपनिषद्— अर्थात् श्रीभगवान् के द्वारा गायी गयी उपनिषद्। इसमें परब्रह्मविषयक ज्ञान निहित होने के कारण यह ब्रह्मविद्या है, साथ ही उस ज्ञान की प्राप्ति के उपाय भी इसी में वर्णित होने के कारण ये योगशास्त्र भी है” (श्री रामकृष्ण शिवानन्द, 2015: 4)। भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण ने कहा—“गीता में हृदय पार्थ गीता में सारमुत्तमम्” अर्थात् हे पार्थ, गीता मेरा हृदय और गीता मेरा सार—सर्वस्व है। “गीता ध्यान में कहा है— “सर्वोपनिषदों गावो दोधा गोपालनन्दनः। पार्थोवत्सः सुधीभोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत्।” अर्थात् सभी उपनिषदों मानो गाय के समान हैं, श्रीकृष्ण उनका दोहन करने वाले हैं। अर्जुन बछड़े के समान है और गीता की अमृतरूप वाणी उत्तम दुग्ध के तुल्य है। केवल विवेकी बुद्धिमान लोग ही उस दूध के पीने वाले हैं” (स्वामी अपूर्वानन्द, 2014: 4)। गीता—महिमा का उद्घाटन पहली बार आदि गुरु शंकराचार्य आठवीं शताब्दी ने इस पुस्तिका को बृहत् इतिहास—ग्रन्थ महाभारत से बाहर निकाला, इस पर संस्कृत में एक महान् भाष्य लिखा और लोगों के समक्ष प्रस्तुत किया। तब तक यह महाभारत के भीष्म पर्व में छिपी हुई थी। विशिष्टाद्वैतवादी रामानुज तथा द्वैतवादी मध्वाचार्य भी अपने—अपने मतानुसार टीका कर गये हैं। सन्त ज्ञानेश्वर ने मराठी में ज्ञानेश्वरी लिखी। श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता विश्व का अद्वितीय ग्रंथ है। जो आत्मतत्त्व के प्रत्यक्षीकरण में एवं मनुष्य को आत्मा से साक्षात्कार कराने में सहायक सिद्ध हैं।

गीता सर्वशास्त्री है। गीता में कर्म—ज्ञान—भक्ति का बड़ा मनोरम समन्वय दिखाया गया है। गीता हमारे जीवन को सर्वांगीण रूप से विकसित करती हुई हमें अज्ञाननिवृत्ति और स्वरूप प्राप्ति—रूप अन्तिम लक्ष्य की ओर परिचालित करती है। जीवन में स्वधर्म के यथायोग्य आचरण से—अर्थात् फल की आकांक्षा और आसक्ति छोड़कर ईश्वरार्पणभाव से स्वकर्म करते रहने से चित्त शुद्ध हो जाता है तथा उस शुद्ध चित्त में ज्ञान प्रकट होकर मनुष्य भवबन्धन से मुक्त हो जाता है—यही गीतोक्त उपदेश की प्रमुख धारा है। श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता के अध्यायों का विभाजन इस प्रकार है—

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता

१.	प्रथमोऽध्याय :	(अर्जुनविषादयोगः)
२.	द्वितीयोऽध्याय :	(सांख्य योगः)
३.	तृतीयोऽध्याय :	(कर्मयोगः)
४.	चतुर्थोऽध्याय :	(ज्ञानयोगः)
५.	पंचमोऽध्याय :	(संन्यासयोगः)
६.	षष्ठोऽध्याय :	(ध्यानयोगः)
७.	सप्तमोऽध्याय :	(ज्ञानविज्ञान योगः)
८.	अष्टमोऽध्याय :	(अक्षरब्रह्मयोगः)
९.	नवमोऽध्याय :	(राजविद्याराजगुह्ययोगः)
१०.	दशमोऽध्याय :	(विभूतियोगः)
११.	एकादशोऽध्याय :	(विश्वरूपदर्शन योगः)
१२.	द्वादशोऽध्याय :	(भक्तियोगः)
१३.	त्रयोदशोऽध्याय :	(क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोगः)
१४.	चतुर्दशोऽध्याय :	(गुणत्रयविभागयोगः)
१५.	पंचमदशोऽध्याय :	(पुरुषोत्तमयोगः)
१६.	षोडशोऽध्याय :	(दैवासुरसम्पद्विभागयोगः)
१७.	सप्तदशोऽध्याय :	(श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगः)
१८.	अष्टादशोऽध्याय :	(मोक्ष संन्यासयोगः)

गीता सन्देश सार्वभौमिक, व्यावहारिक, बलप्रद तथा पवित्र बनाने वाला है। महान् उपनिषदों में मानवीय संसाधन तथा मानवीय सम्भावनाओं का जो एक श्रेष्ठ विज्ञान प्रस्तुत किया गया है। उसे अपनी व्यावहारिक दिशा गीता में ही प्राप्त हुई। इस ग्रन्थ के सात सौ श्लोकों का छन्द भी अत्यन्त सरल है, यह हर पंक्ति में आठ अक्षरों वाला प्रचलित अनुष्टुप छन्द है, वैसे बीच-बीच में कुछ लम्बे छन्द वाले श्लोक भी आये हैं।

गीता के प्रत्येक अध्याय को एक-एक योग की संज्ञा दी गयी है। योग का अर्थ है मिलाकर एक कर देना— भगवान् की ओर ले जाना। जैसे, प्रथम अध्याय को विषादयोग कहते हैं। विषादयोग क्यों कहा गया? इस कारण से कि अर्जुन का विषाद ही उनको भगवान् की ओर ले जाने का कारण बना। (स्वामी सारदानन्द, 2007: 5)

गीता की पृष्ठभूमि

गीता किसी विशेष जाति या धर्म का ग्रंथ न होकर सम्पूर्ण मानव जाति का है। महान् ऋषियों ने बिना किसी भेद-भाव के अपनी धर्म-विषयक धारणाओं का विस्तार किया। ऋषियों ने ये उदात्त विचार किसी वर्ग-विशेष को, समुदाय या जाति को नहीं दिये, बल्कि मार्गदर्शन चाहने वाले सभी लोगों को दिये। "अतः गीता पढ़ते समय हम स्पष्ट रूप से देखते हैं कि इसकी शिक्षाएँ समग्र

मानव-जाति के लिए हैं ऐसे सभी नर-नारियों के लिए हैं, जो अपनी अन्तरात्मा के उच्चतर अभिव्यक्तियों की अनुभूति करने हेतु संघर्ष कर रहे हैं। इस दर्शन और इस धर्म ने हमें यही दिया है। गीता की अपनी विशिष्ट संवादीय पद्धति ने भी इसी आदर्श को रेखांकित किया है। यह संवाद श्रीकृष्ण तथा अर्जुन के बीच होता है। हमारे प्राचीन ग्रन्थों में अर्जुन को नर अर्थात् मनुष्य और श्रीकृष्ण को नारायण अर्थात् परमात्मा का अवतार माना गया है, श्रीकृष्ण इसमें किसी सम्पद्राय-विशेष को नहीं, अपितु अर्जुन के माध्यम से मनुष्य-मात्र को ही अपने उपदेश दे रहे हैं। इस प्रकार गीता में ईश्वर तथा मनुष्य-नारायण तथा नर आमने-सामने खड़े हैं और यही इसकी भव्य तथा उदात्त पृष्ठभूमि है” (स्वामी रंगानाथानन्द, 2001: 9)। धर्म भूमि कुरुक्षेत्र में कौरवों और पाण्डवों की सेनाएं आमने-सामने खड़ी हैं। कौरवों की ओर 11 अक्षौहिणी सेना और पाण्डवों की ओर 7 अक्षौहिणी सेना जिनमें दोनों ओर से सगे-सम्बन्धी, भाई, गुरुजन एवं समस्त देशों के राजा महाराजा युद्ध की इच्छा से एकत्रित हैं।

दोनों सेनाओं के मध्य में एक विशाल रथ खड़ा है, जिसमें भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण सारथि-रूप से और अर्जुन रथी रूप से विराजमान हैं। युद्ध में अपने स्वजनों को देखकर अर्जुन भयभीत हो जाते हैं। उन्हें लगा कि राज्य जैसी तुच्छ वस्तु की प्राप्ति के लिए इतना नर संहार करना महापाप है। कल्याण युद्ध करने में है अथवा न करने में इस विषय में अर्जुन किंकर्तव्यविमूढ़ हो जाते हैं। “वे भगवान् श्री कृष्ण को अपना सखा मानते थे, पर आज पहली बार शरणागत होकर, अपने को शिष्य मानकर भगवान् से अपने कल्याण का उपाय पूछते हैं— ‘यच्छ्रेयः स्यन्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मेशिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम्’ (गीता 2/7) युद्ध करने अथवा न करने का कल्याण से कोई सम्बन्ध नहीं है—यह बताने के लिए भगवान् बड़े विलक्षण ढंग से अपने उपदेश का आरम्भ करते हैं” (पाराशर, 2012: 35)।

इस प्रकार युद्ध स्थल में निराश मन वाले, अर्जुन को कर्तव्योन्मुखी बनाने के लिए श्रीकृष्ण ने जो लोक कल्याणकारी अद्भुत चिन्तन प्रस्तुत किया, वह श्रीमद्भगवद् गीता के नाम से सुर्कीतिक हुआ। गीता के उद्भव की पृष्ठभूमि का आधार महाभारत के युद्ध की विभीषिका से भयभीत अर्जुन का विषाद है। उसी विषाद के परिहारार्थ श्री कृष्ण द्वारा गीता के रूप में लोक कल्याणकारी, कर्तव्य में आस्था का निदेशन, चिन्तन, प्रस्तुत किया गया है।

“गीता के वक्ता भगवान् श्री कृष्ण हैं, श्रोता उनके प्रिय सखा अर्जुन हैं, संकलन कर्ता महर्षि वेदव्यास जी हैं, और लेखक बुद्धि प्रचायक श्री गणेश जी हैं” (पाराशर, 2012: 35)। भगवान् श्री कृष्ण ने अपने उपदेश में प्रमाण रूप से बहुत सी श्रुतियां कही थीं, उनको तथा जो उन्होंने गद्य में कहा था, उसे भी श्री वेदव्यास जी ने स्वयं श्लोकबद्ध कर लिया तथा अर्जुन संजय और धृतराष्ट्र के वचनों को भी अपनी भाषा में श्लोकबद्ध कर लिया। वहीं श्री कृष्णार्जुन संवाद के रूप में अठारह अध्यायों में विभक्त सात सौ श्लोकों का यह ग्रंथरत्न श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता है।

गीता में कर्मयोग, ज्ञानयोग और भक्तियोग का समन्वय योग शब्द का अर्थ—योग शब्द संस्कृत की 'युज्' धातु से 'छज्'(अ) प्रत्यय करके बनता है। युज् धातु के तीन अर्थ हैं—

१) 'युजिर् योगे':

जिसका अर्थ है—समरूप परमात्मा के साथ नित्य सम्बन्ध यही अर्थ गीता में मुख्यरूप से आया है।

२) 'युज् समाधौ':

चित्त की स्थिरता, अर्थात् समाधि में स्थित।

३) 'युज् संयमने':

अर्थात् संयमन, सामर्थ्य, प्रभाव।

गीता में जहां कहीं योग शब्द आया है, इन तीनों में से—एक अर्थ की मुख्यता और शोष दो अर्थों की गौणता है।

गीता में मानव कल्याण के लिए तीन योग मार्गों का वर्णन किया गया है—

१) कर्मयोग २) ज्ञान योग ३) भक्तियोग

गीता में केवल इन्हीं योग मार्गों का वर्णन नहीं हुआ। गीता में इन योगों के अलावा यज्ञ, दान, तप, ध्यान योग, प्राणायाम्, दृष्योग, हठयोग आदि साधनों का भी वर्णन किया गया है। इसका मुख्य कारण यह है कि गीता में अर्जुन के प्रश्न युद्ध के विषय में नहीं है, अपितु कल्याण के विषय में हैं। गीता में कर्म, ज्ञान, भक्ति का वर्णन इस प्रकार है "स्थूल, सूक्ष्म और कारण इन तीनों शरीरों का संसार के साथ अभिन्न सम्बन्ध है। अतः इन तीनों को दूसरों की सेवा में लगा दें, यह कर्मयोग हुआ, स्वयं इनसे असंग होकर अपने स्वरूप में स्थित हो जाये—यह ज्ञान योग हुआ और स्वयं भगवान् को समर्पित हो जायें— यह भक्ति योग हुआ। इन तीनों योगों को सिद्ध करने के लिए अर्थात् अपना उद्धार करने के लिए तीन शक्तियाँ प्राप्त हैं—

१) करने की शक्ति (बल)

२) जानने की शक्ति (ज्ञान)

३) मानने की शक्ति (विश्वास)। (पाराशर, 2012: 35)

कार्य करने की शक्ति निः स्वार्थ भाव से संसार की सेवा करने के लिए है जो कर्म योग है। जानने की शक्ति अपने स्वरूप को जानने के लिए है, जो ज्ञानयोग है। मानने की शक्ति भगवान् को अपना तथा अपने को भगवान् का मानकर सर्वथा भगवान् को समर्पित होने के लिए है, जो भक्तियोग है। जो करने की रुचि अधिक रखता है, वह कर्मयोग का अधिकारी है। जानने की जिज्ञासा रखने वाला, ज्ञान का अधिकारी है और जिसका भगवान् पर श्रद्धा विश्वास अधिक है वह भक्तियोग का अधिकारी है ये तीनों ही योग मार्ग परमात्म प्राप्ति के स्वतंत्र साधन हैं। अन्य सभी साधन इन तीनों के अन्तर्गत

आ जाते हैं। गीता में जगत्, जीव और परमात्मा ने इन तीनों का वर्णन विभिन्न नामों से हुआ है जैसे परा, अपरा और भगवान्। क्षर, अक्षर और पुरुषोत्तम आदि। जगत् और जीव ये दोनों विचार के विषय होने से "लौकिक" हैं। परन्तु परमात्मा विचार का विषय न होने से "अलौकिक" है। इसलिए ज्ञानयोग और कर्मयोग ये दोनों लौकिक साधन हैं और भक्तियोग अलौकिक साधन है। लौकिक साधना से मुक्ति होती है और अलौकिक साधना से परमप्रेम की प्राप्ति होती है।

गीता सारामृत

गीता की पृष्ठभूमि युद्धक्षेत्र है। समूचा गीताग्रन्थ अष्टादश अध्यायों में रचित है। प्रत्येक अध्याय ही एकयोग है। प्रथम अध्याय 'अर्जुनविषाद योग' में उस नैतिक समस्या को बताया है जिसमें व्यवहार करते समय मनुष्य बहुधा द्वन्द्वमें पड़ जाता है, किंकर्तव्यविमूढ़ हो जाता है—क्या करना उचित है और क्या करना अनुचित। अर्जुन केवल पाण्डव पक्ष के एक श्रेष्ठ योद्धा ही नहीं थे, बल्कि उस समय के क्षत्रिय वीरों में अग्रगण्य थे। अपने गाण्डीव धनुष पर उन्हें पूर्ण विश्वास था। प्रथम अध्याय में अर्जुन का वह चित्र है, जब महायुद्ध का आरम्भ होने से पूर्व ही युद्ध करना स्थगित कर वह रथ पर बैठ जाते हैं और श्रीकृष्ण से कहते हैं—'मैं युद्ध नहीं करूँगा। वे अपने स्वजनों के प्रति मोह के फलस्वरूप युद्ध न करने का निर्णय ले बैठते हैं। प्रथम अध्याय मनुष्य की वह मानसिक स्थिति का वर्णन करता है जिसमें अपने प्रियजनों के प्रति मोह की भावना कर्तव्य से पलायन तक करवा देती है।

72 श्लोक युक्त द्वितीय अध्याय का नाम 'सांख्ययोग' है। सांख्य शब्द का अर्थ है ज्ञान और योग शब्द का अर्थ है कर्म। ज्ञान और कर्म पर सम्मिलित या पृथक् रूप से चर्चा होने के कारण इस अध्याय का नाम 'सांख्ययोग' रखा गया है। अर्जुन का विषाद दूर करने के लिए इस अध्याय का जन्म हुआ है। सांख्ययोग का 47वाँ श्लोक बहुत ही महत्त्वपूर्ण है जिसमें श्रीकृष्ण ने अर्जुन को कर्म और कर्मफल का अन्तर बताया है—

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।

मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते संगोऽस्त्वकर्मणि। (स्वामी अपूर्वानन्द, 2014: 40)

श्रीकृष्ण ने कहा—कर्म में ही तुम्हारा अधिकार है, कर्मफल में नहीं। तुम्हें अपने कर्तव्य—कर्म करने होंगे। तुम निष्काम भाव से अपने वर्ण और आश्रम के लिए विहित कर्म करते चलो। कर्मत्याग न करो। दूसरे अध्याय में हम सच्चे दर्शन के उषाकाल में हैं। इस प्रकार द्वितीय अध्याय का सातवाँ श्लोक गीताज्ञान के सम्प्रेषण का मार्ग खोलता है, क्योंकि यहीं शोकग्रस्त अर्जुन श्रीकृष्ण के सामने आत्मसमर्पण करके उनसे पथनिर्देश के लिए याचना करते हैं।

तृतीय अध्याय में 43 श्लोक हैं। इस अध्याय का नाम कर्मयोग है। अर्जुन के प्रश्न पर श्रीकृष्ण ने ज्ञान और कर्म का मेल करके इस अध्याय में विशेष रूप से कर्ममहात्म्य और स्वधर्मपालन का उपदेश दिया है। संन्यास आश्रमियों के लिए ज्ञानयोग और अन्य तीन आश्रमियों के लिए कर्मयोग है। गीता का मूल सूत्र ही यही है—निरन्तर कर्म करो किन्तु उसमें आसक्त न हो जाओ। अनासक्ति ही पूर्ण

आत्मत्याग है जो व्यक्ति धन या अन्य किसी प्रकार की कामना न रख कर कार्य करते हैं वे ही सबसे उत्तम कार्यकर्ता हैं।

सक्ताः कर्मण्यविद्वोंसो यथा कुर्वन्ति भारत।

कूर्पाद्विद्विस्तथासक्तशिकीर्षुलोकसंग्रहम्। (श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता, 2070: 58)

चतुर्थ अध्याय में 42 श्लोक हैं। इसका नाम 'ज्ञानयोग' है। इसे आध्यात्मिक राज्य की कुंजी स्वरूप कहा जा सकता है। इसमें श्रीकृष्ण ने ईश्वर के साकार रूप के बारे में बताया है।

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।

अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम्।। (श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता, 2070: 58)

हे भारत! जब-जब धर्म की हानि और अधर्म की वृद्धि होती है, तब-तब ही मैं अपने रूप को रचता हूँ अर्थात् साकार रूप से लोगों के सम्मुख प्रकट होता हूँ। "सब लोग धर्माधम कर्म के अनुसार जन्म ग्रहण करते हैं किन्तु मैं कर्म के वश में नहीं हूँ। केवल संसार के कल्याण का संकल्प लेकर अपनी त्रिगुणात्मिका माया की सहायता से मनुष्य देह धारण कर संसार में आविर्भूत होता हूँ" (स्वामी अपूर्वानन्द, 2014: 89)। श्रीकृष्ण अर्जुन को ज्ञानयोग का उपदेश सुनाने के पहले ज्ञानयोग में पहुँचने के उपाय रूप से सनातन योग धर्म की प्राचीन परम्परा, अवतार तत्त्व, भगवान के जन्म-कर्मरूप लीलातत्त्व, चार वर्णों की उत्पत्ति, कर्म अकर्म और विकर्म का विश्लेषण, ज्ञान क्या है। ज्ञानलाभ का उपाय फल और अधिकारी का विचार, वर्णभेद, कर्मभेद, ज्ञानलाभ के बहिरंग और अन्तरंग साधन आदि अनेक आध्यात्मिक विषयों का उपदेश किया है। श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं- हे अर्जुन, समस्त कर्म ज्ञान उत्पन्न होने पर समाप्त हो जाते हैं। निष्काम कर्मयोग ज्ञानयोग में पहुँचने का सोपान मात्र है। कर्म, योग भक्ति और ज्ञान परस्पर सहायक हैं और वे अन्त में श्रीभगवान के ज्ञान रूप परम प्राप्ति तक साधक को पहुँचा देते हैं।

उन्तीस श्लोक युक्त इस पंचम अध्याय का नाम 'संन्यासयोग' है। इस अध्याय में श्रीकृष्ण ने कर्म, अकर्म और विकर्म सब कुछ छोड़कर संन्यासी होने का उपदेश नहीं दिया है, यथार्थ में पूर्णतया कर्मफल का परित्याग करके कर्मयोगी या नित्य संन्यासी होने का ही आदेश दिया है। कर्मत्याग या स्वधर्मत्याग गीता का उपदेश नहीं है, बल्कि स्वधर्म-पालन और कर्मफल त्याग ही गीता का उपदेश है। श्रीकृष्ण ने कहा है "संन्यास (त्याग) और कर्मयोग दोनों ही मुक्तिदायी हैं परन्तु (ज्ञानरहित) कर्मत्याग की अपेक्षा कर्मयोग अधिक अच्छा है। हे महाबाहो, जो न तो किसी (व्यक्ति या वस्तु) की कामना करता है और न (किसी से) द्वेष करता है, ऐसा द्वन्द्वरहित व्यक्ति सहज ही बन्धनों से मुक्त हो जाता है" (स्वामी विदेहात्मानन्द, 2014: 50)।

षष्ठ अध्याय में 47 श्लोक हैं। इस अध्याय का नाम ध्यानयोग है। इसके आरम्भ में श्रीकृष्ण बताते हैं कि कर्मफल का आश्रय न लेता हुआ जो कर्तव्यकर्म करता है, वही संन्यासी और योगी है; केवल अग्नि का त्याग करने वाला तथा क्रियाओं का त्याग करने वाला ही (संन्यासी और योगी) नहीं होता।

अनश्रितः कर्मफल कार्यं कर्म करोति यः ।

स संन्यासी च योगी च न निरग्निर चाक्रियः ॥ (श्रीरामकृष्ण शिवानन्द, 2014: 90)

इसमें यम, नियम, आसन, प्राणायाम, प्रत्याहार, धारणा, ध्यान और समाधि में सिद्धि लाभ कर सकने से ही ध्यानयोग के लक्ष्य ब्राह्मी स्थिति की अवस्था प्राप्त होती है। यह साधना भी निष्काम भाव से ही करनी होगी। ध्यानयोग की सहायता से चंचल मन को अभ्यास और वैराग्य का अवलम्बन कर आत्मस्थ करना सम्भव है और भी एक विशेष आशा की वाणी श्रीभगवान ने इस अध्याय में सुनायी है। शुभ कर्म करने वालों को कभी दुःख नहीं होता। निष्काम कर्मी, निष्काम ज्ञानी, निष्काम योगी और निष्काम भक्त—सभी श्रीभगवान के परमपद प्राप्त होंगे, इतना कहकर पुरुषोत्तम श्रीकृष्ण ने ज्ञान, कर्म, योग और भक्ति का समन्वय किया है।

इस सप्तम अध्याय का नाम ज्ञानविज्ञान योग है। इस अध्याय में कुल 30 श्लोक हैं। इसमें श्रीकृष्ण अर्जुन से कहते हैं मैं तुझे ज्ञान के साथ ही विज्ञान भी पूरी तरह से बताऊँगा, जिसे जानकर इस जगत् में और कुछ भी जानना बाकी नहीं रह जाता। हजारों मनुष्यों में से कोई एक ही इसे प्राप्त करने का प्रयत्न करता है। पृथ्वी, जल, अग्नि, वायु, आकाश और मन, बुद्धि तथा अहंकार—मेरी प्रकृति इस प्रकार आठ भागों में विभक्त है। मैं ही इस सम्पूर्ण जगत् की सृष्टि तथा प्रलय स्वरूप हूँ। हे अर्जुन मैं जल में रस हूँ, चन्द्रमा तथा सूर्य में आलोक हूँ। सर्व वेदों में ओंकार हूँ। आकाश में शब्द और मनुष्यों में पौरुष हूँ। मैं पृथ्वी में पवित्र गन्ध, अग्नि में तेज, सभी प्राणियों में जीवन तथा तपस्वियों में तप हूँ। हे अर्जुन, तुम मुझे समस्त प्राणियों का सनातन बीज समझो।

अष्टम अध्याय 28 श्लोकों से युक्त है। इस अध्याय का नाम अक्षर ब्रह्मयोग है। जिसमें अर्जुन ने वह ब्रह्म क्या है, वह कर्म क्या है और अध्यात्म, अधिभूत एवं अधिदैव किसे कहते हैं? हे मधुसूदन, अधियज्ञ क्या है तथा इस देह में किस प्रकार स्थित है और आत्मसंयमी लोगों के द्वारा मृत्यु के समय तुम किस प्रकार जानने में आते हो प्रश्न किये हैं। श्री कृष्ण इन सब का उत्तर देते हुए अर्जुन के मन को शांत करते हैं। अक्षर को परम ब्रह्म और स्वभाव अर्थात् जीवात्मा को अध्यात्म कहते हैं। यज्ञ के रूप में द्रव्यों की आहुति को कर्म कहते हैं। शरीर में विनाशवान पदार्थ अधिभूत हैं, पुरुष या हिरण्यगर्भ अधिदेवता है और मैं ही अधियज्ञ स्वरूप हूँ। इस अध्याय की मुख्य वाणी है—परमगति प्राप्त करने के लिए सदा ईश्वर चिन्तन ही श्रेष्ठ उपाय है। भक्तियोग को सुगम बताया है।

नवम अध्याय 34 श्लोकों में रचा गया है। इसका नाम राजविद्या राजगुह्य योग है। जिसमें अनुपम ऐश्वर्य और भक्ति के असाधारण प्रभाव की विस्तृत व्याख्या की है। इसमें ईश्वरीय योग—सामर्थ्य, भगवान के भक्त दैवी—सम्पद्—सम्पन्न और अभक्त आसुरी—सम्पद्—युक्त, ईश्वर का विश्वानुगत भाव, योगक्षेम और भगद्भक्ति के फल का स्वरूप, श्रीमद्भगवान् भक्ति के लिये लालायित और ईश्वर में एकान्त शरणागति ही भक्तिलाभ का श्रेष्ठ उपाय आदिविषयों का विवेचन हुआ है।

दशम अध्याय में 42 श्लोक हैं। जिसमें ईश्वर की विभूति के बारे में बताया है कि वह विश्वानुगत होकर भी विश्वातीत हैं, प्रपंचाभिमानि होकर भी प्रपंचातीत है। वह निर्गुण होते हुए भी सगुण की

तरह प्रतीत होते हैं। इसमें बताया है भगवान का अन्त नहीं किया जा सकता। उनके कार्य को मनुष्य नहीं समझ सकता। उनके अनन्त कार्य है। ईश्वर को पाने का सहज उपाय बताया 'जो लोग मुझमें चित्त अर्पण कर भक्ति से मेरी उपासना करते हैं, वे मुझे पाने में समर्थ होते हैं।

55 श्लोकों के इस एकादश अध्याय का नाम 'विश्वरूपदर्शनयोग' है। जिसमें अर्जुन ने श्रीकृष्ण से प्रार्थना की थी तथा श्री कृष्ण ने प्रसन्न होकर अपना ईश्वरीय रूप दिखाया। जिसके लिए अर्जुन को 'दिव्यचक्षु' या 'भावनेत्र' दिये थे। जिससे अर्जुन ने भगवान् का दिव्य रूप देखा था जिस रूप का दर्शन होने से मनुष्य को परमगति मिलती है।

श्रीभगवान ने अर्जुन को जिस विश्वरूप का दर्शन कराया था, वह यथार्थ में ही अद्भुत, अनिर्वचनीय और अदृष्टपूर्व है। वह विश्वरूप सभी और पूर्ण, सर्वव्यापी, आदि-अन्त-मध्य-रहित तथा ज्योतिर्मय है। फिर विश्व के जन्म-स्थिति-जय भी उन्हीं में हो रहे हैं। श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं समस्त कर्मों का कर्ता मैं ही हूँ और सारे कर्म मेरे ही हैं, ऐसा समझकर तुम अनासक्त चित्त से युद्धादि समस्त कर्म करते रहो। यही श्रीकृष्ण का निर्देश है।

द्वादश अध्याय 20 श्लोकों में हैं। यह अध्याय भक्ति-साधन के पथ-निर्देश के लिए विशेष महत्त्वपूर्ण है। कर्म, उपासना, मनःसंयम, योग या ज्ञान इनमें से एक या एकाधिक अथवा सभी उपायों से भगवान-लाभ या ब्रह्मस्वरूपता में प्रतिष्ठित होना सम्भव है। भक्तियोग, कर्मयोग, राजयोग या ज्ञानयोग-प्रत्येक ही धर्म की पूर्णांग साधना है। इसमें सगुण-निर्गुण ब्रह्मोपासना इन दोनों में कौन उत्तम है, इसका उपदेश देकर श्रीकृष्ण ने कहा है-यद्यपि दोनों ही मार्ग एक ही वस्तु के प्रापक हैं, तो भी भक्ति में निष्काम कर्म ही श्रेष्ठ है।

त्रयोदश अध्याय में 35 श्लोक (मतान्तर में 34) हैं। इस अध्याय का नाम क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोग है। इस अध्याय के अन्तिम श्लोक में अध्याय का सारमर्म सूचित हुआ है। क्षेत्र और क्षेत्रज्ञ अर्थात् शरीर और आत्मा के भेद-दर्शन से ही मुक्ति है। देहात्मबोध अर्थात् इस नश्वर देह में आत्मज्ञान ही अज्ञान तथा सारे बन्धनों का कारण है। देहात्म-विवेक अर्थात् आत्मा देह से पृथक है, इस ज्ञान से ही निर्वाण मुक्ति है। देह, मन, बुद्धि सभी सृष्ट पदार्थ, सभी सगुण, सभी नश्वर है। अतः वे आत्मा नहीं हो सकते। आत्मा निर्गुण है। क्षेत्रज्ञ (देह) तथा क्षेत्र (आत्मा) का यह भेदज्ञान ही यथार्थ ज्ञान है। वही परमेश्वर का ज्ञान या ब्रह्मज्ञान है।

चतुर्दश अध्याय में 27 श्लोक हैं। इसका नाम गुणत्रयविभागयोग है। सत्त्व, रज, तम इन तीन गुण और तीनों गुणों से अतीत त्रिगुणातीत अवस्था ही इस अध्याय में विशेष रूप से आलोचित हुई है। श्रीकृष्ण ने कहा है- मेरी एकनिष्ठ भाव से भक्तियोग के द्वारा सेवा करने से ही त्रिगुणातीत होकर ब्रह्मभाव प्राप्ति होती है, क्योंकि मैं ही ब्रह्म की प्रतिष्ठा हूँ। श्रीकृष्ण ने त्रिगुणातीत अवस्था के जो लक्षण बताये हैं वह अति दुर्लभ हैं। शरीर में तीनों गुणों के कार्य चलते रहने से जो निर्लिप्त साक्षी रूप से अवस्थित रहते हैं और सुख-दुखादि में विचलित नहीं होते, वे त्रिगुणातीत हैं। जो ऐकान्तिक

भक्तियोग के साथ श्रीभगवान् की आराधना करते हैं वे इन तीनों गुणों का अतिक्रमण कर ब्रह्मभाव प्राप्त होने में समर्थ होते हैं।

पंचदश अध्याय में 20 श्लोक हैं। इस अध्याय का नाम पुरुषोत्तम योग है। समस्त गीता—शास्त्र का आशय इस अध्याय में संक्षेप से व्यक्त किया गया है। इस पुरुषोत्तम को जानने से मनुष्य सर्वज्ञ हो जाता है। उस समय वह समझ सकता है कि वह सगुण और निर्गुण भी है। वह साकार तथा निराकार भी है। वह कृपापारायण होकर भक्तों के दुःखमोचन के लिए अवतार से अवतीर्ण होते हैं। यह पुरुषोत्तम तत्त्व अत्यन्त गोपनीय है और ईश्वर की विशेष कृपा बिना यह तत्त्व कोई समझ नहीं सकता।

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः।

यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः।। (स्वामी अपूर्वानन्द, 2014: 294)

क्षर और अक्षर दोनों पुरुषों से भिन्न स्वतन्त्र एक उत्तम पुरुष भी है, जिन्हें परमात्मा कहते हैं। वह ईश्वरपदा वाच्य नियन्ता निर्विकार और अव्यय होने पर भी तीनों लोकों के हृदयों में प्रविष्ट होकर सबका पालन करते हैं। यह अध्याय श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता का एक श्रेष्ठ अध्याय है।

षोडश अध्याय चौबीस श्लोकों में समाप्त है। इसमें प्रधान तथा दैव और आसुर सम्पत्तियों का विस्तारित वर्णन तथा विभाजन किया गया है। इसीलिए इसका नाम “दैवासुरम्पर्दाविभाग योगः” है। श्रीकृष्ण ने दैवी सम्पदाओं का विभाजन करते हुए कहा है—भय—साहित्य, चित्तशुद्धि, आत्मज्ञान में निष्ठा, कर्मयोगपरावणता, सत्य, अक्रोध, त्याग, शांति, परनिन्दा वर्जन, जीवों पर दया, लोभशून्यता, मृदुता, कुकर्म करने में लज्जा, चंचलता का अभाव, तेजस्विता, क्षमा, धैर्य, शौच, अहिंसा, अहंकार—शून्यता आदि दैवी सम्पदायें हैं। जो लोग पूर्व जन्म के शुभ कर्मों के फलस्वरूप दैवी—सम्पद के अधिकारी होकर जन्में हैं, वे ही इस छब्बीस सात्त्विक गुणों के अधिकारी हैं। उसी प्रकार दम्भ, दर्प, अभिमान, क्रोध, निष्ठुरता, अज्ञान आदि आसुरी सम्पदा लेकर जो लोग जन्मे हैं, वे सदा दुःख ही भोगते रहते हैं।

सप्तदश अध्याय 28 श्लोकों में रचित है। इसका नाम श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोग है। इसमें अर्जुन ने प्रश्न किया है हे कृष्ण, जो लोग शास्त्र के निर्देशों को छोड़कर श्रद्धापूर्वक यज्ञ करते हैं, उनकी वह निष्ठा सात्त्विकी है या राजसी या तामसी? श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं—हे अर्जुन, हर व्यक्ति की उसके अपने स्वभाव के अनुसार ही श्रद्धा होती है। मनुष्य श्रद्धामय है, जिसकी जैसी श्रद्धा है, उसका चरित्र वैसा ही हो जाता है। सात्त्विक लोग देवताओं की, राजसिक लोग यज्ञ तथा राक्षसों की ओर तामसिक लोग भूत—प्रेतों आदि की पूजा करते हैं। इन (तीन तरह के) लोगों को प्रिय लगनेवाला आहार, यज्ञ, तप और दान भी तीन अलग—अलग प्रकार के हैं—उनका यह भेद भी सुनो। सात्त्विक लोगों को ऐसा आहार प्रिय लगता है, जो आयु, सत्त्व, बुद्धि, बल, आरोग्य, सुख तथा रुचि को बढ़ाता हो और जो सरस, चिकना, पौष्टिक तथा मनोरम हो। राजसिक लोगों को ऐसा आहार प्रिय लगता है, जो तीता, कड़वा, खट्टा, नमकीन, खूब गरम, चटपटा, सूखा तथा दाहक हो और दुःख, शोक (चिन्ता) तथा

रोग पैदा करता हो। तामसिक लोगों को ऐसा आहार प्रिय लगता है, जो अधपका, निःस्वाद, दुर्गन्धयुक्त, बासी, जूठा तथा अपवित्र हो। श्रीभगवान ने इस अध्याय में त्रिविध यज्ञ—सात्त्विक, राजसिक, तामसिक का वर्णन भी किया है। शरीरादि—भेद से विविध तपस्या और सत्त्वादि—भेद से त्रिविध दान की व्याख्या करके यज्ञादि कर्म में ब्रह्मनिर्देश दिया है। यह ब्रह्मनिर्देश अवश्य पालनीय है। जिससे कर्म का शोधन होता है। 'ऊँ तत् सत्' इन तीन नामों से ब्रह्म का उल्लेख किया गया है। 'ऊँ' का उच्चारण करके ही निरन्तर यज्ञ, दान, तप आदि क्रियाएँ आरम्भ किया करते हैं। 'तत्' का उच्चारण करके मोक्ष के आकांक्षीगण फल की इच्छा को त्याग विविध प्रकार के यज्ञ, तप, दान आदि क्रियाओं का अनुष्ठान करते हैं। 'सत्' शब्द का उपयोग अस्ति तथा अच्छाई के सम्पादनार्थ किया जाता है और मंगलमय कार्यों में भी 'सत्' का उपेयाग किया जाता है।

अष्टादश अध्याय 78 श्लोकों में रचित है। इसके 73 श्लोक तक श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता या श्रीकृष्णार्जुन संवाद है। बाकी 5 श्लोक संजय के वाक्य हैं। यहाँ समस्त गीताशास्त्र की आलोचना का उपसंहार करके मानव जीवन का चरम, आदर्श और परम प्राप्ति रूप मोक्ष लाभ कैसे होता है, श्रीकृष्ण ने बताया है। इसीलिए इस अध्याय का नाम 'मोक्षयोग' है। पहले अर्जुन के प्रश्न के उत्तर में श्रीकृष्ण ने संन्यास और त्याग तथा सत्त्वादि गुणभेद से त्रिविध त्याग की व्याख्या की है। काम्य कर्म का त्याग ही संन्यास है और सारे कर्मों के फल मात्र का त्याग ही यथार्थ त्याग है। जो कर्म—फल त्याग है वहीं यथार्थ संन्यासी है। सत्त्वगुण से सम्पन्न, ज्ञानी तथा संशयरहित हुआ व्यक्ति न तो अप्रिय कर्म से दूर भागता है और न प्रिय कर्म में आसक्त होता है। ज्ञान, ज्ञेय तथा ज्ञाता—ये तीन ही समस्त क्रियाओं के प्रेरक हैं। इसमें स्वधर्म के द्वारा उपयोगी कर्म करने को भगवान की आराधना माना है। श्रीकृष्ण अपना अन्तिम उपदेश देते हुए कहते हैं—“मन से समस्त धर्म कर्म मुझमें सौंप कर सर्वदा मुझमें मन रखो और अपने अधिकार के अनुसार स्वधर्म का पालन करो, उसी से मेरी प्रसन्नता पाकर मुक्त हो सकोगे। भगवान् की कृपा के बिना मनुष्य मायायुक्त नहीं हो सकता। अहंकार ही वह माया है। श्रीकृष्ण अर्जुन को गीता का गुह्यतम उपदेश देकर कहते हैं—“तुम एकमात्र मेरी ही चिन्ता करो, मेरी ही भक्ति करो, पूजा करो, मुझे ही नमस्कार करो। मैं प्रतिज्ञा करके कहता हूँ कि तुम मुझे ही पाओगे। सब धर्मों का परित्याग कर तुम मेरी ही शरण लो, मैं माया बन्धन से तुम्हें चिरकाल के लिए मुक्त करूँगा।

श्रीकृष्ण की इस अभय वाणी का विपुल फल हुआ था। अर्जुन का अन्तर ज्ञानलोक से उद्भासित हो उठा। वह गद्गद स्वर से बोले—“तुम्हारी कृपा से मेरा मोह दूर हो गया है, मन संशय—मुक्त हुआ है, अब मैं बिना द्विविधा के तुम्हारी आज्ञा का पालन करूँगा।”

कच्चिदेतच्छ्रुतं पार्थ त्वयैकाग्रेण चेतसा।

कच्चिदज्ञान सम्मोहः प्रन्ष्टस्ते ध्वंजय।। (स्वामी अपूर्वानन्द, 2014: 360)

हे अर्जुन, क्या तुमने एकाग्रचित से इस गीताशास्त्र को सुना है? हे अर्जुन, क्या तुम्हारा अज्ञानजनित भारी मोह दूर हो गया है?

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचन तव ॥ (स्वामी अपूर्वानन्द, 2014: 361)

अर्जुन ने कहा— हे कृष्ण, तुम्हारे अनुग्रह से मेरा अज्ञान विनष्ट हो गया है, मैं आत्मतत्त्व सम्बन्धी स्मृति या कर्तव्याकर्तव्य—ज्ञान पा गया हूँ। मेरा सन्देह दूर हो गया है और मेर मन अब स्थिर हुआ है, अब मैं तुम्हारा ही उपदेश पालन करूँगा ।

यहीं महाभारत के भीष्मपर्वान्तर्गत कृष्णार्जुन—संवाद या श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता की समाप्ति हुई। इसके बाकी अंश में संजय और धृतराष्ट्र वार्तालाप है।

गीता का सन्देश मानव जाति का कल्याण करने वाला है। जिसमें निष्काम कर्म भावना करने का उपदेश है। गीता के अनुसार प्रत्येक कार्य पवित्र है। महत्त्व कर्म का नहीं, उसके पीछे निहित भाव का ही है जो निःस्वार्थ हो। जो कर्मशीलता में शान्ति अनुभव करता है वही पूर्ण विद्वान है, वही सिद्ध है। गीता में श्रीकृष्ण ने पहले उद्यम तथा पुरुषार्थ का उपदेश देने के बाद में ज्ञान—भक्ति तथा योग का मार्ग बताया है। अन्त में अट्टारहवें अध्याय में कहते हैं कि सभी कर्तव्यों को छोड़कर निरन्तर अनन्य भाव से मेरा चिन्तन करो, मेरी ही शरण लो। मैं तुम्हें समस्त बन्धनों से मुक्त कर दूँगा और मेरी कृपा से तुम शान्ति और परम गति को प्राप्त कर लोगे।

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ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਨੂੰ ਐਨਾ ਮਾਣ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਭਾਰਤੀ ਅਧਿਆਤਮ ਦੇ ਕਰਮ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕਿਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਆਤਮਾ ਅਤੇ ਜੀਵ ਦੇ ਬੰਧਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਕਰਮ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਦਾ ਖੰਡਨ ਕੀਤਾ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੋਧ ਕੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਕੂਲ ਬਣਾਇਆ। ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖ ਅੰਗ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਮੂਲ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ (ਨਾਮ ਜਪਣਾ, ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣਾ) ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਿਚੋੜ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਜਿਥੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਭਲਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਥੇ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਭਲਾ ਜੁੜਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਅਸਲ ਰਾਹ ਦੀ ਸੋਝੀ ਉਸੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪ ਖਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਵੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਹਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਕ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਸਾਰਕ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀਆਂ ਨਿਭਾਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਮਿਹਨਤੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਗੁਜ਼ਰ ਕਰੇ। ਉਸਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਸੁੱਚੀ ਅਤੇ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰ ਹੋਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਉਹ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਨਾਮ ਦੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਤੱਕ ਅੱਪੜ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣਾ ਧਰਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਕਾਰਜ ਹੈ। ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਦਾਨ ਪੁੰਨ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਵੇਕਲਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਬਣਕੇ ਸਮਾਜ-ਸੇਵਾ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਜ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਿਰਬਾਹ ਲਈ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਤੇ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਜਾਣਦਿਆਂ ਵੰਡ ਕੇ ਛਕਣ ਦਾ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਤੇ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਿੱਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਨਫਰਤ ਨਾ ਕਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਨੁਕਸ ਕੱਢੇ। ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਕਿੱਤਾ ਉੱਚਾ ਜਾਂ ਨੀਵਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰੀ ਉਸ ਕਿੱਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਉੱਚਾ ਅਤੇ ਬੇਇਮਾਨੀ ਨੀਵਾਂ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਹਰੇਕ ਕੰਮ ਰੱਬ ਦੀ ਭਗਤੀ ਹੈ। ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਚਿੱਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਸਾਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਅਤੇ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਭਗਤੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

ਮੂਲ ਸ਼ਬਦ: ਕਿਰਤ, ਰੂਹਾਨੀਅਤ, ਸਰਗੁਣ, ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ, ਧਰਮ

ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖ ਅੰਗ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਮੂਲ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ (ਨਾਮ ਜਪਣਾ, ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣਾ) ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਿਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਨਿਚੋੜ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਜਿਥੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਭਲਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਉਥੇ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਭਲਾ ਜੁੜਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰੀ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਅਸਲ ਰਾਹ ਦੀ ਸੋਝੀ ਉਸੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪ ਖਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਵੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ:

ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਹੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੇਇ ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:1245)

ਇਸ ਲਈ ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਆਪਣੇ-ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਉਦੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ ਅਖਵਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਜਦੋਂ ਤੱਕ ਉਹ ਕਿਰਤੀ ਨਾ ਹੋਵੇ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਕਿਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਅੰਗ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਵਿਹਲੜ ਸਮਾਜ ਦੇ ਵਾਧੇ ਨੂੰ ਠੱਲ੍ਹ ਪਾ ਦਿੱਤੀ। ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਨਾਲ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਮਕਸਦ (ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਲ) ਵਿੱਚ ਕੋਈ ਰੁਕਾਵਟ ਨਹੀਂ ਪੈਂਦੀ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇੱਥੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਚਿੱਤ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਵੱਲ ਰੱਖਣ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ। ਭਗਤ ਨਾਮਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ ਹੈ:

ਨਾਮਾ ਕਹੈ ਤਿਲੋਚਨਾ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਰਾਮੁ ਸਮਾਲਿ॥

ਹਾਥ ਪਾਉ ਕਰਿ ਕਾਮੁ ਸਭੁ ਚੀਤੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨ ਨਾਲਿ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:1375)

ਅਜਿਹੇ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੋਈ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਨੂੰ ਪਵਿੱਤਰਤਾ ਦੇ ਦਰਜੇ ਤੱਕ ਲੈ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਰੂਹਾਨੀ ਕਰਨੀ ਵਾਲਾ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, “ਕੰਮ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਰੂਹਾਨੀਅਤ ਬਖਸ਼ਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਖੁਦਾ ਦੀ ਹੋਰ ਹਰ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਪੂਜਾ ਛੱਡ ਕੇ ਕੇਵਲ ਕੰਮ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ” (ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ 2006: 28)। ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਸਮ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ ਇੱਕ ਵਾਰ ਇੱਕ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਲਈ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਗਿਲਾਸ ਲਿਆਇਆ। ਉਸ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਬਹੁਤ ਸੋਹਣੇ ਸਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਸੁੰਦਰਤਾ ਦਾ ਰਾਜ਼ ਪੁੱਛਿਆ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਬੜੇ ਮਾਣ ਨਾਲ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਉਸਦਾ ਪਿਤਾ ਇੱਕ ਅਮੀਰ ਆਦਮੀ ਹੈ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਕੋਲ ਬਹੁਤ ਨੌਕਰ-ਚਾਕਰ ਹਨ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਸਖਤ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਲਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਵਰਤਿਆ। ਇਹ ਉਸਦੀ ਜਿੰਦਗੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਵਾਰ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਗਿਲਾਸ ਫੜ੍ਹਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸੁਣ ਕੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਦੂਰ ਸਖਤ ਕੰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੱਗੇ ਇੱਕ ਮਜਦੂਰ ਨੂੰ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਲਗਾਈ ਅਤੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਲਿਆਉਣ ਲਈ ਹੁਕਮ ਦਿੱਤਾ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਪਾਣੀ ਵੀ ਲੈਣਾ ਪਸੰਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਜਿਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਕਦੇ ਸਖਤ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਨਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੋਵੇ। ਇਹ ਵੇਖ ਕੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਚਰਨੀਂ ਡਿੱਗ ਪਿਆ। ਨੌਜਵਾਨ ਨੇ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਉਸ ਉੱਤੇ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਨ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪ ਖਾ ਸਕੇ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰ ਸਕੇ (ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, 1967:184)।

ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਨੂੰ ਐਨਾ ਮਾਣ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ। ਭਾਰਤੀ ਅਧਿਆਤਮ ਦੇ ਕਰਮ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਕਿਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਆਤਮਾ ਅਤੇ ਜੀਵ ਦੇ ਬੰਧਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਅਸਲ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ (ਸਤ, ਚਿਤ, ਅਨੰਦ) ਵਿੱਚ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਿਰਿਆ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜਦੋਂ ਉਸਦੀ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਉਣ ਦੀ ਇੱਛਾ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਿਰਿਆ ਤੋਂ ਕਿਰਿਆਸ਼ੀਲ ਰੁਖ ਅਖਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਜੀਵ ਜਾਂ ਆਤਮਾ ਵੀ ਇਸੇ ਵਿਹਾਰ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਲੰਘਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਜੇਕਰ ਜੀਵ ਸਤ, ਚਿਤ, ਅਨੰਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੀਨ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਅਕਿਰਿਆ ਹੋਣਾ ਪਵੇਗਾ, ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਹਰੇਕ ਕਰਮ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ ਸੰਸਕਾਰ ਜਾਂ ਛਾਪ ਛੱਡ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਜੀਵ ਨੂੰ ਚਿੰਮੜ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਜਨਮ-ਮਰਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਬਣਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਪਿਛਲੇ ਕਰਮ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਆਤਮਾ ਨੂੰ ਚਿੰਮੜੇ ਹੋਏ ਹਨ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਧੋਣ ਅਤੇ ਅਗਲੇ ਕਰਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਹੋਣ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਕਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਰਿਆਸ਼ੀਲਤਾ ਦਾ ਖੇਤਰ ਛੱਡ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ। ਸੰਸਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦਾ ਤਿਆਗ ਕਰਕੇ ਜੰਗਲਾਂ, ਪਹਾੜਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਫਾਵਾਂ ਵੱਲ ਰੁਖ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ (ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ, 1967:183-184)।

ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਕਰਮ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਦਾ ਖੰਡਨ ਕੀਤਾ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਸੋਧ ਕੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਕੂਲ ਬਣਾਇਆ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜਗਤ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਿਆਸ਼ੀਲਤਾ ਦਾ ਨਤੀਜਾ ਹੈ। ਜੇਕਰ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ, ਪਾਲਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਲੈਅ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਿਆ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਰਿਆਸ਼ੀਲ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਜੀਵ ਜੋ ਇਸ ਰਚਨਾ ਦਾ ਅੰਗ ਹੈ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਨਿਸ਼ਕਿਰਿਆ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੇ ਹੁਕਮ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਹੈ। ਜੇਕਰ ਜੀਵ ਆਪਣੇ-ਆਪ ਨੂੰ ਕਰਮਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਕਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਕਰਮ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੂੰ

ਸਮਰਪਿਤ ਕਰ ਦੇਵੇ। ਸਮਰਪਣ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਭਾਵਨਾ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਹਉਮੈਂ ਭਾਵ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਜਦੋਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਉਹ ਇਹ ਮਹਿਸੂਸ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੇ ਭਾਣੇ ਅਤੇ ਰਜਾ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਜਿੰਨਾ ਕਿਰਿਆਸ਼ੀਲ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੀ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਏਗਾ। ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ:

A Sikh works because that is the way of his worship. The more he works the more he worship. A hard and honest work takes him into the presence of God where he sees nothing but God's Will all around. The more he works the nearer he goes to the lap of God. (Sher Singh, 1967:185)

ਇਸ ਲਈ ਹਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਕ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਸਾਰਕ ਜਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀਆਂ ਨਿਭਾਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਮਿਹਨਤੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਗੁਜ਼ਰ ਕਰੇ। ਸਿੱਖ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਸੁੱਚੀ ਅਤੇ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰ ਹੋਣੀ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਹੀ ਉਹ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਨਾਮ ਦੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਤੱਕ ਅੱਪੜ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਨਹੀਂ ਤਾਂ ਨਾਮ ਤੋਂ ਉਲਟ ਹਉਮੈਂ ਦਾ ਜੋਰ ਹਾਵੀ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਦੁਬਿਧਾ ਅਤੇ ਚਿੰਤਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਾਬੂ ਕਰ ਲਵੇਗਾ। ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, “ਸੁੱਚੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਪੈਰ ਆਪ-ਮੁਹਾਰੇ ਪਾਕ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਮਾਨਸਿਕ ਚਿਤਵਨ ਕਿੰਨਾ ਹੀ ਉੱਚਾ ਹੋਵੇ, ਰੂਹ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਫ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ, ਮੈਲਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਸਰੀਰ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਆਪ ਮੁਹਾਰੀ ਜਿਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਿੱਛਾਂ ਉੱਤੇ ਫਲ ਫੁੱਲ ਆਣ ਲਗਦੇ ਹਨ, ਸਿਦਕ ਤੇ ਪਿਆਰ ਤੇ ਰੱਬ ਦੀ ਰੱਬਤਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੀਣ ਲੱਗ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ (ਰੰਧਾਵਾ, 1986:99)। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਦਾ ਸੱਚਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਪਣੇ ਗੁਜ਼ਰਾਨ ਲਈ ਮੰਗਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਂਦਾ, ਸਗੋਂ ਆਪਣੇ ਜਤਨਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਰਜਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਟੱਲ ਭਰੋਸਾ ਰਖਦਿਆਂ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਮੁਸੀਬਤਾਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਕਾਬੂ ਪਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਮੰਗ ਕੇ ਖਾਣ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਹੁਤ ਨਿਖੇਧੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਹੈ:

ਦੁਖਿ ਲਗੈ ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਫਿਰੈ ਅਗੈ ਦੂਣੀ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਜਾਇ ॥

ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਹਜੁ ਨ ਆਇਓ ਸਹਜੇ ਹੀ ਲੈ ਖਾਇ ॥

ਮਨਹਠਿ ਜਿਸ ਤੇ ਮੰਗਣਾ ਲੈਣਾ ਦੁਖੁ ਮਨਾਇ ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:587)

ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਪਰੰਪਰਾਗਤ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਨੇ ਪਦਾਰਥਕ ਇੱਛਾਵਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਲੋਕਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾਂਹ ਪੱਖੀ ਰਵੱਈਆ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ। ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨੇ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਕੌੜੀਆਂ ਸੱਚਾਈਆਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਪੁਨਰ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਰੂਹਾਨੀ ਕਦਰਾਂ-ਕੀਮਤਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਇਕਸੁਰ ਕੀਤਾ। ਇਸ ਧਰਮ ਨੇ ਪਦਾਰਥਕ ਇੱਛਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਲਈ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਜਤਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੁਨਿਆਦੀ ਮਹੱਤਵ ਦੀ ਨਾ ਸਿਰਫ ਪ੍ਰੋੜ੍ਹਤਾ ਹੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਵਿੱਤਰ ਕਹਿ ਕੇ ਅਧਿਆਤਮ ਦਾ ਦਰਜਾ ਵੀ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ:

ਖਾਣਾ ਪੀਣਾ ਪਵਿੱਤ੍ਰੁ ਹੈ ਦਿਤੇਨੁ ਰਿਜਕੁ ਸੰਬਾਹਿ ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:472)

ਅਤੇ

ਅੰਨ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਬੈਸੰਤਰ ਦੇਵਤਾ ਲੂਣੁ ਪੰਜਵਾ ਪਾਇਆ ਘਿਰਤੁ ॥

ਤਾ ਹੋਆ ਪਾਕੁ ਪਵਿੱਤੁ ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:473)

ਅਤੇ

ਧੰਨੁ ਗੁਪਾਲ ਧੰਨੁ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ॥

ਧੰਨੁ ਅਨਾਦਿ ਭੂਖੇ ਕਵਲੁ ਟਹਕੇਵ ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:873)

ਭਗਤ ਧੰਨਾ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਤੋਂ ਪਰਿਵਾਰਕ ਜੀਵਨ ਲਈ ਪਦਾਰਥਕ ਲੋੜਾਂ ਦੀ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਨਵੇਂ ਅਰਥ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕੀਤੇ ਹਨ:

ਗੋਪਾਲ ਤੇਰਾ ਆਰਤਾ ॥
ਜੋ ਜਨ ਤੁਮਰੀ ਭਗਤ ਕਰੰਤੇ ਤਿਨ ਕੇ ਕਾਜ ਸਵਾਰਤਾ ॥
ਦਾਲਿ ਸੀਧਾ ਮਾਗਉ ਘੀਉ ॥ ਹਮਰਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਕਰੈ ਨਿਤ ਜੀਉ ॥
ਪਨੀਆ ਛਾਦਨੁ ਨੀਕਾ ॥ ਅਨਾਜੁ ਮਾਗਉ ਸਤ ਸੀ ਕਾ ॥
ਗਉ ਭੈਸ ਮਾਗਉ ਲਾਵੇਰੀ ॥ ਇਕ ਤਾਜਨਿ ਤੁਰੀ ਚੰਗੇਰੀ ॥
ਘਰ ਕੀ ਗੀਹਨਿ ਚੰਗੀ ॥ ਜਨੁ ਧੰਨਾ ਲੇਵੈ ਮੰਗੀ ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:695)

ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਤਿਆਗੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਤਿੱਖੀ ਅਲੋਚਨਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਹੜੇ ਭੋਜਨ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਬੁਨਿਆਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਦੀਆਂ ਵਸਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਕ ਉਨਤੀ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਵਿੱਚ ਰੋੜਾ ਸਮਝਦੇ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਤਿਆਗ ਲਈ ਅਨੇਕ ਤਰੀਕਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਸਹਾਰਾ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਰੁਝਾਨ ਦਾ ਖੰਡਨ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਅੰਨੁ ਨ ਖਾਇਆ ਸਾਦੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ...
ਬਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਨ ਪਹਿਰੈ ॥ ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਕਹਰੈ...
ਅਲੁ ਮਲੁ ਖਾਈ ਸਿਰਿ ਛਾਈ ਪਾਈ ॥
ਮੂਰਖਿ ਅੰਧੈ ਪਤਿ ਗਵਾਈ ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:497)

ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਜੀ ਅੰਨ ਦਾ ਤਿਆਗ ਕਰਕੇ ਮੁਕਤੀ ਲੱਭਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਖੰਡੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਖੋਖਲੇਪਣ ਉੱਤੇ ਵਿਵੇਕਪੂਰਣ ਵਿਅੰਗ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਅੰਨੈ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਜੋ ਨਰ ਹੋਵਹਿ ॥ ਤਿਨਿ ਭਵਨ ਮਹਿ ਅਪਨੀ ਖੋਵਹਿ ॥
ਛੋਡਹਿ ਅੰਨੁ ਕਰਹਿ ਪਾਖੰਡ ॥ ਨਾ ਸੋਹਾਗਨਿ ਨਾ ਓਹਿ ਰੰਡ ॥
ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਬਕਤੇ ਦੂਧਾਧਾਰੀ ॥ ਗੁਪਤੀ ਖਾਵਹਿ ਵਟਿਕਾ ਸਾਰੀ ॥
ਅੰਨੈ ਬਿਨਾ ਨ ਹੋਇ ਸੁਕਾਲੁ ॥ ਤਜਿਐ ਅੰਨਿ ਨ ਮਿਲੈ ਗੁਪਾਲੁ ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:873)

ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, “ਉਹ ਸਾਰੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਲਪਿਤ ਕਿਸਮਾਂ ਹਨ, ਜਿਹੜੀਆਂ ਖਿਆਲੀ ਤੌਰ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਟੀ ਤੋਂ ਇਨਕਾਰ ਕਰਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।” (ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ:26)। ਨਰੋਈ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਿਕ ਉੱਨਤੀ ਲਈ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀਆਂ ਬੁਨਿਆਦੀ ਲੋੜਾਂ ਦੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਪਤੀ ਅਤਿਅੰਤ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਅਧਿਆਤਮਿਕ ਪੱਖ ਵਿੱਚ ਰੁਕਾਵਟ ਨਾ ਬਣ ਸਕਣ। ਐਸ. ਰਾਧਾਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨਨ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ:

Spiritual life finds full scope only in communities of certain degree of freedom from sordidness. Lives that are strained and straved cannot be religious except in a rudimentary way. Economic insecurity and individual freedom donot go together. (Radha Krishnan, 1940:353)

ਐਸ. ਰਾਧਾਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨਨ ਦਾ ਇਹ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੋਂ ਸੇਧ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਦਿੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ:

ਭੁਖੇ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ ॥ ਯਹ ਮਾਲਾ ਅਪਨੀ ਲੀਜੈ...
ਦਇ ਸੇਰ ਮਾਂਗਉ ਚੂਨਾ ॥ ਪਾਉ ਘੀਉ ਸੰਗਿ ਲੂਨਾ ॥
ਅਪ ਸੇਰ ਮਾਂਗਉ ਦਾਲੇ ॥ ਮੋ ਕਉ ਚੋਨਉ ਵਖਤ ਜਿਵਾਲੇ ॥
ਖਾਟ ਮਾਂਗਉ ਚਉਪਾਈ ॥ ਸਿਰਹਾਨਾ ਅਵਰ ਤੁਲਾਈ ॥
ਉਪਰ ਕਉ ਮਾਂਗਉ ਖੀਂਧਾ ॥ ਤੇਰੀ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰੈ ਜਨੁ ਥੀਂਧਾ ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:656)

ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਨਾ ਤਾਂ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਦਾ ਪੱਖ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਇੰਦ੍ਰਿਆਵੀ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਸਾਰਕ ਸੁਖਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੀਨਤਾ

ਵਾਲੇ ਜੀਵਨ ਦੀ ਤਰਫਦਾਰੀ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਸਗੋਂ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਦੀ ਪੁਸ਼ਟੀ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਸੰਤੁਲਤ ਰਾਹ ਅਖਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ:

ਜਿਸੁ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਿ ਬਹੁਤ ਤਿਸੈ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਿ ਚਿੰਤਾ॥

ਜਿਸੁ ਗ੍ਰਿਹਿ ਥੋਰੀ ਸੁ ਫਿਰੈ ਭ੍ਰਮੰਤਾ॥

ਦੁਹੁ ਬਿਵਸਥਾ ਤੇ ਜੋ ਮੁਕਤਾ ਸੋਈ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ ਭਾਲੀਐ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:1019)

ਬੇਸ਼ੱਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਦਾ ਪੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ ਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਪਰ ਜੇ ਇੱਕ ਪਾਸੇ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਅਨੈਤਿਕ ਸਾਧਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਅਮੀਰ ਜੀਵਨ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਚੋਣ ਕਰਨੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਧਰਮ ਗਰੀਬੀ ਨੂੰ ਤਰਜੀਹ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦਾ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ ਹੈ:

ਸੰਤਨ ਦਾ ਦਾਨਾ ਰੂਖਾ ਸੋ ਸਰਬ ਨਿਧਾਨ॥

ਗ੍ਰਿਹਿ ਸਾਕਤ ਛਤੀਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਤੇ ਬਿਖੂ ਸਮਾਨ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:811)

ਅਤੇ

ਕਬੀਰ ਖੂਬੁ ਖਾਨਾ ਖੀਚਰੀ ਜਾ ਮਹਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਲੋਨੁ॥

ਹੇਰਾ ਰੋਟੀ ਕਾਰਨੇ ਗਲਾ ਕਟਾਵੈ ਕਉਨੁ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:1374)

ਅਨੈਤਿਕ ਵੰਗ ਨਾਲ ਇਕੱਠੇ ਕੀਤੇ ਧਨ ਨੂੰ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਰੱਦ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਇਸ ਸੱਚਾਈ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਆਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਰਿਵਾਰ ਦੇ ਮੋਹ ਵਿੱਚ ਫੱਸ ਕੇ ਦਿਨ-ਰਾਤ ਗਲਤ ਤਰੀਕਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਧਨ ਕਮਾਉਣ ਦੇ ਆਹਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੁਟਿਆ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਅੰਤ ਵੇਲੇ ਉਸਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਸਹਾਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ। ਅਨੈਤਿਕ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਅਪਨਾਉਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਜਮਾਂ ਦੀ ਸਜਾ ਸਹਿਣੀ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਹੈ:

ਕਾਮਣਿ ਲੋੜੈ ਸੁਇਨਾ ਰੁਪਾ ਮਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਲੁੜੇਨਿ ਸੁ ਖਾਧਾਤਾ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਪ ਕਰੇ ਤਿਨ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਜਾਸੀ ਜਮਪੁਰਿ ਬਾਧਾਤਾ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:155)

ਅਤੇ

ਅਨ ਕਾਏ ਰਾਤੜਿਆ ਵਾਟ ਦੁਹੇਲੀ ਰਾਮ॥

ਪਾਪ ਕਮਾਵਦਿਆ ਤੇਰਾ ਕੋਈ ਨ ਬੋਲੀ ਰਾਮ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:546)

ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਬਾਲਮੀਕ ਬਟਵਾੜੇ (ਰਾਹ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੁੱਟਣ ਵਾਲਾ) ਦੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਨੂੰ ਦ੍ਰਿੜ੍ਹ ਕਰਵਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਵਾਟੈ ਮਾਣਸ ਮਾਰਦਾ ਬੈਠਾ ਬਾਲਮੀਕ ਵਟਵਾੜਾ॥

ਪੂਰਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਭੇਟਿਆ ਮਨ ਵਿਚਿ ਹੋਆ ਖਿੰਜੋਤਾੜਾ ...

ਘਰ ਵਿਚਿ ਪੁਛਣ ਘਲਿਆ ਅੰਤਿ ਕਾਲ ਹੈ ਕੋਇ ਅਸਾੜਾ॥

ਕੋੜਮੜਾ ਚਉਖੰਨੀਐ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਬੋਲੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਝਾੜਾ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ:19)

ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ, ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਦੀ ਭੈ ਅਤੇ ਭਾਵਨੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਉਸ ਉੱਤੇ ਅਟੱਲ ਭਰੋਸਾ ਰੱਖਣ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਧੋਖਾ-ਧੜੀ ਤੋਂ ਵਰਜਦੇ ਠੀਕ ਆਚਾਰ ਧਾਰਨ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ, "ਆਪਣੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਸਭ ਕੋਈ ਕਰੇ, ਇਹ ਗੱਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਨੇ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਆਂਵਦੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਕਾਰ

ਕਰਣੀ। ਇਉਂ ਨਾਹੀ ਕਰਣੀ ਖੁਸਿ ਖੋਹਿ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਆਣਿ ਵਾੜਨੀ, ਧਰਮ ਕਿਰਤਿ ਕਰਣੀ ਦੇਣਹਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਬਾ" ॥ (ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ, 2010:24)

ਭਾਈ ਦੇਸਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪਣੇ ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਖੇਤੀ ਵਣਜ ਵ ਸਿਲਪ ਬਣਾਵੈ ॥ ਔਰ ਟਹਲ ਜੋ ਮਨ ਮੋ ਭਾਵੈ ॥

ਦਿੜ੍ਹ ਹੁਈ ਸੋਇ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਵੈ ॥ ਚੋਰੀ ਡਾਕੇ ਕਬਹਿ ਨ ਜਾਵੈ ॥ (ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ, 2010:129)

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹਰੇਕ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਉਹ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਉਸਦੀ ਰਹਿਤ ਭੰਗ ਨਾ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੋਵੇ:

ਜਿਹ ਬਿਧਿ ਰਹਤ ਨ ਨਾਸ ਹੋਇ, ਸੋਈ ਟਹਿਲ ਕਮਾਇ ॥ (ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ, 2010:129)

ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸੁਮਾਰਗ ਦਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਕਿਰਤ ਚੋਣ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਲਈ ਖੇਤੀ, ਵਣਜ ਅਤੇ ਸਿਲਪ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਨੂੰ ਉੱਤਮ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜੇਕਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਨੌਕਰ ਹੋਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ ਦੀ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਈ ਉੱਤਮ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਆਪਣੀ ਮਹੀਨੇ ਦੀ ਤਨਖਾਹ ਉੱਤੇ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਰੱਖੇ। ਆਪਣੀ ਨੌਕਰੀ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰੀ ਅਤੇ ਸਖਤ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਨਾਲ ਕਰੇ। ਮਾਲਕ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਲੜਨ ਲਈ ਭੇਜੇ ਉਹ ਜਾਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਸੂਰਬੀਰਤਾ ਨਾਲ ਲੜੇ, ਪਿੱਠ ਨਾ ਦਿਖਾਵੇ ਚਾਹੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਜਾਨ ਹੀ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਾ ਚਲੀ ਜਾਵੇ। ਲੜਾਈ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੇ ਧਨ ਉੱਪਰ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਨਾ ਰੱਖੇ। ਮਾਲਕ ਜੋ ਹੁਕਮ ਕਰੇ ਸੋ ਸਿਰ ਮੱਥੇ ਮੰਨੇ:

ਅਰੁ ਜੋ ਚਾਕਰੀ ਕਰੈ, ਤਉ ਸਿਪਾਹਗਰੀ ਕੀ ਕਰੈ। ਕੈਸੀ ਕਰੈ? ਜੋ ਬੇਪ੍ਰਵਾਹ ਰਹੈ। ਅਰੁ ਜੋ ਮਹੀਨਾ ਹੋਵੈ, ਉਸ ਉਪਰਿ ਸੰਤੋਖ ਕਰੈ। ਅਰੁ ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਚਾਕਰ ਹੋਵੈ, ਕਹੀਂ ਭੇਜੈ ਲੜਾਈ ਨੂ; ਤਾਂ ਉਸ ਸਮੈ ਅਪਨੀ ਮੁਰਾਦ ਨੂੰ ਬੁੱਝੈ, ਜਾਨੈ। ਸੂਰਬੀਰ ਹੋਇ ਰਹੈ। ਅਰੁ ਜੋ ਲੜਾਈ ਹੋਇ; ਤਹਾਂ ਉਲਟੈ ਨਾਹੀ। ਕਿਸੀ ਦੇ ਮਾਲ ਦੀ ਵਲਿ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਕਰੈ। ਅਰੁ ਜੋ ਕਿਛੁ ਖਾਵੰਦ ਕਾਰ ਫੁਰਮਾਵੈ, ਸੋ ਸਿਰ ਮਾਥੇ ਉਪਰਿ ਮਾਨੈ। (ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, 1965:67)

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਮ ਹਾਲਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਰਜ ਲੈਣਾ ਮਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੈ। ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸੁਮਾਰਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਚਨ ਆਇਆ ਹੈ:

ਜਬ ਲਗ ਬਸਾਇ ਤਬ ਲਗ ਕਰਜ ਨ ਲਇ। ਅਪਨਾ ਥੋੜੇ ਹੀ ਵਿਚ ਬਯੋਹਾਰ ਕਰੈ ਕਿਰਤਿ ਦਾ। ਕਰਜ ਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਬਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲੇਨ ਨ ਦੇਇ, ਬਿਰਦ ਅਪਨੇ ਨੂੰ। (ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, 1965:125)

ਪਰ ਜੇਕਰ ਬਹੁਤ ਹੀ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਲੋੜ ਨੂੰ ਕਰਜ ਲੈਣਾ ਵੀ ਪੈ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਕਰਜ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਮੰਗੇ ਕਰਜ ਵਾਪਸ ਕਰੇ। ਜਿਨਾਂ ਚਿਰ ਕਰਜ ਵਾਪਸ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦਾ ਉਨਾ ਚਿਰ ਐਸ਼ਪ੍ਰਸਤੀ ਨਾ ਕਰੇ:

ਅਬ ਜੋ ਕਰਜ ਲੇਵੈ ਉਸ ਕੋ ਚਾਹੀਐ, ਜੋ ਬਿਨਾ ਮੰਗੇ ਪੈਸੇ ਕਰਜ ਕੇ ਦੇਇ। ਜਬ ਲਗ ਨ ਦੇਇ, ਤਬ ਲਗ ਸੁਆਦ ਅਰੁ ਖੁਸਬੋਈ ਅੰਗੀਕਾਰ ਨ ਕਰੈ। (ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, 1965:125)

ਕਰਜ ਦੇਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਵੀ ਕੁਝ ਹਦਾਇਤਾਂ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸੁਮਾਰਗ ਦੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਨੇ ਦਿੱਤੀਆਂ ਹਨ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਉਹ ਕਰਜ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਵਿੱਲ ਦੇ ਅਰ ਲਾਲਚ (ਵਿਆਜ) ਦੇ ਦੇਵੇ। ਜੇਕਰ ਉਸ ਕੋਲ ਮੌਜੂਦਾ ਸਮੇਂ ਗੁੰਜਾਇਸ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਤੋਂ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰਕੇ ਦੇਵੇ। ਇਸ ਬਿਉਹਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਕਰੇ। ਆਮ ਕਰਜ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਖਾਣ, ਪਾਣ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਕਿਸੀ ਕਾਰਜ (ਵਿਆਹ-ਸ਼ਾਦੀ) ਲਈ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਕਰਜ ਦਾ ਵਿਆਜ ਲੈਣ ਦੀ ਸਖਤ ਮਨਾਹੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਭਾਰੀ ਹੱਤਿਆ ਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ:

ਅਬ ਜੋ ਕੋਈ ਅਪਨੇ ਕਿਸੀ ਕਾਰਜ ਕੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਯਾ ਖਾਨੇ ਪਹਿਨਨੇ ਕੇ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਕਰਜ ਲਏ। ਤਬ ਉਸ ਕਰਜ ਦੇਨੇ ਵਾਲੇ ਕਉ ਚਾਹੀਐ

ਜੇ ਉਸ ਕਰਜ ਲੈਣੇ ਵਾਲੇ ਤੇ ਬਿਆਜ ਨ ਲਇ। ਇਸ (ਵਿਆਜ ਖੋਰੀ) ਬਰਾਬਰ ਹੋਰ ਹੱਤਿਆ ਨਹੀ। ਅਰੁ ਬਿਆਜ ਦੇ ਲਾਲਚ ਕਰਿ ਦੇਨੇ ਮੈ ਨਾਹ ਨ ਕਰੈ। ਜੇ ਮੇਨੁ ਕਿਆ ਨਫਾ ਹੈ, ਜੇ ਮੈ ਕਰਜ ਦੇਉ। ਇਸ ਕਰਜ ਦੇਨੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਅਉਰ ਧਰਮ ਨਾਹੀ। ਪਰੁ ਤਬ, ਜਬ ਆਪ ਨ ਮੰਗੈ। ਜਬ ਲੇਨੇ ਵਾਲਾ ਆਪ ਸੈ ਦੇਵੈ, ਤਬ ਲੇਵੈ। (ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, 1965:124)

ਜੇਕਰ ਕਰਜ ਕਿਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਪਾਰ ਜਾਂ ਘਰ-ਬਾਰ ਬਨਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਉਸ ਉੱਤੇ ਵਿਆਜ ਲੈਣ ਦੀ ਮਨਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਕਰਜ ਦੇਣ ਸਮੇਂ ਇਸ ਬਿਉਹਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਖੋਲ੍ਹ ਲਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਕਰਜ ਲੈਣ ਵਾਲਾ, ਕਰਜ ਵਾਪਸ ਕਰਨ ਸਮੇਂ ਵਿਆਜ ਸਮੇਤ ਕਰਜ ਵਾਪਸ ਕਰੇ। (ਰਣਧੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, 1965:124)

ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਲਈ ਦਸਾਂ-ਨਹੂੰਆ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੰਡ ਕੇ ਛਕਣਾ ਵੀ ਧਰਮ ਦਾ ਅੰਗ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ ਜੀ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਕਿਰਤਿ ਵਿਰਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇ ਕੈ ਭਲਾ ਮਨਾਇ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ:12)

ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣਾ ਧਰਮ ਅਨੁਸਾਰੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਕਾਰਜ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪਣੇ ਰਹਿਤਨਾਮੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਲਈ ਆਦੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ, “ਗੁਰੂ ਕਾ ਸਿਖ ਗਰੀਬ ਦੀ ਰਸਨਾ, ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਗੋਲਕ ਜਾਣੇ (ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ:81)। ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਦਾਨ ਪੁੰਨ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਵੇਕਲਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਬਣਕੇ ਸਮਾਜ-ਸੇਵਾ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਜ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਖੈਰਾਤ ਦੇਣਾ ਜਾਂ ਦਾਨ-ਪੁੰਨ ਦੀ ਰੀਤਿ ਇਕ ਨੂੰ ਭਿਖਾਰੀ ਤੇ ਦੂਜੇ ਨੂੰ ਦਾਨੀ ਬਣਾ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਹੀਣ-ਭਾਵਨਾ ਤੇ ਅਹੰ-ਭਾਵ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਅਸਮਾਨਤਾ ਲਿਆਉਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ 'ਘਾਲ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਹਥਹੁ ਦੇਇ' ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆ ਦੇ ਕੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਰੋਗ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਾ ਲਿਆ। ਇੱਕ ਵਾਰ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਸਵਾਲ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਸ਼ੰਕਾ ਵੀ ਖੜ੍ਹਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਕਿ ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣ ਦੀ ਕਾਰ ਵਿਹਾਰਕ ਨਹੀਂ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅੱਗੇ ਦੋ ਤਿਲ ਭੇਟ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਿਹਾ ਕਿ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਵੰਡ ਕੇ ਦਿਖਾਉ। ਗੁਰੂ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੇ ਮਰਦਾਨੇ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਤਿਲ ਪੱਥਰ ਉੱਤੇ ਰਗੜ ਕੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਥੋੜ੍ਹਾ ਜਲ ਪਾ ਕੇ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਛਕਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਹਾ। ਭਾਈ ਮਰਦਾਨੇ ਨੇ ਇਵੇਂ ਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ, ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਇਹ ਭਵਿੱਖਬਾਣੀ ਵੀ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣ ਦੀ ਰੀਤਿ ਅਪਨਾਏ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਸੁਖੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਇਹ ਰੀਤਿ ਹਰ ਥਾਂ 'ਤੇ ਚੱਲ ਕੇ ਰਹੇਗੀ (ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ, 1997:115)

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਤੋਰੀ ਇਹ ਵੰਡ ਛਕਣ ਦੀ ਰੀਤ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਦਸਵੰਧ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਹਰ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਈ ਪੰਥਕ ਤੌਰ 'ਤੇ ਲਾਜ਼ਮੀ ਹੋ ਗਈ। ਦਸਵੰਧ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਹਰੇਕ ਸਿੱਖ ਲਈ ਆਪਣੀ ਕਮਾਈ ਦਾ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਿਮਿੱਤ ਕਾਰਜਾਂ ਲਈ ਦੇਣਾ ਜਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਭਾਈ ਦੇਸਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਆਪਣੀ ਦਸਾਂ-ਨਹੂੰਆਂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਦਸਵਾਂ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਲਈ ਦਸਵੰਧ ਕੱਢਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹ ਸੰਸਾਰ 'ਤੇ ਬਹੁਤ ਜੱਸ ਖੱਟਦਾ ਹੈ:

ਦਸ ਨਖ ਕਰ ਜੋ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਵੈ। ਤਾਂ ਕਰ ਜੋ ਧਨ ਘਰ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ।

ਤਿਹਤੇ ਗੁਰੁ ਦਸਵੰਧ ਜੁ ਦੇਈ। ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁ ਜਸ ਬਹੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਲੇਈ। (ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ: 128)

ਇਸ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਸਿੱਖ ਦਸਵੰਧ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਉਹ ਤਨਖਾਹੀਆ ਕਰਾਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਉੱਤੇ ਭਰੋਸਾ ਨਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਆਦੇਸ਼ ਦਿੰਦਿਆਂ ਭਾਈ ਨੰਦ ਲਾਲ ਜੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਤਨਖਾਹਨਾਮੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਫੁਰਮਾਨ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਦਸਵੰਧ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੇਵਹੀ, ਝੂਠ ਬੋਲ ਜੋ ਖਾਇ।

ਕਹਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਾਲ ਜੀ, ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਕਛੁ ਨ ਬਿਸਾਹੁ। (ਪਿਆਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ: 58)

ਲੋੜ ਤੋਂ ਜ਼ਿਆਦਾ ਧਨ ਇਕੱਠਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਗੈਰ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਦੂਜਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ 'ਤੇ ਡਾਕਾ ਮਾਰਨਾ ਹੈ। ਧਨ ਦੇ ਜੋੜਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਭੇਤ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜਦੋਂ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਆਪਣਾ ਗੁਜਾਰਾ ਦਸਾਂ-ਨਹੂੰਆਂ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਧਨ ਜੋੜਨ ਦੀ ਗੁੰਜਾਇਸ਼ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ। ਇਹ ਗੁੰਜਾਇਸ਼ ਸਿਰਫ ਉਦੋਂ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ ਜਦੋਂ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਅਨੈਤਿਕ ਤਰੀਕੇ ਅਪਣਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਫਰਮਾਨ ਹੈ:

ਇਸੁ ਜਰ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਘਣੀ ਵਿਗੁਤੀ ਇਨਿ ਜਰ ਘਣੀ ਖੁਆਈ॥
ਪਾਪਾ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਮੁਇਆ ਸਾਥਿ ਨ ਜਾਈ॥ (ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ:417)

ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿੱਖਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਿਰਬਾਹ ਲਈ ਧਰਮ ਦੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਤੇ ਬਖਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਜਾਣਦਿਆਂ ਵੰਡ ਕੇ ਛਕਣ ਦਾ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ ਤੇ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਕਿਸੇ ਕਿੱਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਨਫਰਤ ਨਾ ਕਰੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਉਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਨੁਕਸ ਕੱਢੇ। ਕੋਈ ਵੀ ਕਿੱਤਾ ਉੱਚਾ ਜਾਂ ਨੀਵਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰੀ ਉਸ ਕਿੱਤੇ ਨੂੰ ਉੱਚਾ ਅਤੇ ਬੇਇਮਾਨੀ ਨੀਵਾਂ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਹਰੇਕ ਕੰਮ ਰੱਬ ਦੀ ਭਗਤੀ ਹੈ। ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ ਚਿੱਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਸਾਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਮਿਹਨਤ ਅਤੇ ਇਮਾਨਦਾਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਭਗਤੀ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ।

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Effect of some Indigenous Plant Extract as Repellents on Olfactory Physiological Behavior of *Apis florea*

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The objective of this research was to devise methods to provide functional protection to the honeybees in pesticide treated fields. Pesticides used for protection of crop from pests have proven to be harmful to the bees. Moreover, indiscriminate use of pesticides results in huge mortality of bees. Plant extracts can act as repellents for the protection of bees. The repellent effect of extracts namely, *Myrtus communis*, *Eugenia caryophyllata*, *Carum ajowan*, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Eucalyptus sideroxylon*, *Citrus aurantium* were tested by olfactometer method in laboratory conditions. *Carum ajowan* have proven to be effective by olfactory method which gave 93.33% repellency. *Azadirachta indica*, *Carum ajowan* extracts were tested on *Lycopersicum peruvianum* crop for determination of their repellent effectivity in field conditions at 5 percent concentration. *Carum ajowan* extracts gave 81.67 percent repellent effectivity while *Azadirachta indica* showed 71.30 percent repellent effectivity. However, repellent effectivity decreased sequentially with passage of time and relationships were linear and negatively significant.

Keywords: honeybees, *Apis florea*, pollination, pesticides, repellents.

Introduction

Honeybees are one of the most valuable pollinators and help yield gain in several entomophilous crops (Sihag, 1986). Conversely, several pests and diseases cause severe damage to the crops resulting in heavy yield losses. About a 6-7 times higher seed yield was reported in crops protected from various pests and diseases than those where no such operations were applied (Sihag, 1988). Use of pesticides is still the best recourse in plant protection, especially in the developing countries where the masses are still largely uneducated. However, the indiscriminate use of pesticides cause large scale mortality of honeybees and other bees (Sihag and Rathi, 1995). In India, only about 10 lakh bee colonies are available at present as against an estimated need of 737 lakhs (Ramarethinam, 1998).

Majority of the bees working in the fields treated with highly toxic contact insecticides will never get back to their hives and will die in the fields. Brood also gets injured through pollen gathered and stored by the bees from insecticide treated fields. In order

to minimize the pesticide hazards, efforts have been made to search for repellent compounds, which could deter bees from visiting pesticide treated flowers. Over 500 different repellent compounds have been tested by different methods like feeding dish choice test, olfactometer and field trials (Solomon and Hooker, 1989). An effective bee repellent must be strong enough to prevent the honeybees from collecting poisoned nectar or pollen from insecticide treated plants and must not injure any part of the plant or harm the operator.

The defensive properties of plants against insects and other pests have largely been attributed to essential oils or plant extracts. Mixtures of compounds secreted by plants inhibit feeding and exhibit repellency. Plant extracts e.g. seed extract of the neem tree (*Azadirachta indica*) has shown great potential as an important source of plant insecticide. Beneficial properties of plant extracts include repellency, feeding and oviposition deterrence and insect growth regulatory activity. Neem extract may be safer for non-phytophagous insect species. Use of plant extracts reduces the number of honey bees from visiting plot of blooming canola (Naumann *et al.*, 1994). Past studies on effect of plant extracts on honey bees have suggested that it is safer at doses likely to be encountered in field application and may be repellent to foragers (Larson, 1990). Efficiency of earlier tested chemical need to be enhanced and also make them cheaper (Mishra and Sihag, 2009a, 2009b, 2010). The objective of the study was to test some plant extracts as repellent to *Apis florea* in laboratory as well as in field conditions.

Methodology

Extraction of Oils from Indigenous Plant Sources

Direct Steam Distillation

The plant material was chopped and extracted with methanol by dipping for 48 hours. The extracts were concentrated under reduced pressure; the viscous material so obtained was allowed to solidify at room temperature. The leaves extracts of all plants were prepared by using the same general procedure.

Oils were extracted in distillation apparatus using the method by Bhardwaj (1974). For each extract 200 grams of leaves, flowers, seeds or stems were used to which 800 ml of water was added and then the steam distillation was carried out for about two hours. Some water always accompanied the oils. The extracted material was kept in the refrigerator for a few hours, allowing oil contents to get separated from water, which was pipetted out.

Preparation of Plant Extracts as Repellents

Seven plant extracts, from *Eucalyptus sideroxylon*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*, *Eugenia caryophyllata*, *Carum ajowan*, *Myrtus communis*, *Citrus aurantium* were diluted in distilled water to concentrations ranging from 1 percent to 7 percent for olfactory experiments in laboratory conditions. Plant extracts showing more repellency to bees in olfactory experiments were then tested in field experiments.

Trapping and Pre-feeding of *A. florea*

The foragers were collected from their colonies lying on bushes suspended from a branch of tree or chimneys or in empty cases etc. by hand picking method. These were taken from nearby areas, horticultural gardens and Chambal area of Haryana Agricultural University. The foragers of one colony were used for one plant extract. Before starting the experiment, the bees were pre-fed for 2 hours in cavity with a piece of cotton swabbed with 30 percent sugar water solution (SW). The cavities were placed in incubator at 32 ± 0.5 °C. Pre-feeding was considered necessary to obtain uniform physiological condition among the bees.

Methods of Evaluation of Plant Extracts as Repellents

Olfactory Method in Laboratory Conditions

Seven plant extracts mentioned above were tested in the laboratory conditions at 7 different concentrations ranging from 1 to 7 percent by olfactory method. The design and working of olfactometer based on split arena repellency test was adopted (Gupta, 1987). Number of ball movements in both the arms of the ball manometer was set at 80 oscillations/ minute at 10 mm/Hg pressure, thus equalizing the flow of air in each half of the arena. Mouths of both the funnels were covered with Whatman filter paper having equal number of holes. One Whatman filter paper was poured with 0.5 ml of test solution while other with equal volume of distilled water. Twenty bees were released in upper half of operational chamber and olfactometer was screwed air tight. Vacuum pump was run to create a vacuum of 10 mm of Hg in olfactometer chamber that resulted in the development of two arenas, one with vapours of test solution and other with vapours of distilled water. Number of bees in water vapour arena and chemical vapour arena were counted after one minute interval for 5 minutes. The experiments were conducted under yellow light. Cluster formations do not take place at 10 mm/Hg pressure. Olfactometer was cleaned thoroughly and blank was run for 5 minutes after each experiment to remove any left over vapours of previous experiment. Every time fresh bees were taken in order to have satisfactory result.

Each concentration used in olfactory method was replicated 3 times and its mean

value was taken and percent repellency was calculated by following formula:

$$\% \text{ Repellency} = 100 - \left(\frac{\text{No. of Bees in Test Arena}}{\text{Total No. of Bees}} \times 100 \right)$$

Field Experiment

The Plant extracts showing more effectivity in the laboratory were tested in the field conditions for 30 days. The extracts were tested at 5 percent concentration on the basis of olfactory gustatory studies which have revealed that with increase in concentration beyond 5 percent, response was stabilized in case of one extract i.e. *Myrtus communis* (Malhotra, 1998). The extracts were tested on tomato crop (*Lycopersicon peruvianum*). Four 1 m² plots (quadrates) were marked in the crop area. Three plots were sprayed with chemical water (CW) solution while one was sprayed with distilled water (DW) by using one litre capacity hand spray pump. The number of bees visiting the treated and untreated plots was counted in clockwise fashion for 5 minutes. Five countings of each plot per day were recorded. The percent repellency was calculated by using following formula:

$$\% \text{ Repellency} = 100 - \left(\frac{\text{No. of Bees on CW}}{\text{Total Bees on DW}} \times 100 \right)$$

Temperature and relative humidity were recorded before and after each set of the observations and were measured with dry and wet bulb thermometer.

Statistical Analysis

Data were subjected to ANOVA and Duncan multiple range test was applied to find out the significant differences between different concentrations and different oils (Duncan, 1955).

Results and Discussion

The main purpose of the study was undertaken to explore and evaluate the repellent behavior of *A. florea* to various plant extracts. The repellent effects of plant extracts against *A. florea* were evaluated in laboratory by Olfactory method. Out of seven plant extracts, two plant extracts showed highest repellency (Table 1) were tested in field conditions to know the duration of repellent effectivity.

Olfactory Experiment: Seven plant extracts were tested for their efficiency as repellents in the olfactometer at the concentrations ranging from 1 to 7 percent. The

working of olfactometer is based on split arena repellency tests. The number of bees congregating in the chemical vapour arena and water arena of the olfactometer provided an index of repellency. Seven Plants extracts namely, *Myrtus*, *Eugenia*, *Cinnamomum*, *Azadirachata*, *Eucalyptus*, *Carum* and *Citrus* were used. *Carum* oil was found to be the most effective of all and showed 93.33 percent repellency at 7 percent concentration while *Myrtus* oil was found to be least effective and showed 71.66 percent repellency at 7 percent concentration (Table 1). The response of olfactory receptors of *Apis florae* to plants extracts was almost the same, as the pattern of repellency follows a similar course with all the plant extracts. The repellent effect of all extracts was directly correlated with concentration. Plant extracts can be arranged in the following order on the basis of maximum percent repellency. *Myrtus communis*: 71.66 < *Eucalyptus sideroxylon*: 81.67 < *Cinnamomum zeylanicum*: 86.67 < *Eugenia caryophyllata*: 88.33 < *Citrus aurantium*: 90.00 < *Azadirachta indica*: 91.67 < *Carum ajowan*: 93.33. Statistical analysis of data supported the observation in the sense that each extract maintained its entity in causing variable repellency.

Table 1: Olfactory Response of Apis florae to Different Concentration of Plant Extract

Plant Extracts	Average Repellency (%) at Various Concentrations							
	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	7%	
Myrtus communis		28.33	36.66	43.30	51.66	56.66	61.66	71.66
Eugenia caryophyllata		43.33	53.33	63.33	68.33	73.33	78.33	88.33
Cinnamomum zeylanicum		48.33	68.33	70.30	73.33	80.00	83.33	86.67
Azadirachta indica		46.66	53.33	65.00	71.67	78.33	83.33	91.67
Eucalyptus sideroxylon		31.67	40.00	50.00	58.33	65.00	70.00	81.67
Carum ajowan		53.33	56.67	66.67	76.67	81.67	88.33	93.33
Citrus aurantium		43.33	53.33	63.33	76.66	85.00	88.33	90.00

Each observation (repellency %) is average of 3 replicates; sample size of 20 bees, experiments carried out at 32±0.5C

All plant extracts showed same pattern of repellency i.e. there was increase in percent repellency with increase in concentration of plants extracts. Statistical analysis of the data has shown that all these plant extracts were highly significant in their repellent potency as the coefficient of correlation between percent repellency and percent concentration was highly significant in each plant extract (0.9454 – 0.9963). 'r' values calculated for different plant extract are shown in Table 2 . There is significant correlation between repellency and concentrations.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficient 'r' of Result of Olfactory Experiment

Plant Extract	'r' Calculated
<i>Myrtus communis</i>	0.9963
<i>Eugenia caryophyllata</i>	0.9816
<i>Carum ajowan</i>	0.9919
<i>Cinnamomum zeylanicum</i>	0.9454
<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	0.9946
<i>Eucalyptus sideroxylon</i>	0.9850
<i>Citrus aurantium</i>	0.9730

Similar type of results has been reported on *A. florea* by Goyal and on *A. mellifera* by Rani (Goyal, 1977; Rani, 1989). Essential oils were reported to be an effective repellent against *A. florea* by Gupta (Gupta and Mohla, 1986). *Azadirachta* or neem insecticide was found to be an effective repellent on foraging honey bee (Naumann *et al.*, 1994). Turmeric oil, sweet flag oil and neem oil were found to be effective repellent and growth inhibitor (Jilani *et al.*, 1988). *Citronella* oil was found to be effective repellent for stored grain pests and household insects (Saraswathi and Rao, 1987). Previous research on plant extracts considered 60 percent as effective and safe threshold level of repellency. Certain Chemicals (Phenol, Aldehyde and Ketone) showed 80 percent repellency and had been considered as the effective threshold level of repellency, which implied that the rest 20 percent of bees would be at risk for exposure to the pesticides (Gupta and Mohla, 1986; Gupta, 1987; Rani, 1989; Gill, 2000; Sihag, 2008).

Statistical analysis of data showed that these plant extracts were highly significant as coefficient of correlation; regression between percent repellency and concentration

were highly significant for each plant extract. Similar result was obtained in *Apis floreae* for some compounds by the olfacto-gustatory experiments (Bhardwaj, 1974; Goyal, 1977). *Carum ajowan* and *Azadirachta indica* extracts gave more repellency than other plant extracts.

Field Experiment: The more effective extracts i.e. *Azadirachta indica* and *Carum ajowan* showing more repellent effect in the laboratory were tested in the field conditions for 30 days.

Field experiments were conducted in the field conditions in order to observe the following aspects:

i) Vapours of volatile compounds may be present in a small space in the olfactometer which interfered with the olfactory response of bees. Vapours of CS solution affected the SW solution provided as control. Both altered the result.

ii) The ecological factor, affecting the behavior of honey bees, like temperature, humidity and space under natural condition differ from those in controlled experimental conditions e.g. percentage repellency of *Carum ajowan* oil at 5 percent concentration was 81.67 percent and in *Azadirachta indica* oil was 78.33 in olfactory method (Table 1) but in field conditions percent repellency were 73.88 and 71.30 at 5 percent respectively (Table 3 and 4). The effect of repellents decreased gradually with time and their relationship was linear and negatively significant. *Carum ajowan* was more effective than *Azadirachta indica*.

Table 3: Effect of *Carum ajowan* Extract on Percentage Repellency to *Apis floreae* in Field Conditions

Duration (h)	Temperature (°C)	Relative Humidity (%)	Average Percentage Repellency
0600-0700	30.5	86	73.88
0700-0800	32.5	80	66.42
0800-0900	35.0	75	62.25
0900-1000	37.5	63	58.31
1000-1100	42.0	57	54.67
1100-1200	44.0	54	50.00

Table 4: Effect of *Azadirachta indica* Extract on Percentage Repellency to *Apis floreae* in Field Conditions

Duration (h)	Temperature (°C)	Relative Humidity (%)	Average Percentage Repellency
0600-0700	24.0	84	71.30
0700-0800	28.7	76	69.87
0800-0900	32.2	71	63.87
0900-1000	36.1	62	60.26
1000-1100	39.2	59	56.83
1100-1200	42.1	51	54.60

Percent repellency decreased to 66.42 and 69.87 in *Carum* oil and *Azadirachta* oil respectively after one hour of spray. After 5 hour of spray percent repellency further decreased to 54.67 and 56.83 percent respectively. Similar result was also obtained in mosquitoes with different repellents (Khan, *et al.*, 1975).

Temperature was an important factor which influenced the repellent effectivity. With increase in temperature repellent effectivity decreased while relative humidity decreased with increase in temperature. In this way relative humidity acted as balancing factor for temperature. Coefficient of correlation between relative humidity and repellency was positive (Table 5) indicating that decrease in one factor caused decrease in other factor. Coefficient of correlation between time and repellency (Table 6) temperature and repellency was negative (Table 7) indicating that increase of one factor caused decrease of other factor and vice-versa. Similar results were obtained in *Apis mellifera* with different ketones (Rani, 1989).

Table 5: Relationship Between Repellency (%) and Humidity (%) in Field Conditions

Plant Extracts	N	'r'	Remarks Significant (S)/ Calculated Non- significant (NS)	
<i>Carum ajowan</i>	6	0.974	(S)	Both are positively correlated
<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	6	0.980	(S)	

Table 6: Relationship Between Time (h) and Repellency (%)

Plant Extracts	N	'r'	Remarks Significant (S)/ Calculated Non- significant (NS)	
<i>Carum ajowan</i>	6	-0.990	(S)	Both are negatively correlated
<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	6	-0.980	(S)	

Table 7: Relationship Between Temperature and % Repellency in Field Conditions

Plant Extracts	N	'r'	Remarks Significant (S)/ Calculated Non- significant (NS)	
<i>Carum ajowan</i>	6	-0.973	(S)	Both are negatively correlated
<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	6	-0.989	(S)	

Conclusions

Pesticide poisoning of honey bee has been a problem since the advent of synthetic broad spectrum insecticides. Honey bees pollinate variety of crops and protection of honey bees from pesticide hazard has been a challenging task but plant extracts can act as a repellent for the protection of honey bees. So application of plant extracts either in combination with pesticides or separately on crops can protect the honey bee from pesticide hazards and also play an important role in reducing the harmful effect of insecticides.

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Antecedents of Trust in Social Media

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The rise of social networking sites since the beginning of the 21st century has ushered in a new era in human development which has met the age-old human need for social gratification and has brought millions of people closer to each other. However, lack of trust has been repeatedly identified as one of the most formidable barriers that inhibits people from collaborating on social media. The future of social media is tenuous without a general climate of online trust. There are only a few studies which have studied the trust in the social media context and most of the research is extant. This research presents a conceptual framework on various antecedents of trust in social media through a review of literature on research available on the subject and related domains of internet and e-commerce. It is found that broadly the trust antecedents can be grouped as personal or individual-based, institution-based, social media platform-based, social capital-based and perceived risk.

Keywords: social media, antecedents of trust, social capital, social networking sites

Introduction

The rise of social media has been the most talked about and disruptive innovation of this century which has brought millions of people closer by enabling them to share their views with others without the constraints of time and space. In recent years, both the industry and academe have shown an interest in trust within the context of the digital environment in general and more specifically towards social media. Understanding the nature of trust and its antecedents has become an important goal, since online trust in social media is being regarded as a crucial factor for the success of an organisation and its social media marketing initiatives.

Lack of trust has been repeatedly identified as one of the most formidable barriers to people for engaging in online mode, e-commerce transactions and collaborating on social media. The future of social media is tenuous without a general climate of online trust. Building user trust on the social media is a challenge for nearly all organisations and hence this research is of increasing importance.

Also, the proliferation of fake and paid online reviews make the building and maintaining consumer trust on social media a challenging task. At the same time, high information transparency and low barriers to entry in the social networking sites, as well as low customer switching costs, necessitate a closer investigation trust development on social media.

Building trust in a virtual environment is a formidable task. This is more difficult since trust is a complex and an abstract concept, and it is not easy to identify the elements or antecedents that create it. There are only a few studies which have studied the trust in the social media context. This research is aimed at identifying antecedents of trust in social media through a review of literature available on subject and also on studies related to internet and e-commerce.

Review of Literature

Knowing the nature of online trust and its determinants has become an important goal. This is reflected by scholars like Beldad, de Jong and Steehouder (2010) in their research. The research discusses the different determinants of online trust, as identified in different empirical studies, with the objective of understanding its nature and its formation. Results are described using a framework of three clusters of antecedents: customer/client-based, website-based and company/ organization-based antecedents.

Filieri, Alguezai and McLeay (2015) in their research related to travellers and use of social media demonstrated that travellers increasingly rely on travel services to plan their trips. The study tests a model of antecedents and consequences of trust towards social media. The authors have proposed mainly five factors for building consumer trust: source credibility, information quality, website quality, customer satisfaction and user experience with social media. The findings of the study showed that all the aforementioned factors with the exception of source credibility and user experience influence consumer trust towards social media.

In their research related to trust in government's social media service Park *et al.* (2015) employ Zucker's integrated perspective for the structural components of trust simultaneously. The study demonstrates that factors related institutional-based trust, characteristic-based trust and process based trust contribute to improving trust through government social media services.

Another article which has a bearing on this research is by Khong, Onyemeh and Chong (2013). In their research article, the scholars highlight the importance of trust in social

media. To them trust is emerging as a critical influencer of customer behaviour. Results showed that network effect and customer orientation empowerment were significant predictors of trustworthiness and trust.

Research Gaps and Objectives

Though a large number of studies have studied trust in the online context, academic research investigating antecedents to trust in social media is insufficient. This is because Social Media and its potential usage by the firms is a relatively new concept. Thus, most of the studies have taken a limited approach to trust antecedents given the specific nature of the industry in which the research was undertaken and only few have considered social capital as an important factor. This calls for defining a comprehensive trust building model which can be studied by the industry and government to fully leverage the potential of social media. Accordingly, this research has been undertaken with the objective of indentifying various antecedents in the context of social media through a review of extant literature. Based on literature, this study investigates what factors (antecedents) lead to formation of trust in social media. A conceptual model will be proposed to clarify the relationship between various antecedents and user trust in social media.

Social Media Trust Antecedents – Conceptual Framework

Drawn from the extant literature survey, it was found that trust in social media can have various antecedent dimensions. These dimensions have been identified as (i) User-based (ii) Institution-based (iii) Social Platform-based (iv) Social Capital-based and (v) Perceived Risk.

User-based Trust Antecedents

Propensity to Trust: Propensity to trust is defined as the tendency for human beings to believe in the trustworthiness of others (Das and Teng, 2004). Although, empirical studies on the impact of propensity to trust on the formation of online trust have brought out conflicting results (Beldad et al., 2010), there are some studies which have found a positive relation between online trust formation and propensity to trust. In his research paper titled “E-commerce: the Role of Familiarity and Trust,” Gefen (2000) studied trust in the context of the E-commerce involved in inquiring about and purchasing books on the Internet. He found that besides familiarity with an Internet vendor and trust in the vendor, it is primarily people's disposition to trust that affects their trust in the vendor.

User Experience and Proficiency: The level of experience in using social media and online reviews in the decision making process can be an important factor to consider

when investigating the antecedents of trust (Filiari, Alguezaui and McLeay, 2015). Studies in the domain of Internet point to the probable existence of user experience as an important antecedent in trust formation on social networking sites. In the context of online commerce, the level of experience with online mode governs risk perception (Metzger, 2006). Accordingly, people who are proficient with the internet are more likely to have lower perceptions of risks in carrying out online transactions (Beldad *et al.*, 2010).

Institution-based Trust Antecedents

Reputation: Reputation within the online context can be defined in two ways (Beldad *et al.*, 2010). Firstly, a platform's reputation is a collective measure of trustworthiness (in the sense of reliability) based on referrals or ratings from members in a community (Jøsang, Ismail and Boyd, 2007). Secondly, it is an indication of a platform's credibility, which results from the comparison between what it promises and what it actually fulfils on the online platform (Casalo, Flavián and Guinalú, 2007). Smeltzer (1997) has studied the specific nature and origin of trust in buyer-supplier relationships. According to him, organizational reputation has a direct relationship in trust development. An existence of a positive organizational reputation creates a more open and trusting relationship between buyers and organizations whereas the opposite is also true if the organizational reputation is negative.

Expectation Confirmation: Expectations refer to the attributes or characteristics that a person anticipates or predicts will be associated with an entity such as a product, service or technology artefact. The confirmation of expectations indicates that users obtained the expected benefits through their usage experiences. Beldad *et al.* (2010) in their study on antecedents of online trust have used the assertion made by Sztompka (1999) to show the relevance of past experience in trust formation. It has been stated that "people are usually ready to trust those whose trustworthiness has been tested and those who did not fail them before". Casalo *et al.* (2007) have analyzed the effects of the level of satisfaction of previous interactions and the trust placed by the consumer in a website. The empirical analysis carried out by the authors confirmed the existence of positive and significant effects of trust and satisfaction on commitment.

Structural Assurance: Structural assurance is an institution-based trust construct and has been mainly propounded by Zucker (1986) who has found that structural assurance leads to trust development. Trust in people is supported by the institutional (i.e. legal, governmental, contractual, regulatory) structures that create an environment that is safe and secure to participants (McKnight, Choudhury and Kacmar, 2002). In the context of internet (and social media also) structural assurance

may therefore be a belief that the web has protective legal backing that assures that transactions online can be conducted in a safe and secure manner (McKnight *et al.*, 2002).

Social Platform-based Trust Antecedents

Information Quality: Customers are likely to trust websites that contain accurate, current and complete information (Kim *et al.*, 2005). In the social media environment, most of what is communicated is based on personal perceptions, thoughts, experience and opinions which are subjective in nature which poses a dilemma for consumer as to whom to trust (Khong *et al.*, 2013). Metzger (2004) contends that ‘trust’ has been found to be strongly related to information disclosure. According to her, trust in people or businesses are relative to their profile and trustworthiness of information shared or disclosed. The more trustworthy information is shared or disclosed, the more trust is built. Filieri *et al.* (2015) findings also emphasize the centrality of information quality in consumer-generated media (CGM), which was found to be the most important antecedent of trust towards CGM. In this context it is contended that there can be many dimensions of information quality like timeliness, relevance, completeness, value, usefulness and credibility (Filieri *et al.*, 2015).

Trust towards Social Media Platform: Although, literature on social networking sites’ quality and trust are relatively few, findings in e-commerce literature support the influence that website quality has on the formation of consumer trust in online merchants. Fung and Lee (1999) have stated that site information quality and a good interface design enhance the formation of customer trust. According to McKnight *et al.*, (2002), on the Internet, the vendor is faceless, so the interface becomes the “online storefront” upon which first impressions are formed. They have compared website quality to a bank and stated that users are willing to depend on the bank to offer good service, not because one knows the people who run the bank to be trustworthy, but because outward appearances imply that it is solid and well-managed.

McKnight *et al.*, (2011) have investigated role of Information Technology (IT) in shaping trust and have recommended that the social networking service should be easy to use and work as expected in order to be considered trustworthy. Similarly, Beldad *et al.*, (2010) have further divided website based trust antecedents into perceived ease of use of website, information quality, graphical characteristics, social presence cues, customization and personalization capacity, privacy assurance and security features and third party guarantees.

Social Capital-based

Social Capital-based broadly refers to the resources accumulated through the relationships among people (Coleman, 1988). Social networking services in general have been found to create and contain certain amount of social capital (Valenzuela, Park and Kee, 2009; Warren, Sulaiman and Jaafar, 2015). Ellison *et al.*, (2007) have found strong association between social capital and Facebook. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) suggest considering social capital in terms of three clusters: the structural, the relational and the cognitive dimensions of social capital.

Structural Social Capital: The structural aspect of social capital refers to the connections between people (Bolino, Turnley and Bloodgood, 2002). Structural resources include network characteristics such as social interaction ties, tie strength, and centrality (Chiu, Hsu and Wang, 2006). More specifically, it relates to an individual ability to make weak and strong ties to others within a system.

Relational Social Capital: The relational resources of social capital refer to “the kind of personal relationships people have developed with each other through a history of interactions” (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). It is best characterized through trust of others and their cooperation and the identification an individual has within a network. Trust is a key relational resource which refers to the “willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence” and represents a relationship attribute (Moorman, Deshpande and Zaltman, 1993; Wang *et al.*, 2016).

Cognitive Social Capital: Lastly, the cognitive resources of social capital refer to a shared paradigm and are defined as “those resources providing shared representations, interpretations, and systems of meaning among parties” (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). A shared set of terms or jargon facilitates effective communication and mutual understanding. Social network members usually develop myths, stories, and metaphors comprehensible only by people in the same group with the same language and codes (Wang *et al.*, 2016).

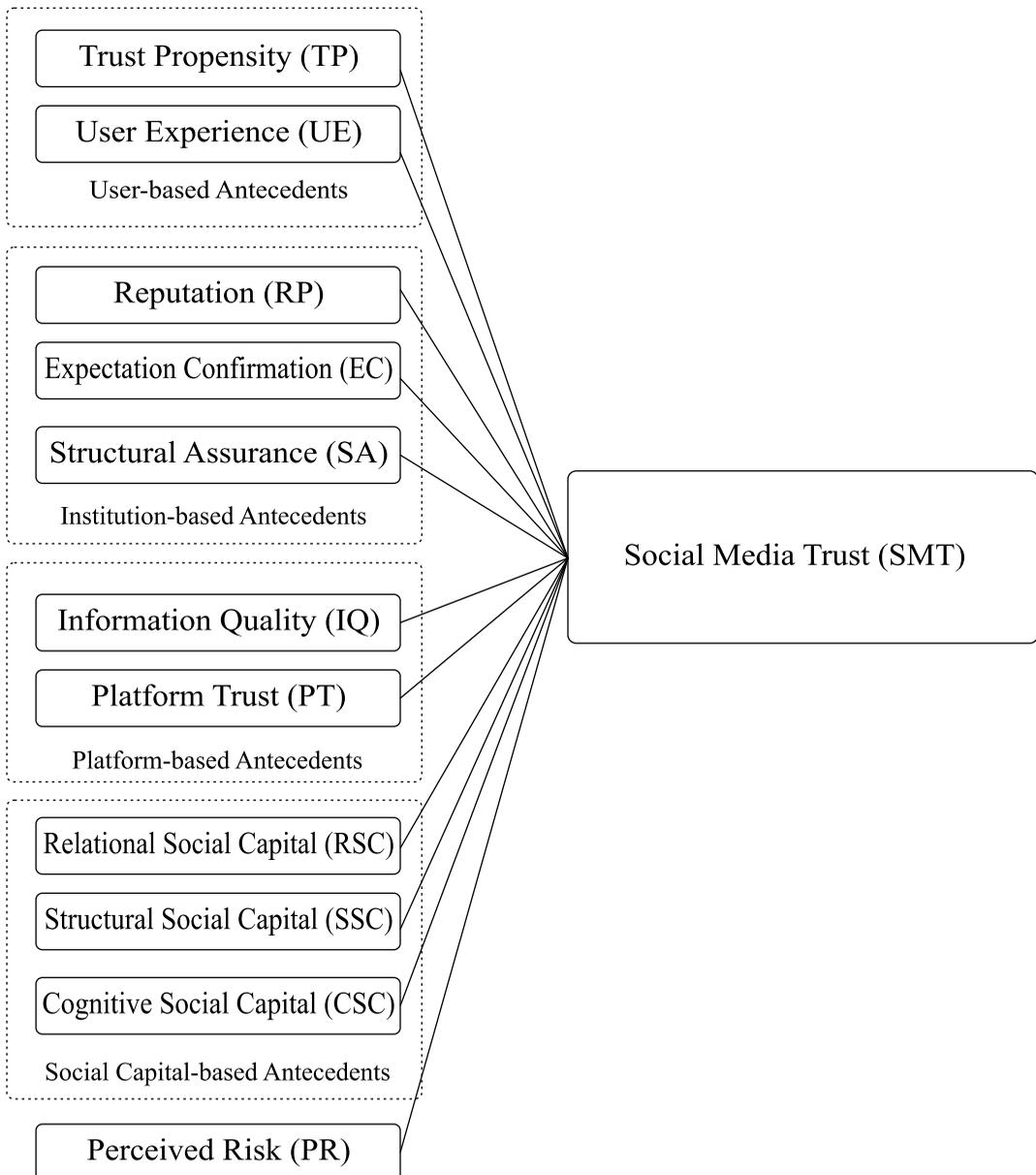
Perceived Risk

Perceived Risk: Trust and risk have often been linked in the literature. Risk can be defined as uncertainty in outcomes, especially where the possibility of losses exists. According to Das and Teng (2004), risk could be seen as an antecedent of trust. Since information privacy is important for individuals and social media users, unwanted information disclosure on online media represents substantial threat. A person who perceives high risk could also be very careful of what information they share on social networking services and thus would have likely low levels of trust on the social media.

Thus perceived risk should have negative effect to trust towards social networking services.

The proposed conceptual framework depicting relationship of social media trust and trust antecedents can be seen in Figure-1.

Figure 1 : Conceptual Framework



Conclusion and Directions for Future Research

As per the literature review it was found that there are only a few studies, which have investigated implications of trust in the social media context. Thus, the research carried out in the field of Internet and e-commerce, which is closely related to the social media has formed the basis of this research. In this study, a conceptual framework in the context of social media has been presented which highlights the relationship between the various antecedents and user trust in social media. In this research, antecedents of trust have been categorized into five broad dimensions. The social media or individual based trust antecedents include user's propensity to trust and user's experience and proficiency. Institution-based trust antecedents include reputation, expectation confirmation and structural assurance. Social media platform-based antecedents include information quality and trust towards social media platform. Social Capital-based and its forms- Structural, Relational and Cognitive Social Capital can also be trust antecedents. Lastly, user's perceived risk towards social media is a "negative" trust antecedent.

The study identifies the antecedents of trust in social media. Marketer can take clue from the framework and frame their strategies to develop trust in their social media platforms. For organizations, which are looking at ways to create trust in social media to market their products and services and also create brand identity for themselves, this study provides pointers in order to increase and sustain trust in social media.

Although, this paper provides only the theoretical model regarding the antecedents of trust in social media, the research paves way for future research where a qualitative research can be carried out to fine tune or find more trust antecedents. Also the outcomes of the research can be further investigated through quantitative analysis to come up with a theoretical model explaining trust antecedents and their relationship with trust in social media.

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Compliance Cost of Income Tax: Study of Salaried Assesseees of Amritsar District in Punjab

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Compliance cost is the cost incurred by the taxpayers for fulfilling their legal and statutory obligations (e.g. cost incurred on activities like registration as taxpayers, filing of return, availing professional's advice etc). The present study attempts to determine the compliance cost incurred by the salaried assesseees of Amritsar district in Punjab besides assessing their preferred method of filing of tax returns. The study reveals that the majority of the respondents file their tax return themselves and overall compliance cost incurred by them during the assessment year 2015-2016 was up to Rs. 2,000.

Keywords: tax return, Amritsar assesseees, compliance cost

Introduction

Tax Compliance by assesseees implies the compliance with the entire statutory obligations specified in the tax law including the registration as tax payers and timely and accurate filing of returns and payment of taxes. "Compliance Costs are not only incurred by the taxpayers, but also include all the costs of agents and other financial institutions which are responsible for collecting the taxes" (Chattopadhyay and Gupta, 2002, w.p.). Non-compliance implies failure to meet the tax reporting requirements or tax obligations. It includes both intentional and unintentional activities to ignore the tax liability through tax evasion and tax avoidance (Pope and Jabbar, 2008). The present study revolves around the compliance cost incurred by the respondents during the assessment year 2015-2016.

Review of Literature

A number of studies have been conducted worldwide to study the various aspects of income tax. Some of the major findings are:

- Bhoothalingam (1968), in his report titled, *Final Report on Rationalisation and Simplification of the Tax Structure*, suggested to abolish the classification of

income under various heads for the purpose of calculating total income and also to allow the setting-off of different losses from any type of income for the improvement in taxation system of the country. It was also suggested to raise the exemption limit for an individual and Hindu Undivided Family (HUF) from Rs. 7,500 to Rs. 10,000. The study recommended an increase in the number of officers for the convenience of the various taxpayers so that they can easily pay their taxes in the right manner.

- Direct Taxes Enquiry Committee (1971), appointed under the chairmanship of K. N. Wanchoo, in its report submitted to the Government of India, found the main reasons of tax evasion as high tax rates, inefficient tax laws and donation to various political parties etc. The committee recommended solutions to various problems such as developing confidence among taxpayers in India, regulating donations to different political parties, penalty for non-disclosure of actual income, issuing permanent account number (PAN) to all the assesseees, mandatory registration for all the religious trusts and charitable institutions, proper training to the tax officers and so on.
- Mookherjee and Das-Gupta (1995), in their paper titled “Reforming Indian Income Tax Enforcement,” examined the cause of poor performance of income tax in India and also suggested various measures for its improvement. Findings revealed that the performance of the Indian income tax was very poor as compared to the other countries with similar per capita gross domestic product (GDP). It was argued that the reason for the poor performance of Indian income tax was inappropriate organizational structure, lack in the use of computerization and an ineffective allocation of manpower resources with the increasing taxpayer population. It was concluded that the contemporary administrative and enforcement practices would not lead to improvement in the performance of the Indian income tax. Further, it was also recommended that certain steps were required to be taken against large scale tax evasion besides improvement in the information system.
- Rajan (1996), in his study titled *Personal Income Taxation in India*, studied the effect of the Indian income tax structure on the economic growth of the country. The period covered for the purpose of the study was from 1951-1952 to 1988-1989. It was concluded that for the economic growth of the country the rationalization of tax structure is a must. It was also suggested that the tax law should be simplified so that it is easier for the tax payer to understand.
- Virmani (1997), in his paper titled “An Agenda for Tax Reform,” suggested that there was a need for elimination of various exemptions, reduction of tax rates and

simplification of filing of tax return. Further, it was observed that computerized database should be used and authenticated expenditure data on telephone bills, property ownership, electricity bills etc. need to be maintained. Some of the other measures were also suggested to check tax avoidance like simplified tax return form, payment only through debit card /credit card or certified banker's cheques etc.

- Chattopadhyay and Gupta (2002), in their study titled “The Personal Income Tax in India: Compliance Costs and Compliance Behaviour of Taxpayers,” examined the effect of compliance costs on the behaviour of the tax payers in India. Data was collected from 172 individuals and regression analysis technique was used to analyze the collected data. A relationship was observed between the various components of compliance cost (like bribes etc.) and compliance behaviour. Besides bribes, the use of tax professionals also affected the compliance.
- Das-Gupta, Ghosh and Mookherjee (2004), in their study titled “Tax Administration Reform and Taxpayer Compliance in India,” analyzed the different ways in which tax payers disclosed their income. Data was collected directly from the official records of various tax units for the Assessment Years 1989-1990 to 1990-1991. Technique of Regression Analysis was used, the results of which revealed that along with assesseees assigned to special assessment units, the assesseees with the higher income voluntarily disclosed their income. It was concluded that the significant compliance gain could be ensured through an expanded staff and that there is need to change the various assessment procedures for the tax payers as well as the staff.
- Singh and Sharma (2007), in their study titled “Tax Professionals' Perception of the Income Tax System of India: An Empirical Evidence,” revealed that the tax professionals and tax advisors play an important role in the revenue collection procedures by giving advice to the tax payers. Data was collected from 500 respondents through convenience-cum-judgment sampling method and collected data was analyzed with the help of techniques like weighted average scores, factor analysis, chi-square, one-way ANOVA and regression analysis. It was revealed that with the passage of time there was an improvement in the Indian taxation system due to reduction in tax evasion, e-filing of tax return, extension of relief of taxpayers etc. Further, it was also found that the tax payers were not satisfied with the price level adjustments of the tax rates.
- Deshpande (2012), in his study titled *A Study of Personal Income Tax Structure in India with Special reference to Selected Districts in Maharashtra*, examined the

effect of India's income tax policy on individual taxpayers. Data was collected from 400 salaried class and businessman class assesseees from selected area of Maharashtra (i.e. Aurangabad, Nashik, Pune, Ahemadnagar, Nagpur, Kolhapur, Solapur and Raigad) through questionnaire. The data was analyzed in tables and graphs with the help of simple statistical tools. The study revealed that poorly designed tax structure in India leads to several problems like high compliance costs, tax evasion, tax avoidance and so on. It was suggested that there is a need for easy access to tax payers through e-mail, internet and extension facilities such as tele-filing and tele-refunds etc. so that people are encouraged to pay their tax liability.

- Gupta and Gupta (2013), in their article titled “Income Tax Structure of Individual Assesseees in India: A Critical Study,” examined the present income tax structure in India to identify the several problems associated with it. The main issue observed was the poorly designed tax structure resulting in more tax evasion and high compliance cost.

The review of literature shows that though researches have been conducted from time to time on the various dimensions of income tax yet there is need to carry out extensive research as regarding the vital issue in Indian taxation system i.e. compliance cost. The present study thus attempts to explore this important issue with special focus on assesseees of Amritsar district.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the present study are as follows:

- 1) To identify an association between demographics and the tax return filing method adopted by the assesseees
- 2) To measure the monetary compliance cost incurred by the salaried category assesseees in the Amritsar district of Punjab.

Research Methodology

The present study includes both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data was collected with the help of structured questionnaire. Data was collected from a sample of 200 salaried assesseees from Amritsar district in the State of Punjab by employing Convenience-cum-Judgment Sampling technique. Secondary data was collected from journals, books, magazines, official websites of Indian Income Tax Department, working Papers, newspaper reports and budget papers.

Data Analysis And Interpretation

The present study is based on the data collected from a sample of 200 respondents. Percentage, frequencies, median values and chi- square test have been applied to analyze the collected data. Table 1.1 represents the age-wise, gender-wise and income-wise distribution of the respondents.

Table 1.1: Age, Gender and Income of The Respondents

	Status	Number of Respondents	Percent
Age Group	Below 30 Years (A-1)	41	20.5
	31-50 Years (A-2)	91	45.5
	51-60 Years (A-3)	48	24
	Above 60 Years (A-4)	20	10
	Total	200	100.0
Gender	Male (G-1)	102	51.0
	Female (G-2)	98	49.0
	Total	200	100.0
	2,50,001-5,00,000	101	50.5
	5,00,001-10,00,000	75	37.5
	Above 10,00000	24	12
	Total	200	100.0

The distribution of the respondents by their age group (Table 1.1) shows that out of total 200 respondents, majority, i.e. 91 (45.5 per cent) belong to the age group of 31-50 years (A-2), followed by 48 (24 per cent) respondents in the age group of 51-60 years (A-3), 41 (20.5 per cent) respondents in the age group of below 30 years (A-1) and 20 (10 per cent) respondents in the age group of above 60 years (A-4).

Similarly, distribution of the respondents by their gender shows that out of total 200 respondents, majority, i.e. 102 (51 per cent) are male respondents while 98 (49 per cent) are female respondents.

The distribution of the respondents according to their income group shows that out of total 200 respondents, majority, i.e. 101 (50.5 per cent) respondents belong to the income group of Rs. 2,50,001-5,00,000 (Low Income Tax Group), followed by 75 (37.5 per cent) who belong to the income group of Rs. 5,00,000-10,00,000 (Moderate Income Tax Group) and 24 (12 per cent) belong to the income group of above Rs. 10,00,000 (High Income Tax Group).

Tax Return Filing by the Respondents

Tax return filing is one of the important elements of compliance costs. Hence, it becomes important to study the association between the method of filing of tax-return and their demographics. Chattopadhyay and Das-Gupta also studied the role of demographics in influencing compliance costs of the tax payers in India. Further, Das-Gupta, Ghosh and Mookherjee also analyzed the ways in which tax payers disclosed their income.

For the present study, the respondents were asked as to whether they file their return themselves, with the help of tax advisors/professionals or with the help of others (e.g. family members, friends and neighbours etc.). Of the 200 respondents surveyed in the Amritsar District, majority, i.e. 112 (56 per cent) stated that they file their return themselves, followed by 45 (22.5 per cent) respondents who take the help of tax advisors/professionals, and 43 (21.5 per cent) respondents who file their return with the help of others (e.g. family members, friends and neighbours etc). The following hypotheses were formulated and tested:

- H1:** There is no significant association between the age of the respondents and their tax return filing method.
- H2:** There is no significant association between the gender of the respondents and their tax return filing method.
- H3:** There is no significant association between the income of the respondents and their tax return filing method.

In order to determine the association between the demographic variables (i.e. age, gender and income) with the tax return filing method followed by the respondents, the chi-square test was applied. The responses have been compiled in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Tax Return Filing by the Respondents

Annual Saving	(Age-wise Analysis)			(Gender-wise Analysis)			(Income-wise Analysis)			Total
	Below 30 Years (A-1)	31-50 Years (A-2)	51-60 Years (A-3)	Above 60 Years (A-4)	Male (G-1)	Female (G-2)	2,50,001-5,00,000 (Low Income Group) (Y-1)	5,00,001-10,00,000 (Moderate Income Group) (Y-2)	Above 10,00,000 (High Income Group) (Y-3)	
Myself	23 (56.1%)	70 (76.9%)	17 (35.4%)	2 (10%)	63 (63.8%)	49 (50%)	68 (67.3%)	39 (52%)	5 (20.8%)	112 (56%)
With the help of tax advisors/ professionals	12 (29.3%)	15 (16.5%)	16 (33.3%)	2 (10%)	27 (26.5%)	18 (18.4%)	15 (14.9%)	14 (18.7%)	16 (66.7%)	45 (22.5%)
With the help of others (e.g. family members, friends, neighbour etc.)	6 (14.6%)	6 (6.6%)	15 (31.3%)	16 (80%)	12 (11.8%)	31 (31.6%)	18 (17.8%)	22 (29.3%)	3 (12.5%)	43 (21.5%)
Total	41 (100%)	91 (100%)	48 (100%)	20 (100%)	102 (100%)	98 (100%)	101 (100%)	75 (100%)	24 (100%)	200 (100%)

Source: Survey Data

Table 1.2 (A): Result of Chi-Square (Age-wise, Gender-wise and Income-wise)

Pearson Chi-Square Value	Value	d.f.	Significance	Significant/ Insignificant	Accepted/ Rejected
Age-wise	68.755	6	.000	Significant	Rejected
Gender-wise	11.870	2	.003	Significant	Rejected
Income-wise	35.432	4	.000	Significant	Rejected

*Significant at the 0.05 Level

The chi-square value indicates that statistically there is significant association at 5 per cent level between the age, gender and income of the respondents and their tax return filing method. Hence, the age, gender and income of the respondents play an important role in their decision regarding tax return filing method. Primarily, the respondents belonging to the age group of 31-50 years (A-2) prefer to file their return themselves while respondents belonging to the age group of 51-60 years (A-3) prefer to take the help of tax advisors/ professionals. Senior citizens i.e. respondents above 60 years (A-4) prefer to file their return with the help of others (e.g. family members, friends, neighbours etc).

Gender-wise, the male respondents prefer to file their return themselves or with the help of tax advisors/professionals while female respondents prefer to take the help of others (e.g. family members, friends and neighbours etc).

Income-wise, the respondents belonging to the income tax group of Rs. 2,50,001-5,00,000 (Y-1) prefer to file their return themselves. The respondents who belong to the income tax group of Rs. 5,00,001-10,00,000 (Y-2) also prefer to file their return themselves while the respondents belonging to the income tax group of above Rs. 10,00,000 (Y-3) prefer to file their return with the help of tax advisors/ professionals.

To conclude, it was observed that the majority of the respondents file their return themselves while the number is comparatively less for those who prefer to file their tax return with the help of others (e.g. family members, friends and neighbour etc.) or with the help of tax advisors/professionals.

Compliance Cost Incurred by the Respondents

The respondents were asked to give an estimate of the compliance cost (e.g. expenditure on tax return filing, obtaining PAN, tax litigation, etc.) incurred for complying with their income tax proceedings during the assessment year i.e. 2015-2016. The result is shown in the table 1.3.

**Table 1.3: Compliance Cost Incurred by the Respondents
(Assessment Year 2015-2016)**

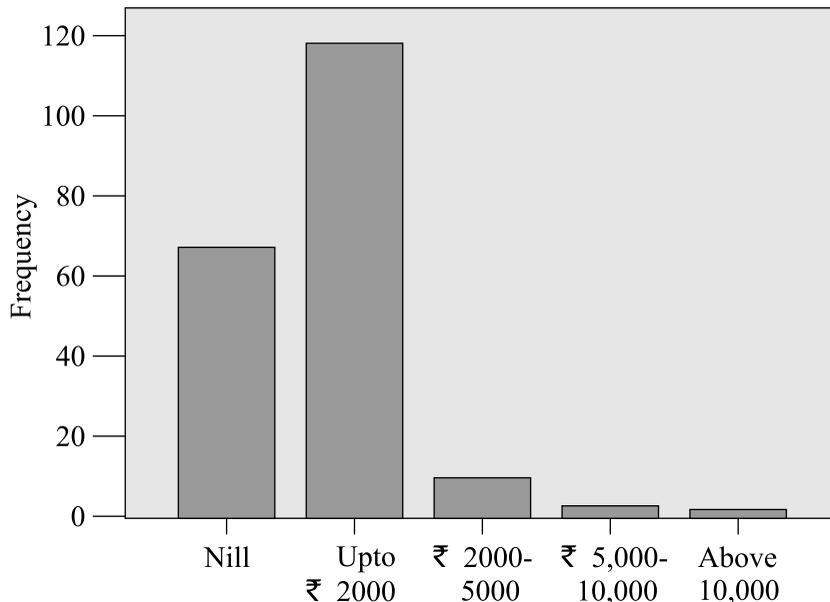
Compliance Cost (Rs.)	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Nil	67	33.5	33.5
Up to 2000	118	59.0	92.5
2000-5000	10	5.0	97.5
5000-10,000	3	1.5	99.0
Above 10,000	2	1.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	

Median Value: Up to Rs. 2,000

Source: Survey Data

The graphical presentation of the data contained in Table 1.3 has been shown through Figure 1.

Figure 1: Compliance Cost Incurred by the Respondents



As shown in Table 1.3 and Figure 1, out of 200 respondents, 118 (59 per cent) respondents stated that they incurred an expenditure of up to Rs. 2,000 as compliance cost during the assessment year 2015-2016, followed by 67 (33.5 per cent) respondents who incurred no cost, 10 (5 per cent) respondents incurred the compliance cost between Rs. 2,000-5,000, 3 (1.5 per cent) respondents incurred between Rs. 5,000-10,000 while only 2 respondents incurred above Rs. 10,000 as compliance cost during the assessment year 2015-2016.

The median value computed revealed that overall a burden of up to Rs. 2,000 have been observed as regards compliance costs borne by the respondents of the present study.

Limitations of the Study

1. Data has been collected only from the limited area i.e. from Amritsar district in the state of Punjab in India.
2. The present study only covers the salaried assesseees of Amritsar district in the state of Punjab. The findings, thus, can't be generalized for all categories of assesseees i.e. businessman or corporate taxpayers.

3. For determining the compliance cost only monetary cost has been considered in the present study. Other compliance cost such as non-monetary cost, voluntary cost, internal and external costs have not been considered in this study due to time constraint.
4. The present study does not cover the e-filing of return (i.e. one of the major methods of return filing in India).

Suggestions for the Policy Makers

Results indicate that primarily, the respondents approach the tax advisors and professionals to reduce their tax liability. Besides that, they take the help of tax advisors and professionals because of the frequent changes in laws from time to time. Therefore, the policy makers in India can consider the option of evolving some other way of incorporating changes that could ensure minimal complexity in understanding the new provisions (e.g. automatic adjustment of all tax rates for price level changes). Results revealed that though majority of the respondents incur compliance cost up to Rs. 2,000, there were other respondents also who incurred compliance cost (during the assessment year 2015-2016) between Rs. 2,000 – 10,000. Therefore, steps should be taken by the government to reduce the compliance cost to the least extent by making maximum use of information technology.

Scope for Further Research

The present study is limited to only particular area i.e. Amritsar district in the state of Punjab. Further research could cover other geographical regions of the country and other categories of assesseees i.e. businessman and corporate assesseees. As regards compliance cost, an assessment could be done of both monetary as well as non-monetary costs borne by all categories of assesseees. On the other hand e-filing of return is one of the major areas which could be covered for the purpose of the further research.

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The Glass Ceiling in India: Myth or Reality

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The present paper focuses on the reality of “glass ceiling,” an invisible barrier that prevents women from moving to the top in management hierarchy regardless of their qualifications or achievements. Women are not adequately represented and suffer from discrimination in all spheres. Glass ceiling is perceived as an all pervasive phenomena and is deeply entrenched in India. Women managers have been conspicuous by their minority in organizations. The present paper is descriptive in nature and has taken data from secondary sources. But the emerging role of women as company CEOs, policy makers and even boardroom executives motivates this study to examine whether it is really gender discrimination being tagged as glass ceiling or mere perception leading us away from actual facts. The study discusses indicators suggesting glass ceiling, barriers preventing women from reaching the top and sums up by throwing light on the recommendations of how to remove the obstacles and to bring complete parity in workforce.

Keywords: glass ceiling, gender discrimination, gender parity, women professionals

Working women are no longer a rarity and have come to be accepted as an integral part of the working force. But women have been challenged by inequality in the workforce. Until the modern era, socio-cultural and legal practices, combined with religious and educational conventions, prohibited women's entry and participation in the workforce. Economic dependency upon men, poor socio-economic status of women, and lack of access to higher education for women have excluded them from well-paying and high-status occupations. However, around the world there has been a trend towards increased access for women in education and participation in the labour force. Since 1970, women's share of the labour force has steadily increased in virtually all regions of the world, and it now approaches the 50 percent mark in the Scandinavian countries, the United States, Canada, the UK, and France. Despite these trends towards equalization of access to employment for women and men, there is persistent gender segregation in the workplace much like the division of labour at the home also remains strongly gendered (Lips, 2014).

The term “glass ceiling” is used to describe the concealed but real obstructions which are faced by women in their career, and which deter them from reaching a higher position in the corporate sector. The concept explains the condition where the skills

and knowledge of a person are ignored just because of their gender. The term, which is in vogue in the current era of organizational behaviour, refers to an intangible barrier within a hierarchy that restrains qualified women or minorities from obtaining higher level positions at their workplace. The very fact that women are adequately represented in the workforce, but rarely in the senior managerial positions has been labelled “the glass ceiling.” The concept originally came up with reference to the print media at the National Press Club in July 1979, at a Conference of the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press led by Katherine Lawrence of Hewlett Packard. The term was later used in 1984 in a chapter of the book, *The Working Women Report: Succeeding in Business in the 1980s*, by Gay Bryant (1984). Later the term was used in 1986, when two Wall Street Journal reporters named Carol Hymowitz and Timothy D. Schellhardt used the phrase in their article entitled: "The Glass Ceiling: Why Women Can't Seem to Break the Invisible Barrier That Blocks Them from the Top Jobs" (1986: 1) to explain the unseen barriers that block women from advancing to senior leadership positions in organizations. Since then, the expression has been used widely in the official government reports, popular media and different academic platforms. Glass ceiling is a phenomena which is rampant in every country. The number of women holding top positions is very small particularly in the corporate sector where there is dearth of women in top management posts. *The Economist* created glass ceiling index in 2013 and recently in 2016 updated their index and included data on higher education, labour-force participation, pay, child-care costs, maternity rights, business-school applications and representation in senior jobs.

Women are almost non-existent in the board rooms. 63 percent of the companies surveyed have no women directions on their board rooms (Dee-Ann, 2013: 16).

Terminology Related to Glass Ceiling

Glass Wall: A related concept that is often used along with glass ceiling is that of the glass wall. As glass ceiling is used to describe barriers found in vertical movement, a glass wall refers to an organizational divide based on gender into functionally different areas for men and women. Gender stereotyping blocks women from positions in certain departments and for certain kinds of tasks. This results in the erection of glass walls.

Glass Escalator: Other related metaphor used to explain glass ceiling is glass escalator. This can be defined as how more men are joining fields that were previously mainly under domain of women, like nursing and teaching, and now within these job fields, men are dominating and even going directly to the top (Cotter et. al., 2001). Men are being given more promotions than women and even though women have

worked just as hard, they are still not being offered the same chances as men are in some circumstances.

Sticky Floor Effect: Another concept often understood in conjunction with the glass ceiling is that of sticky floor. This term is used to explain the attitude of women when they impose career blocks upon themselves that put a stop for them from moving up. Women hold themselves back in their careers and shy away from reaching an apex position in their professional space. Often women seek to relieve work pressure and avoid shifting to distant locations for personal reasons. Often a woman has to be pushed hard to see herself in a top job. Shambaugh Rebecca (2008) in her book titled “It's not a glass ceiling, It's a sticky floor,” elucidates what really holds women back from reaching their full leadership potential, which is right below their own feet — the sticky floor. Women do not show ample confidence in their ability to handle higher level jobs. It is because of this sticky floor syndrome that a lot of women are unable to even reach, let alone break, the glass ceiling.

Glass Cliff: Another terminology related to the glass ceiling is that of the glass cliff. When women break through the glass ceiling, they also often encounter what is known as the glass cliff. It is a term to explain the phenomenon whereby women are given leadership roles, such as executives in the corporate world when the chances of failure are the highest. Women are generally given eminent positions when circumstances are precarious or risky (Sabharwal, 2015). Thus women who reach the top are often cast into positions where they are more likely to fail than succeed. The terminology has come into currency because a cliff represents a steep height, and as on a cliff, this too is a perilous situation which may involve the risk of falling.

Objectives of the Study

The study has been conducted with the following objectives:

1. To examine the existence of glass ceiling
2. To study the status of women in the workplace

Methodology

The present study is based on secondary data collected from various sources such as research papers, reports of International Labour Organisation (ILO), Central Statistical Organisation (CSO), Global Gender by World Economic Forum, Census 2011, Grand Thornton International Business report, books etc., and is descriptive in nature. The analyses are based on interdisciplinary approach.

Glass Ceiling in India

Women managers have been conspicuous for their minority in Indian organizations. However, Indian organizations have also experienced a steady increase in the number of women employees and this pattern is bound to continue in the future as well. No longer are women associated with low expectations in education and workforce. Women now try to seek and obtain the highest position in business. But they are not given enough opportunities to catapult them to the upper echelons. This is the reason there are only a handful of women who have reached the top and breached the barrier. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Indra Nooyi, Chanda Kochhar etc. are the few names that come to mind if one attempts to identify women who have reached the top of their organizations. *The Hindu* (Dadhwal, 2016) reported that gender pay gap is still wide in India (according to Monster India report). It released the “Monster Salary Index” and found that gender gap is still wide at 27 percent. According to the report, some of the reasons behind gender pay gap could be the preference for male employees, preference for promotion of male employees to supervisory positions and career breaks of women due to parental duties and socio-cultural factors.

The corporate sector is a major driver in development and plays a prominent role in the economy. The Indian corporate sector has two main components: one owned by government and the other owned by private companies. It is primarily owned by companies ranging from MNCs to private companies and public companies. The Indian corporate sector has steadily grown over the last 2 decades. However, there is rampant gender inequality in the placement of women in the corporate sector.

According to EY's (a firm of Ernst and Young Global Limited) report titled *Navigating Disruption without Gender Diversity? Think Again* (2016), majority (69 percent) of industry leaders believe they will achieve gender parity on their board within the next 25 years despite little progress being made within the organizations. A survey of 350 C-Suite executives from the top 200 companies in seven industries across 51 countries revealed only 13 percent expect a significant increase in the number of women in leadership roles in the next five years. Female respondents identified an unsupportive culture (28 percent), organizational bias (28 percent) and conflicts of raising a family (24 percent) as a key obstacle. However for the success of organizations, gender diversity in the workplace is a business imperative and is no longer a preference but a necessity for successful organizations.

The predominance of men at senior management levels in corporate India may change as more professionally qualified women enter the workforce. Though the process is still moving at a snail's pace. Indian men in corporate boardrooms still seem to resist

women in top positions, which makes the implementation of the amended Companies Act, 2013 the need of the hour. This can be witnessed worldwide. As per *The Tribune Spectrum* (Dikshit, 2015), in spite of Norway progressing on all social and human indicators, only 33 percent of all boardroom positions are occupied by women there. This depicts that even highly progressive countries are lagging behind in giving equal representation to women in boardrooms.

Indicators of the Existence of Glass Ceiling at the Workplace

The effect of the glass ceiling can be explicitly seen in the form of gender inequality at the workplace. Gender discrimination in the working place begins with the hiring process, where men are hired first or hired instead of women. It may also vary in the context of income disparity whereby men are paid more than women. In some offices it is seen that women are harassed and subjected to some brutality or fail to get promotion regardless of their academic credentials in favour of men. Workplace politics also instigate gender discrimination (International Labour Organization Report, 2015). Several organizational mechanisms promote the glass-ceiling effect and social closure in male-typed occupations. Both formal and informal hiring procedures, unequal access to informal networks for learning about jobs and securing them, gender biases in criteria, and implicit stereotypical assumptions that men and women are better suited to perform different types of work endorse the glass ceiling effect. Organizations produce and reproduce gender differences. Women are still breaking into male-dominated fields, but still face the problem of tokenism, the hiring of one or a few women and minorities, perpetuating group disadvantages (Gottfried, 2013).

The reasons for women finding it difficult to move into senior posts are women's own inclinations as they may settle for a field even if the prospects of promotion are slim. The twin demands of a successful career and family are difficult to manage. It has been observed that majority of women use contingency approach in the selection of their career. The contingency approach implies that women chose occupations in which they see the greatest opportunities for flexibility in which they can respond to any contingency such as marriage, child birth and geographical mobility. It is believed by some men that women lack managerial qualities (Thompson, 2001). Men on a senior position think that women are difficult to deal with and they would have to rethink their ways of working if they had to deal with women on a senior level. Probably among the very senior staff there is a feeling that women are more emotional which is dangerous in the office space. Women are much more under scrutiny than their male counterparts in all stages of their careers. A woman has to be twice as good as a man to be chosen for senior posts and has to ensure continually that she remain twice as good.

The very femininity of women is thought to lessen her chances of being promoted into a position of some authority. It is also believed they would not rise above a certain level because they would not devote wholeheartedly to their work, and that, particularly if they had family commitments, they would not be prepared to devote the time necessary to function well in a top position. They might have the responsibility and power without being given the post or the title. Men are considered to be more capable of looking at the broad field and making managerial decisions whereas women's eye for accuracy and detail is assumed to be most useful in a secondary and/or complementary role.

Barriers Preventing Advancement of Women on the Top

Societal Barriers

1. Lower educational opportunity provided to women
2. Prevention from advancing due to conscious and unconscious stereotypical notion attached to women
3. Lesser support system

Internal Structural Barriers within the Direct Control of Business

1. Traditional and inflexible recruitment practices leaving women out of recruitment
2. Corporate climates alienating and isolating minorities and women
3. Initial placement and clustering in staff jobs or in highly technical and professional jobs that are not on the career track to the top
4. Inadequate mentoring and guidance provided to women
5. Inadequate management training given to women in comparison to their male counterparts
6. Lack of opportunities for career development
7. Biased performance evaluation for women and men which blocks women's growth
8. Counterproductive behavior and harassment by colleagues at workplace against women

Government Barriers

1. Lack of vigorous, consistent monitoring and law enforcements
2. Weaknesses in the formulation and collection of employment-related data which makes it difficult to ascertain the status of groups at the managerial level and to disaggregate the data

Theoretical Framework

After reviewing a gamut of significant literature on the glass ceiling and its effect abroad and in India, this segment consists of a brief look at some theories that allow to make sense of glass ceiling as has been thus far been illustrated empirically and described conceptually. It explores some of the valuable frameworks in sociological theory that can confer form to the glass ceiling concept. Various perspectives underlying the concept can be applied in the present study.

Liberal feminist perspective and Human capital theory are used to understand the status of women and existence of glass ceiling. Liberal feminists believe that “female subordination is rooted in a set of customary and legal constraints that blocks women's entrance to and success in the so-called public world” (Giddens, 2009: 164). They strive for sexual equality through political and legal reform. Liberal feminism's primary goal of gender equality in the public sphere – equal access to education, equal pay, end to job sex segregation and better working conditions. The propagators of liberal feminism won primarily through legal channels and according to them traditional cultural and social attitudes perpetuate inequality.

Human capital model illustrates that gender wage gap is the main reason why there are lesser women on the top in the workplace. On the basis of the present research, it is observed that as women have a dual responsibility of family and work; it gives an upper edge to men. As women, especially mothers, invest relatively less than men in their employment, they harvest fewer rewards. Due to intermittent careers, women are given less promotions and wages (Holborn and Haralambos, 2008).

Recommendations

The role of women in Indian society is primarily considered to be confined within the home. Women are considered responsible for marital obligations and raising of the children. Whereas, men are considered the *karta* [doer] in the family: he who provides financial resources and is the bread winner. Women are not given that status though despite their contributions at home as well as professionally. Hence the following recommendations for organizations become imperative:

- Development of supportive structure for women through women-friendly policies considering their exclusive social and familial responsibilities (Jha, 2015).
- Designing of HR policies to cater to the growing need of women employees' career growth, which needs to be formulated at various levels.

- Provision of training to the male employees to enable them to accept women as equal counterparts (Eugenia Date, 1998).
- Creation of a supportive environment for women so that they may realize their inner strength and capabilities and feel motivated to remain in workforce and perform their best.
- Creation of an environment where women executives get support from their leaders and encouragement from co-workers.
- Development of leadership qualities in women executives by providing proper training and mentorship to them and providing them the learning environment to identify themselves as leaders and hone their qualities to deserve a leadership role. Leadership qualities can be developed by accepting challenging assignments which help women demonstrate their capabilities.
- Helping women executives in realizing their own ambitions and aspirations, and motivating them to be more confident in expressing their view.
- Provision of leadership identity development programs for women executives. It is observed that women executives often focus more on how others perceive them and what kind of working style others would be comfortable with, rather than concentrating on their own goals (Bansal and Kathuria, 2015).
- Family has a major impact on women executives' career, but organizations should mentor women executives and should support them (Beasley, 1999). Organizations should create a path for those women who are willing to take a re-entry to their work life after the career break due to the family commitments. As family commitments are inevitable, organizations should consider these commitments and should support women executives to cope with the new environment.

The study is significant in probing into the existence of the glass ceiling in India and the recommendations which help the management in breaking the glass ceiling and promoting a gender-level playing field. The study also analyses what factors hold women back from climbing on the top and the forms of discrimination women in the organizations have to face.

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New Bank License Regime: A Step Ahead Towards Financial Inclusion in India

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An attempt is made in this paper to conceptually understand the new initiative taken by the Reserve Bank of India to inculcate financial inclusion in India. The issue of bank license to 23 private players, who are financially and technologically sound, is a welcome one to make the financial system sound and competitive. The focus is on covering small and marginal farmers, small business units, unserved, unbanked, unorganized and financially excluded customer segment under one financial system where they can be served. The capital requirement, scope of activity, area of operation and other financial and banking requirements are different for these new banks as per guidelines issued by RBI. It issued 2 universal bank licenses, 11 payment banks and 10 small finance bank licenses in 2015-16. The new bank license regime will definitely boost the Indian economy and is a step ahead towards financial inclusion in India. Though there is a risk factor involved in the functioning of these institutions as banks, RBI will keep a close watch on its operations.

Keywords: financial Inclusion, bank license, universal banks, payment banks, small finance banks, Reserve Bank of India

Introduction

A sound financial system has a pivotal role to play in the development and growth of an economy, and it demands sound financial policy and wide coverage of masses having education, knowledge and approach to financial system. Financial Inclusion is a step ahead towards achievement of this aim. The government of India is also fulfilling its responsibility towards society at large by introducing new financial inclusion initiatives like Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Insurance policies, USSD based mobile banking, RuPay card, Direct Benefit Transfer, Swabhimaan Scheme, Expansion of BCA network, RBI branch authorization policy, etc. The main aim is to spread awareness among the people and uplift their standard of living and their basic financial rights by providing easy access to financial knowledge, service and market. All these efforts are pushing the concept of financial inclusion in India.

Financial inclusion or inclusive financing is the delivery of financial services and products at affordable prices to sections of disadvantaged and low-income segments

of society, in contrast to financial exclusion where those services are neither available nor affordable. Banking and non-banking industry has been trying to target the masses in vain. The number of households availing banking services in India as per census 2001 was 35.5 percent. With expansion of banking services and modification in the banking structure and policies, the percentage increased to 58.7 percent as per census 2011. Out of 1,25,857 scheduled commercial bank branches in India, only 38.6 percent, 26.8 percent, 18.30 percent and 16.29 percent are working in rural, semi urban, urban and metropolitan cities of India respectively as on March, 31, 2015. Currently, almost 41.3 percent of Indians do not have a bank account and only about 40,000 of India's 6.38 lakh villages have a commercial bank branch. This imbalance shows inability of bigger banks to reach the masses where other service providers such as telecom providers have made deep inroads.

The banking industry is a pioneer one where the public, at large, considers their investment safe and best source of saving mobilization. It has shown tremendous growth in volume and complexity during the last few decades. In the post-financial sector reforms phase (1991), its performance and strength improved perceptibly. Financial soundness of the Indian commercial banking system compares favorably with most of the advanced and emerging countries. India has 27 (state run) public sector banks and 22 private sector banks (old and new), 43 foreign sector banks, 4 Local Area Banks and 64 Regional Rural Banks. But its ratio of branches to adults is only about one fourth of Brazil's, leaving about half of households in India – accounting for 1.2 billion people outside the banking system. Viewed from this perspective, today's banking structure in India has both the need and the scope for further growth in size and strength.

Despite making significant improvements in all the areas relating to financial viability; profitability and competitiveness, there are concerns that banks have not been able to reach and bring a vast segment of the population, especially the underprivileged sections of the society; into the fold of basic banking services.

Need and Objective of the Study

Over the past few years, Reserve Bank of India (banker to banks) has been pushing to make more genuine efforts to penetrate India's hinterland and increase lending to farmers, small traders and businesses. But banks struggling under huge piles of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs), that are eroding their capital, have been reluctant. When bankers do not give desired attention to certain areas, the regulators have to step in to remedy the situation. This is the reason why the Reserve bank of India places a lot of emphasis on financial inclusion.

The Expert Committees on Financial/Banking Sector Reforms, 1991 and 1998 (Chairman: Shri M. Narasimham) and the Committee on Financial Sector Reforms, 2009 (Chairman: Shri Raghuram G. Rajan) recommended the issuance of different type of licenses for niche banks – small finance and payment banks who will further regulate the objective of deepening financial inclusion. It will have an advantage in terms of business and risk management. Some countries have a differentiated bank licensing regime where differentiated licenses are issued specifically outlining the activities that the licensed entity can undertake. A snapshot of different licensing regimes adopted in different countries can be explained in Table 1.

Table 1: Licensing Regimes

Country	Types of Banks
USA	Credit card banks, trust banks, community development banks, cash management banks and banker’s bank
Australia	Authorized deposit taking institutions perform limited range of banking activities
Singapore	Full bank, qualifying full bank, wholesale bank, offshore bank, representative bank.
Hong kong	Licensed, restricted license and deposit taking companies.
Indonesia	Multiple licensing policy
India	Universal banks, payment banks and small finance banks

Source: www.rbi.org

Table 1 shows that open countries with large and growing financial sector (in terms of contribution to GDP) seem to be favoring differentiated license policy. The position in case of India is different with regard to the development and growth of banking industry. The reason cited by Indian banks is paucity of capital. Stakeholders including the government are in no mood to beef up the capital in order to ameliorate the status of Indian banks worldwide. If India successfully rakes in colossal capital, new Indian banks would inch closer to a striking distance of laurels round the globe. This justifies the need for expansion in the banking industry and thus the issue of new banking licenses to India is a welcomed step by the Reserve Bank of India.

Hence, the objective of the present study is to examine the conceptual framework of

the set up of 23 License banks, their pros and cons and the future of these banks in India.

Review of Literature

The review data has been collected from articles in newspapers, journals and websites of RBI. A large number of studies have been carried out to examine the concept of financial inclusion. The issue of bank license to private firms is a new concept and hardly any study has been carried out in India to study the concept of issuance of bank licenses to private firms.

Standard and Poor's (Choudhary, 2014), in their statement in press release, stated that India's plan to grant new banking licenses to companies could increase risks in the banking sector given the chance that new entrants could be lax about loan standards.

ICICI Bank chief (Press Trust of India, 2015b), in her statement said that the entry of new licenses 11 payment banks would strengthen the overall financial ecosystem and also benefit the existing banks. Arun Jaitley, the finance Minister (2015) considered this initiative of RBI of issuing new bank licenses as an important step to expand Rural Banking.

Experts in a press release (Press Trust of India, 2015a) said that these banks are likely to witness an increase of up to 50 percent in attrition this year compared to last year as new players entering the sector would prefer seasoned industry professionals to grow their operations. IDFC chairman Rajiv Lall welcomed the grant of license but anticipated an arduous process in his interview with *Business Standard* (2015). Robin Roy, Associate Director of financial Services at Pricewater House Coopers, India commented that, "One can't expect these 2 Universal bank licenses to be game changer. Scaling up, reaching out has its own cost". He further said that, "It won't be a cake walk to convert (that) into a banking model" (Bose and Sharma, 2014).

A perusal of statements reveal the fact that this is a time when there is a public concern about good governance and when it comes to licenses for the entities that are trusted by the Indian public, this may well be the most appropriate step taken by the RBI to deepen the financial inclusion in India.

Research Methodology

The paper is conceptual in nature. Secondary data has been used for the present study. The articles, news briefs, interviews published in newspapers, annual reports of RBI and respective companies for the year 2014-15 have been used for the present study.

Analysis and Discussions

The focus of the present study is to examine the new banking sector reforms introduced by the Reserve Bank of India in current fiscal year by issuing bank licenses to 23 private players to deepen financial inclusion in India. The same can be discussed as under:

An Initiative towards Financial Inclusion: Issue of 23 Bank Licenses

No new Indian bank has been formed since Yes Bank in 2004. In December 2012, the amendments to the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 were carried out after consulting with the Government of India and various guidelines for “Licensing of New Banks in the Private Sector” were issued in 2014. Afterwards, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) granted 23 banking licenses to new players – two were given universal banking licenses (April 2, 2014), 11 were issued payments banks licenses (August 19, 2015) and 10 were given licenses for small finance banks (September 16, 2015) [list is attached as annexure 1].

The RBI selected private players who have reach and the technological and financial strength, experience in different sectors and capabilities to serve excluded customers across the country. Some experts gave the opinion in press releases that existing institutions such as Grameen Banks can be used effectively to expand access to financial services to poor. But the present situation demands for some structural changes in the banking industry to push for financial inclusion. Licenses were not issued to big and lucrative industries but to the applicants who were fulfilling the stringent norms. A question arises in the mind as to why licenses were not given to the big industrial houses. The answer lies in the fact that the industrial houses, if allowed to enter the business of banking, can play mischief by using public money for their own benefit and denying money to the competition.

The RBI issued three kinds of licenses to different private players after scrutinizing their applications with the set guidelines:

1. Universal Banks
2. Payment Banks
3. Small Finance Banks

Universal Banks

It is a system of banking where banks undertake a large number of financial services like investment banking, commercial banking, development banking, insurance and other financial services including functions of merchant banking, mutual funds,

factoring, housing finance, insurance etc. Universal banks may offer credit, loans, deposits, asset management, investment advisory, payment processing, securities transactions, underwriting and financial analysis.

RBI issued universal bank license to two private players: IDFC, a non-banking financial corporation based in Mumbai and is specialist in infrastructure lending, and Bandhan, a Kolkata-based microfinance organization. These two firms have a sound and successful track record of 10 years. The initial minimum paid up capital for a bank need to be at least Rs 500 crore. They need to be listed within three years of starting business.

These banks can accept deposits and carry out lending activities without limitations in the area of operations. They work towards achieving financial inclusion and 40 percent of their lending should be towards the priority sector. They need to open 25 percent of their branches in unbanked rural centers (population of upto 9999, according to the latest census). Also banks promoted by groups having 40 percent or more assets/income from non-financial business will require RBI's prior approval for raising paid-up voting equity capital beyond Rs 1000 crore or more for every block of Rs. 500 Crore.

Universal banking is for the big players in banking, and there is always the fears of monopolizing the markets with them. In addition, if these banks fail, it will cause a severe jolt to the banking system and investor confidence. While some feel that such banking helps in diversifying risk, others are of the view that separate handling of different banking services is less risky.

Payment Banks

Payment Banks are “feeders” for Universal Banks. They are “add-ons” to the banks rather than competitors (Parmar, 2015). They are set up as mini banks to be operated in rural area. RBI allowed 11 private players to work as payment banks. They are not pure banks but their working is be like other scheduled commercial banks. Small businessmen, labour workforce, low-income households, other unorganized sector entities and users are given small savings account and payment/ remittances services upto Rs 1 lakh per individual. The customer can open current and savings account with these banks and money can be deposited for longer time as compared to SCBs and they earn interest for their deposits too.

The depositor can avail services like mutual funds, insurance, money transfers, ATM, debit card, Internet banking etc. which will reach every nook and corner of the country where banks have failed to open branches network. M-Account service can be availed

by all the depositors augmenting cashless transactions in India. Moreover, the payments bank license enables the network of 1,54,000 post offices (including 1,30,000 rural post offices) to offer banking services to the masses in the country. These banks cannot adopt lending activities for which customers have to go to the SCBs.

Payment Banks may work as a Business Correspondent (BC) for other banks for credit and other services which the latter cannot offer. These banks are controlled by RBI and try to reach the people who do not have access to banking and also to those who have opened accounts under PMJDY scheme.

The risk of fraud is minimized as the companies getting payment banks license are financially sound, technologically strong and have already developed trust in the minds of people at large. According to Fitch Ratings, the focus of payments banks on smaller deposit holders and mobile banking will add to competitive pressures for public banks, and could potentially pose risks to their market share over the long term.

Small Finance Banks

Small Finance banks are a type of niche banks in India. They can provide basic banking service of acceptance of deposits and lending. RBI issued Small Finance Banks license to 10 private players who will undertake basic banking activities of accepting deposits and lending to unserved and underserved sections including small business units, small and marginal farmers, micro and small industries and unorganized sector entities.

There is no restriction on the area of operations of small finance banks. They can undertake other non-risk sharing simple financial service activities, not requiring any commitment of own fund, such as distribution of mutual fund units, insurance products, pension products, etc. with the prior approval of the RBI and after complying with the requirements of the sectoral regulator for such products. The small finance bank can also become a Category II Authorised Dealer in foreign exchange business for its clients' requirements. It cannot set up subsidiaries to undertake non-banking financial services activities. There is a requirement of opening at least 25 per cent of its branches in unbanked rural centres (population upto 9,999 as per the latest census). The small finance bank will primarily be responsive to local needs.

Small finance banks will be subject to all prudential norms and regulations of RBI, as applicable to existing commercial banks, including requirements of maintaining Cash Reserve ratio, Statutory Liquidity ratio. They will be required to extend 75 percent of adjusted net bank credit to the priority sector. Also, at least 50 percent of its loan

portfolio should comprise loans and advances up to Rs 25 lakh. The minimum paid-up equity capital for small finance banks shall be Rs. 100 crore.

The small finance bank cannot be a Business Correspondent (BC) for another bank. However, it can have its own BC network. These banks come under the purview of RBI's Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006. The compliance of terms and conditions laid down by RBI is an essential condition of grant of license. Any non-compliance can attract penal measures including cancellation of license of the bank.

The small finance bank may choose to continue as a differentiated bank. If it aspires to transit into a universal bank, such transition will not be automatic, but would be subject to it applying to RBI for such conversion and fulfilling minimum paid-up capital/ net worth requirement as applicable to universal banks; its satisfactory track record of performance as a small finance bank for a minimum period of five years and the outcome of RBI's due diligence exercise. On transition into a universal bank, it is subjected to all the norms including Non-Operative Financial Holding Company (NOFHC) structure as applicable to universal banks.

If a promoter setting up a small finance bank desires to set up a Payments Bank, it must set up both types of banks under a NOFHC structure. However, a promoter will not be granted licenses for both universal bank and small finance bank even if the proposal is to set them up under the NOFHC structure. The difference between three banks can be summarized in Table 2 in terms of its capital requirements, scope of activities and area of operation.

Table 2: Difference between Universal, Payment and Small Finance Banks

Basis of differences	Universal Banks	Payment Banks	Small Finance
Capital Requirement	At least Rs 500 Cr	At least Rs 100 Cr	At least Rs 100 Cr
Scope of Activity	Full banks allowed	Lending not activities.	Basic banking
Area of Operation	No limitation in area of operation.	Business Correspondent of another bank.	Cannot be Business Correspondent of another bank. Banking services to Small and marginal farmers, SBUs, micro and small industries and unorganized sector entities.

Pros and Cons of Bank Licenses to Private Players

As every action in an organized system has its own pros and cons, issue of new banking licenses too has its opportunities and threats lined up. Few opportunities are as follows:

Customer Oriented Banks: The new players have a structure of commercial banks with different capital requirements and are be more customer-centric than investment-centric. They have more coverage than commercial banks and are be more customer savvy. The aims of Government of India to cover huge masses under one umbrella of financial inclusion with introduction of LPG subsidy and PMJDY become achievable targets with them.

Technology Driven: As the contemporary era is technology driven, these new banks are strong in finance and technology. They have sound technological infrastructure and capital base. The experiment of RBI in offering financial services to unorganized, unserved and neglected sector of the society through these banks will help in promoting financial literacy to the masses within few years. These banks have already reached the people who were unable to access commercial banks. So, these banks with high technology and sound infrastructure will lead the youth to new globalized high-tech world.

Eliminate Black Money: Transactions through these banks is be done with the help of mobiles. The Government of India is also emphasizing to effectively ban cash transactions once a 95 percent mobile and Jan Dhan penetration rate is achieved. The use of mobile banking and internet banking will promote financial business of these banks and cashless transactions through these services will definitely result in reduction of black money in the financial system.

Cashless Transactions: Cashless transactions through mobile phones are promoted by these banks. Mobile phones will play a role of debit and credit cards. Consumers need not find an ATM or bank branch to withdraw or transfer money. The expenditure on expansion of ATMs can be controlled in cities and the service of any time transactions can be extended to distant villages etc. where the populace is still excluded from financial services.

Reduction in Banking Costs: Banking costs will come down due to intense competition driven by the expected proliferation of payment banks. Commercial banks charge a huge cost whether it is above-limit ATM transactions, additional cheque-books, big money transfers, maintenance of minimum balances, or draft

issuance fees. These costs will come down as these banks start offering zero-balance accounts and low-cost services. Currently, efficient private banks like HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Axis Bank make huge profits from their low-cost current and savings bank accounts, but a big chunk of this will move to payment banks, who may offer higher savings bank rates of 5-7 percent. Private commercial banks mint money since they only have to compete with slothful public sector banks. Now they will have nimbler rivals to worry about. The customer will finally be king.

Efficient than Public Sector Banks: Public sector banks were facing acute competition from private and foreign sector banks. But the new banks will give more push to them as they are well capitalized and have strong financial and technological infrastructure. They will have wider coverage of the erstwhile excluded customers.

Transformation of Social Welfare and Subsidy Schemes: Social welfare and subsidy schemes will be transformed into reality with the help of these banks. These banks will aid various schemes by eliminating fake recipients, giving direct payments to the poor (who have Jan Dhan Accounts), ensuring cash in zero balance accounts etc. Today commercial banks failed to reach billions of people, but tomorrow these banks will reach every house with the help of mobile-enabled services. The difference between Airtel and State Bank of India lies in the fact that both have huge customer base but Airtel can go at the place where SBI cannot go with a branch.

Cons of Bank Licenses to Private Players

Jack of all Trades, Master of None: The issue of bank license to 23 private players may adversely affect the banking system in the country. As these players are already running their practice in lending and other activities, and are not well versed with the banking services. The scheduled commercial banks have rich experience in lending and deposit activities and have staff specialized in banking activities which these banks still have to create along with a credibility among the consumers.

Market Risk: Market risk will heighten as interbank transactions swell to a stratospheric level. Even a single bank failure can threaten the whole system since it is interlinked with other players. Techniques viz. interest rate sensitivity analysis, structural liquidity analysis and fortnightly dynamic statement analysis need to be inculcated in new banks' strategy making, in order to measure and mitigate other market risks like liquidity and interest rate risk. The RBI is also concerned about the risk factor involved in the working of these banks in initial years. RBI governor said that the small banks and payments banks will be subject to a higher degree of regulation during the initial period.

Difficulty in Supervision and Administration: A market remains attractive for both buyer and seller if both ends meet the value proposition. If majority of banks focus on the same customer base, the profitability per customer will plummet and can trade to such low levels that the sector may turn unattractive which can trigger consolidation of banks and hence render this whole issuance of licenses a futile exercise. Also with increased number of banks, RBI's visibility may reduce and that may impede its administering and regulating responsibility.

Chance of Failure: When there is a large numbers of banks, there can be a situation where banks form groups to provide loans to risky borrowers fully aware that they will be bailed out by the regulator in case of any default. An economy cannot afford notable number of banks being shut down in short period of time.

Practical Implication of the Study

The present study has practical implications for the banking industry, economy and the common man as explained below:

Implications for the Banking Industry: The new banks will bring in new business model, new products, new processes, new technologies etc. The level of productivity, efficiency and customer service would be expected to be higher. The existing banks may have to re-orient some of their businesses, technologies etc. The existing banks would face competition, both on their assets and liabilities side of the balance sheet, from the new generation banks and have to devise the ways to withstand the competition or they may lose their existing customers, who may move away to new banks. Banks that cannot compete would be vulnerable to acquisition/takeover. Indian financial system is bank dominated. The financial system will be broadened and deepened with entry of new banks in the private sector. The market share of banks would also be increased in the terms of financial assets over non banks, if the business houses with major NBFCs come out successful in getting bank licenses.

Implications for the Economy: Capital formation leads to infusion of more finance in the economy that leads to more liquidity and solvency, as growth of Indian economy depends on its financial system which in turn depends on the banking industry. An efficient financial system transforms the savings into investments and channelizes the investments to productive sectors of the economy to spur growth. Indian economy has more potential to grow in the future. If it focuses more on the expansion of manufacturing and infrastructure sectors, the credit need of the real economy would be much more as compared to the service sector. Entry of new private players would, in a way, help in the economic development of the country.

Implications for the Common Man: The common man would be benefitted from the innovative products and superior banking technology of the new generation banks. They would be able to reach out to the masses more easily by use of information and communication technology enabled services. The unbanked, unorganised and unserved masses will also get benefit from these new banks that were earlier excluded from the banking services.

Conclusion

The issuance of bank licenses to 23 private players with different capital base fulfilling requirements for set up of universal, payment and small finance banks is a welcome step taken by RBI to deepen financial inclusion in India. These firms are financially and technologically equipped to reach the unbanked, unserved, unorganized and excluded small customer segment. The new bank license regime is designed to bridge the roadmap between financial services, knowledge, market and large segment of public. It will give strong push to the initiative taken by Government of India in boosting the Indian economy.

These banks will have a high-powered customer grievances cell to handle customer complaints. The operations of the banks will be fully networked and technology driven from the beginning, conforming to generally accepted standards and norms. RBI should however look at this opportunity carefully and should see that the financial stability of the country is not jeopardized.

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Annexture 1: List of 23 New Bank Licenses (Issued by RBI)

Nature of Bank License	Number of Banks	Name of Banks	Headquarters
Universal Banks	2	IDFC Bandhan	Mumbai Kolkata
Payment Banks	11	Aditya Birla Nuvo Fino Pay Tech National Securities Depository Reliance Industry Dilip Shantilal Shanghui Tech Mahindra Vodafone M-Pesa Airtel M Commerce Deptt of posts Vijay Shekhar Sharma Cholamandalam	Mumbai Mumbai Mumbai Mumbai Mumbai Mumbai Mumbai New Delhi Mumbai Mumbai Chennai
Small Finance Banks	10	Au Financiers Suryoday Micro Finance Capital Local Area Bank Disha Microfin Equitas Holdings ESAF Microfinance and Investments Ujivan Financial Services Janalakshmi Financial Services Utkarsh Micro Finance RGVN (North East) Micro finnace	Mumbai Mumbai Jalandhar Ahmedabad Chennai Thrissur Bengaluru Bengaluru Varanasi Guwahati

Semiconductor Nanophase Materials: Fundamental and Theoretical Aspects

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Nanophase materials are frequently characterized by novel properties that can be significantly different from those of the corresponding bulk phase. As materials are formed on ever decreasing length scales, the differences between the bulk and small particle properties become increasingly pronounced. These differences have stimulated a growing worldwide effort that cuts across many disciplines and research areas that emphasize the synthesis and characterization of an increasingly wide variety of nanophase materials. The motivation for this research is derived both from understanding the fundamental characteristics of nanoparticles as well as numerous applications which these materials exhibit, particularly in the areas of optical devices, micro-mechanical devices and information storage. In the present paper, we will discuss fundamentals of nanophase materials including requisite theoretical background of quantum confinement in order to understand their properties.

Keywords: semiconductors, nanoparticles, quantum confinement, band-gap shift, optical and electronic properties

Introduction

I would like to describe a field, in which little has been done, but in which an enormous amount can be done in principle. This field is not quite the same as the others in that it will not tell us much of fundamental physics (in the sense of, "What are the strange particles?") but it is more like solid-state physics in the sense that it might tell us much of great interest about the strange phenomena that occur in complex situations. Furthermore, a point that is most important is that it would have an enormous number of technical applications. (Feynman, 1960: 22)

The amount of space available to us for information storage (or other uses) is enormous. As first described in his lecture by Richard P. Feynman, there is nothing except the size aspect which restricts us from using this space (Feynman, 1960). In his time, it was not possible to handle and probe single atoms or molecules because they were far too small for the equipment available at the time. Thus, his speech was completely theoretical and futuristic. He described how the laws of physics do not put any constraint on our ability to manipulate single atoms and molecules. Instead, it was the lack of availability of appropriate handling tools for doing so. However,

he correctly predicted that the time would come in which atomically precise manipulation of matter would arrive. Now, that time has come as we now have the techniques to form small particles, which we call nanophase particles and we can analyze them in indirect as well as direct phase.

Nanophase materials are defined as those with no dimensions less than 1 nm and none greater than 100 nm.

The novel properties of nanophase particles are dominated by two major effects:

1. The increasing relative significance of the surface energy contributions associated with the larger surface to volume ratio of nanoparticles.
2. The unique characteristics of electrons in confined systems.

The first effect largely determines the physical and thermodynamic properties of the particles (e.g. melting points, solid phase transitions, bulk modulus etc.)

Both the surface properties and the electron confinement combine to produce novel electronic properties that can be manifested in wide range of effects, such as a large nonlinear optical susceptibility, intense photo luminescence and altered band structures. In order to understand the properties of nanophase materials, it is important to understand the phenomenon of quantum confinement thoroughly.

Theoretical Background

Quantum Confinement

Quantum Confinement means restricting the dimensions of the particle to the order of its *Bohr exciton radius*.

If this confinement is in one dimension, then the system is called *Quantum well*.

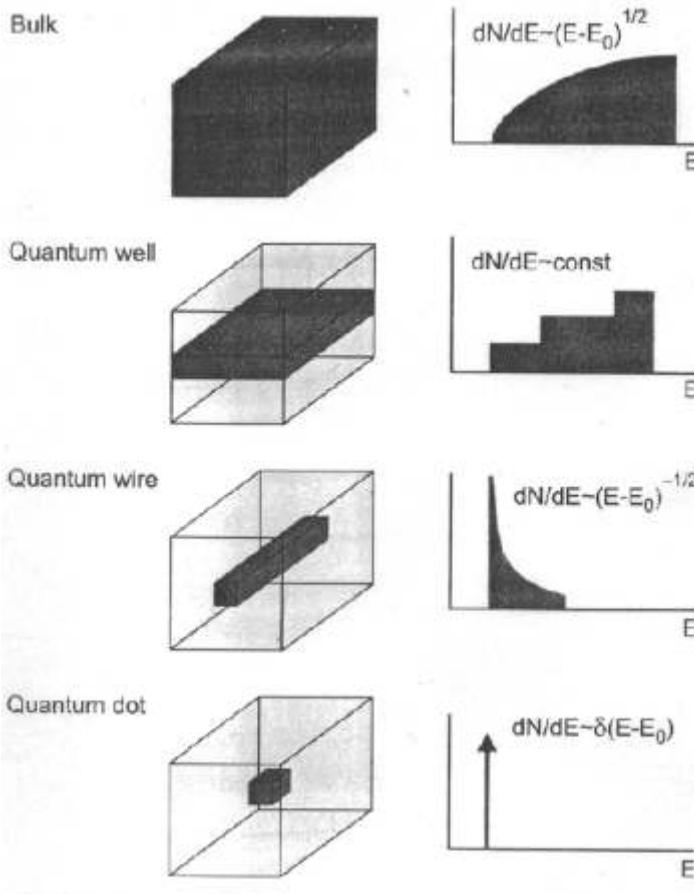
If this confinement is in two dimensions, then the system is called *Quantum wire*.

If this confinement is in three dimensions, then the system is called *Quantum dot*.

Figure 1 shows different confinement structures and corresponding energy states.

When wave functions of excitons are of the order of the particle diameter, energy levels appear near the band edges that lead to discrete electronic transitions and an increase in minimum energy gap.

Figure 1: Different Confinement Structures and Corresponding Energy States (Shchukin, Lendentsov and Bimberg, 2004)

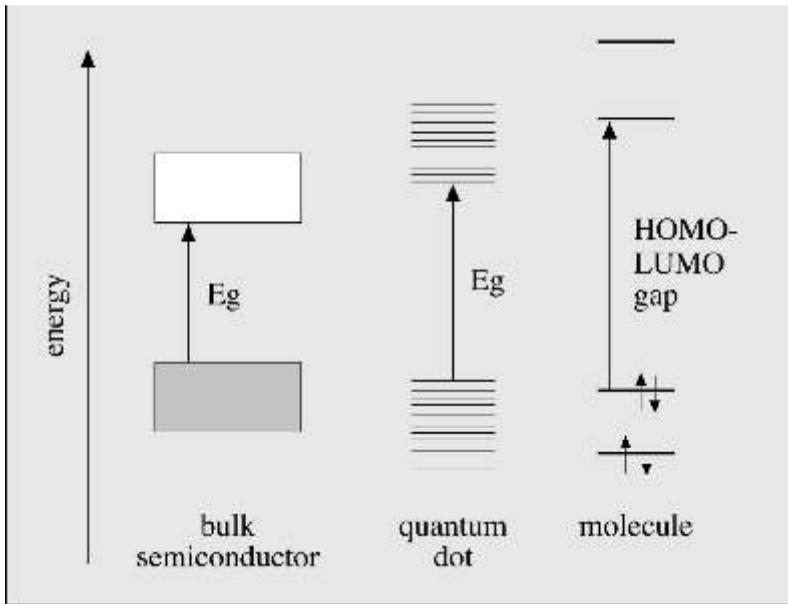


Quantum Confinement-3D, Quantum Dot

Quantum Mechanical Background (Ventra, Evoy and Heflin, 2004)

The mobility of electrons and holes are limited within semiconducting nanocrystals as a result of the spatial confinement of charge carrier wave function within these particles. This limitation affects the electronic states of the nanocrystals directly. The band-gap is expanded with increasing spatial confinement, and the band-edge positions are shifted as can be seen in Figure 2. Basically this mesoscopic phenomenon is responsible for the intriguing electro-optic properties of such particles. Many potential applications rely on this quantum size effect.

Figure 2: Schematic Representation of Band-gap Transition from a Molecular View to Solid State



As a first example of quantum confinement we consider a spherical crystal with a diameter $D (=2R)$. In order to be called a quantum structure, the diameter D , must be smaller than the de Broglie wavelength given by

$$\lambda = h/p \quad (1)$$

where h is Planck's constant and $p = \hbar k$ is the momentum of the electron keeping the sample at room temperature T . If we take

$$E = (3/2) kT = p^2/2m,$$

where E the kinetic energy, k the Boltzmann's constant and m the mass of the electron (or hole), then we find that the value of λ is of the order of 6 nm at room temperature (at 300 K). This means that for the spherical crystal of diameter $D < 6\text{nm}$ the electrons (or holes) wave packet is squeezed somewhat unnaturally into a space smaller than it would normally have in its host structure.

Another way of looking at this is to say that natural Bohr exciton radius is larger than the host crystal structure. Such small host crystals are called *quantum dots* and the resulting physical state is called *quantum confinement*.

For simplicity, we take an infinite spherical well to have an insight into the consequences of quantum confinement.

Hamiltonian operator can be written as:

$$H = -(\hbar^2/8m_e)_e - (\hbar^2/8m_h)_h + V_e(r_e) + V_h(r_h) \quad (2)$$

and the potential

$$V_i(r_i) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{for } r_i < R \\ \infty & \text{for } r_i > R \end{cases} \quad i = e, h \quad (3)$$

For the case of single exciton we can take $(r_e, r_h) = (r_e) (r_h)$

The Schrodinger equation for spherical infinite well can be solved and the normalized solution is given by:

$$Y_{nlm}^i(r) = Y_{lm}^i(2/R^3)^{1/2} (J_l(\alpha_{nl})/J_{l+1}(\alpha_{nl})) \quad (4)$$

α_{nl} are the zeroes of the Bessel functions. The Bessel function $J_l(\alpha_{nl}r/R)$ must also vanish at the surface of the quantum dot sphere. With these conditions the energies of the electrons and holes are given by:

$$E_{n,l}^{e,h} = (\hbar^2/8m_{e,h})(\alpha_{nl}/R)^2 \quad (5)$$

What we now have is an additional term $E_{n,l}^{e,h}$ added on the band gap energy E_g predicted for the bulk due to quantum confinement of the electron or hole. Thus, the photon energy required to produce the electron-hole pair (exciton) is

$$h\nu = E_g + (\hbar^2/8m_{e,h})(\alpha_{nl}/R)^2 \quad (6)$$

This produces an effective band gap shift that is proportional to $1/R^2$ in the quantum regime.

However, in the real quantum dot case, several other things like effective masses of electron and hole, spin orbit effects of electronic states and electric susceptibility of the nanocrystal modifies the levels.

The host matrix material of the quantum dot and the surface reconstruction different

than the bulk structure make easily measured changes in the optical spectroscopy (Balandin and Wang, 2006).

In the pioneering investigations of quantum confinement in semiconductor nanocrystals, Efros and Efros introduced three regimes of quantum confinement, depending on the ratio of the crystallite radius R to the Bohr radius of the electrons, holes and electron-hole pairs, respectively (1982). For very small quantum dots one speaks of the strong confinement regime, where the individual motions of the electron and hole are quantized. For somewhat larger dots one can introduce an intermediate confinement regime if the effective mass of the holes is much bigger than that of the electrons. In this case the radius of the nanosphere has to be small relative to the electron Bohr radius and large relative to the hole Bohr radius, respectively. Under these conditions the influence of the quantum confinement on electron and hole is substantially different (Banayi and Koch, 1993). The weak confinement regime is appropriate for relatively large quantum dots i.e. radius of the nanosphere is much larger than the Bohr radii of electron and hole. The confinement effects in this regime are relatively small.

Recent Research Findings in the Field of Semiconductor Nanophase Materials

Most quantum dot materials that exhibit the interesting or useful electronic or optical properties are semiconductor nanoparticles. The effects of the particle size on optical properties are more pronounced in semiconductor nanoparticles. Among the unique properties of nanomaterials, the movement of electrons and holes in semiconductor nanomaterials is restricted due to quantum confinement, thereby affecting the transport properties related to phonons and photons which are largely influenced by the size and geometry of the materials (Murray, *et al.*, 2000). In semiconductors the band edges control the opto-electronic behavior. Since with increasing particle size, the band edges are the last to develop, semiconductor nanoparticles exhibit strong size dependent shifts in the band-gap (Brus, 1984). As a result of these effects, semiconductor nanoparticles have been proposed as light emitting diodes (Colvin, Scwamp and Alivisatos, 1994) and single electron transistors (Klein *et al.*, 1997). They have potential applications in non-volatile memory (Guo, Leobandung and Chou, 1997) smart temperature and light sensing devices (Gea, Budai and Boatner, 1999). Semiconductors such as TiO_2 , ZnO , ZrO_2 , V_2O_5 , WO_3 , and metal sulphides (Kida *et al.*, 2003) are employed as photocatalysts. Among the semiconductors, titanium dioxide (TiO_2) is one of the most important and widely used photocatalysts, because of its suitable flat band potential, high chemical stability, nontoxicity, corrosion resistance, abundance, cost effectiveness, and high photocatalytic activity.

Recently, there have been a considerable amount of research efforts in the field of nanocrystal memories (Lu *et al.*, 2006). Nanocrystal memories have made their point during last years as a possible solution to overcome the scaling issue of electronic nonvolatile memories. Ultimately, the requirement is to look for nanoparticle memories with a decrease in the voltage needed for write/erase operations. But it has to be achieved without compromising the retention characteristics of the memory. Conventional memories use polycrystalline Si floating gate. In this case, the oxide should not be too thin to maintain the charge storage behavior (Kanjilal *et al.*, 2003). A single leakage path in a polycrystalline Si based memory can discharge the memory cell. It results in the loss of information of the memory cell. So, a drawback of such flash memories is the relative high operational voltage and the slow write/erase speed due to the relatively thick oxide used. The oxide thickness is crucial for the device behavior because the programming is done by injecting carriers through it. Decreasing the oxide thickness increases the write speed but decreases the retention time. Hence, the used oxide thickness has to be adjusted with respect to the intended application. Alternatively, nanocrystals embedded in gate oxide can be used as storage nodes for a non-volatile memory. A nanocrystal memory was proposed, which utilizes direct tunneling of charge into three-dimensionally confined nanocrystal (Tiwari *et al.*, 1996). It is fast, can be fabricated with a minimum perturbation of conventional silicon technology and works at room temperature. Besides this, semiconductor nanoparticles have also been investigated for their potential applications in emerging technologies such as nanoelectronics, nanophotonics, energy conversion, non-linear optics, solar cells and detectors.

Conclusion

Semiconductor nanomaterials have interesting properties with useful functionalities as compared to bulk materials. Sharp and intense emission spectra, easy processability and functionality are among the most attractive characteristics of these materials. For example, the quantum confinement effect gives rise to a significant change in optical properties of semiconductor nanomaterials. High surface-to-volume ratio has a major effect on both physical and chemical properties of the semiconductor. As a result, semiconductor nanomaterials have been the focus of research for about last two decades. By virtue of these properties, semiconductor nanophase materials have significant applications in various fields such as solid-state physics, inorganic chemistry, physical chemistry, colloid chemistry, materials science; recently biological sciences, medical sciences, engineering and also in various other interdisciplinary fields.

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Customer Experience and Digitization: Creating Magic at Every Touch Point

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The present day customer is spoilt by choices. Moreover, the over-commoditized markets have left little room for businesses to differentiate between their products. The only option left with the marketers is to create memorable and compelling customer experiences to win customer loyalty. Further, digitally-enhanced customer experiences can bring sustainable differentiation to the business, provided such experiences resonate with the brand image of the business. But it is imperative that the digital be embedded seamlessly in all areas of business for making customer's journey an exhilarating one. In fact a sloppy digital strategy can do more harm to the brand than bring any benefit to it. This paper aims to provide some useful insights by studying the digital journeys of some successful brands like Starbucks, Uber, Amazon, Disney, Burberry etc. The paper delves into the stories of these companies that have created meaningful customer experiences by using the power of data. It also reveals instances of rich online presence, fast connectivity with their customers through multiple platforms and consistent online experience. The objective of any digital strategy is to create convenience for the customers at every touch point of consumption journey.

Keywords: customer experience, digital, touch-points, data, strategy, differentiation, brands

Introduction

In today's time when business disruptions have become normal, customer loyalties are getting eroded because of vanishing switching costs. Every business is becoming customer-obsessed due to which creating differentiating customer experience is becoming increasingly difficult. Customer experience, in literal terms, means any event or happening which leaves some impression on the mind of the person who is getting affected by that event. Hence, experiences leave some memories, which can be used for future reference. The role of customer experience in marketing has gained huge importance as it has the potential of gaining customer loyalty and further

creating strong brands through customer recommendations. According to Carbone and Haeckel “By experience we mean the take-away impression formed by people's encounters with products, services and businesses – a perception produced when humans consolidate sensory information” (1994: 1). Customer experience is the customer's interpretation of his dealings with a brand at various touch-points, which come across the consumption process (Frow and Payne, 2007). The role of a memorable customer experience is recognized in achieving business goals (Hoolbrook and Hrischman, 1982; Pine and Gilmore, 1998). These customer experiences are getting generated at both online and offline touch-points. In fact marketing fundamentals are getting a paradigm shift with the advent of digitization. This digital deluge at every customer touch-point on the one hand, gives mind-boggling opportunity to marketers to create customer-wooing experiences and on the other hand, it poses challenges like threat to customers' privacy. The expectations of dynamic customers are compelling marketers to enhance the customer experience at every touch-point by unearthing the power of digitization without getting overwhelmed by the overflowing big data. A customer's experience in store, in its physical setting, is impacted by a large number of factors like behavior of other customers and the overall shopping environment (like its lighting, temperature, music and ambient noise). Consumers are ready to give some benefit of doubt to offline constraints by recognizing that few of these issues are beyond a business's control, and thus they set a lower standard for offline experiences. They might also be ready for a few minutes wait for getting the services, but online customers are less patient, reason being switching to a competitor's website by merely clicking on a mouse is far easier than driving down to another store in the town to compare the services. A study also revealed that a wait for ten seconds to load a page can lead to fifty percent of customers quitting that site. A research at Microsoft also revealed that a website starts losing customer traffic to that of competitors if it takes 250 milliseconds more to load (Borowski, 2015). For consumers, there's no excuse for a shoddy digital customer experience.

Research Problem

Businesses are trying hard to make their presence felt in the dynamic field of digitization. But in this pursuit they are unknowingly doing more harm than good to their brands. Companies do have websites and online presence, but due to shoddy execution of their digital policies they are creating inconsistent and unpleasant customer experiences. Proper understanding of the success and failures of the companies, which have already made the efforts in the digital world, can give lessons to beginners in the virtual world. Stories of the businesses, that have already made

their presence felt in digital world, can act as a ready reckoner for the others in creating amazing customer experiences.

Objective of the Study

This paper aims to study various cases of the companies from diverse industries, which have created compelling customer experiences by ushering into the exciting world of digitization.

Relevance of the Study

To provide the wow-moments to the customers at various touch-points by creating personalized, seamless, secure and intuitive digital experience needs phenomenal efforts. Success and failures of some businesses during their digital journeys can act as precious take-away for other companies, which are planning to enhance their customer experience by going digital.

Research Methodology

The study is based on literature review to reveal the factors behind success and failure, moments of truth, pros and cons, and diverse stories which businesses across industries have created through their digital customer experience journeys.

Amazing Stories and Precious Insights

The review of literature reveals various instances where well-designed digital experiences have improved various business metrics. For example, Deloitte which has a global presence in almost 150 countries of the world, has provided satisfying digital experience to its clients by providing rapid digital content, reliable online information, seamless online experience across devices and consistent brand experience by utilizing the power of data to gain more knowledge about their customers. To ensure meaningful customer engagement through web, the company has upgraded its website, created strong mobile experience, utilized the cloud assets, done quick distribution of financially sensitive information to its clients and understood the complex behavior of their clients by intelligently analyzing their offline and online actions. There are various lessons which have been combined in this paper, which reveal that how various successful companies have optimized customer experience by having well executed digital strategy. Following are the stories of some brands which have successfully executed their digital strategies to enhance customer experience:

Going Digital, 'The Starbucks Way'

Starbucks, the specialist in coffee business has enhanced its store business by

providing complementing digital experience. To create unique digital experience, the most recognized brand in the world has engaged almost 94% of its customers on Facebook, and booked 7 million users actively on its mobile payment application through its loyalty card schemes. It helps the customers to save time, skip in-store lines and locate stores conveniently through its online applications. Its 'myStarbucks' app has acted as a tool to engage customers, through which they can have their own customized versions of coffees (Welch and Buvat, 2013) Also, the company has launched 'My Starbucks Idea' website to get customer generated ideas for improving its product and services. They also have 'Starbucks Digital Network,' which provides premium digital material to be enjoyed along with their coffee in the Starbucks outlets. All these digital initiatives aim to provide superior customer experience to Starbucks customers. Moreover, applications like mobile payment have created a digital advantage for the company by reducing its transaction charges and operational costs. Thus, it proves that digital innovations can become an integral part of the company's strategy to enhance customer experience and to bring operational efficiencies.

Disney, Championing the Digitalized Customer Experience

Disney has created an online portal 'MyDisneyExperience.com' to ease down customers' journey with the company at various touch-points, for example, selecting fast-passes, checking entertainment times and purchasing pictures clicked at theme parks. The idea is to provide good digital experience which complements their core product. Thus, the company has carried forward its legacy of creating memorable experiences by using its technology. Its digitized endeavors include providing personalized customer experience with the help of card technology. For instance, while on the rides of 'Test track' a customer can customize his cars, its colors, specifications and even get updates at various checkpoints that who all are winning (Beard, 2014).

Domino's Digital Space

The world's favorite pizza maker has proven that digital strategy of a business ultimately should complement the company's overall strategy. The idea behind Domino's digital efforts is to convert online experiences of the customers into sales conversions. The company's digital and CRM (Customer Relationship Management) teams manage push marketing messages on mobiles, emails and websites in a personalized way. Their data analytics team tries to identify customer priorities and behavior. Further, the company adjusts its media mix after getting intelligent inputs from digital activities about competitors' recent actions, going for new marketing choices e.g. targeting Facebook and Gmail customers. Also the company customizes

content marketing on social media which revolves around their target customers' passion like a football and cricket matches. It also employs Google analytics for analyzing their customers' online behavior (Chaffey, 2014).

Uber's Ride With Digital Experiences

Uber's ride completely transformed their centuries old shoddy cab industry into a customer-centric technology savvy business. Uber brought this disruption in cab hailing industry by working on the following customer experiences: for e.g. getting rid of all frictions in cab hiring (i.e. waiting endlessly for the appropriate taxi), manipulated cab fares, grumpy cab drivers, cash-based payments and many more. It also brought complete transparency in cab services like, name of the driver, which car is he riding and his time of arrival; all this helps in justifying customer expectations appropriately. Moreover, at Uber, feedback is an integral part of experience which keeps the improvements perpetual in its services (Haaff, 2014). Uber is a company which has epitomized digital experiences.

Burberry: A Seamless Integration of Offline and Online Experience

The company is providing a holistic customer experience by blurring the lines between its digital and physical world. The website 'Burberry World Live' gives similar experience as a customer gets in its Regent Street flagship store. There are certain takeaways from Burberry's digital stint: reinforce what the brand stands for e.g. in case of Burberry, through its digital content, the company brought back the memories of celebrities of 1960's, and so showing off their iconic Burberry trench coats, all this brought back the romance of Burberry fashion making it a relevant luxury fashion brand. Burberry took a tough road by making Millennial their target audience (instead of their existing middle-aged trench-coat using customer base) because they are the influencers and trendsetters of today's time, and the official critics of the society. The company went all out to impress these young customers who are extremely intuitive with technology and get influenced by the brand advocacy of their peers especially on social media. There came the innovation in customer experience creation journey of Burberry by launching 'The Art of Trench' campaign, which provided a platform where their customers could proudly display their Burberry coats, their styling pictures posted on Pinterest or Instagram, their selfies with an option for onlookers to go for ready purchases. Burberry also encashed Millennia's love for music by creating a platform 'Burberry Acoustic,' a website which gives an opportunity to young British music bands to display their skills and further links them with Burberry stores (Davis, 2014). Another online endeavor, 'Burberry Bespoke,' allows its customers to design their own coats by opting for customized colors, buttons

etc. The aim of Burberry's digital strategy is to create branded experience embedded across all its touch-points.

Amazon, the Leader in e-Customer Experience

Amazon is a champion in providing superior digital customer experience right from creating first impressions on their website to the stage of making final purchase. In fact, e-Channel Retail Benchmark Research (2016) puts across first impression on a site and check-out stage as two most crucial stages of customers digital journey with a brand. A consumer survey about Amazon reveals that the most liked features about the company's website were fast and accurate predictive texts about keyword search, integrated and extensive reviews of customers on product pages and one-click intuitive purchase functionality. The results also revealed that getting a consistent experience across different channels like mobile, laptops or applications also adds to Amazons great digital journey.

Digital Agenda at Siemens AG

The digitalization strategy at Germany-based engineering company Siemens AG is another example of enhancing business efficiencies by optimizing the digital strengths. The escalating impact of digital efforts on its business units had encouraged company's CEO Joe Kaeser and his key team members to bring digitalization at the heart of its new corporate strategy, together with automation and electrification. The problem was to balance digital initiative with the corporate at various business units which were part of Siemens. These business units were earlier independent with very specific product offerings for their clients. To ensure participation of business units, Siemens used both pull and push approach for its latest analytics platform, instead of centrally forcing it on other business units. This approach helped the company achieve digitalization in a quick way to match the exponential growth in analytics and data generation.

Visual Consistency at Apple

Consistency is needed at many levels including the digital. Apple's digital design is a glorious example of maintaining a consistent experience across various products. The customer experience and design professional at Apple, Adam Richardson, explained “how Apple creates uniform functional patterns and visual across its different devices, to help the customers conveniently to migrate from one device to another and enhance their loyalty towards the brand” (McKinsey and Company, 2015).

Melia Hotel International's Digital Transformation

Spain based Melia Hotels have brought about 27 percent increases in their direct sales

with the help of digital strategy in the very first year of its implementation. This initiative named 'Be More Digital' was brought in the collaboration with Accenture (Sanchez and Schumann, 2016). This strategy mainly focuses on customer personalization at every stage of customer experience right from booking the hotel to the stay, and even beyond it. Efforts are made to provide customized content to each and every customer strengthening one to one interaction and loyalty. The increase in its revenue is mainly led by improved customer segmentation based on digitally generated customer data which reveals a lot about their behavior and assists tailored marketing activities for them. The importance of successful digitization is all the more crucial for the success for businesses in hotel industry because customers do a lot of comparative survey with competitors' offers before booking hotel rooms.

Lessons from Digitization Strategies of Companies

There are various takeaways which one can have from the successful and not so successful implementation of digital strategies of various businesses. The lessons derived after studying the digitization experiences of some companies, which can help other businesses in optimizing and creating a digital transformation, are as follows:

Increasing Customer Engagement: The purpose of every digitization effort of a business should be to enhance customer engagement with the brand. Whether it is Burberry customers designing their own coats or Starbucks' coffee lovers customizing their coffee, the idea is to bring customers closer to their beloved brands through digital experience in a seamless way.

Less is More in Case of Digitization: It is not necessary to overwhelm customers with loads of content. The purpose is to simplify and enhance the customer experience by putting in such digital components which resonate the company's brand value and customers' core needs.

Going Social should be the Top Digitization Strategy: The company's digital efforts should get reflected at all the major social platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc., for example, is the company propagating right kind of hashtags among its audience.

Identifying the Target Customer's Digital Zone: Before a company puts in its digital strategy, it is important to figure out where its target audience spend its maximum digital time and on which platforms the company's customers are more active.

Exploring the Data Goldmine: Diverse and abundant data coming through customers' digital footprints should be utilized to improve marketers' insights, making data-

driven decisions instead of simply working on hunches and improving customer experience.

Conclusion

Digital footprints of customers leave important history for smart market segmentation which can help companies create personalized experiences. Such personalized attention is a step towards creating convincing digital experiences which can reduce problems like cart abandonment and customer deflection. Moreover reliable and in-time digital content can win the hearts of hard-to-please customers.

Crisply designed, intuitive and simple company websites can succeed in providing comfortable customer experiences. Ease of navigation can relieve customers from tedious shopping experience and serve them well. A digitally-savvy company already knows what their customers would be looking for and can lead them conveniently towards solutions.

A strong digital experience can win loyal customers and become a big differentiator in today's world of hyper-competition. By mapping customers' journey on the web, companies can broaden their scope of customer understanding, creating new possibilities of customer profiling and customized services. Persuasive, simple and engaging digital experience is key to make customers raving fans.

Omni-channel companies especially need to focus on providing seamlessly integrated digital experience across channels, devices and apps. A small issue like company site not fitting to mobile screens can really make customers restless, hence spoiling their digital experience with the company. The patience-deficit generation of customers can easily drop off during various stages of purchase funnel if they find it even a bit difficult to maneuver through the company's virtual market. The landing pages of any company on the internet are actually the most lucrative avenues for tapping their potential customers. Thus, companies need to make them superbly informative, self-sufficient, leading and instinctive. Landing pages should offer every possible solution which a customer could seek. By using algorithms well many companies appropriately suggest right products to their online visitors who might be getting confused due to abundant choices available in the market.

Digital interaction points with customers can act as gold mines for capturing customer feedbacks and suggestions. Successful companies engage their customers well and crowd source invaluable ideas with the help of digital interactions. Online insights are a very frugal means to strengthen customer experiences and win their loyalties. Successfully executed marketing campaigns have actually made good use of data

which is customer-centric. Many companies have optimized the digital experiences for their customers by successfully understanding their individual requirements through their online behavior. This type of micro detailing of customer's behavior can actually help companies to up-sell and cross-sell to their customers.

Customer-sensitive websites ensure that they do not irritate their customers by asking for too much personal information before directing them to substantial solutions that they are actually looking for. Unnecessary registrations and form filling can put off web visitors. Digital experience on various platforms like social sites, company websites etc. should be benchmarked against the best practices of the leaders in respective fields. For example, best practices of Facebook in the field of social media are worth following. The businesses are strengthening their customer relationship management with the help of well-integrated digital interactions, for example the personal information provided by the customer on e-mail once need not be asked of him again while having a chat with customer care executive.

Every digital communication should convey the same core message for which the company is known for. Also digitally driven informed decisions can create such products which satisfactorily fulfill their needs and can provide apt solutions for customer problems. A company which displays empathy while designing their digital experience policies can reduce complexities faced by the customers' during their online journeys. A customer, whose attention span is already limited and is further exhausted by marketing clutter, can only be calmed by providing digital experience which is simple, instinctive and solution oriented. Also, such a digital experience should be complimented by providing actually fulfilling real product experiences. An accomplished customer experience is one which is consistent and enriching at every touch-point, whether virtual or real.

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Use of Emotext and other Cues in CMC and its Outcome

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Computer mediated communication (CMC) has long been criticized by researchers, especially the proponents of Cues-filtered-out approach, for its lack of non-verbal cues that are essential for conveying the rich relational messages. The absence of non-verbal cues in CMC is thus believed to impede the accomplishment of social functions that typically involve these cues. But the present generation CMC channels, especially social media, make available various emotext like strategic capitalization (e.g. This is TOO MUCH!), emoticons (☺☹) etc. to enhance the meaning and add to the emotional texture of the message. The objective of this study is to analyze if social media users expand the communication channel to convey emotions through the use of emotext, and the implications of such usage for communication effectiveness and relationships. Findings reveal that majority of social media users make use of emotext to compensate for reduced cues in online communication and such usage is positively correlated with the impact on online communication and relationships.

Keywords: social media, computer mediated communication, paralanguage, emotext, emoticons, non-verbal cues, reduced social cues, media richness.

Introduction

While first generation computer mediated communication (CMC) afforded little or no non-verbal cues to the users, the next generation CMC allows for many non-verbal cues to add to the meaning of the written word. For example, commenting on someone's Facebook post 'God, you are so intelligent ;-)' makes it clear that you think that the subject is an idiot. The emoticon highlights the sarcasm hidden in the text, without which the comment would have conveyed a different meaning. In contrast to the Reduced Cues approach to CMC that assumes it to be a lean medium unsuitable for conveying relational meaning, Walther (1992) presented the Social Information Processing perspective which suggested that the users of CMC have developed an electronic paralanguage to express socio-emotional information. Jaffe, et al. (1995) referred to this paralanguage as informal codes/ emotext and said that these include intentional misspelling (e.g. This is tooooo good) to represent accentuation of a word or phrase; lexical surrogates (e.g. hmmm, okkkk) to convey thoughtfulness or hesitation; strategic capitalisation (e.g. This is NOT FAIR) for expressing anger or to warn or call for attention; grammatical markers (e.g. !!!!???) to add emphasis and

emoticons (e.g. 😊) to serve for facial expressions or vocal intonations. For the purpose of this study, the usage of emotext and other cues like chronemic cues, abbreviations, natural language, etc. is referred to as textual accommodation of cues i.e. adapting the text-based communication on social media to convey affective information.

Methodology

A cross-sectional survey of 440 Chandigarh residents regarding their use of emotext while communicating via social media and the outcome of such usage was conducted. A questionnaire containing close-ended questions, related to the frequency of usage of emotext, the outcome of such usage and the relation between the usage and outcome, was administered to the respondents. SPSS was used to analyze the data collected.

Textual Accommodation of Cues

Despite the limitations of the medium, users have found ways to increase the richness of CMC and achieve socially oriented communication through it. Social media users may adapt their textual messages to socio-emotional content by inserting relational icons in the text to convey various emotions, like for sadness, for happiness and so on. Keeping in mind various studies on incorporation of visual cues in textual messages, it was hypothesized that:

H1: Social Media users use emotext to compensate for reduced social cues in online communication.

This hypothesis was tested using non-parametric Chi-square test. The data supported the hypothesis as there was statistically significant difference in the relative frequency of usage and frequency of non-usage of textual accommodation of cues by different users ($n = 440$) (Chi-square = 93.141, $df = 2$, p value= $p < .01$). The users were categorized as low users (score of 12-24 on the scale of frequency of emotext use), moderate users (score of 25-36 on scale of frequency of emotext use) and high users (score of 37-48 on scale of frequency of emotext use) of textual accommodation of cues on the basis of how often they made use of emotext and other cues to overcome the problem of non-availability of non-verbal cues online. Results showed that majority users came under the category of moderate users and high users of textual accommodation of cues i.e. 328 respondents (74.6 percent) while 112 respondents (25.4 percent) fell in the low usage category. The difference in the usage and non-usage of emotext and other cues was found to be statistically significant. The users of social media make use of certain behaviours (like quick reply to show eagerness) and

language-based indicators (like abbreviations, emoticons) to convey relational messages. Hence, it can be said that users have come to adapt their communication according to the medium by using various paralinguistic features.

As far as the frequency of use of various emotext and other cues is concerned, it was found that maximum number of respondents used emoticons as compared to any other form of textual accommodation of cues, with 194 respondents always using emoticons while communicating online. This implies that emoticons are the most preferred form of textual accommodation of cues on social media (Table 1).

Table 1: Frequency of Use of Emotext and other Cues

S.No.	Statements	Response	Number of Respondents			
			Always	Often	Sometimes	Never
1	Embed links for further information		32	75	213	120
2	Send private messages instead of public posts		63	136	198	43
3	Use abbreviations like LOL, ROFL, etc.		100	182	74	84
4	Use short form of words, like 'grt' for great		117	127	87	109
5	Use chronemic cues, e.g. quick reply to show eagerness		46	128	125	141
6	Use natural language		144	216	69	11
7	Use intentional spellings, e.g. sssooo goood!		66	166	90	118
8	Use lexical surrogates, e.g. hmmm		110	132	162	36
9	Use grammatical markers, e.g. !!!!!, ?????		129	129	152	30
10	Use strategic capitalization, e.g. WHAT?		76	169	175	20
11	Use emoticons, e.g. 😊		194	177	69	0
12	Use all of the above		34	150	189	67

Another interesting finding was that there was no respondent who never uses emoticons in their communication on social media while there were other cues which were never used by different users. The second most frequently used cue on social media was found to be the use of natural language as 144 respondents reported always using used natural language while communicating online to approximate it to offline communication as much as possible. 63 respondents always sent private messages instead of public posts, while 136 respondents preferred sending private messages, thus showing their desire for personalizing their online communication. The number of users always using abbreviations was 100 and those always using short forms of words were 117, which points towards the users' intention to shortcut communication. Lexical surrogates like 'HmMMM' convey the formality/informality dimension of communication and the results of this study showed that 110 respondents used these to add more meaning to their online text. The least used cue was embedding of links for further information with only 32 respondents always using it and 120 users never using it. Thus, it can be concluded that communicators in a variety of contexts and media may attempt to imbue textual messages with verbal, grammatical, and punctuation features intended to replicate a more personal style.

The use of emotext by users to add meaning to their online communication is in consonance with the findings of Krol (1994) which showed that people insert relational icons into the text of the message to convey feelings of sadness [☹], surprise [😲], or happiness [😊]. The discoveries of this section also find support in the work of Walther (1992) who observed that computer mediated communicators are developing an electronic paralanguage to express affective and socio-emotional information. As pointed out by Jaffe, et al., the findings of this study also suggest that users attempt to incorporate the surrogates for traditional types of interactive non-verbal cues. Regarding their use, Witmer and Katzman (1997) examined emoticons in a large sample of Usenet newsgroups postings. In a content analysis of roughly 3,000 messages, they found that 13.2 percent contained emoticons (or intentional misspellings, punctuation, and other CMC-based textual graphics, which the researchers contend function in similar fashion), which is similar to the findings of this study which show maximum usage of emoticons.

From the point of view of the theoretical approaches underlying CMC, the findings of the textual accommodation of cues support the Social Information Processing (SIP) perspective given by Walther. A key aspect to the SIP model is that users adapt and find ways to overcome the relative shortage of cue systems. The use of chronemic cues, as suggested in SIP theory, was found to be substantial in this study as 128 respondents

said that they often used chronemic cues to compensate for reduced social cues online. On the other hand, the findings of the textual accommodation of cues section are contrary to the Cues-Filtered-Out perspective which suggests that since CMC has no non-verbal cues, it impedes the accomplishment of social functions that typically involve those cues. But this section's findings point out that despite the limitations, users have found ways to incorporate relational meaning in their messages while communicating online. It was found that users employ emotext and other cues in order to compensate for the lack of nonverbal cues and thus it can be concluded that CMC does not hinder the accomplishment of social functions which require such cues. The respondents' use of textual accommodation of cues in this study is contrary to the premise of Media Richness Theory. According to the Media Richness Theory, face to face communication is the richest mode of communication as it includes multiple cue systems, immediate feedback, natural language and message personalization. But the findings of this section show that these sub-dimensions of media richness can also be found in CMC with the textual accommodation of cues and users have adapted their communication according to the medium. The ability to exchange messages in real time while chatting provides for immediate feedback, and the interactivity afforded in present generation CMC allows for natural language and message personalization. Thus, CMC is no more a lean moderate of yesteryears and the newer multimedia forms of online communication have expanded the bandwidth of CMC.

Outcome of Textual Accommodation of Cues

Communication literature emphasizes the importance of non-verbal cues in driving the interaction between people (Thalmann, 2001) and it would be reasonable to expect that greater “richness” in communication would lead to better expression and understanding, disclosure and strengthening of ties. Working within the limitations of text-based communication, users try to achieve greater levels of relational communication by a variety of means, including use of natural language, attention to chronemic cues (e.g. business hours vs. after hours, swift reply vs. slow reply), and other devices like emoticons. A scale was used to study the impact of usage of emotext and other cues on dimensions of communication like personalization and accuracy, uncertainty reduction, impression management, disclosure, offline and online relationships, etc.

On the basis of score on the scale of outcome of textual accommodation of cues, the outcome was classified as: low outcome (score of ≤ 15), moderate outcome (score of 16-30) and high outcome (score of 31-45). Majority of the respondents i.e. 51.6 percent (n=227) and 40.5 percent (n=178) were in the high outcome moderate

outcome category, respectively while only 8 percent (n=35) of respondents experienced low outcome of textual accommodation.

The outcome of textual accommodation of cues that was experienced by maximum number of respondents was “personalization of online communication.” This was followed by “reduction of uncertainty” as a result of textual accommodation of cues. Notably, respondents reported that textual accommodation of cues had greater implications for offline relationships than online relationships as 32 percent of respondents agreed that textual accommodation of cues lead to augmentation of the level of offline relationships while 27.7 percent of respondents agreed that such accommodation resulted in augmentation of level of online relationships (Table 2).

Table 2: Outcome of Textual Accommodation of Cues

S.No.	Statements ↓	Response →	Number of Respondents				
			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Communication becomes more personal		45	239	123	11	22
2	Communication becomes more accurate		22	197	131	79	11
3	Disclosure becomes more trustworthy		11	159	157	78	35
4	Uncertainty is reduced		-	231	109	89	11
5	Manage impressions of myself		-	198	207	11	24
6	Better expression of emotions		-	198	144	74	24
7	Conceal true emotions		24	62	181	173	-
8	Augment level of offline relationships		11	141	189	77	22
9	Augment level of online relationships		34	122	173	99	12

Although reflections about the utility of emoticons seem fairly widespread, less is known about their actual use and impact. Even though very few studies actually examine emoticon use, almost all commentators assume that emoticons have meaningful communicative impact. For example, Rezabek and Cochenour asserted that “the combination of symbols :-) represents a typical smiley face and conveys the sentiment that the person sending the message and using that particular emoticon is pleased, happy, agreeable or in a similar state of mind” (1998: 201). Utz (2000) analyzed the role of emoticons in relationship development online and found that the use of such cues was a significant predictor of relationship development in Multi-User Dungeons, accounting for 14 percent of the variance in users' frequency of relationship development.

From the theoretical point of view, Walther's Social Information Processing model can be applied to the use of emoticons and other cues in online communication. This theory posits that users adapt social meanings in CMC language that they would otherwise express non-verbally. Thus, it can be deduced that users of social media often incorporate emoticons and other cues as visual cues to augment the meaning of textual electronic messages.

Relationship between Textual Accommodation of Cues and Outcome of Textual Accommodation of Cues

Keeping in mind the extensive use of textual accommodation of cues, it was hypothesized that:

H2: Textual accommodation of cues and the outcome of textual accommodation of cues are positively correlated.

This hypothesis was tested using Gamma. The result supported the hypothesis (Gamma=.569, $p<.01$). Thus, there is a significant positive relationship between textual accommodation of cues and its impact on online communication. Those who experience high positive impact of emotext and other cues tend to be those who are high accommodators of cues in their online communication. 12.6 percent ($n=11$) of high accommodators experienced low outcome while 75.9 percent ($n=66$) of high accommodators experienced high outcome.

There is a significant positive correlation between desire for personalization (as conveyed through sending of private messages instead of public posts) and online communication becoming personal (Gamma = .232, $p<.01$). Thus, users who instead of writing public posts, send private messages more often experience greater personalization of communication on social media. 52.4 percent ($n=33$) of users who

always sent private messages agreed to the statement “Communication becomes more personal,” while none of them disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

The finding of the relationship between textual accommodation of cues and its outcome that social media users feel that communication becomes more accurate as a result of textual accommodation, is supported in the finding of Huang, Yen and Zhang (2008) that emoticons may be beneficial because an increase in information richness is equivalent to an improvement in communication efficiency and effectiveness. Huang, et al. also found that an emoticon speeds up communication and eliminates some difficulty in expressing feeling-using words. This finding is consistent with this section's observation that users felt that textual accommodation led to better expression of emotions. Walther and D'Addario (2001) studied the role of emoticons in textual communication and indicated that emoticons are capable of strengthening the effect of an unwritten message, emphasize a meaning throughout the creation and interpretation of a given message and equally simplify written messages. The findings of outcome of textual accommodation of cues are similar to the findings of Kotlyar and Ariely (2013) that communication tools that provided a greater variety of nonverbal cues were associated with better perceptions of the other person, greater information disclosure, and higher level of interest in developing a relationship.

If we analyze the findings of the outcome of textual accommodation of cues' section, they are in accordance with Reinforcement Theory. This theory focuses on the social context of media use, in other words, the way media may affect us is dependent on social groups and interaction therein; the findings of this section pertaining to the effect of usage of emotext secure support in the interaction part of the theory. The premise that the respondents' style of communication online determines the kind of impact they experience is reflected in the findings of this section wherein those who are high accommodators of textual cues are the ones who experience more positive outcomes of such accommodation.

Conclusion

The majorly text-based character of computer mediated communication is perceived to render online communication less richer in terms of conveying of relational messages and emotions, thus impeding the social-orientedness of such communication. The findings of this study indicate that the social media users are making use of emotext in their online communication as a way to compensate for the reduced social cues in computer mediated communication. Thus, it can be deduced that users have come to adapt their communication to the medium and in the process, have devised a kind of paralanguage to convey rich relational messages. Emoticons

were found to be the most favored form of paralinguistic feature incorporated in the communication through social media by the users. The usage of emotext was found to have a positive impact on the offline as well as online relationships, thereby further supporting the contention that socially-oriented communication can be achieved even through social media by the usage of emotext. These findings highlight the importance of emotext in making online communication richer.

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