

2022
DEC

ISSN 2349-5172

INQUEST

A JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
AND HUMANITIES



INQUEST A JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES



CHANDIDAS MAHAVIDYALAYA
Birbhum, West Bengal

Vol.6 • December 2022

ISSN : 2349-5472

INQUEST

A JOURNAL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

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Khujutipara, Birbhum, (W.B.)

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INQUEST, a journal of social science and humanities, is published by Chandidas Mahavidyalaya, Khujutipara, Birbhum (W.B.). This journal publishes referred papers covering current research in social science and humanities both original research articles and invited reviews. This is an endeavour to contribute in the social science research.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

It is my great pleasure to note that sixth volume of INQUEST-2022, an annual journal of Social Science and Humanities is going to be published very recently. Presently the College has made tremendous progress in all areas of academic, non-academics, capacity building relevant to its staff and students. This publication of journal on a regular basis is a part of its continuous progress. This issue of journal is an effort to accommodate of various research based thought, ideas and expert knowledge of many academia including of our own teaching faculties. In the journal we see that there are ten papers of diversified streams.

On behalf of college family and as a head of the institution, I am heartily thankful to the Authors, Joint Editors, Asstt. Editors, Advisory Board Members, Peer review & Editorial team, Publishing press and all other Associates of INQUEST. I always welcome of any suggestion and opinion in respect of this issue. I am hopeful that the INQUEST will be improving as regards its quality, ranking and indexing in future.

Let's work together and contribute wholeheartedly for maintaining its quality and regularity.

We look forward to welcome many submission of good papers in the next year's issue.

Sd/ Dr. Sk. Aatur Rahaman

Editorial

Research on the social issues now a day mostly demands inter-disciplinary approach. Since Second World War inter-disciplinary approach became the dominant paradigm in the social science studies. It is not only the intellectual-appeal that spawns inter-disciplinary research in social science, but the necessity to understand the third world societies helped create that approach for investigation of socio-political and socio-economic problems in these societies. During Cold War period, West needed requisite information and understanding about the mystifying East. Globalization reinvigorates this process and redirects the entire academic exercise in the arena of Social Science. The hitherto hidden agenda and issues become areas of interest for the academicians, researchers and scholars. Naturally in-depth grass root level research in the social and international arena find place in our academic endeavour. Diversity and plurality of approaches in understanding diverse issues prove to be the very essence of our academic exercise. Although development related issues predominate the field, but the complex issues touching our daily life have been given due importance by the researchers. Scholars from English literature, Philosophy, Political Science and Library Science deal with various socio-economic cultural problems. Issues of equality, spiritual quest, elderly people's problem, rape, spirits of democracy, ethnic identity, library and e-resources etc.

In a nutshell, this volume of INQUEST is a kind of collection of diverse but important research articles viewed from diverse perspectives by eminent scholars that reflect the multi-disciplinary or inter-disciplinary approach.

Editors

Contents

Message from the Principal	3
Editorial	5

Articles

1	Information Needs of Elderly Living in Old Age Homes in West Bengal: A Study <i>Dr. Animesh Bhattacharyya, Dr. Susmita Chakraborty & Dr. Biplab Chakrabarti</i>	9
2	Research trends on academic library: a study from Sodhganga repository <i>Dr. Sourav Chatterjee</i>	24
3	Biodiversity: a Legislative Poser in India <i>Dr. Veera Renuka Lobo</i>	40
4	Understanding the Idea of Equality through the Eyes of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya <i>Dr. Subhas Singha Roy</i>	61
5	Democracy and Its Problems: A Philosophical Remedy <i>Asma Parbhin Khatun</i>	72
6	Availability of Indian E-Resources Pertaining to DOAJ During 2020 <i>Puloma Bishu</i>	83
7	How to Get Rid of Suicidal Thoughts: A Psychological Remedy <i>Prakash Mondal</i>	101
8	Rape: An attack on the dignity of women <i>Dr. Prabal Kumar Sinha</i>	112
9	“Towards Endless Felicity”: The Spiritual Quest in Rassela <i>Abhinanda Chakraborty</i>	122
10	Ethnic Identity Crisis of the Rajbanshis <i>Pran Krishna Biswas</i>	130

Information Needs of Elderly Living in Old Age Homes in West Bengal: A Study

DR. ANIMESH BHATTACHARYYA*

DR. SUSMITA CHAKRABORTY**

DR. BIPLAB CHAKRABARTI***

Abstract:

India is witnessing a rapid growth of senior citizens in the last few decades. The changing scenario from the value-based joint family system to a nuclear family system emerges the growth of institutional care for supporting the old age people in our society. Inmates of these old age homes are facing depression, loneliness and disabilities in terms of physical and mental health. In this situation, information is necessary to provide them with support services in all aspect of their life. The objectives of this study are to identify the information needs of the inmates of the government-aided old age homes in West Bengal, to study the background profile of the inmates and to understand the channels of information they used to meet their information needs. It is found from this study that respondents have needed information on financial, health, legal and general social issues and they are familiar to use human sources and newspaper as sources of information. It is also observed that a few respondents have used the library to meet their information needs. Government initiatives, as well as willingness of Non-

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Governmental Organizations to establish a dedicated local information support services for these people, is necessary and socialization of these inmates through active participation of different creative and social activities may change their life towards the concept of active ageing.

Key Words: Information needs, Information seeking behaviour, Information sources. Old Age Homes, Senior citizen.

Introduction:

Information needs and information seeking behaviour are commonly used to understand the information system, information behaviour and perception of information literacy of a community or a group of people. The changing scenario of the demographic condition of world population highlights the proportion of aged persons in the total population is increasing. Ageing reflects the biological changes of the human body. It also changes physical, psychological, functional, and social values. The traditional joint family system which was prevalent for a long time in Indian society is declining with the effect of modernization, industrialization and globalization. After industrialization, it was financially impossible to live in a joint family in urban cities (Dolai, 2015). The changing scenario of traditional family structure and physical and mental health of the elderly lead to the emergence of community care and old age homes in India (Lamb, 2007).

In India, the population growth of elderly people is alarming. In 1961, the older population in India was 25 million i.e., 5.6 per cent of the total population; it increased to 104 million in 2011 and in percentage it was 8.6 per cent of total population (Central Statistics Office, 2016). A joint study of Help Age International and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2012 declared that India has 100 million older populations and it is expected to increase to 323 million by 2050, which constitutes 20 % of the total population of India (Help Age India, 2014). In another study, it is projected that the proportion of older persons in India will be 12% by 2025 and 20% of the total population in 2050 (Rajan, 2007). Besides this increase

in the proportion of the older population, it also observed that there is a rapid growth of dependency ratio of the older population during these decades. It claimed from 10.9% in 1961 to 14.2% in 2011 for all over India. Therefore it is necessary to study the elderly people, their needs and support services. In this present digital environment information may be considered as a useful media to solve the day-to-day problems and it makes one's life smooth by providing required information. Information need is difficult to identify and it is not to be considered as fundamental needs like the need for shelter, the need for sustenance, but rather a secondary need which arose out of the desire to satisfy the primary needs (Wilson, 1981). It can be measured through information seeking and information use behaviour. Therefore, this study of information needs of elderly people, those are living in the old age homes covers the area of information needs, source of information, type of information they use and their information seeking and use behaviour. In Indian perspective, an elderly tried to live alone when there is none to care for them. This is a hard truth in reality for those who have no physical and economic capability. This study will try to understand the problems of the elderly, their information needs especially those are living in the old age homes.

Significance of the study

Ageing is a universal and inevitable stage of life, but it has been viewed as a problematic stage of human life cycle. In this stage human life becomes more sensitive and emotional in psychological perspective and weaker on physical aspect (Panday, 2017). In this stage older adults are becoming inactive in respect of physical, social, financial and mental perspective and increase their dependencies on others (Dhara & Jogsan, 2013). This demographic transition highlights increased demand in aged care services to support their physical and psychological wellbeing, which may be considered as a challenge in any developing countries like India.

The traditional joint family system in India has been

disappearing slowly which was based on love, affection and traditional culture (Lalan, 2014). In this respect institutional care supports providers for old age persons are important and they have played a vital role for the wellbeing of elderly in our society. There are mainly two types of old age homes viz. private old age homes and Government and Government aided old age homes. Private old age homes are mainly paid homes, they take charges for their services. On the other hand government and government aided homes are mainly take care to destitute, poor, and infirm old age persons. It is observed that information on different support services and information needs of inmates are important. The study of information seeking behavior is essential requisite for designing and developing or evaluating of any information system (Naskar & Majumder, 2017).

Information need is a complex idea and it is not clear to anyone or one cannot identify information need properly if he or she does not feel the requirement of information to fulfill their objectives. It can be measured through information seeking and information use behavior. Information needs may be difficult to quantify and cannot be described directly but through the context in which they address information needs (Kuruppu, 1999). It is important to identify the nature of information needs of older persons. Todd (1984) showed that older people needed information on housing, welfare benefits, health and social services. The older people did not feel or often expressed the needs of information but they required help, encouragement and guidance to make a positive and active life style after retirement. Old age persons are facing various problems related with physical and mental health care. Therefore information related with health issues take priority among them. Silbajoris (2000) highlights the opinions of older adults regarding health information and their use of the internet to access the health information. Su and Conaway (1995) express that most of the elderly people have required news and information on health, interests, cultural & religions activities. They often used Newspaper, television, family and friends as a source of information. The importance of health information needs has

been observed by Liao, Chiu and Yuch (2012). This study shows that rural older people have the highest need for 'health service information' and 'preventive health care information'. Family, friends and television were the main source of health information. The same result is also observed by other studies. Brossoie, Roberto, Willis-Walton and Reynolds (2010) highlight that most of the elderly persons are interested on health care reform and information on different ageing issues. Most of the old age persons rely on family and friends as resources for information needs. In the last stage of life old age persons are depended on younger generation on financial issues. Baker (2004) described four categories of information needs of older persons including physical, emotional, spiritual and financial. Gollop (1997) explored that elderly people used a wide variety of sources of information such as physicians, the mass media, members of their social networks, print and non print media, family members, close friends etc. Legal issues are important for old age persons. Edwards and Fontana (2004) examined the legal information needs of older adults and their awareness of legal information, process of information acquisition and barriers of information acquisitions, information provision strategies etc. General information needs are also important for old age persons. It is highlighted by some studies that elderly people have interest on domestic matters as well as political and social issues. Cooper and Urquhart (2005) examine the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of home-care workers and clients and it highlights a variety of information needs including health, welfare, leisure and domestic matters. It is revealed from this study that elderly people trust the advice of home care staff as much as they might have trust their own family members. Hirakawa, Kuzuya, Enoki and Uemura (2011) identify that most concern issues related with elderly care are first aid, dementia & public long term care insurance services. At the same time Caregivers need information about public long term care insurance services, consumer related issues like problems with consumer products and contracts as well as information related with food and nutrition. Therefore in this study, authors highlight

the information needs of old age persons in aspects of their financial, legal, healthcare and general issues.

Objectives

The main objectives of this study are:

- ❖ To study the background profile of inmates of old age homes in respect of their education, health status and economic condition.
- ❖ To identify the information needs of old age persons living in the old age homes in West Bengal.
- ❖ To identify the sources of information used by the elderly inmates of the old age homes in West Bengal.

Methodology

This is a survey based study. The survey has been conducted on the basis of the list of old age homes provided by the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India and Department of Women & Child Development and Social Welfare, Government of West Bengal. There are 20 government aided old age homes. Those are running in collaboration with Non Governmental Organizations (NGO) under the scheme of Integrated Programme for Older Persons (IPOP) of Government of India. There are 421 beneficiaries in these old age homes in West Bengal. Out of which 317 respondents have been studied in-depth for the research purpose. Rests of the inmates are not studied because of their serious illness, restrictions imposed by the authority, out station movements of the inmates, and non willingness of some participants. Elderly inmates of the old age homes were approached for study and interviewed after taking permission from the authorities.

Data analysis

General information of the old age homes

There are 23 districts in West Bengal. Table-1 reveals the distribution of old age homes in different districts in West

Bengal. Most of the old age homes are in Purba and Paschim Medinipur districts.

Table 1: District wise distribution of old age homes in West Bengal

Name of Districts	No. of OAH	Percentage (%)
Hooghly	02	(10%)
Howrah	01	(05%)
Kolkata	02	(10%)
Nadia	02	(10%)
Paschim Medinipur	06	(30%)
Purba Medinipur	07	(35%)
Total	20	(100%)

The general information of the old age homes is shown in Table-2. It is observed that most of the old age homes are established in the period of 1991-1995 and after 2000 only one Government aided old age home is established in West Bengal.

Table 2: Distribution of the general information of the old age homes

Variables	No. of old age homes	Percentage (%)
Year of Establishment		
Up to 1990	2	(10%)
1991-1995	15	(75%)
1996-2000	2	(10%)
After 2000	1	(05%)
Type of accommodation		
Single bed room	3	15%
Double beds room	6	30%
Dormitory	20	100%

Medical facilities		
Doctors visit	20	100%
Nursing Care	3	15%
Entertainment facilities		
Television	16	80%
Radio	3	15%
Library	11	55%
Annual programmes	20	100%

Most of the old age homes accommodate their inmates in dormitory and a few old age homes have the facilities of single bedded room and double bedded rooms. All old age homes have medical facilities like regular physical checkup and doctor's visit. Only three old age homes offer nursing care in their institutional setup. Entertainment facilities are important for the inmates of the old age homes. Most of the old age homes organize annual programmes like picnic, local side seen and tour, annual function etc. Eighty per cent old age homes have Television for their inmates and only eleven old age homes have institutional library within their compound.

Demographic conditions of the respondents are shown in Table-3. It is clear from this table that most of the respondents belong in the age group of 60-69 and 70-79. Among the respondents 199 (62.78%) respondents are women and 118 (37.22%) respondents are male. According to this study most of the residents of these old age homes are either illiterate or have completed primary level of education. Only 9.15% respondents have completed secondary level of education and only 3.47% participants have completed graduation. Elderly inmates of these old age homes have mainly come from rural areas of different districts. Most of them are destitute and infirm and they have no any fixed income. Some of the respondents earn money from different activities organized by old age homes. 5.99% respondents earn from old age pension and 19.87% participants can earn from other activities.

Table 3: Distribution of the general information of the respondents

Variables	No. of old age homes	Percentage (%)
Age (Years)		
60-69	124	(39.12%)
70-79	122	(38.49%)
80-89	62	(19.56%)
90-99	9	(2.84%)
Sex		
Male	118	(37.22%)
Female	199	(62.78%)
Education		
Illiterate	111	(35.01%)
Primary	108	(34.07%)
Middle	57	(17.98%)
Secondary	29	(9.15%)
Higher Secondary	01	(0.32%)
Graduate	11	(3.47%)
Source of income		
Old age Pension	19	(5.99%)
Interest on savings	09	(2.84%)
Other sources	63	(19.87%)
No Sources	226	(71.29%)

Table 4: Distribution of physical status of the respondents

Variables	No. of inmates	Percentage (%)
Movement		
No problem	141	(44.48%)
Little problem	148	(46.69%)
With the help of others	28	(8.83%)
Unable to walk	0	0
Hearing		
No problem	138	(43.53%)
Little hearing	168	(53%)

With the help of hearing aids	2	(0.63%)
Deaf	9	(2.84%)
Vision		
No problem	33	(10.41%)
Partial Vision	91	(28.71%)
With the help of spectacles	193	(60.88%)
Blind	0	0
Other Diseases		
Diabetes	37	(11.67%)
Skin Diseases	14	(4.42%)
Arthritis/Pain	204	(64.35%)
Urinary Problem	29	(9.15%)
Blood Pressure	84	(26.50%)
Asthma	67	(21.14%)
Acidity	121	(38.17%)

Table-4 reflects the physical status of the respondents. Old age is an inevitable stage of the human life cycle. It means declining physical and mental ability and increasing economic dependency upon next generation. It is clear from the above table that most of the respondents have ability to movement and hearing. A large section of respondents have used spectacles and suffer from arthritis, blood pressure, asthma and acidity but no one found in the condition of unable to walk and complete blind.

Table 5 Distribution of respondents according to their Information needs

Information need	No. of inmates	Percentage (%)
Financial Information		
Income related	65	(20.50%)
Savings related	7	(2.21%)
Insurance related	0	0
Financial org. related	0	0
Old age scheme related	6	(1.89%)

Health Information		
Diseases related	164	(51.74%)
Medicine related	68	(21.45%)
Doctors related	28	(8.83%)
Physical fitness related	116	(36.59%)
Legal Information		
Wealth related	15	(4.73%)
Insurance related	0	
Nominee related	1	(0.32%)
Others	13	(4.10%)
General Information		
Market Related	69	(21.77%)
Political	15	(4.73)
Religious	161	(50.79%)
Social information	53	(16.72%)
Sports	35	(11.04)

Table 5 describes the information needs of the respondents. 20.50% respondents need income related information and 2.21% respondents are interested about savings related information. Most of the inmates are interested on health and general information. 51.74% respondents need diseases related information, 21.45% need medicine related information and 8.83% and 36.59% respondents need doctors and physical fitness related information. A few respondents have needed legal information. They have needed general information on market, political, religious, social and sports related information.

Table 6 Distribution of Information Sources used by the respondents

Information sources	No. of inmates	Percentage (%)
Financial Information		
News paper / News	60	(18.93%)
Library	10	(3.15%)
Internet	0	0
Human being	60	(18.93%)

Health Information		
News paper	74	(23.34%)
Library	15	(4.73%)
Internet	0	0
Human beings	158	(49.84%)
Legal Information		
News paper	16	(5.05%)
Library	5	(1.58%)
Other internet	0	0
Human beings	17	(5.36%)
General Information		
Newspaper	104	(32.81%)
Library	12	(3.79%)
Internet	0	0
Human beings	152	(47.95%)

Sources of information of the inmates are shown in Table-6. Respondents are mainly used news paper, human resources and library to fulfill their information needs. They do not use internet due to lack of knowledge. Respondents have used human resources maximum for all kinds of information needs. News paper is used maximum for general information and library is used mostly for health information. Human resources are also used maximum to fulfill the requirement of health information needs.

Conclusion

The problem of old age had never been a problem in Indian society, when joint family system was prevalent (Dubay, 2011). Modern busy lifestyle and change of mentality of young generation as well as economically stabled elderly parents may be a cause of mushrooming of the institutional care for old age persons in our society. Information need may not be a need like essential commodities or services, but it is a gateway to fulfill the requirement of a person. Therefore information is important in today's society. Inmates of old age homes also felt the requirement of information on different aspects of their life.

This study identifies the information needs of elderly inmates on financial, health, legal and general issues. The old age inmates of government aided old age homes felt loneliness, mental depression and lower satisfaction. Their poor health and hopelessness of survival in life unveil the stigma of the society. Social interactions, emotional supports, engagement of different performing art and activities of old age persons are essential to change their life and perception of old age in our society. Government and non-governmental institutions should take initiatives to establish a local information support system for old age persons to understand and solve the problems of old age. The concept of active and successful ageing should also be considered to change the perception of the old age.

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Research trends on academic library: a study from Sodhganga repository

DR. SOURAV CHATTERJEE*

Abstract:

The present study attempts to find the trends of research on academic library based on the theses uploaded in Shodhganga database. Sodhganga is a national digital repository of Electronic Thesis and Dissertations (ETDs), which was set up by the INFLIBNET centre. The main aim of Shodhganga is to provide worldwide accessibility of Indian theses and dissertations as an open access to the academic community. The data was collected from the repository in between 2012-2022. Total 112 theses were taken into consideration for this study. The author tries to find out the coverage as well as prospect of academic library and its related area. The paper analyses different facets like year of uploading of thesis, completion year of thesis, different subject area of research, number of guides, language, state wise distribution of thesis etc. Tamil Nadu is the leading state which contributed maximum number of theses. This study also observes that most of the theses were written in English language. This work will definitely help to understand the current status of research on academic library and on the basis of that future path may be decided.

Keywords: Academic library, Trends of Research, Shodhganga, Library Automation, Theses/Dissertation, Institutional Repository

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Introduction:

Academic libraries provide different types of intellectual information to the younger generation and thus play a significant role to build knowledge based society. A well equipped, structured and properly managed academic library is a foundation of particular academic institution and thus it is inseparable. Depending on the nature of academic library like School, College or Universities the target users varies. They may be students, teachers, research scholars, and staff of the institute. They have diverse need of information. It is the duty of the academic library to satisfy the need of the users. These libraries collect variety of information resources, organize those resources and meet the information need of the users through different kind of services and thus support learning, research activities of any particular institute. Such libraries support, give encouragement and motivation. It also gives inspiration in education. In the present age, information is not only available in the libraries as a physical content, it collects digital information and with the help of technology it disseminate information to its users without wasting of their time. Academic libraries are now providing variety of resources in different formats as well as assist individuals to improve their skills, cultural values, reading habits, communication development etc. Academic library spread useful and good information among its users. Satisfaction of users is an important part for any library. To satisfy the user's development of libraries is a must for imparting proper knowledge.

All types of libraries including academic libraries are in an era of change. Academic libraries are reinventing themselves in the new era as far as space, services and collections are concerned. In the digital era academic libraries are working as a learning space where it supports both formal learning together with new emerging information communication technology (IT) and services. It is hard to imagine an academic institution without a library. Today's students are the new generation learners; they are using the library and pushing the library in a way so that rethinking is necessary.

Role of Academic Libraries:

The role of academic libraries varies on the basis of requirements of their respective users and their nature. The collections of libraries also varied accordingly. But the primary roles of any academic library are:

- To assist the parent institution to fulfill the main objectives of education by providing good collection of books and journals, course related materials etc. in both print and electronic format.
- To give proper training to users in handling documents, give career guidance, access to information through internet etc.
- To preserve information for future use.
- To provide users the deeper meaning of universe of knowledge and encourage lifelong learning.
- To help the users to be a good citizen.

Review of Literature:

User satisfaction is one of the primary objectives of any library. Database, new technologies and innovative ideas have made the library environment more challenging for users and as well as for librarians. Different quantitative studies have done in different parts of the world to analyze and evaluate the performance of the library to measure users' satisfaction on academic library collection, function, services and infrastructure. Future direction of academic library services depends on analyzing the benefits of new technologies coming in the library and users' study is the way to understand their demand (Gardner & Eng, 2005; Sahu, 2007; Kasim, 2009; Goodall & Pattern, 2011).

Lipincott (2010) examined the improvement in the technological area especially in case of mobile devices and analyzed the potentiality of use of mobile devices like laptops and cell phones in the academic libraries. He observed the use of those devices is expanding among the students. It was revealed from the study that mobile devices may create more

opportunities for users to be actively participated in the teaching learning process.

Emmons & Wilkinson (2011) studied the impact of academic library on student persistence. The paper showed that users/students who used the academic library frequently had significant impact on academic performance. The study also focused on the correlation between academic library use and development of library skills, higher grades, reducing faculty times etc.

Kumar V (2019) discussed in his research paper the academic libraries, its definition, functions, resources, and services. He also explained the internet and its evolution and application in the academic libraries particularly in higher education institute. In his research paper he studied the use of internet on library services in selected higher education institute in Chennai.

Roy & Ghosh (2022) in their paper analyzed the contribution of various open Universities of India with respect to the Ph.D theses they uploaded in the Shodhganga repository. The key roles of the open Universities in the higher education system and the opportunities they provide for distant learners were discussed here. The study analyzed the contribution on various aspects by those open Universities like year of publication, subject area, language etc.

A considerable number of studies have been done on different aspect on academic libraries in different parts of the country as well as in whole world like use of resources, use of internets, different library services etc. But author identified that no research was done previously to identify the trends of research on academic library in India. The author identified the gap and the result is this piece of work.

Objectives of the study:

The objectives of the study are as follows:

- To understand and discover the research trend on academic libraries by different Universities in India.
- To discover the important areas of research on academic libraries done so far.

- To explore and analyze those theses on various areas like language, page length, year wise distribution of theses awarded, state wise distribution of research work etc.
- To find out future direction of research on academic library.

Methodology:

The study is done to fulfill the above objectives. The research based data were gathered from Shodhganga database of INFLIBNET. Keeping in mind the above objectives of the study data were carefully classified and structured. All the data were analyzed and after that they were presented in tabular form. MS-Excel was used for preparing charts and draws the findings of the study.

Scope and limitation of the study:

The scope of the present study is limited to Indian Universities only, which contributed and uploaded their research thesis to Shodhganga repository of INFLIBNET particularly on academic library. The study is also limited because the data were collected from the Shodhganga database of INFLIBNET from 2012-2022. Previous years were not included for data collection. Total 112 theses already awarded and contributed by various Universities of India during that period on different aspects of academic library are taken for that study.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 1: Distribution of theses according to the year of upload in the Shodhganga database on Academic Library:

Year	Number of theses uploaded	Percentage
2012	3	2.7%
2013	5	4.5%
2014	7	6.25%
2015	7	6.25%
2016	18	16.1%

2017	20	17.8%
2018	12	10.7%
2019	4	3.6%
2020	9	8%
2021	11	9.8%
2022	16	14.3%
Total	112	100%

Table 1 shows the year wise distribution of uploaded theses in the Shodhganga repository. These theses were contributed by various Universities of India, and were uploaded in between 2012-2022. Total 112 theses were uploaded in that period. In the year 2017 maximum number of theses were uploaded. 20 (17.8%) out of 112 theses were uploaded in that year. Year 2016 was in the second position. 18 (16.1%) theses were uploaded in that year. 16 (14.3%) theses were uploaded in 2022, was in the third position in the list.

Table 2: Distribution of uploaded theses according to year of completion of research:

Year of Completion	Number of Theses	Year of Completion	Number of Theses
1985	1	2008	2
1986	1	2009	2
1987	1	2010	4
1990	1	2011	8
1993	1	2012	6
1994	2	2013	8
1998	1	2014	6
2000	1	2015	7
2001	3	2016	5
2002	1	2017	13
2003	3	2018	10

2004	1	2019	9
2005	2	2020	4
2006	1	2021	5
2007	2	2022	1
Total		112	

Table 2 represents the distribution of uploaded theses according to year of completion of research on academic library by various Universities in India. From that table it is seen that those theses were completed in between 1985-2022. Few years are also there in between where no such data was found. Table shows that highest number of completed theses was found in the year 2017 (13), and in the second position was in the year 2018 (10).

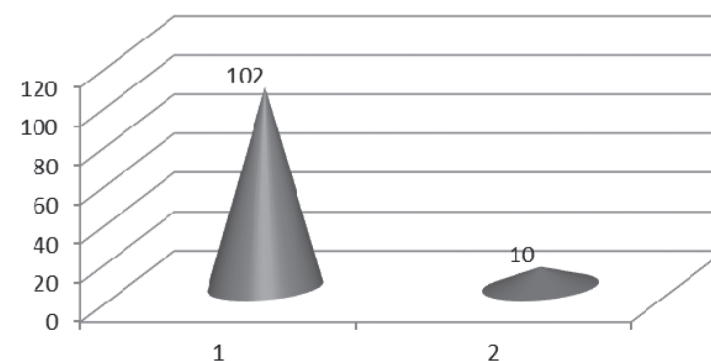
Table 3: Language wise distribution of theses in Sodhganga database on Academic library:

SI No.	Name of Language	Number of Theses	Percentage
1	English	105	93.75%
2	Marathi	4	3.57%
3	Hindi	2	1.79%
4	Guajarati	1	0.89%
Total		112	100%

Table 3 depicts the language wise distribution of uploaded theses. Total 4 languages were found by the author, in which theses were written. 105 (93.75%) out of 112 theses were written in English language. 4 (3.57%) were written in Marathi language, 2 (1.79%) were in Hindi and only 1(0.89%) thesis was found in Guajarati language by the author.

Table 4: Distribution of uploaded theses according to number of supervisors or guides:

Number of Supervisors or Guides for each theses	Number of Theses	Percentage
1	102	91.07%
2	10	8.93%
Total	112	100%



X axis: No. of Supervisor(s), Y axis: Number of theses

Fig 1: Distribution of uploaded theses according to number of supervisors or guides

After analyzing the data (from Table 4 and Fig 1) the author here found two categories. Maximum number of theses was guided by single supervisor/guide. 102 (91.07%) theses out of 112 fell in the first category. Only 10 theses (8.93%) were guided or supervised by two supervisors.

Table 5: Distribution of uploaded theses according to the number of pages

Sl No.	Range of Pages	Number of Theses	Percentage
1	0-50	0	0
2	51-100	1	0.9%
3	101-200	8	7.14%
4	151-200	25	22.32%
5	201-250	24	21.4%
6	251-300	19	17%
7	301-350	17	15.17%
8	351-400	10	8.93%
9	401-450	5	4.46%
10	451-500	2	1.78%
11	Above 501	1	0.9%
Total		112	100%

Table 5 reflects the range of total number of pages of uploaded theses on academic library. There is a great variation. 25 (22.32%) out of 112 theses were completed within the range of 151-200 pages. And 24 (21.4%) were completed within 201-250 pages. There is only one thesis in the range of 51-100 pages category, similarly above 501 pages author found one thesis only.

Table 6: Faculty or Department wise distribution of uploaded theses by various Universities:

Sl No.	Name of Faculty/ Department	Number of Theses	Percentage
1	Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS)	102	91%
2	Faculty of Fine Arts	6	5.4%
3	Faculty of Science and humanities	2	1.8%

4	School of Humanities and Social Sciences	2	1.8%
Total		112	100%

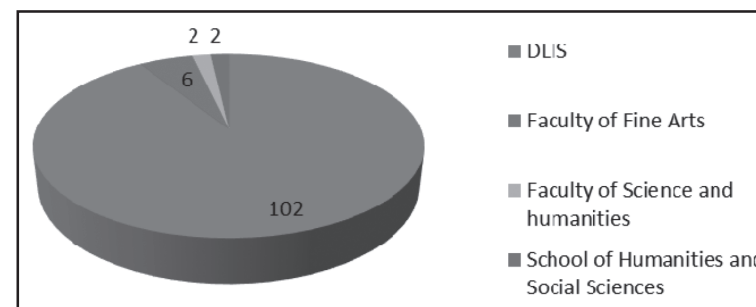


Fig 2: Faculty or Department wise distribution of uploaded theses by various Universities

Table 6 and Fig 2 explain faculty/ department wise distribution of uploaded theses. DLIS of various Universities contributed the maximum number of theses. They contributed 102 (91%) of the total theses uploaded. Faculty of Fine Arts was in the second position. This department contributed 6 (5.4%) theses. Other two departments in the list are Faculty of Science and humanities and School of Humanities and Social Sciences. They contributed 2 theses each.

Table 7: Research areas of uploaded thesis on academic libraries:

Sl No.	Area of Research	Number of theses	Percentage
1	IT application or Automation in Academic Libraries	44	39.3%
2	Academic library system and services	15	13.4%

3	Marketing and Management of Information	9	8%
4	Cost Benefit Analysis	3	2.7%
5	Space Utilization and Library Building	4	3.6%
6	User study and User Satisfaction	11	9.8%
7	Utilization of Human/Personnel Resource Management	8	7.1%
8	Information Seeking Behavior	1	0.9%
9	Finance of Academic Library	2	1.8%
10	Total Quality Management	5	4.5%
11	Library Development	4	3.6%
12	Collection Development Policy	6	5.3%
	Total	112	100%

Table 7 reveals that IT application or automation in academic libraries was the main topic or area of research by different scholars of various Universities in India. Total 44 theses (39.3%) were identified in that area. After analyzing author found 12 different areas of research on academic libraries on which theses were submitted. Another important area of research was academic library system and services. On that area 15 (13.4%) theses were identified. Use of study and User satisfaction were also significant areas of study where 11 (9.8%) theses were found.

**Table 8: Name and State or Area wise distribution of uploaded theses from various Universities:
Bengal 2**

Sl No.	Name of University	Location of University/ State	Number of Theses
1	Gauhati University	Assam	7
2	Andhra University	Andhra Pradesh	5
3	Sri Krishnadevaraya University	Andhra Pradesh	1
4	Guru Ghasidas University	Chattisgarh	2
5	Sardar Patel University	Gujarat	1
6	Kurukhstra University	Haryana	3
7	Bangalore University	Karnataka	2
8	Karnatak University	Karnataka	3
9	Kuvempu University	Karnataka	1
10	Mangalore University	Karnataka	7
11	Reva University	Karnataka	1
12	University of Mysore	Karnataka	3
13	University of Calicut	Kerala	1
14	University of Kerala	Kerala	4
15	Jiwaji University	Madhya Pradesh	1
16	Swami Vivekananda University	Madhya Pradesh	1
17	North Eastern Hill University	Meghalaya	1
18	Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University	Maharashtra	4
19	Kavayitri Bahinabai Chaudhuri North Maharashtra University	Maharashtra	1
20	Savitribhai Phule Pune University	Maharashtra	2
21	Shivaji University	Maharashtra	1
22	Solapur University	Maharashtra	1
23	Swami Ramanad Teerth Marathwada University	Maharashtra	1
24	Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth	Maharashtra	1
25	Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University	Maharashtra	1
26	Utkal University	Odisha	1
27	Guru Nanak Dev University	Punjab	1
28	Punjab University	Punjab	3
29	Banasthali Vidyapith	Rajasthan	1
30	Banasthali University	Rajasthan	2
31	Nims University	Rajasthan	1
32	Shri Jagadishprasad Jhabarmal Tiberwal University	Rajasthan	9
33	Singhania University	Rajasthan	1
34	Algappa University	Tamil Nadu	1
35	Anna University	Tamil Nadu	2
36	Annamalai University	Tamil Nadu	1
37	Bharathiar University	Tamil Nadu	3
38	Bharthidasan University	Tamil Nadu	2
39	Karunya University	Tamil Nadu	2
40	Madurai Kamraj University	Tamil Nadu	1

41	Manomaniam Sundaranar University	Tamil Nadu	7
42	Periyar University	Tamil Nadu	1
43	Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswati Viswa Mahavidyalaya	Tamil Nadu	3
44	Aligarh Muslim University	Uttar Pradesh	4
45	Bundelkhand University	Uttar Pradesh	1
46	Jadavpur University	West Bengal	6
47	The University of Burdwan	West Bengal	2
48	University of Calcutta	West Bengal	1
	Total		112

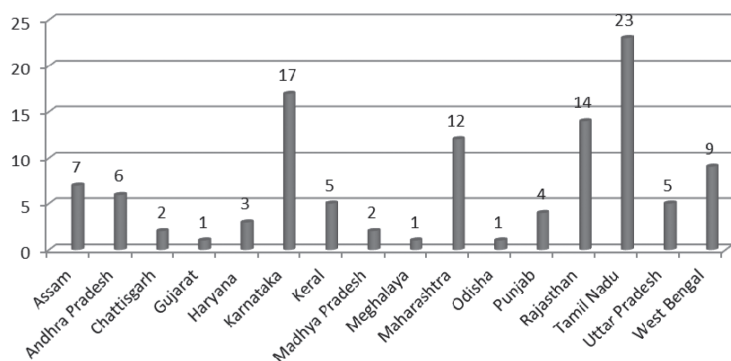


Fig 3: State wise distribution of uploaded theses

Table 8 and Fig. 3 represent the name of the Universities and their location, which contributed the 112 theses which are considered for this study. Total 48 Universities scattered in 16 different states of India took part in this study. 11 different Universities from Tamil Nadu contributed 23 theses, which is the maximum number among all the states. Karnataka was the second highest as far as number of theses was contributed. 6 different Universities here contributed 17 theses. If we consider the single University which contributed the maximum number of theses, here came the name of Shri Jagadishprasad Jhabarmal Tiberwal University from Rajasthan. This University contributed 9 such theses by different scholars for this study.

Findings:

- This study is based on the uploaded thesis from various Universities from India in the Sodhganga repository on Academic Library.

- Total 112 theses were considered for this study which were uploaded in between 2013-2022.
- Maximum number of theses was uploaded in the year 2016 and 2017 on Academic library. Total 38 (33.9%) theses were uploaded in these two years.
- Only 20 % of the theses were completed from 1985-2007. From 2008 to 2022, 80% of those theses were completed.
- Majority of those theses were written in English language
- In case of 91.07 % theses, were guided by single supervisor.
- 43.72 % of those theses were completed within the page limit of 151-250.
- 91% of those uploaded theses are the outcome of Department of Library and Information Science (DLIS) of various Universities.
- The most important area of research found from that study was 'IT application or Automation in Academic Libraries'.
- Universities from Tamil Nadu and Karnataka are doing very well as far as contribution of theses on academic library is concerned.

Conclusion:

Academic library not only meet the needs of the academic users and give support to learning environment of an institution, but it also understand the philosophy of the institution so that appropriate choices can be made regarding the materials and services to be provided. The landscape of academic libraries in India has been changed. As the new technologies and innovations are coming into the library, some people already raised the question regarding the conventional need of academic libraries. The future vitality of any academic library will be dependent on few factors like the users' requirements, input, role of the library staff and the productive output so that it can meet the users' need. The process is not so smooth. Many research works have already been conducted to understand the important areas, difficulties, lacuna etc. and on the basis of those

future guidelines may be created. Thesis/ dissertations are recognized as an important source of research work. This attempt to find the status of research through Shodhganga repository on academic library will definitely help to evaluate the trends of research on this field and surely able to keep up the pace in this changing scenario.

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Biodiversity: a legislative poser in India

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Abstract:

India has large biodiversity spread across the country. To save and safeguard this wealth a lot of efforts have been made in the form of legislations, policies, action plans, by government, environment groups and Non-Government Organisations (NGO). Considering the population, poverty, unemployment, greed of the companies and multinationals, alternate ways have to be learned and executed by all to protect the earth.

Biodiversity is everything in life [1] that we find on earth—the variety of animals, plants, fungi, and even microorganisms like bacteria that make up our natural world. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems, like an intricate web, to maintain balance and support life.

India has two of the 25 identified biodiversity centers termed as hot spots, viz., Eastern Himalaya and Western Ghats. India is also considered as one of the 12 centers of origin of agriculture. The number of plant species in India is estimated [2] to be over 47,480, representing about 7 per cent of the world's flora. These are categorized in different taxonomic divisions including over 1,500 flowering plants. Estimates for the flower plants are 64 gymnosperms, 2,483 bryophytes, 1,012 pteridophytes, 1,940 lichen, 12,480 algae and 23,000 fungi.

The faunal species of India are estimated to be about 1,00,690, representing about 6.4 per cent of world's fauna.[3]

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It includes 5,000 molluscs and about 57,000 insects. Besides other invertebrates, there are about 2,546 fish species, 204 amphibians, 428 reptiles, 1,228 birds and 372 mammals. India's eight breeds of buffalo represent entire range of genetic diversity of buffalos in the world. Besides, there are 26 breeds of cattle, 40 of sheep, 20 of goat, eight of camel, six of horse, two of donkey and 18 types of poultry. Presently, India is characterized by 14 biosphere reserves [4] of which three are in the world network of biosphere reserve, viz., Sunderban, Gulf of Mannar and Nilgiris. Besides, there are about 100 national parks and 500 bird sanctuaries, representing different biogeographic regions of the Indian subcontinent.

Legislation related to biodiversity

The fundamental policy and legal support for the implementation of biodiversity protection is embedded in the Constitution of India which creates an abiding responsibility of the State and the people of India to take positive action for the protection and conservation of natural resources. Among the many policies and Acts that have been rolled out to safeguard mother earth some of them are summarized here.

BioDiversity Act, 2002

The Act [5] recognises India's richness in biological diversity and associated traditional and contemporary knowledge systems, acknowledges its commitment to implement the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and provides for "conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of biological resources and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The Act inter alia obligates the Central Government to:

(i) develop national strategies, plans and programmes for conservation and sustainable use,

(ii) institute measures to identify and monitor areas rich in biological resources,

(iii) promote in situ and ex situ conservation of biological resources

(iv) create incentives for research, training and public education to increase awareness about biodiversity, and

(v) integrate the conservation, promotion and sustainable use of biodiversity into relevant sectoral, cross sectoral plans, programmes and policies, “as far as practicable and wherever deemed appropriate.”

The Act also includes specific provisions for:

(i) notifying species which are on the verge of extinction, or likely to become extinct in near future as threatened species; rehabilitation of such species promoting Research and Development (R&D) and other necessary actions,

(ii) chronicling of knowledge related to biological resources at the local level with the object to respect, preserve and use such knowledge,

(iii) conditionalities and modalities for seeking prior approvals for undertaking certain activities.

(iv) The Act creates a three-tier architecture for its implementation at national, state and the local levels. This architecture coordinates the implementation of the National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBAP) in collaboration with line agencies and other non-government stakeholders.

On December 16, 2021 the government issued amendments [6] with an aim to reduce the pressure on wild medicinal plants by encouraging cultivation, and fast-tracking research, patent application and transfer of research results. Critics said the proposed law seeks to facilitate trade and benefit the AYUSH industry and is contrary to the aims of the existing law to conserve biodiversity.

Loopholes in the BioDiversity Act 2002 in India

Article 21 and Article 14 are two of the fundamental rights guaranteed even to non-citizens. It is necessary to examine how Article 14 is violated by the Biodiversity Act, 2002. The act distinguishes [7] citizens of India and other persons on the basis

of citizenship and residential status. These provisions deter foreign joint ventures as well as collaboration with foreign scientists because of strict prohibition on even minor equity holdings in a company.

State biodiversity authorities formed under the act do not have complete autonomy and their powers are merely restricted to that of an advisory body abiding by the guidelines issued by the Central Government. State governments should be granted more autonomy in a bottom up approach to solve problems related to biodiversity. Since local communities are aware of the manner in which bio resources from their village are being used and would notice any unwanted outside influence over resource extraction or external parties interested in resource extraction, their vigilance would help in preventing bio piracy, as would the other civil society organizations and individuals.

The Act centralizes all the property rights either in the hand of the state through sovereign appropriation or in the hands of private inventors through monopoly of intellectual property rights.[8] It does not however provide a framework for the rights of all other holders of biological resources and related information. The consequence is that resources and knowledge are not allocated through intellectual property rights, the rest is freely available.

There is no clear distinction made between ‘genetic resources’ and ‘biological resources’ in the legislation. Hence, the collection, sale, or purchase of a single biological specimen constitutes access to genetic resources. Only a few bio prospecting proposals have been submitted and approved. Details of negotiation procedures are not yet available, and, hence, the effectiveness of the Act in practice has yet to be seen.

Indian Forest Act, 1927 (last amended in 2017)

The Act’s provisions include criteria and modalities for reserving and designating forests for conservation and legal protection, management of forest produce, and issues regarding transit of the forest produce and the fees and duties leviable on this produce.

Wild Life Protection Act, 1972 (last amended in 2006)

It empowers the State to declare areas of ecological, faunal, floral, geomorphological or zoological association or importance as protected areas, under four categories, namely, National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuaries, Community Reserves and Conservation Reserves.

Forest Conservation Act, 1980

The Act governs matters relating to diversion of forest land for any non-forest purpose. The diversion of forest is made subject to:

- (i) stringent scrutiny, and
- (ii) recovery of net present value (NPV) and compensatory afforestation equal to the area diverted.

Environment Protection Act, 1986

It covers all matters relating to the protection and importance of environment at a broad level and empowers the State to issue notifications to protect the environment whenever necessary. An example of this is the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification (CRZN) issued by Ministry of Environment and Forests, 2019 declaring coastal stretches as Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) to regulate industrial and other activities in CRZ towards ensuring conservation and protection of coastal areas, coastal ecosystems and the livelihoods of the coastal communities.

Wetlands Rules, 2017

These Rules have succeeded the Wetland (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2010. WR, 2017 aims at conservation and wise use of wetlands making states responsible for conserving and sustainably managing wetlands recognizing the fact that land and water, the two major ecological constituents of wetland ecosystems, are enlisted as State subjects as per the Constitution.

The Plant Quarantine (Regulation of Import into India) Order, 2003 (PQO, 2003) Notified under the Destructive Insects and Pests Act, 1914, it aims at preventing introduction of:(i)

exotic pests, (ii) diseases, and (iii) weeds likely to get introduced through import of agricultural commodities or plants/ materials into India. It is implemented through 59 Plant Quarantine Stations (PQSs) located in various states.

The Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001 (PPVFR Act, 2001)

The Act has established an effective system for:

- (i) protection of plant varieties,
- (ii) recognition of varieties traditionally cultivated and evolved by farmers in their fields,
- (iii) recognition of wild relatives or landraces of a variety about which the farmers possess the common knowledge,
- (iv) farmers' and plant breeders' rights including rights in respect of their contributions made at any time in conserving, improving and making plant genetic resources available for the development of new plant varieties, and
- (v) encouragement to development of new varieties of plants.

The National Green Tribunal Act, 2010 (NGT Act, 2010) The Act establishes a National Green Tribunal (NGT) inter alia for effective and expeditious disposal of cases relating to environmental protection, conservation of forests and other natural resources.

The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (Forest Rights Act, 2006)

The Act recognizes and vests the forest rights and occupation in forest land in the forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers, who had been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded in the past. The Act also seeks to balance these rights with the responsibilities for sustainable use, conservation of biodiversity and maintenance of ecological balance so that forests are conserved while ensuring the livelihood and food security of the forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers.[9]

A representation of the important cases that were filed in the courts

1. Cases Related to ‘Smuggling’ & Biopiracy of Bioresource

a) The two czech nationals were arrested in India for illegally collecting rare insects in Singalila National Park, West Bengal [10]. Being foreigners, it was impossible for them to do so without the support from National BioDiversity Authority (NBA), as per the requirements of Sections 3 and 19 of the biodiversity (BD) Act. However, at a time when NGT had not been formed, taking action required either the State Biodiversity Board (SBB) or an empowered authority or a “benefit claimer” to file a case before the High Court. Hence, the West Bengal Forest Department (FD) invoked Sections 27 and 29 of the Wild Life Protection (WLP) Act, 1972 (illegal entry into the PA) to charge the two scientists. Subsequently, additional grounds related to violation of Section 3 of BD Act (i.e., lack of permission from NBA), because they had secured more than 1500 species of butterflies including endangered species. Though the collection was done for research purposes, the Chief Judicial Magistrate in Darjeeling convicted them on 8 September 2008 under the provisions of the WLP Act, 1972.

b) The ongoing PIL before the Supreme Court of India on the issue of genetically modified (GM) crops – Aruna Rodrigues & others versus Union of India & others [Writ Petition (Civil) No.260 of 2005], cites the government’s legal obligations under the CBD towards biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of bioresources [11]. c) A case was filed by the Kerala Forest Department against the two Japanese nationals in July 2015 relating to forests and wildlife. d) The petitioner NGO urged the Karnataka High Court to direct attention to the widespread practice of biopiracy by national and international corporate bodies. It alleged that the TNAU and UAS, involved in developing Bt brinjal, did not seek permission from the NBA before passing on local varieties of brinjal to a non-Indian seed company. e) The Secretary NBA along with Karnataka SBB and

DC Dharwad filed a criminal complaint in the brinjal matter on 24 November 2012 before the Principal Civil Judge and Judicial Magistrate of First Class, Dharwad (Criminal Complaint No. 579 of 2012). f) A writ petition (Research Foundation for Science, Technology & Ecology & Another versus Union of India & Others [WP (Civil) No. 64 of 2004]) was originally filed in 2004 by an NGO - RFSTE, headed by Dr Vandana Shiva, seeking directions for the Centre to challenge the patenting of wheat by US company Monsanto before the European office.

2. Cases Related to Access and Benefit Sharing

a) Applications Challenging the MP SBB’s Notices on Benefit-Sharing that led to the drafting of the Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) Guidelines (Judgment Issued in February 2015 related to 13 appeals and original applications before the NGT) b) In October 2014 there were media reports that ayurvedic manufacturers from Vidarbha region of Maharashtra are planning to seek clarity from the SBB over serving notices to them under section 7. c) Central India AYUSH Drug Manufacturers & Others versus State of Maharashtra through its Secretary, Department of Revenue & Forests, & Others [Writ Petition 6360 of 2015] d) In 2016 a series of cases emerged in Uttarakhand on the ABS issue [12]. All the cases came from the paper and pulp industry in the state, particularly from those units that were manufacturing different types of paper. They were filed in reaction to being asked by the SBB to pay benefit sharing for the use of bioresources.

e) The NGT Western Zone (WZ) Bench hearing a matter filed by Advocate Asim Sarode (No. 25 of 2015) passed an order for ABS payments by companies engaged in commercial utilization of castor plant and other bio-resources for drugs and cosmetics on 3 November 2015.[13] As Castor oil is extracted from castor plant, which is an agricultural produce, Justice VR Kingaonkar, judicial member and Ajay Deshpande, expert member of the NGT WZ Bench at Pune delivered an order

making Maharashtra SBB mandatory to collect ABS payment under the provisions of BD Act. The NGT instructed Maharashtra SBB to take adequate action against the defaulting parties. The similar case which occurred with Hershey in India as a result Hershey had received many notices by the MP SBB to abide by ABS requirements under the BD Act. Instead of resorting to litigation some companies approach the NBA directly seeking resolution on the issue of ABS as it is being exemplified at its 38th meeting the NBA had to consider the plea of M/s Hindustan Unilever Limited for reduction of benefit sharing [14].

3. Cases Related to Legal Interpretation and Definitional Issues

a) BMC Eklahara sought NGT intervention to declare coal as a bioresource to be able to insist on benefit sharing from coal companies [Application No. 28 of 2013(CZ) and Application No. 17 of 2014(CZ) THC] Judgment dated 16 October 2015).
b) Law firms with experience in advising their corporate clients also point to other key terms in legislation that have inadequate explanations. For example,[15] no clear guidance on the difference 38 Notification S.O. 1352 (E) dated 7 April 2016 39FAQ 17[16] [17]. Beware of the Indian Biological Diversity Act, 2002 Krishna & Saurastri Associates [18] between ‘by products’ and ‘value-added products’ (VAPs) creates confusions as to the applicability of the Act on certain products.

c) Normally traded Commodity issues

Case by an NGO- The PIL filed by ESG challenged the MoEF&CC’s Notification of 26 October 2009 on normally traded commodities (NTCs) issued under Section 40 of the BD Act. The petitioner NGO ‘s query was to the government as to why efforts are not taken to tackle biopiracy of bioresources and why some bioresources have been exempted from the Act. The submission to the court had shocking revelations by the Environment Ministry as it allowed the trade of critically endangered and threatened species in a list of 190 plants and also exempted them from the protection provided under Sections

3 and 7 of the BD Act. Among other demands, the NGO wanted both Section 40 and the NTC Notification to be struck down. The case [19] came up for final hearing before the Principal Bench of the High Court of Karnataka.[20]

4. Cases Raising Concerns on the Implementation of the BD Act

a) Chandra Bhal Singh versus Union of India & Others (O.A. No. 347 of 2016 with hearings underway and last order as on 29 September 2016).[21] b) (Writ Petition No. 15663 of 2014 judgment dated 11 March 2015) R. Muralidharan filed A Writ Petition [22] under Article 226 of the Constitution of India before the High Court of Madras. This entreat sought to declare that the BD Act is unconstitutional, as it violates Article 14 and India’s obligation under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). It also looked for directions to dissociate the Indian Patent Act regulations with the access approvals that need to be taken by the NBA. On 11 March 2015 the two-judge bench in the Madras High Court that all the petitioner persists with seems to be qua the implementational difficulties rather than any worthwhile challenge to the constitutional validity of the Act. The judgment added that there were no satisfactory answers by the petitioner on both these aspects. On the same date this case was dismissed with the finding that “the petition is completely misconceived and accordingly dismissed”.

5. Invoking the BD Act for Ecosystem Conservation

a) M/s Chembra Peak Estates Limited Versus State of Kerala & Others W P (Civil) No. 3022 of 2008 (I). b) The BMC of Keoti Village in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh had filed a case [23] before the NGT’s CZ Bench in 2014 (Original Application No. 06/2014 (CZ)) raising concerns about the impacts being caused due to construction of biodiversity parks, illegal mining and the collection of Tendu Patta by contractors without any charges being levied by the BMC. The judgment makes some strong observations about destruction of biodiversity,

high rate of extension of species and the knowledge about process, practices and biological uses of natural products being sought for free from holders of this knowledge. One solution that the NGT observed is accelerating the preparation of people's biodiversity registers (PBRs) not just in Keoti but also in other villages.

A glimpse of the social movements for biodiversity

A remarkable journey for environmental movements in India began only after 1970. Though Biodiversity conservation was not the specific objective of these movements, inevitably they tried to preserve their ecosystem which in turn was responsible for biodiversity conservation. These movements arose exclusively as responses to local issues in different locations at different intervals. The rationale behind these movements could be varying from control over natural resources to spread of environmental awareness and media along with false developmental policies of the government, socioeconomic reasons, and environmental degradation/ destruction.

Some of the movements which led to conserve nature and in turn caring for biodiversity have been mentioned are : Chipko Andolan, Bishnoi Movement, Save the Bhagirati and Stop Tehri project committee in Uttar Pradesh, Save the Narmada Movement (Narmada Bachao Andolan) in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, the Appiko Movement in the Western Ghats, youth organizations and tribal people in the Gandhamardan Hills whose survival is directly threatened by development of bauxite deposits, the opposition to the Baliapal and Bhogarai test range in Orissa, groups opposing the Kaiga nuclear power plant in Karnataka, the campaign against the Silent Valley project, the Rural Women's Advancement Society, formed to reclaim waste land in Bankura district and the opposition to the Gumti Dam in Tripura local movements are working against deforestation, water-logging, salinization and desertification in the command areas of dams on the Kosi, Gandak and Tungabhadra rivers and in the canal-irrigated areas of Punjab and Haryana. Some other local movements like Pani Chetna, Pani Panchayat and Mukti

Sangharsh champion ecological principles for water use.

A glimpse at the comparative view of the biodiversity legislation in the neighboring countries

The island **Sri Lanka** adorned with rich ecosystem diversity[24] due to its topographic and climatic heterogeneity as well as its coastal influence. Biodiversity conservation policy in Sri Lanka is grounded on the National Wildlife Policy (2000) and the National Forestry Policy (1995) along with the National Environment Policy and the National Ecotourism Policy. The legal framework for biodiversity conservation slumps basically with the Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance (FFPO) of 1937, the Forest Ordinance, National Wilderness Heritage Act, National Environmental Act, Fisheries Ordinance, Coast Conservation Act and several other legislative acts. The FFPO implements two approaches for species conservation: i) establishment and maintenance of a protected area system wherein all biota within the specified areas is protected from human interference, and ii) listing of protected species in seven different schedules indicating taxonomic groups that are protected and not protected. Sri Lanka is a signatory to several international legal instruments/ conventions relating to biodiversity conservation. Sri Lanka is adhered to by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) that controls international co-operation in regulating the growing threat from the trade in endangered biota. The document titled 'Biodiversity Conservation in Sri Lanka: A Framework for Action' formulated by the Ministry of Forestry and Environment in response to the article 6 of the Convention on Biological Diversity wealth and its associated knowledge in Sri Lanka. At the Millennium Summit of the United Nations held in New York in 2000, eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were targeted for achieving during the decade from 2005-2015. Among these, there are at least two viz., achieving universal primary education and ensuring environmental sustainability that could be used effectively in biodiversity conservation in the longer term. The protected areas network and their

surrounding landscape with human habitation in Sri Lanka could be managed in accordance with the MAB concept which intends to fulfill three complementary functions: conservation of biological and cultural diversity, sustainable development and logistic support for education, training, research, and monitoring. To fulfill these functions, the biosphere reserves are organized in three interrelated zones: a legally constituted core area devoted to long-term protection, a buffer zone where activities compatible with the conservation objectives can take place, and an outer transition area where sustainable resource management practices are promoted and developed.

Indo - Burma region

Myanmar

Key legal and policy documents[25] include the Myanmar Forest Policy of 1995 which included protection of wildlife and biodiversity amongst its six priority areas, the National Forest Master Plan 2001 – 2030, the 1990 Marine Fisheries Law, Tourism Law (1990), Forests Law (1992), Protection of Wildlife and Wild Plants and Conservation of Natural Areas Law (1994), and the National Environment Policy Law (1994, followed by a procedural framework in 2003) (Habito and Antonio 2007, U Mint Aung 2007)

China

China's State Council, authorizes the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP, formerly the State Environmental Protection Administration (SEPA)) to coordinate and monitor the management of biodiversity conservation.[26] SEPA was formed in 1989, following a revision of the key Environmental Protection Law, and became a full ministry in 2008. Its responsibilities include formulating laws, regulations, economic, and technical policies, compiling national programs and technical specifications, formulating management regulations and evaluation standards for nature reserves, and supervising the conservation of rare and threatened species. In addition,

MEP is responsible for the implementation and supervision of international environmental conventions, and represented the government in drafting and revising the CBD. However, responsibility for managing the majority of forests and other protected areas lies with the State Forestry Administration. Several other institutions also have biodiversity conservation responsibilities, including the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Construction, the Ministry of Water Resources and the Chinese Academy of Sciences. One source of independent expert advice to the State Council in policy development and planning is the China Council for International Cooperation on Environment and Development, a high-level, nongovernmental consultative forum created in 1992, consisting of senior Chinese officials and experts, together with high-profile international experts.

Key legal documents for China include laws on water pollution (1984), forests (1984), fisheries (1986), air pollution (1987), and water (1988). Subsequent to the passing of the Environmental Protection Law there have been laws passed on other environment protection issues, such as water and soil conservation (1991), energy utilization (1997), and land resource administration (1998). All these laws have been promulgated by the Standing Committee of the People's Congress. In addition, the State Council has passed a key resolution on environment protection (1996) and regulations on environment protection in construction (1988) (Habito and Antonio 2007).

Environmental issues in Hong Kong and Macau are governed by separate administrative and legal frameworks. Hong Kong's primary agency concerned with biodiversity conservation is the Nature Conservation and Country Parks Programme of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. Environmental protection (including impacts and pollution control) is administered by the Environmental Protection Department, which has the critical role of coordination with Mainland Chinese authorities on environmental concerns. Environmental protection in Macau is managed by the

Environmental Protection Bureau, which was established in mid-2009.

Cambodia

The constitution of Cambodia [27] includes some progressive elements, such as recognition of indigenous communal tenure in the Land Law and community forestry in the Forest Law. The two ministries responsible for biodiversity conservation are the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) and the Ministry of Environment (MoE). The General Department for Administration of Nature Conservation and Protection under MoE is responsible for management of the protected areas designated by Royal Decree in 1993, Ramsar sites, and Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve, and for implementation of environmental impact regulations. Two agencies within MAFF are responsible for biodiversity resources throughout the rest of the country. The Fisheries Administration is responsible for fisheries, aquatic reptiles and freshwater mammals (including fisheries lots that overlap with Tonle Sap Biosphere Reserve). The Forestry Administration (FA) is responsible for forest resources and wildlife outside the MoE protected areas network. This includes the management of a parallel network of 11 additional conservation areas.

The two key legal documents are the Forestry Law of 2002, and the 1996 Law on Environmental Protection and Natural Resource Management (a.k.a. the 'Environment Law'). In recent years, these laws have been supplemented by two important new documents. The 2008 Protected Areas Law strengthens the legal mandate for management of MoE protected areas. The 2010 National Forest Plan provides a 20-year guiding strategy for FA and includes a component dedicated to strengthening biodiversity conservation. As part of this, a Wildlife Law is currently being drafted. The two ministries divide between themselves responsibility for the various international conventions and treaties to which Cambodia is party. Unfortunately, collaboration and coordination between the ministries is not as strong as it might be.

Lao PDR

As of late 2011, the institutional arrangements for the management of Lao PDR's forests and protected areas were in a state of flux. In August 2011, the government of Lao PDR created the new Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE), responsible for managing all forest types except production forests. The Department of Forestry (DoF) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry will continue to manage all production forest activities including forest concessions and industrial forest plantations. Previously, the key institution at the central level within DoF was the Division of Forest Resource Conservation, which was created in mid-1999 as part of a wide-ranging restructuring of central government, to improve efficiency and move central staff to assist provinces and districts. Several other government institutions outside of DoF will be moved to the new ministry, including the Water Resources and Environment Agency (WREA) in the Office of the Prime Minister, which is mandated to provide broad inter-sectoral coordination and regulation. Other institutions, such as the Ministry of Defence, the Hydropower Office of the Ministry of Industry and Handicrafts, and the National Tourism Authority, are also integrally involved in or near protected areas (Robichaud et al. 2001).

Key legal documents [28] include the Water Resources Law (1997), the Environmental Protection Law (1999), the Forestry Law (2007), the Wildlife Law (2008) and the Fishery Law (2010). These documents are the bases in formulating a Sustainable Forestry and Rural Development Program, the National Environment Strategy and the National Biodiversity Action Plan (2004). The forestry law was first developed in 1996 and revised in 2007. The revision included stronger measures to control illegal logging and resulted in the creation of a division for forest protection. Lao has a Forest Strategy to 2020, which was developed in 2002 (MAF 2004). This helped refine forest policy and includes targets for species conservation and preserving environmental services.

Thailand

Since 2002, management of the national protected area system has been the responsibility of the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. Other bodies with environment-related remits include the Department of Marine and Coastal Resources, the Royal Forestry Department (both within MoNRE), the Department of Fisheries, and the Department of Agriculture. The other main government institution involved in natural resources management is the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, which is responsible for developing and coordinating national and international environmental plans and policies. It hosts the secretariat of the National Biodiversity Board, functions as a clearing house for the CBD, and supports research and programs relating to access to and sharing of benefits from biodiversity use.

Important legal documents [29] include the 1960 Wild Animals Reservation and Protection Act which led to the establishment of the first protected areas, followed by the National Parks Act of 1961. These two Acts led to the creation of many of Thailand's protected areas. The National Forest Policy of 1985 emphasized environmental protection and committed 25 percent of the forest area to be set aside for protection, with 15 percent for economic use. Commercial logging of natural forest was banned in 1989. Other important laws included the Forest Act of 1941, the Fisheries Act of 1947, the Forest Reserve Act of 1964 and the 1992 Wild Animals Reservation and Protection (which updated and replaced the 1960 Wild Animals Act) and Enhancement and Conservation of National Environmental Quality Acts of 1992.

Vietnam

Significant new laws have been passed recently in Vietnam, chief among them being the 2008 Biodiversity Law. Prior to

this, biodiversity conservation was covered only by the 1991 Law on Forest Protection and Development, the Fisheries Law and the 1994 Law on Environmental Protection (revised in 2005). The Law on Forest Protection and Development has been updated on several occasions most recently in 2004, and it is this current version that is generally referred to. One of the key provisions of the 2004 revised law is that it allows for non-state actors to lease natural forest outside of protected areas. This creates a basis for the establishment of 'conservation concessions', such as have been piloted in Indonesia and elsewhere (Rice 2002). A follow-up decree formalizing the system was put into effect on January 1, 2011. This is the first national legal framework supporting payments for ecosystem services in the hotspot. Another important recent decree in late 2010 provides a new legal framework for the Vietnamese protected area network to reform the management of special-use forests, which allowed for increased decentralization to local authorities (PanNature 2011).[30]

Nepal

Nepal has formulated institutional reform to address issues of biodiversity conservation. Even before the adoption of the Convention, the Forest Nationalization Act 1957 is one of the pioneer policies of its kind. This policy had an intention to protect the public forests from individual misuse and encroachment. Similarly, the Forest Act 1962 is another milestone to protect the forests and keep intact in Nepal. These two forest policies are largely guided by state owned principles while local communities largely excluded in the forest protection and utilization process. Along with the adoption of Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992, the Government of Nepal has been applying a participatory approach to forest protection, giving special attention over the rights and responsibilities of local communities. Forests Act 1993 and Forest Regulation 1995 aim to ensure the basic needs of the local communities and support the principles of sustainable forest management. Around 20,000

community forest user groups are actively engaging in forest protection, management and utilization. These groups have covered more than one third of the forests across the country. Following the 4th amendment of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act (1993), the Government of Nepal has been providing 30-50% of the annual revenue generated from the protected area to the local communities for the sake of biodiversity conservation, community development, livelihood improvement and conservation education and communication focusing to the people and marginalized people, living in and around the protected areas, which are the major outcomes of biodiversity conservation in Nepal.

In 2015, Nepal promulgated the new constitution with the adaptation of the federal system. The biodiversity issues are considered the subject matters at all three levels of the government: local, state and federal. The Department of Forests has the largest network to 74 districts, while the Department of Soil Conservation and Watershed Management has coverage to 61 districts. Similarly, 20 protected areas under the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation are engaging in protected area management and biodiversity conservation activities. Since the adoption of Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992, a number of institutions have been reformed to address the three objectives of CBD. The council has a gene bank to save the species and genetic resources. Agriculture ministry is also working as the focal ministry of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), adopted in 2001, a global response to promote the conservation of plant genetic resources and to protect farmer's rights to access and have fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of their use. The Constitution of Nepal (2015) is giving special attention to forests and environment protection in Nepal [31]. The right to live in a clean environment is secured under fundamental rights (article 30) of the citizens.

Conclusion : Among the environmental laws in India, perhaps no legislation is as underutilized as the Biological

Diversity Act, 2002. A law that provides for local control over biodiversity; recognises and protects traditional knowledge; provides for the creation of biodiversity heritage sites and mandates impact assessments for ecologically destructive projects, is today rarely understood and applied by. Recently, there have been noteworthy developments which may significantly change the country's current biodiversity management regime. The NGT orders, in this case, are a shining example of how the courts can play an important role in bringing back to life a dormant and largely forgotten legislation.

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Understanding the Idea of Equality through the Eyes of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya

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Abstract:

The idea of equality is one of the most prominent political and social values that attracted the people's imagination. People throughout the ages struggled and aspired to some form of equality in their life. Even in modern times equality precipitates people of the deprived sections of the society throughout the globe to raise their voices to have equal treatment and dignity in some form or other. The remarkable political movements in Europe (French Revolution) and North America (Independence movement in USA in 1776 and in the 1830s anti-slavery movement) shattered the very foundation of the established hierarchy and racial discrimination. Women in the western part of Europe and Northern America since the late 18th century started fighting for socio-political equality and civil rights ultimately culminating in achieving the right to vote and other civil rights. In modern India the struggle for equality can be traced in the works and activities of social reformers. Rammohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, newly western educated elite raised their voice of protest against the unjust behaviour of the established hierarchy of the society. In the name of tradition and religion, people of lower strata and the women folk were mistreated and discriminated against. Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, the doyen of Bengali literature of the 19th century, is one of the protest voices in the 19th century against

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the prevalent inequality. This article wants to explore the idea of equality and inequality of Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya.

Key words: Equality, social reform, colonial rule, economic exploitation, social hierarchy, landed aristocracy, peasants of Bengal.

Introduction:

19th century in Indian history is the turbulent period; it generates hopes and despair, promise and frustration both in the public and private sphere. The British colonial domination left an indelible impression in the public psyche. It's unique in the sense that no other foreign rule made such comprehensive onslaught in the minds of Indians. Not only the British defeated Indians militarily, it put a civilizational challenge. Our culture, education, knowledge system, literature, life style were treated as uncivilized and their motto to reverse it. The white man's burden (Kipling, 1899) theory gave the requisite legitimacy about their activities in colonies; armed with both soft¹ and hardpower² the colonial master started their civilizing mission; introduction of modern education, health and medical facilities, transport and communication, press, administrative system, legal system and judiciary generated a kind of respect among the native people. Despite criticism, the native Indians accepted their ability; even a section of Indian intelligentsia advocated to imitate them.

Bankim had a future project while introducing the idea of equality-inequality. The question of reconstruction of the dilapidated and sick society haunted him so much that he tried to find the reasons behind such unfortunate fate of India. His motherland used to be inflicted and looted by the foreigners despite being one of the oldest civilizations. Influenced by the ideas of **William Edward Hartpole Lecky**

(History of Rationalism, 1865) Bankim started advocating the introduction of rationalism in India. It is his sheer faith in the power of rationality that made him structure his entire literary production. His long essay- Samya (Equality)- is the product of his questioning the discriminatory and inequitable

society of his time.

The tacit support of the Indians towards the regenerative activities of their colonial masters made their task easier. Introduction of modern western educational system created a radical repercussion among the newly educated Indians. Establishment of English medium schools, colleges, and universities to impart modern science, technology and liberal arts and literature paved the way for rethinking the inhuman medieval socio-religious practices. The Derozians or the Young Bengalees threw a strong challenge towards the archaic social customs and practices; strong criticisms against the social evils like polygamy, child marriages, poor conditions of women, social stratification, inhuman treatment of the women folk in the family, gender inequality implied the urge from within to re-organize the society.

Life and works of Bankim

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, the Emperor of Literature (Sahitya Samrat), one of the foremost Bengali intellectuals in 19th century Bengal. Born in highly orthodox Bengali Brahmin family in 1838 in Naihati, in the district of North 24 Paraganas of West Bengal, the doyen of Bengali literature received his education in modern curriculum. "He was familiar with western philosophy and science and keenly spoke for the need of western education even in the Indian context. Some of the thinkers who influenced him include John Stuart Mill, Mathew Arnold, Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer (Debroy, 2023)". Although the scholars like Prof. Tapan Raychaudhury (Chaudhury, 2002) believed rightly that Bankim's intellectual world was also shaped by his maternal uncles who were orthodox Hindu Brahmins known for Sanskrit Pandits throughout South Bengal, but he supported the introduction of modern education in India. One of the first graduates from Calcutta University Bankim received law education from Presidency college. "His initial school years were spent at the local English school of Midnapore in West Bengal, followed by junior and senior years at the Hooghly College near Kanthalpara. Simultaneously, he took extensive lessons in Sanskrit literature

and acquired proficiency not only in the language but also the various systems of Hindu philosophy. The prestigious Presidency College in Calcutta was where he was noted for his brilliance in the BA examinations (he also secured a degree in law 11 years later) (Debroy, 2023)”

After his graduation he was offered administrative post under the British colonial government. “From 1858, until his retirement in 1891, he served as a deputy magistrate in the Indian Civil Service” (Britannica, 2023) Soon after his joining the post his wife died, the sad incident left an indelible impact upon his psyche for a fairly long time. As per the demand of the job, he had to stay and work in several parts of Bengal and got the opportunity to come into contact with the people of different localities. A keen observer of the social world and Indian history, Bankim started searching the answer of India’s frequent subjugation by the foreigners. It was neither the absence of military prowess nor martial bravery that made India subjugated; rather it was the culture (Chatterjee P. , Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse, 1993) or the construction of spiritual world of the Indians that turned their attention from the material prosperity and this-worldly sensual pleasures; their central focus shifted to spiritual emancipation or salvation. Influenced by the positivist and utilitarian philosophy of Comte and Bentham and Mill, Bankim attempted to re-mould the public psyche and rebuild the society. As a public intellectual his objective to bring changes in the public perception of the social world so as to refashion the Indian society. Scholars are of the opinion that Bankim Indians to be eligible first to enjoy the fruits of independence; to him it’s not the other way round.

Bankim could not ignore the demand of the modern age; the promise of modernity – equality and individual liberty deeply moved him and the flakes of it can be found in his writings. Western liberal values had tremendous attraction among the intellectuals in the colonies also. The western educated intelligentsia aspired to plant the liberal values in their society too. Bankim is no exception. The Bengali Hindu society was suffering from numerous diseases – discrimination against men and women,

abject poverty especially among the peasant community, lack of strong will and integrity among the educated youths in addition to polygamy, child marriage, superstitions and social practices (lokachar).

Bankim, an ardent follower of positivist and liberal utilitarian philosophy, prescribed equality as important medicine for social ills. In his long essay *Samya (Equality)*, he dealt with the socio-economic inequality in rural Bengal. *Samya (Equality)* is a long essay published in 1879 in his monthly magazine- *Banga Darshan*. It is that kind of literary piece which reflects his liberal approach. “.. *Samya* in particular because it is among the best illustrations of Bankimchandra as a modern liberal thinker”(Debroy, 2023).

Equality is one of the prime movers and shakers of mankind. Equality is natural temptation among the deprived although naturally inequalities abound around us. Inequality in many forms and respects – physical, intellectual, genetic, abilities and dispositions- is regarded as natural and does not invite any protest or criticism. “The range of inequalities and disparities that humanity displays are indeed very wide and this is an empirical fact”(Acharya, 2010). Amidst these natural inequalities, we believe in essential equality and equal worth especially when inequality arises out artificially. When society is artificially stratified, weaker sections are deprived of resources and human dignity, large discrimination pervades into the social life, equality appears to be very important. “Yet, as humans, we believe, and rightly so, that we are essentially equal and possess equal worth especially when it comes to realizing this ideal in social economic and, political structures of our society(Acharya, 2010)”. Apart from the biological or anatomical similarities (birth, death, reproduction, linguistic expression, living with others etc), moral capacities (feeling pain, affection for others, cooperation, compassion, aspiration for better life) are universally applicable to all human beings(O, 1997). Bankim was well aware about the natural inequality. Here he aptly reminds us “Differences are a basic principle of the world. There is inequality in everything. There are real differences between people. Real differences are differences created by rules of nature. (Chattapadhyay, 2012)”.

But the author was more concerned with man-made artificial socially constructed inequality. He was deeply disturbed by the constructed-inequality in the society. There are numerous artificial inequalities in the society of which four kinds of discrimination - caste, economic, gender and racial- disturbs him.

Brahmins belong to the upper echelon of the society though economically they may be poor. Sudras or the lowest segment of Hindu society are deprived of privileges enjoyed by the Brahmins. "The difference between brahmins and Shudras is an artificial one. If you kill a brahmin, that is a serious crime. But if you kill a shudra, that is a light offence. Such norms are against the rules of nature. Why should one be able to freely kill a Shudra and not a Brahmin? Why should the Shudra always give and the Brahmin receive? Shouldn't the principle instead hold that the one who has the capacity to give, should be the giver? And the one who needs should be the recipient." (Chattapadhyay, 2012)

According to Bankim, prefers urge for wealth accumulation for prosperity of a society to the aspiration for knowledge. "...the original source of civilization is accumulation of wealth. If I state that the love of wealth is a common cause of development of civilization, that will not be an exaggeration" (Chattapadhyay, 2012). He attests the belief that the desire wealth accumulation is considered as lowly and so unwanted. He continues "In a society, the love of wealth does not decline simply because the national wealth created is enough to satisfy the survival needs of everyone in the society. There is perpetual creation of newer and newer objects of desire. That which was earlier a luxury, later assumes the characteristics of a necessity. Once that is attained, other commodities become necessities. Desire leads to effort, effort leads to success. Therefore, happiness and welfare begin to increase. Further, an increase in the desire for happiness and welfare is an essential prerequisite for the advancement of civilization. Once the desire for physical happiness is satisfied, the desire for knowledge and beauty, together with love for poetry and literature and other forms of education, begin to emerge." (Chattapadhyay, 2012)

At the same time where people easily get food and lives in

warm climate, they need not work hard and gradually become lethargic and idle."...sense of satisfaction occurred naturally in India. Due to the heat, it is difficult to sustain continuous physical effort in this country. As a result, reluctance to labour becomes a natural habit (Chattapadhyay, 2012)". Civilizational prosperity will remain out of reach in those societies. Added to this are the self-content and quest for spiritual knowledge and that made Indians turn their faces from hard-work. "When the desire for happiness is weak, the effort of labouring is also weak. There is no wish to excel and correspondingly, no such attempts are made. In addition, in a country where food is available in plenty, there is no incentive to curb the increase in population. The 'bliss' that poets perpetually praise, is extremely harmful for advancement of society. This poetic desire is poison to social life. (Chattapadhyay, 2012)". He laments that Indians face this unfortunate state of nature.

The self-content and indifferent to hard-labour accelerate poverty and superstitions.

Bankim attracts our attention towards the plight of the debt-ridden hardworking poor peasants of Bengal. He narrates the story of Paran Mandal – fictitious name of a poor peasant- an illiterate, hapless, , docile who endures physical and mental torture of the landlords and their officials. Here Bankim's take on "The zamindar babu lives in a palace that has seven and a half storeys. Through mild light that is reflected from coloured glasspanes, he gazes upon the beauty of diamonds that adorn the fair skins of his wife and daughter. At which time, Paran Mandal and his sons are in the fields, in the blistering sun of the high noon. Their heads are uncovered and so are their feet. The mud of the fields covers them all the way up to the knees. Through this mud, with a blunt plough and two skeleton-thin bulls, they are attempting to plough the fields so that the zamindar may have his pleasures. It is the month of Bhadra and a strong sun is in the sky. To satisfy the thirst that burns their hearts, they drink muddy water from the fields. They are hungry. But this is not the time to go home and eat; this is the time to plough the field. In the evening they will return home and eat large red grains of rice mixed with salt and chillies from broken utensils.

It will leave their stomachs half-empty. They will then sleep on torn mats or on the ground, at one end of the cowshed. Mosquitoes do not bite them. The next morning, when they are again on their way to plough a field full of mud, the zamindar or the moneylender will catch them, to recover money owed. They will not be able to work that day. Otherwise, the zamindar or the moneylender will seize the land and there will be no work for the entire year” (Chattopadhyay, 2012).

The author exposes their extractive nature (in different occasions and on different pretexts the landlords and their officials extract money from the peasants); the pathetic part of the story is the connivance of the administrative and judicial officials to whom the helpless peasants like Paran Mondal approach for justice but the intriguing nature of the administrative and landlord’s officials and the innocence and lack of knowledge of the poor peasants in juridical niceties keep them far away from the justice and makes them surrender before them. So perpetuates the plight of poor peasants- the rice-feeders of Bengal.

Bankim does not seem to be radical in prescribing the way-out of the plight of the peasants. Rather he depends on the goodwill of the zamindars. He holds that few zamindars are exploitative and indulge in wrong-doing. “..... not all zamindars are oppressors. Day by day, the number of oppressive zamindars is declining. The educated landlords who live in Kolkata are not oppressors. The oppression that occurs in their names occurs without their knowledge, or sanction..... There are also educated zamindars in rural areas, the same holds true for them. The really big zamindars do not oppress as much – in many big households, there is virtually no oppression.” Then who are the perpetrators? The Nayebs and Gomosts (Cashiers and clerks) and petty landlords. “The oppression that occurs in their names occurs without their knowledge, or sanction. The nayebs and the gomastas indulge in this.Oppression is prevalent among smaller zamindars.....but whose estates do not even bring twelve hundred rupees (very meagre amount of revenues to maintain their status and lifestyles) in twelve months. They are therefore inclined to garner some extra money through beating and oppression.”

(Chattopadhyay, 2012). Bankim appeals to the conscience of the landlords and their association (British India Association) to take corrective measures so that the plight of the poor peasants and the subjects of the zamindars come to an end. Even he prescribes the ostracization of those landlords who are hand and glove in extractive activities and tarnishes the images of the zamindars.

Bankim turns his attention to the discrimination and unequal conditions of the women in Bengal. Of many kinds of inequalities between men and women, Bankim is seen to be concerned with the issues of women education, freedom of movement, polygamy, widow re-marriage and property inheritance. A strong advocate of universal education for all, Bankim deplors the education system and the prevalent belief system of the Bengali society where women not allowed to get education like their male counterparts save basic elementary knowledge and households calculations. He prescribes that women should get the modern education for the betterment of the society. “But most educated Indians will respond that it is desirable so that women pick up righteous ways and become knowledgeable, and so that their intelligence is sharpened”(Chattopadhyay, 2012). Equal opportunity for education should be extended to all irrespective of gender. “Therefore, one has to acknowledge that in the matter of access to education, men and women should have equal rights” (Chattopadhyay, 2012).

The author supports the free movement of the women in public domain like her counterparts. “Among the various kinds of oppression performed by men, among the various disparities between men and women, the third one we listed is the practice of confining women within the four walls of the house like caged wild animals”(Chattopadhyay, 2012). To him confining the women in house and preventing them going outside is like putting them in cage like animals and this practice is inhuman and medieval. He deplors “What an insult! What shame! And there is no insult when your wife and your daughter are imprisoned like animals in cages? No shame?” Bankim wants the women-folk enjoy the fruits of development and if they are prevented forcefully they “ will be deprived of most of the world’s happiness, pleasures, education,

fun and everything that is good on this earth” (Chattapadhyay, 2012) and that will go against the basic principles of equality.

Bankim ratifies the re-marriage of widows on technical grounds. As human being every one has the right to marry or remarry. “But it is desirable that widows should have the right to remarry, if they should so wish”(Chattapadhyay, 2012). He is seen to appreciate those widows who voluntarily desisting the temptation of re-marriage because of true-love and devotion to their husbands. Yet he acknowledges the right to re-marry like her male counterparts. In regard to the polygamy, he prescribes that the male should marry once. “Everyone will argue that like women, men should also have the right to a single marriage.” (Chattapadhyay, 2012). In case of property inheritance, the daughters would be allowed to enjoy the right to inherit property like her brothers.

Bankim introduces the concept of equality for the larger project of re-building the rotten society of 19th century Bengal. He clearly understands that if the society is not repaired or reformed, the aspiration to become a powerful nation or construction of national identity would be a futile attempt. The blue-print of the future society can be seen in his attempt to establish equality in the society. Deeply moved by Rosseau and Mill, he advises his countrymen to apply the liberal ethos in their life-styles, behaviour and activities so that an equity-based society can be erected. But radicalism in his approach is somehow missing whether the end of plight of the poor peasants or the remarriages of widows. It may be due to his upbringing in the traditional environments or he fears that too much radical approach would end up in chaos. For him, the best way for the Indians to look into their own society, find out the ills and challenges and a public discussion and morality be created to solve them.

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Democracy and Its Problems: A Philosophical Remedy

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Abstract

Democracy was defined by Abraham Lincoln as the government of the people, by the people, for the people. In a democracy it is the people that rule. Generally, the representatives of the people are chosen by adult franchise and the governmental functions are performed by these representatives. The ideals of democracy are liberty, equality and fraternity. Democracy establishes political, economic and social equality. In it, every individual has the right to express his thoughts, make associations and indulge in all constitutionally permissible activities. The ultimate objective of democracy is not only a successful government but the establishment of an ideal state in which there is the maximum scope for the development of fraternity. Democracy aims at the evolution of conditions which allow for the maximum possible and the best development of the human personality.

1. What is Democracy and Its Classifications

The present world is the most political and governmental system of democracies. Democracy is the party of common people's rights. As a result, citizens are more receptive to democratic systems of government. However, there are differences in the nature of this democracy in the country. However, the main objective of this system of government is the spontaneous participation of the people. Below we will discuss about what is democracy and its various facts.

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Democracy, literally, rule by the people. The term is derived from the Greek *dēmokratia*, which was coined from *dēmos* (“people”) and *kratos* (“rule”) in the middle of the 5th century BCE to denote the political system then existing in some Greek city-states, notably Athens, a city-state in Greece. Aristotle is called the father of democracy. However, the father of modern democracy is John Locke.

Democracy is a system of government where decisions are made directly or indirectly by the people to formulate laws, leadership, policies and state management, foreign policy etc. A democracy is a society in which the citizens are sovereign and control the government. Democracy is a system of government in which citizens exercise their power directly and have the right to elect government representatives.

The main types of democracy are:

- Direct democracy
- Representative democracy
- Presidential democracy
- Parliamentary democracy
- Authoritarian democracy
- Participatory democracy
- Islamic democracy

2. Problems of Democracy

While on the one hand, democracy has been praised, on the other hand, it has also been ridiculed and criticized. Oscar Wilde has gone so far as to say that democracy means no more than the beating with sticks of the people, by the people, for the people.

This criticism of democracy, however, is not logical nor, supported by facts. And yet there can be no denying the fact that the institution of democracy is beset with some fundamental difficulties. Generally speaking, these difficulties may be classified as follows:

(i) Difficulties concerning elections: The following are the difficulties concerning elections that beset a democratic institution or government:

1. Political groupism: In a country governed in the democratic pattern, there is a multiplicity of political parties all of which constantly indulge in propaganda to further their respective political interests and sometime do not care even if the public stands to lose in storms of violence and bloodshed. In the face of political game no consideration of the propriety of the means employed worries the parties and recourse is had to the worst means if they further the interests of the party.

2. Objectives of election forgotten: In fact, in democratic countries the various contestants fight elections only to gain power and are blissfully unaware of the actual objectives of such elections. Neither the contestants nor the electing public pay any heed to the aims and objectives that are at the root of the elections. On the one hand, the aim of democracy is the establishment of equality and fraternity. But on the other, in the days of elections one sees preponderance of mutual hatred, competition and jealousy. Votes are solicited in the name of caste and group relationships, and are also cast on these bases by the public. And sometimes votes are even bought by the force of money. Sometimes people are bribed out of their political conviction by offers of subsequent facilities in return for the votes. In this way, the interests of the nation are thrown to the winds while limited and narrow interests of political power and economic liberty rule the roost. Communal tensions are aroused and class struggles are made even more bitter.

3. Evil effects of propaganda: In the democratic pattern propaganda is indulged in to give currency to opinions. And propaganda is the best means of educating the public but when at the time of elections, the very objectives of the elections are forgotten then the propaganda at that time is hardly calculated to educate the people and is more likely to deceive and mislead them. In these campaigns of propaganda all kinds of falsehood are resorted to in order to turn public opinion in their own favour. This has the cumulative effect of electing those people who are completely inefficient and corrupt while it also deprives the deserving and efficient person of success. At the time of election, the propaganda is calculated to rouse the passions and

prejudices of the people rather than to educate the people and to teach them.

4. Misuse of monetary power: As has been pointed out earlier, often votes are bought and democracy is reduced to being a puppet in the hands of the capitalists who exploit the public to gain their own interests.

5. More rejection than election: In fact, as H. G. Wells has pointed out, one finds more rejection than election in democracy. What happens is that the voter instead of selecting turns more to the rejection of candidates. He does not turn to the consideration of the efficient and able candidates but thinks in terms of bad qualities, hatred and possibilities of loss because of the election of a particular candidate. In this way, he proceeds from one to the other rejecting each one in turn and ultimately selects the one against whom he can find nothing or from whom he can hope to benefit in some way or the other. In this manner, then, there is more rejection than election in an electoral campaign in a democracy.

(ii) Difficulties concerning representation: In addition to the above difficulties of election there are some difficulties of representation that characterize a democracy. In fact, the main difficulty among them is the absence of good and proper representation. Now-a-days the states are quite big entities and among a people running into a few millions it is not possible to have direct election. It is for this reason that indirect election is resorted to. And even in this there is the difficulty of it being doubtful as to the extent to which a particular individual may represent the public that has elected him for this very purpose. Evidently, in the society some people become the rulers while the rest are only the ruled. Then how can it be called the government of the people? Sometimes it also happens that the leader of the powerful group takes over the administration. In this way, in its practical form democracy does not appear to be very different from aristocracy. It is a matter that needs thought. After all, how can the people be represented at all adequately by an individual who is a leader coming from a higher social strata and who only rarely comes into direct

contact with the public except for a short time during the days of elections? And even if they do attend to the problems of their electors, it is only to provide security for opinions and the vested interests.

3. Solution of the Problems of Democracy

To some extent, the problems of democracy can be solved. The difficulties of efficient representation can be removed by dividing the areas of election on the basis of efficiency. The difficulties of election can be eliminated by political education. The time taken in discussion of problems by the parliament can be materially reduced if committees constituted of expert persons are formed for the solution of various problems. The public itself can prevent undesirable changes in the established leadership. Many of the psychological defects can be removed by developing the national character and the sense of co-operation. Roughly speaking, the following conditions are essential for a successful democracy.

1. High level of general education: If a democracy is to be a success, a high level of general education is very essential. The citizens cannot make a success of democracy as long as they do not introduce a high conception of public life. This education can be imparted in two ways - mass education and political education. In mass education what is of particular importance is newspaper in addition to speeches and the freedom of forming associations. The leaders of mass education are independent, knowledgeable and impartial newspapers. It is necessary to educate the citizens in connection with the elements of communal life at an early age. The practical education concerning democracy is imparted to the citizen when he takes part in democratic institutions, panchayats, municipalities and the elections of the union and state legislatures.

2. Equality: Social, political and economic equality is absolutely necessary if democracy is to be a success. As a general rule, no individual or class of individuals should possess special privileges over and above those available to the people in general. But equality does not imply that there should be no

distinction on the basis of skill and qualities or on any other basis. Actually, the real implication of equality is the equality of opportunity. The differences between the individuals cannot be eradicated in the name of equality. Haldane is only too correct in his statement that you cannot make men equal because Nature is too powerful. One woman is born beautiful while another is born ugly and this creates a major difference. One man comes into this world possessing large resources of grey matter while another is completely devoid of them. One individual enjoys good health while another suffers from poor health. In a democracy some particular classes can be endowed with special prerogatives and privileges in order to rid them of their backwardness and bring them up to the level of the rest of the population. But these measures should continue to be exceptions and should not be permitted to become the rule. In this way, then, all the posts in the government should be open to all who have the appropriate ability and skill. All adults should have the right to vote in a democracy so that adult franchise is established. In the economic sphere each individual should be employed and the employment should bestow on the individual a sufficient income by virtue of which he may live a superior and comfortable life. Conditions of unemployment, poverty, famine and unhealthy conditions of life are not in any way conducive to democracy. On the contrary, they are destructive of democracy.

3. Liberty: Liberty is a fundamental condition of democracy. J. s. Mill considers the liberty of the individual to be the most important. But liberty does not imply the right of the individual to behave in any manner that he pleases. Liberty implies self control and not irresponsibility. Mill who lays so much emphasis upon the individual's liberty, advises the control of the individual in all cases where the effect is to have repercussions in society and influence other individuals. Liberty means that the individual has the opportunity to develop himself to the fullest and he is not obstructed in any way from realizing his self.

4. Fraternity: In order that democracy may be a success and should also be rid of its psychological difficulties it is

necessary that the ideal of democracy and fraternity should be achieved. The real problem is the establishment of a democratic society and not a democratic government, the latter being only a means to the establishment or achievement of the former. The main characteristic of a democratic society is fraternity and co-operation is the main basis of the activity of individuals belonging to a democratic society. Fraternity should be encouraged in all spheres in order to hasten the establishment of a democratic society.

From the foregoing description of the nature, problems and the means of achieving democracy it is evident that in its progress is comparatively slow but ultimately the most beneficial.

4. Importance of Education in Democracy

The importance of education for a democratic state is fairly evident from the foregoing account. The following points can be stressed in this connection:

1. Knowledge of rights and duties: If democracy is to be a success, it is essential that every citizen should be aware of his rights and duties because only then can he take active and productive part in the affairs of the state. This knowledge of rights and duties can be obtained only through education. Education socializes the individual so that he develops consciousness of duty.

2. Development of humane qualities: If the ideal of brotherhood is to be achieved by a democratic state, it is necessary for it to develop humane qualities in its members. Kant's moral concepts, quoted earlier, throw important light on this. Only through education can such qualities as a high moral character, sociability, benevolence, patience, pity, sympathy and brotherhood, etc, be developed in the individual.

3. Faith in democratic ideals: In order to make democracy a success, it is essential that its citizens must have faith in the democratic ideals. And this can be brought about only when they are adequately educated because it is only the educated person who realizes that the sole purpose of life is not the satisfaction of gross physical desires. The ideals of freedom,

liberty, brotherhood are more valuable and necessary. No one but the educated individual can understand the circumstances and needs of another person before passing judgment on him. Only such a person can accept the ideal of equality after recognizing human values as being the end to be achieved.

4. Fulfilment of political duties: In a democracy the government is elected by the people, and hence the responsibility for electing a good government devolves upon them. And, if the people are unable to understand their political responsibilities, it is foolish to hope for a democratic government. This ability to recognize where one's duty lies can come only through education. Educated people can properly assess the qualities and shortcomings of the various individuals who are fighting the elections, and of the various political parties and the plans and policies which they profess. In India, the absence of education is a big handicap in creating a truly democratic state because during elections the ignorant people are persuaded to vote for the wrong person, with the result that the governance of the country has failed time and again. Corruption is rampant. The Mudaliar Report points out that if democracy is anything more than voting blindly, then every individual must accept the task of independently thinking about all social, political and economic problems before deciding upon the party he wished to support. But this is possible only when the entire electorate is educated to think independently.

5. Protection and transmission of culture: In any state, ideals can be achieved only when change is accompanied by a parallel continuity, and this continuity with the past is maintained only through culture, the social heritage, which is passed on to the new generation through the medium of education. Hence, education is also required for transmitting culture to future generations and for protecting it.

6. Preventing exploitation: The ideals of democracy are opposed to exploitation of every kind, but if political, social and economic exploitation is to be eliminated from society, it is essential to have universal and compulsory education. In its absence, the rich and powerful people will never give up their

advantage and habit, while the poor will never become sufficiently conscious of their rights or their ability to organize together and counter this exploitation. Educated people in a country are aware of their rights and They have the intelligence and training to fight exploitation or violation of their rights. Hence, education is the only real foundation on which democracy can be based.

All these important aspects of democratic education also hold true in India. India is not merely a modern democratic state but a country which is traditionally inclined towards democracy. A democratic constitution was adopted after independence. In 1938 Jawaharlal Nehru had said, "The Indian National Congress stands for independence and a democratic state." This objective was achieved after independence with the establishment of a democratic state. The Indian Constitution seeks to establish a popular government in the country on the basis of democratic principles outlined earlier. For this every citizen must participate in the administration, through his right to vote and to be elected. Every individual is guaranteed and given equal status and opportunity, because no one is discriminated against on the basis of religion, race, caste, community, sex, or on any other grounds. The government is responsible to the people and its elected representatives.

In order to achieve this objective of democracy, education is as necessary in India as anywhere else, a truth which the Indian people have been quick to realize. In the words of Dr. F.W. Thames, "Education is no exotic in India. There has been no country where the love of learning had so early an origin or has exercised so lasting and powerful an influence. From the simple poet of the vedic age to the Bengali philosopher of the present day there has been an uninterrupted succession of teachers and scholars." Not only did the Indian Constitution accept the ideals of democracy, it considered education the prime responsibility of the state. In Article 45 of the Constitution, it has been stated that every state must arrange for the provision of free and compulsory education to all children up to the age of 14, within ten years of the date of inception of the Constitution. After the achievement of independence, a new

phase began in the history of education. Articles 29 und 30 of the Constitution give fundamental rights to every individual in connection with education and cultural development. According to Article 29, every Indian national living in any part of India will have the right to maintain his own specific language, script and his culture. No person can be refused right of admission to any educational institution. established by the state. by reason of religion, race, caste, language or any other similar consideration. According to Article 30, every minority community will have the right to establish and maintain educational institutions of its own choice, irrespective of whether the minority is a linguistic or religious one. The state will also not refuse aid to any such institution created by a religious of linguistic minority. Articles 45 and 46 determine the policy for education as part and parcel of the directive principles. According to Article 45, the state will make every effort to provide free and compulsory education, within ten years, to every child below the age of 14. According to Article 46, the state will pay special attention to the educational and economic interests of all backward classes, especially the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. It also entrusts the state with the duty of protecting such tribes from social injustice and exploitation of every kind. The Indian Constitution laid the foundation for a federal government in which the functions of the state and central governments are distinctly defined. Both the central and state governments have some duties with respect to education.

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Availability of Indian E-Resources Pertaining to DOAJ During 2020

PULOMA BISHU*

ABSTRACT

The dissemination of knowledge in electronic form boasts up the academicians. So, scholars and researchers are willing to share their work with vast audiences for valuing recognition. India's open access publishing of journals has gained wider acceptance so, the study was conducted to explore India's present status in indexing its journals in an online Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). For this reason, a list of 287 active open access journals published in India from DOAJ website was analysed. It was found that India occupies 15th position among the top 20 countries transcending Argentina, Germany, Netherlands, etc. and India's role is progressive relating to other developing countries. Most of the journals indexed in DOAJ are in English and CC BY-NC-SA is normally followed for Indian journals. India's potentiality is found mainly in the field of medical sciences. The Maximum growth of journals was noticed during 2017 and Wolters Kluwer Medknow Publications is one of the oldest and most popular journals.

Keywords: Open access; DOAJ; India; Subjects; Licensing attribute; Language; Peer review; APC charges; Publishers' keywords.

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INTRODUCTION

India being a treasurer of knowledge preserves its intellectual output in the form of theses, dissertations, research papers, conference papers, seminar papers, etc. Rampant growth of scholarly articles sometimes becomes inaccessible due to a lack of cognizance of researchers and academicians. Further, the cost of publishing an article has also encumbrance the utmost accessibility. But due to advancements in technology and revamping attitudes towards open access, information is not constrained within a particular region. This does not mean that the researchers are being impinged upon to disclose their work in open access. There lies the importance of open access where it derives its worthiness. Open access is such a set of principles that seek to grant free and open online access to research outputs without any accessing barriers. The term, 'open access' itself was first formulated in three public statements in the 2000s: the Budapest Open Access Initiative in February 2002, the Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing in June 2003, and the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities in October 2003. Open access got a pace after the Budapest Open Access Initiative in 2002. Budapest Open Access Initiative, defines open access as "free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself." Nowadays, researchers are now concentrating on depositing their works in open access journals, institutional repositories, etc. Academicians' knowledge has gained intensity due to the wider accessibility of information through various channels.

DOAJ is a community curated online directory of open access journals that aim to provide quality, peer-reviewed, open access materials. The initiative to start the project, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) was taken in 2002 at the first Nordic

Conference on Scholarly Communication. Finally, DOAJ was launched in 2003 at Lund University, Sweden with 300 open (<http://www.doaj.org>) access journals. DOAJ is a not-for-profit organization managed by Infrastructure Services for Open Access C.I.C (Community Interest Company) based in the United Kingdom.

DOAJ is a comprehensive list of open access resources many researchers have attempted to give a translucent picture from various fields. For example, Lone, Rather & Shah made a case study of India's contribution to open access literature based on DOAJ and openDOAR. India occupied 7th rank in DOAJ and Indian journals are mainly published by Medknow Publications, Indian Academy of Sciences, and Kamla Raj Enterprises. Among the top 10 countries, India's position is 10th in openDOAR (Loan, Rather & Shah, 2008). Rath investigated 60 open access Social Science journals indexed in DOAJ by India. He also traced that most of the journals grew between 2009 and 2014 and bear charges for publishing (Rath, 2015).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several studies have been conducted to find out the benefit, growth, and development of open access movement. Though the situation has improved in the past years, there has been a constant challenge faced by researchers. As the ever-growing mountain of information becomes available, academicians have perceived the credibility of online information. The famous proverb says, 'it takes years to build up trust and only seconds to destroy it.' This implies since the development of DOAJ in 2003 and till date researchers and users are dependent on it and trust relies to some extent on time or longevity which gradually becomes stable in nature. Information seeking activities on the Internet enhances the extent of individuals' institutional trust. Research and development organizations and higher educational institutions in India are engaged in expertise research, supported by industries, expertise, and funding agencies. In India, institutions like the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore; Indian Institute

of Management, Kozhikode; Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi; Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore; National Institute of Technology, Rourkela; INFLIBNET, Ahmedabad were some institutes that have established open access Institutional Repositories (IRs) that provides research outputs. The open access journals in India are mainly initiated by journal publishers like the Indian Academy of Sciences, Indian National Science Academy, Indian Medlars Centers of National Informatics Centre, Medknow Publications, indianjournals.com, Kamla Raj Enterprises as stated by Ghosh & Das (Ghosh & Das, 2006). Arunachalam discussed the two ways of achieving open access i.e., gold OA and green OA. He also deliberately focused on the issues of more awareness of open access required in India (Arunachalam, 2008). Laakso et al. gave a comprehensive idea of the historical development of OA journals published in DOAJ from 1993 to 2009 (Laakso et al., 2011). Stenson introduced the services of DOAJ and DOAB. She also addressed the differences between OA journal publishing and OA monograph publishing. She highlighted the contribution of these services to scholarly publishing (Stenson, 2012). Roy, Biswas, & Mukhopadhyay targeted the open access initiatives and delineated some current open access channels and the areas where India has been able to create vital progress (Roy, Biswas, & Mukhopadhyay, 2012). Tamizhchelvan & Dhanavandan analysed India's contribution to DOAJ which was 595, occupying 4th position around the globe. Most of the journals are published in English and the journals bear an article processing charge. About 70 journals are published in the field of computer science. Medknow publications contribute 77 which is the maximum from 595 journals (Tamizhchelvan & Dhanavandan, 2013). Nashipudi & Ravi pointed out that by 2013, India's dynamic growth in multiple subjects in producing open access publishing (Nashipudi & Ravi, 2015). Mondal explored in his study how the SAARC countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan are contributing to DOAJ, whereas Afghanistan, and Maldives with zero contributions, and India is the highest contributor with 77.12% (Mondal, 2016). Sahoo, Mohanty & Sahoo mentioned

India's contribution to DOAJ. India generated a list of 318 open access journals indexed in DOAJ where India occupied the 9th position. On the other hand, some researchers presented their papers addressing the role of India underlying some specific subject area coverage (Sahoo, Mohanty & Sahoo, 2017). In this line, Lihitkar & Lihitkar studied 100 open access journals in Library and Information Science based on some parameters. They found out that a maximum number of LIS journals was contributed during 2005 and 2006 with 11 each. The United States contributed the maximum amount i.e., 30 (Lihitkar & Lihitkar, 2013). Mondal assessed there are 60 online journals freely accessible in the field of Computer Science in DOAJ. India holds 4th rank with 463 contributions and the maximum contribution comes from Health Sciences which is 214 (Mondal, 2014). Murli mined 488 open access journals in Agriculture from the DOAJ website with various interdisciplinary subjects. He investigated, Indonesia topped the list and De Gruyter Open is the most prolific publisher in the agricultural field. He also gave a detailed analysis of the top 25 journals, the top 25 abstracting and indexing databases, licenses adopted, formats, and article processing charges (Murli, 2018). Loan et al. conducted a study to identify the publishing trends of the open access religious journals available in DOAJ. Among the 27 countries that have contributed to DOAJ, the highest contribution is from Indonesia with 17.65% and most of the journals belong to Islam (Loan et al., 2018). Chirico entails about the efficacy of the Journal of Health and Social Sciences (JHSS). JHSS is a reputed journal that got its pace during 2016-2018 and publishes high-quality manuscripts. This journal is indexed in DOAJ (Chirico, 2019). Mehraj, Rehman & Ganaie analysed 168 open access journals from DOAJ in the field of Computer science. Springer Open is the leading publisher and most journals have no APC charges. Indonesia is the highest contributor in this field (Mehraj, Rehman & Ganaie, 2019). The above studies identify the considerable efforts made by the researchers. Considering all these efforts the present study throws light to provide a vivid picture of the present status of India in DOAJ.

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study is to get a vivid picture of the present status of India in DOAJ. Hence the following factors are considered at ease: -

- To assess India's contribution to DOAJ regarding multidisciplinary subjects.
- To find out the growing trend and year-wise contribution of India in DOAJ.
- To ascertain the licensing attributes, and Article Processing Charges (APCs) of the journals.
- To find out the most productive publishers in India in DOAJ.
- To depict the language-wise distribution and publishers' keywords-wise distribution of open access journals.
- To assess the type of peer-reviewing of journals in DOAJ

METHODOLOGY

In the light of growing popularity of the open access system, I have investigated the DOAJ website and adopted the following steps to percolate the actual result-

Step 1: The data for the study were retrieved from the DOAJ website (<http://www.doaj.org>) on July 2020 and were collected in the Excel sheet (considering all 133 countries across the globe).

Step 2: It was found that about 287 Indian journals are indexed in DOAJ. These data were then presented in a tabular form considering each of the parameters of the present study.

Step 3: A chart was selected from the Excel sheet which was found appropriate for each parameter.

Step 4: Those were evaluated to draw a clear picture of the present status of India in DOAJ based on the objectives.

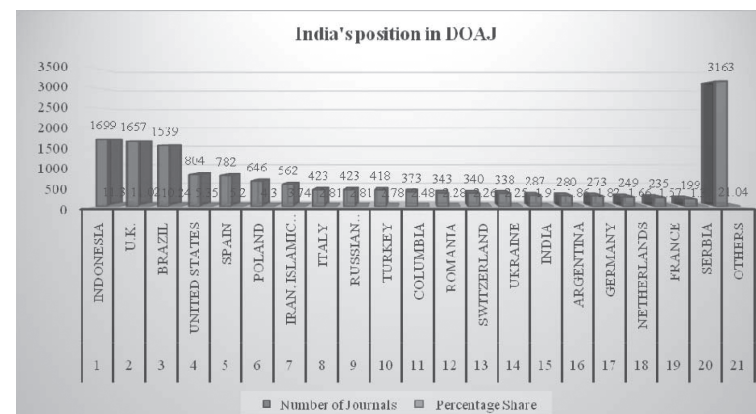
RESULTS

The data collected from the DOAJ website (<http://www.doaj.org>) are represented diagrammatically below and analysed based on

the said parameters.

India's contribution to DOAJ

Figure 1: Diagrammatic representation of India's Position in DOAJ

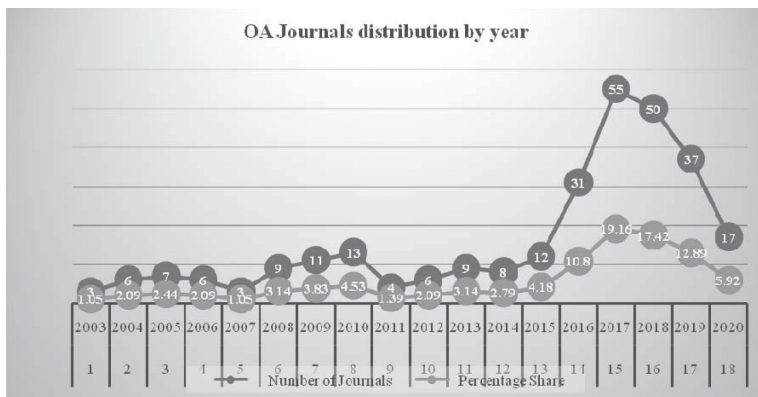


Source: (<http://www.doaj.org>)

As on date, it was found that 15033 journals are enlisted in DOAJ from 133 countries. Figure-1 entails India's position in DOAJ. India occupies the 15th position with 287 (1.91%) open access journals. Indonesia with 1699(11.30%), the U.K. with 1657(11.02%), and Brazil with 1539 (10.24%) journals being the most productive countries occupying 1st, 2nd, and 3rd positions respectively. These top 20 countries contribute the maximum percentage share with 78.96% which is noticeable relating to the remaining 113 countries which are 21.04% only. This represents many countries are yet to perceive the credibility of open access journals in DOAJ.

Growing trend and year wise contribution of India in DOAJ.

Figure 2: Diagrammatic representation of India's OA Journals Distribution by Year

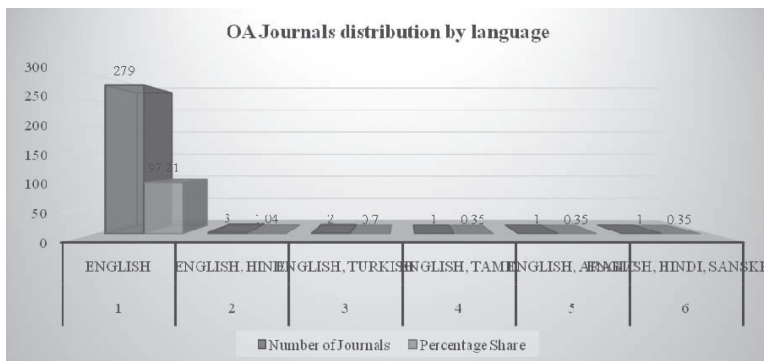


Source: (<http://www.doaj.org>)

India has been contributing since 2003 and its key motivation identifies the growth. Figure 2 represents India’s landscape of open access journals in DOAJ. It was noteworthy, particularly during 2017 (19.16%) and 2018 (17.42%). The figure also reflects the access, usage, and popularity of Indian journals in the open access domain. This provides evidence that the DOAJ list is in a constant state of flux and uncertainty due to its constantly changing quality-related parameters.

Language wise contribution of India in DOAJ

Figure 3: Diagrammatic representation of OA Journals in DOAJ Based on Language

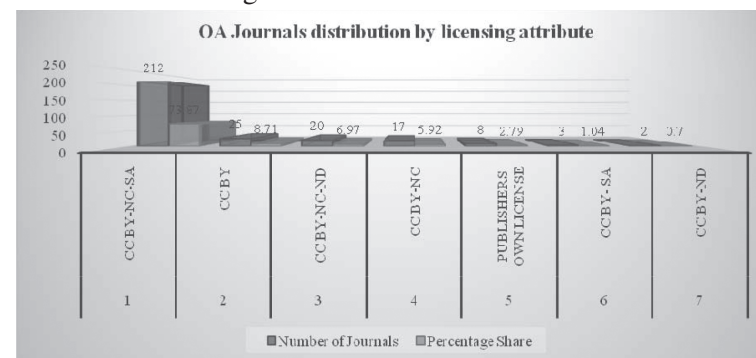


Source: (<http://www.doaj.org>)

Figure 3 depicts the publication language used for scholarly articles indexed in DOAJ. English is the most common communicating language which is 279 (97.21%). Other than English, few journals use two or more Indian languages. Among them, English, Hindi 3 (1.04%) is dominating, followed by English, Turkish which is 2 (0.70%); English, Tamil is 1 (0.35%); English, Arabic is 1 (0.35%) and English, Hindi, Sanskrit is 1 (0.35%).

Licensing wise contribution of India in DOAJ

Figure-4: Diagrammatic representation of OA Journals in DOAJ Based on Licensing Attribute

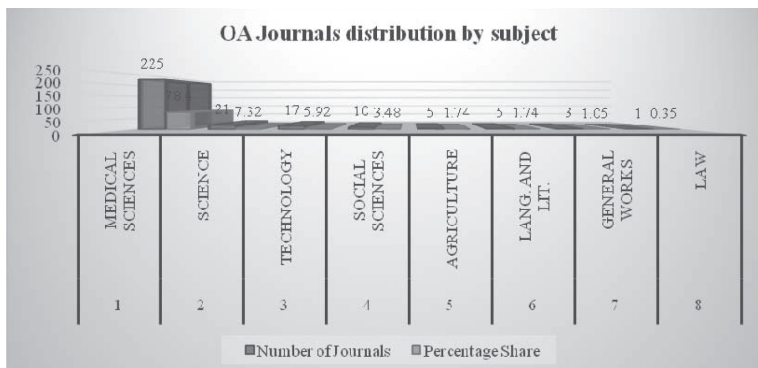


Source: (<http://www.doaj.org>)

Creative Commons Attribution License is the license that best meets the BOAI. The best option for OA journals is to apply the CC BY type attribute as it is the most liberal among all types of Creative Commons Attribution Licenses. But figure-4 represents the most used attribute is CC BY-NC-SA which is 212(73.87%), whereas CC BY is 25(8.71%) which is the widest possible range of reuse rights. Next comes CC BY-NC-ND which is 20 (6.97%), CC BY-NC is 17 (5.92%), Publishers’ own license is 8 (2.97%), CC BY-SA is 3 (1.04%) and CC BY-ND is 2 (0.70%).

Subject wise contribution of India in DOAJ

Figure-5: Diagrammatic representation of OA Journals in DOAJ Based on Subject

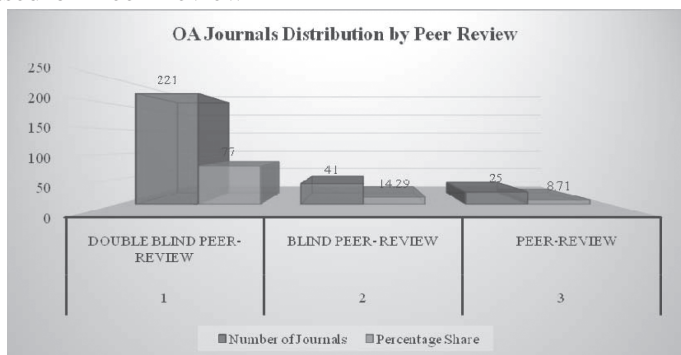


Source: (<http://www.doaj.org>)

Figure 5 reflects the wider spectrum of subject coverage. Journals in DOAJ are classified based on the Library of Congress Classification (LCC). The table above reflects the maximum number of contributions in Medical Sciences with 225 (78.40%). Second place is occupied by science which is 21 (7.32%), followed by Technology which is 17 (5.92%), Social Sciences is 10 (3.48%), Agriculture is 5 (1.74%), Language and Literature is 5 (1.74%), General Works is 3 (1.05%), and Law is 1 (0.35%). Hence, great strides have been made toward open access in the field of Medical Sciences.

Peer-Review wise contribution of India in DOAJ

Figure-6: Diagrammatic representation of OA Journals in DOAJ Based on Peer-Review

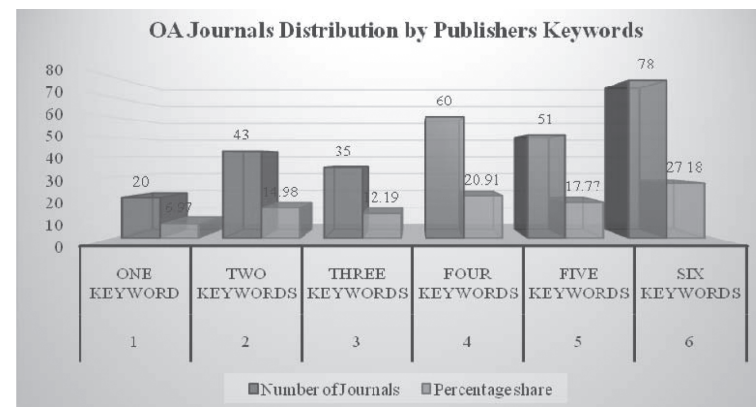


Source: (<http://www.doaj.org>)

Generally, in the process of peer-review the author's research work is scrutinized by the expert groups. In the Double-blind peer-review process, the identities of both the authors and reviewers are kept hidden. The traditional form of peer-review is the Single blind peer-review where the reviewer's identities are kept secret from the authors. Here, figure 6 represents about 221 (77%) journals categorized under Double blind peer-review followed by Blind peer-review which is 41 (14.29%), and Peer-review is 25 (8.71%).

Publishers' Keywords wise contribution of India in DOAJ

Figure 7: Diagrammatic representation of OA journals in DOAJ Based on Publishers' Keywords

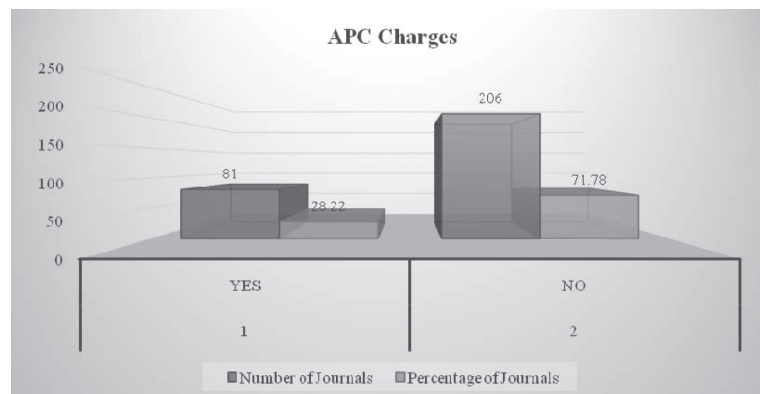


Source: (<http://www.doaj.org>)

When a journal is added to DOAJ, the publisher or provider must provide some keywords to make it available easily to the user. Here figure-7 depicts the number of keywords assigned by the publisher. Journals having six keywords are 78(27.18%) which is the highest. Then comes five keywords with 51 (17.77%), four keywords with 60 (20.91%), three keywords with 35 (12.19%), two keywords with 43 (14.98%), and one keyword with 20 (6.97%). This shows most of the publishers have chosen four to six keywords in the case of Indian journals indexed in DOAJ.

APC Charges wise contribution of India in DOAJ

Figure-8: Diagrammatic representation of OA Journals in DOAJ Based on APC Charges



Source: (<http://www.doaj.org>)

Open access journals generally are freely available for users, and they do not charge any amount, either from the authors or users. But in certain cases, they charge an amount as ‘Article Processing Charges’ from the authors. In the case of India, the open access journals indexed in DOAJ, within which only 81 (28.22%) charge APC or handling charges, and 206 (71.78%) do not charge any amount. This is illustrated in figure-8 where ‘yes’ represents APC charges and ‘no’ represents no APC charges.

Publishers based OA Journals in DOAJ

Table 1: Assessing OA Journals in DOAJ Based on Publishers

Serial No.	Publishers' Name	URL	Number Share	Percentage of Journals
1	Wolters Kluwer Medknow Publications	http://www.medknow.com	194	67.60
2	NISCAIR	http://www.niscair.res.in	5	1.74
3	Elsevier	https://www.elsevier.com	4	1.39
4	ICT Academy of Tami Nadu	http://www.ictacademy.in	4	1.39
5	Thieme Medical and Scientific Publishers Pvt. Ltd.	https://www.thieme.in	4	1.39
6	JCDR Research and Publications Pvt. Ltd.	https://www.jcdr.net	3	1.05
7	SAGE Publishing	https://www.us.sagepub.com	2	0.70
8	Veterinary World	http://www.veterinaryworld.org	2	0.70
9	69 Publishers having one each	—	69	24.04
	Total		287	100

Source: (<http://www.doaj.org>)

Open access publishers have gained a natural interest in DOAJ since it avails an infrastructure that increases the visibility and dissemination of their products. Table 1 reveals that in India Wolters Kluwer Medknow Publications is actively engaged in open access publication which is 67.60%. The second position is occupied by NISCAIR (1.74%), followed by Elsevier, ICT Academy of Tamil Nadu, and Thieme Medical and Scientific Publishers Pvt. Ltd. (each with 1.39%). Then comes JCDR Research and Scientific Publications Pvt. Ltd. (1.05%), subsequently followed by SAGE Publishing and Veterinary World (each with 0.70%). Besides these publishers, 69 publishers are contributing single journals each, which is 24.04%. So, compared to Wolters Kluwer Medknow Publications other publishers' contribution is very negligible.

CONCLUSION

Overcoming the financial, institutional, legal, time, and space barriers between the user and their needed information, India has

gained momentum in the open access movement. The open access movement is growing fast in all directions overcoming regional barriers and surpassing disciplinary boundaries. Like journals, e-books also have started to flourish in all fields of knowledge. The study revealed India's potentiality is quite noticeable in the field of Medical Sciences (78.40%) and to a certain extent in the field of sciences (7.32%) and Technology (5.92%). India has been more promising during 2017 (19.16%) and 2018 (17.42%). Analysing language and licensing attributes in DOAJ most of the publications are in English (97.21%) and CC BY-NC-SA (73.87%) is the commonly used license. About 77% of journals come under the Double-blind peer-review process and 27.18% comes under six keywords. Whereas most of the journals do not have handling charges and Wolters Kluwer Medknow Publications publishes a maximum number of journals. What are the motivations that lead to the increasing rate of indexing in DOAJ for more than a decade? There are some well-established underlying facts relating to this. The extent of necessity and other consequences have driven the attention of scholars and researchers in India. Furthermore, ever since the establishment of DOAJ the level of social trust had become a core component regarding scholarly works. Because open access is all about increasing access to new knowledge. So, it is recommended that researchers from a wide variety of disciplines should deposit their work in various journals. The present study was to understand the extent of involvement of India in DOAJ. It will help the librarians access the publications and link them to their institution's website for speedy access and wider exposure. In this regard, it will be the duty of the libraries, and higher institutions to grow cognizance so that all disciplines may achieve a pace like medical sciences. Hence there will be an unfettered flow of knowledge from which India itself can reap its benefit. Studies may be carried on from a wider perspective considering other countries or deriving a comparative study between countries. Again, a study can also be conducted depicting the status of a particular discipline. DOAJ and its application can be one more perspective of the study. This will assist in a flourishing open access system.

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How to Get Rid of Suicidal Thoughts: A Psychological Remedy

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Abstract

From the primordial phase, suicide occurs more often in older than in younger people, but is still one of the leading causes of death in late childhood and adolescence worldwide. This not only results in a direct loss of many young lives, but also has disruptive psychosocial and adverse socio-economic effects. From the perspective of public mental health, suicide among young people is a main issue to address. Therefore, we need good insight in the risk factors contributing to suicidal behavior in youth. This mini review gives a short overview of the most important risk factors for late school-age children and adolescents, as established by scientific research in this domain. Key risk factors found were: mental disorders, previous suicide attempts, specific personality characteristics, genetic loading and family processes in combination with triggering psychosocial stressors, exposure to inspiring models and availability of means of committing suicide. Further unraveling and knowledge of the complex interplay of these factors is highly relevant with regard to the development of effective prevention strategy plans for youth suicide.

Key words: Self-directed, Prevention, Suicide, Suicidal behavior, and depressed.

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Introduction

Man naturally wants to live. He wants to maintain his body and prolong his life by all means available. In fact, he spends a good deal of his energy and resources towards finding ways and means to extend to the uppermost limit his longevity. He dreams and wishes to conquer death and reverse the processes of ageing. He wants to avoid even minor injuries. It is often observed that a man involved in a major accident or a soldier injured by multiple bullet injuries when admitted to hospital is asked by the doctor: "Your left and right arms are affected by gangrene and these must be amputated to prevent general poisoning of the body immediately. May we proceed?" The patient may feel depressed and, for a while, may think about the futility of life. But soon he recovers and asks the doctor; "Shall I be able to live and feel healthy?" The same story is repeated again and again in the emergency operation theatres of hospitals all over the world. As a matter of fact, the instinct for self-preservation is primordial and pivotal of other urges; because, without survival nothing can be worthwhile. All these facts notwithstanding, some persons do put an end to their lives. Then there are some persons who individually and rationally choose to die. There is no society and no time where the acts of suicide do not take place. Therefore, the study of suicide and the investigation of its nature and prevention form a part of the subject matter of sociology as well as psychology.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the proposed study are as follows:

1. To identify the main cause of suicide and,
2. To make a moral remedy of suicide.

Definition of Suicide

Encyclopedia Britannica defines suicide as "the act of voluntary and intentional self-destruction." This emphasizes two salient features of the act of suicide: (1) that suicide involves the 'will' of the person, which consents and acquiesces in

willing self-destruction; and (2) 'knowledge' that death is being preferred to life and the person concerned is aware of and has acknowledge this as a fact and accepted it as inevitable and non-avoidable.

For practical, law-enforcement purposes, the definition of prostitution has usually not been too difficult. A prostitute defines herself when she "agrees to have sexual intercourse with a person (not her husband) who offers his money for engaging in the intercourse" (Benjamin, 1964).

In the august 1951 issue of the *International Journal of Sexology*, Albert Ellis wrote, "commercialized prostitutes would certainly be included – whether they accepted many or a chosen few paying partners. But also included would be girls who trade their sexual favours for food, entertainment, or other gifts and wives who, having no love and no sex desire for their husbands, continue to have sex relations in order to maintain the socio-economic benefits of marriage" (Ellis, 1951).

Psychological Analysis of Suicide

The problem of suicide is highly complex; it can be approached in numerous ways and from various standpoints. A number of eminent psychologists have discussed suicide from the viewpoint of psychology. Among them Freud and Karl Menninger are the most prominent. We shall discuss below the views of these authorities of the world of psychological learning.

a) Freud's Viewpoint:

The famous psychologist and the father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud has discussed the problem of suicide from his peculiar point of view. According to him there is a fundamental biological urge which expresses itself in paradoxical bipolar manner in which there is constant pull in opposite directions. Eros and Thanatos, i.e., an urge to live and a wish to die, are fundamental biological impulses which pull man in opposing directions and they fight for dominance. If for some reasons, the wish to die gets precedence over the urge to live and overwhelms it, man's urge to live becomes dim and ineffective

and he considers death to be a more basic mode of existence.

To explain the fact of suicide, Freud makes use of one of the fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis, namely, identification. Identification is a mental process by which a man considers some object, some goal or some idea to be so intimate that he would live only for the sake of it and without it everything is useless, devoid of meaning and value. Usually, death-wish expresses itself in the form of remaining externalized. In suicide it becomes internalized, man identifies himself with his own destruction and commits suicide.

b) Karl Menninger's Analysis of Suicide:

The theory of Menninger regarding suicide is, in fact, a corollary of Freud's theory. He has analyzed only the Thanatos, i.e., the wish to die. According to him, the wish expresses itself in three forms: (1) the wish to die; (2) the wish to kill; and (3) the wish to be killed. Menninger has tried to explain suicide on the basis of this three-sided expression of the Thanatos, the death wish. According to Menninger the wish to die must be strong and pervasive in a man who commits suicide. Besides, he must have a pronounced aggressive urge to kill. Now, for some reason, personal or impersonal, the urge to kill must be utterly frustrated. The urge to kill must be very intense and forceful but its expression must be balked by some countervailing objective factors. This would understandably generate extreme tension, which would be resolved only by internalization of the urge to kill, transforming it into a wish to die, leading ultimately to suicide. In the process of internalization of the death wish there results an identification of the man committing suicide with the object of his to kill.

Durkheim's Theory of Suicide

Durkheim, the eminent French Sociologist, has made an extremely minute and detailed study of the phenomenon of suicide. He has given his considered views and opinions in his world - famous book *Le Suicide*. He has classified different types of suicide on the basis of different types of personalities

of men. He has recognized following three to be the fundamental types:

- i) Egoistic: The suicides committed by persons who are self-centred and to whom self-regard is the highest regard are called egoistic suicides. On account of their self-centredness and lack of altruistic feelings, a sense of respect and regard for others, the egoistic persons are usually aloof and cut off from the main stream of society. They can never take whole-hearted interest in social projects. An overwhelming sense of self-regarded needs and heightened sense of self-importance leads to aloofness and indifference and this grows into social alienation. This social alienation produces apathy. Being basically a gregarious animal, man is unable to cope with social alienation and feels impelled to commit suicide.
- ii) Altruistic: According to Durkheim the second type of suicide is altruistic suicide. Such suicides are committed by individuals having a peculiar type of personality. An altruistic suicide is a form of sacrifice in which a person puts an end to his life by some heroic means in order to promote or further the interest of the cause or idea dear to him. According to Durkheim the persons committing altruistic deeds are those who attach great value and importance to the need and imperative of control. Compared to the value of society and its causes they consider their own personal life of no worth. For them the worthwhileness of their life lies in the maintenance and promotion of social forms of which they are shadows. Once such an outlook develops and takes firm hold of the man, such a person easily and willingly sacrifices his life for social causes, ends and purposes. As a matter of fact, such a person considers himself only a reflection of the society and, therefore, of no worth and value in himself. Durkheim has illustrated altruistic suicide by the examples of suicides by soldiers which are due to rigorous discipline. The ancient custom of Sati, in which

a wife would willingly jump into the funeral pyre of her husband and thus end her life, is an example of altruistic suicide and can be explained as being due to rigorous social control acquiesced to.

iii) Anomique suicide: According to Durkheim, the third type of suicide is anomique. This type of suicide is concerned with social disorganization and imbalance. At the time when society is in a crisis, the social relations are disturbed and even disrupted; and at such periods and under the fluid and critical social conditions the personal and social ethics both become casualties. The values crumble and life becomes devoid of its guiding light. At such times the outlook of some persons suddenly undergoes critical change and results in dangerous developments. Durkheim has tried to illustrate this fact by giving examples from economic life. In critical periods there are sudden changes in the economic fortunes of people; multimillionaires may become paupers overnight. Due to loss of financial fortunes many persons commit suicide. Now the fact is that neither economic prosperity nor economic poverty themselves can be causes of suicide. A sudden change must be producing repercussions and having reverberations on the social relations and conditions; and it is actually these things which cause suicide and not the loss of economic possessions. What actually happens is this: a man's social relations, status, regard and dispositions are affected by his riches or lack of them. Now a multimillionaire is used to a particular status. He is honoured, respected and listened to by others. But if he loses his fortune his social relations are disrupted. If the change is gradual one adjusts to it with ease; but in case of sudden change no such adjustment is possible. Under these circumstances many people commit suicide. To a superficial observer the suicide is because of loss of fortune; but though there is loss of fortune, it is sudden and has disrupted social ties. Therefore, actually it is the

social disruption that has caused suicide and not the loss of fortune.

Criticism of Durkheim's Theory

Durkheim has given importance only to social factors in suicide and tried to reduce other factors to social factors and thereby has tried to establish the exclusiveness of social factors in the etiology of suicide. But this is a one-sided view. If it is possible to reduce non-social to social factors it is equally possible to reduce social to non-social factors. For example, if we say that Mr. A committed suicide not because his wife slept with his boss but because his social ties with his boss were disrupted, we can also say that disruption of social ties is due to the character of the man, because Mr. B under similar circumstances did not commit suicide, but settled the score by sleeping with his boss's wife.

Remedies of Suicide

The problem of suicide poses serious danger both to the individual and the society. As the social organization becomes increasingly complex, the incidence of suicide also rises. In India, consequent upon industrialization and urbanization the social organization is rapidly changing and this leaves many individuals maladjusted. Because of the increasing maladjustment, the incidence of suicide is showing an upward trend. Suicides have adverse effect upon the society and the nation, because, due to suicides, the nation loses the invaluable services of many persons. In critical social situations, as a rule, suicides are committed by persons of high sensitivity, intelligence and talent. Naturally, it is a matter of grave concern to any nation if it starts losing its elite in suicides. However, suicide also has a chain reaction impact. If some notable personality commits suicide many more persons who are somehow holding themselves together, are deeply affected and their impulse to suicide is further strengthened. Suicides by famous scientists, writers, artists, and politicians produce chain-reaction. On account of these incontrovertible facts, it is the duty and obligation of

society and the nation to find correctives to the problem of suicide. But the important question is, what are these correctives? What steps can a society take to prevent occurrence of suicide? Towards this end we have to eliminate those causes which lead to psychological and social tensions, cultural contradictions and produce personal and social disintegration. Following are the suggestions calculated to reduce or eliminate those irritants which induce suicide:

1. Elimination of factors inducing social disintegration: In a disorganized and disintegrating society the incidence of suicide rises; therefore, it is the duty of every nation and society, to stem disintegration of the society and evolve ways and means which would produce social harmony and promote social peace and tranquillity. Society should try to check and control crimes like violence, drug-addiction, sex offences and marital infidelity, etc. as these lead to rapid personal disorganization.

2. Economic reform: Economic factors play an extremely important part in causing suicides. The wide economic disparities and consequent class distinctions play havoc with the life of individuals. Due to widespread disparities society is divided into rich and poor classes. In such a society the money power comes to play so vital a role that the social class, prestige and reputation rise and fall with economic possessions and dispossessions. Such a society cannot be harmonized; it will always breed conflicts and contradictions, till the society eliminates aggressive economic competition and reduces the overwhelming role of money.

3. Religious preaching: Indeed, religion is always opposed to suicide and considers it to be a sin, a violation of the will of God. However, in modern society the spirit of religion is becoming weak and the restraint which was exercised by religious injunctions upon human behaviour no longer holds. Therefore, it is of fundamental importance for every society that the spirit of religion should be revived and it is made to play the role of preaching love and harmony, forbidding violence and hatred. For this it is essential that various religious institutions

should use their influence to propagate the sanctity of life and the value of love and harmony.

4. Reform in the institution of marriage: A number of suicides in India are due to defective and retrograde traditions and conventions of marriage. For example, due to the institution of dowry, many deserving females are condemned to live the life of spinster-hood. This is obviously an abnormal condition of a nubile young damsel; but what is worse, such persons are socially stigmatized. Consequently, many such girls, unable to cope with the insistent natural urge, become unwed moth4eers. Therefore, they are left with no alternative to suicide. Obviously, it is the duty of every society to remove from its social fabric irritants like these and also all other orthodoxies and harmful conventions which plague the society and undermine the moral and natural health of its members.

5. Social acceptance of unmarried persons: Our society is highly orthodox and conservative and in this society marriage for every young man and girl is considered an inevitability and anyone stepping out of this social barrier is subject to ridicule, calumny and contumely. However, it is now recognized by every enlightened person and society that the belief that marriage is an inescapable destiny of every man and woman is false and ill-conceived. There are in every society some persons whose fundamental nature and habits are incompatible with the institution of marriage. If such persons are forced to marry because of social pressure they find themselves in hell and to avoid and escape from the disgust and shame of life they commit suicide. No society has any right to interfere with the natural development of man and force upon him some artificial pattern. On the contrary, society must recognize the peculiar needs and urges of its members and suitably cater for these.

6. Reform in retrograde social traditions and conventions: Generally, the social traditions and conventions facilitate smooth movement of social life; but with the passage of time, they grow into orthodoxies and their observance becomes an end in itself instead of being a means of smooth social intercourse. These

orthodoxies become hindrances in the way of social and personal developments. In Indian society evil customs like dowry, taboo on widow remarriage, casteism and untouchability destroy the real purpose and value of education and help increase psychological and social tensions. These customs and traditions are indeed blots on the society and must be eradicated if there is to be peace and progress in the society and if the society is not to crumble under the weight of modernization, urbanization and industrialization. These orthodoxies are the chief causes of cultural lag and backwardness.

7. Promotion of healthy entertainment: Entertainment is as necessary for the healthy and happy life as good food, home and other things. Entertainment is a great source of dissipation of tensions. Bad or sex-laden entertainment may thrill and produce temporary euphoria but in the long run it tells upon the mental health of man. Therefore, it is the duty of the society to check wild pornographic display in dance, drama and cinema and to provide good, natural and refreshing entertainment.

From the above discussion, it becomes clear what steps are necessary for the prevention of suicide. Indeed, the main cause of suicide is personal disintegration and the consequent imbalance of personality. Therefore, all our efforts should be directed towards checking the factor which produce imbalanced and disintegrated personality.

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Rape: An attack on the dignity of women

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Abstract:

Rape is commonly looked as an offence of sexual nature but it is in fact, an assertion of male power, authority and dominance over the opposite sex. Rape has become the most commonly used form of assault to demean the opponent during war and communal violence. In a male-dominated society rape is the ultimate insult that can be inflicted on a woman and womanhood. Patriarchy imposes stigma and shame on the victims as if they are responsible for the assault and thus undermines the role of the perpetrators. The stigma forced on the victims compels them to bow down to the politics of silence by not being vocal about the act, by not reporting it to the police or to anybody else. One study on the rape victims in the USA has revealed that only twenty five percent of the cases are reported to the police. In Australia only 32% of the victims of rapes or attempted rapes report the matter. Amongst several African tribes rape is considered as a violation of property rights because women are believed to be the property of either their fathers or husbands. (188 words)

Introduction

All of we know that Rape is a criminal violence. Before discussing rape at first we have to know about violence. Violence is an integral, though may not an acceptable, part of social life. So far, there is not known history of human civilization which is free

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of violence. Surely, violence has changed its form and character over hundreds and thousands of year to suit the socio- political and cultural environment within which its manifestation takes place. With the passage of time, the meaning and significance of violence often change and bring in various shades and shapes within its folds. From battlefield to the confines of domestic world, violence is so common that it has become a part of everyday life. On the other hand violence against women has a different connotation altogether. It may be described as a technical term to refer to violent acts that are primarily or exclusively committed against women by men and or by women also. In short, these types of violence are targeted at a specific group with the victim's gender as a primary consideration. The UNO Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) has noted, in short, that this sort of violence could be perpetrated by assailant of either gender belonging to the family, the community and even the state itself. The obvious reason behind such violence is the common perception of women as inferior and subordinate to men. Closer examination reveals that the history of being considered as property and the specific gender role assigned to them for being subservient to men in general, and to women in powerful positions within the family, in particular. The popular belief is, being weak in body and mind; women are always in need to be protected by the opposite sex for women's own benefit. Today few topics draw the attention of researches in social sciences, Government, Planning groups, social workers and reformers as the problems of women do. Approaches to the study of women's problem range goes from gerontology to psychiatry and criminology. This is also the task of social philosophy. But one important problem of women which is highly ignoring that is the problem of the violence against women. The problem of violence of women is not newly emerging issue. Women in the Indian society have been victims of humiliation, torture and exploitation for as long as we have written records of social organization and family life. Today women are gradually recognised as important, powerful and meaningful contributors to the life of men. In spite of the legislative measures

adopted in favour of women in our society after independence, countless women are still victims of violence. They are beaten, kidnapped, raped, brunt and murdered. According to the English Oxford Dictionary violence means violent behaviour intended to kill or hurt. The operational definition of violence may be given as force whether overt or covert, used to wrest from an Individual (woman) something that she does not want to give of her own free will and which causes her either physical injury or emotional trauma or both.

The Police Research Bureau, Delhi has referred to “crime against women “under two categories: (1) crime under the Indian Penal Code. The Bureau has identified seven crimes in this category. They are rape, kidnapping, and abduction, homicide for dowry, torture (physical & mental), and molestation, eve-teasing and (2) crime under the local and special law. The Bureau has identified four crimes under the local and special laws are: commission of Sati, dowry prohibition, immoral traffic and indecent representation of women. So, rape, kidnapping, murder, wife-battering, sexual abuse, eve-teasing are all the examples of violence against women.

Violence against women may be categorized as Criminal violence, Domestic violence and Social violence. Rape is a criminal violence .Rape is an attack on the dignity of women as it invades the bodily privacy and psychological sanctity of women against her will. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, rape is forcible intercourse imposed on women. This forceful sexual act violates the most basic of the rights of the victims that is the right to life and liberty. The Indian Penal Code under section 375 has defined rape as an act assault on a woman by one or more men against the victim’s will, without her consent, or with her consent obtained by force or under threat, or when she is, due to some physiological or mental condition the consequences of her concern.

Rape is commonly looked as an offence of sexual nature but it is in fact, an assertion of male power, authority and dominance over the opposite sex. Rape has become the most commonly used

form of assault to demean the opponent during war and communal violence. In a male-dominated society rape is the ultimate insult that can be inflicted on a woman and womanhood .Patriarchy imposes stigma and shame on the victims as if they are responsible for the assault and thus undermines the role of the perpetrators. The stigma forced on the victims compels them to bow down to the politics of silence by not being vocal about the act, by not reporting it to the police or to anybody else. One study on the rape victims in the USA has revealed that only twenty five percent of the cases are reported to the police. In Australia only 32% of the victims of rapes or attempted rapes report the matter. Amongst several African tribes rape is considered as a violation of property rights because women are believed to be the property of either their fathers or husbands.

Rape, as we all know, has a devastating effect on the victim as it constitutes an assault on her body and soul. The effect includes various physiological, psychological and social impacts like depression, fear, deep-rooted sense of guilt, suicidal urge, diminished sexual interest, lack of trust on mankind. The victims may also be infected with sexually transmitted diseases including HIV-AIDS. Unwanted pregnancy may be another serious consequence of rape. The trauma of rape does not end with the healing of bodily injury because the odds against the victim are too many to overcome easily. Absence of moral and social support may aggravate the trauma and agony of the victim.

Classification of Rape

A rape is rape. Yet, for technical purposes it may be classified under several heads like **statutory rape, gang rape, mass rape, political rape, custodial rape and marital rape.**

Statutory rape: It is child rape. Section 375 of IPC illustrates it as the sexual violence of a minor girl either with or without her consent, but without the consent of her guardian and outside marriage. It is a serious offence as it may sear the victim rather deeply in both body and mind. The incidents of child rape increasing in rapid numbers in the country over the years.

Gang rape: This type of rape occurs when groups of men rape a victim either a tactic of political retaliation or to exhibit their power and dominance over the victim and or her community or for momentary gratification of desire under the impact of substances. The Delhi rape case (December 2012) was an example of this type in which a young woman and her man-friend were grievously beaten and thrown out of a moving bus after the girl was brutally raped by four inebriated men in a Delhi bus. The girl was subjected to so much brutality and torture that she died a few days after the assault. Similarly, a college girl was raped by a gang of four persons and brutally murdered in Barasat, West Bengal recently. The Bhanwari Devi case and the famous 'Vishaka Judgement' pronounced by the Supreme Court of the country remind us of another facet of gang rape. Bhanwari Devi, female government functionary or Saathin working under the Women Development Programme in a village in Rajasthan, was gang-raped in front of her husband in September, 1999 by several men from her own village because she had campaigned hard against child marriage, as a part of her official duty. The Supreme Court of India had pronounced its landmark verdict on sexual harassment at workplace after considering all the harassments faced by Bhanwari Devi. It is also known as 'pack rape' in Australia.

Mass rape: it is committed on a large number of women by an equally large number of males. It is a common strategy to demean a community by another during wartime or riots.

Political rape: This type of sexual assault is undertaken to get the feeling of revenge. During caste wars, communal violence before or during political campaigns of rapes are committed to gain political mileage.

Custodial rape: Rape of a woman who is kept in the supposedly safe custody of a police station, or jail, a military camp, remand home or hospital by one or more members of the custodians themselves is commonly known as custodial rape. India has a notorious reputation for rape of women in custody. The rape of Mathura in police custody was an eye opener that had forced activities and social workers to campaign hard for protection of

right in custody.

Marital rape: It refers to unwanted intercourse by a man on his wife without her consent or with her consent extracted by using force or physical violence or with threat of using force or even when she is not in a position to give consent (that is, unconscious, drugged etc.). It is three types- (a) force-only or forceful rape of wife by the husband; (b) battering rape or rape accompanied with battering by husband. In this type of rape the wife experiences both physical and sexual violence; and (C) Sadistic or obsessive rape in which perverse sexual acts and torture also remain involved. Pornography often becomes a part of sadistic form of rape. The recognition of marital rape as an offence is rather new; as the right of husbands to sex, forcefully or not, has long been established in almost all societies. Neither did the society recognise a married woman's rights over her own body, nor did it allow a woman the freedom of consent or refusal of sex to her husband. Therefore, marital rape was never brought within the purview of rape laws and husbands enjoy absolute legal immunity in respect of sex with their wives simply on the basis of their marital relations. Sir Mathew Hale, in his History of the Pleas of the Crown (1786) has concluded that no husband can be guilty of raping his own wife, because by their mental matrimonial consent and contract the wife surrenders, irrevocably, to her husband. Similar status was bestowed on wives in each and every society throughout the ages. The issue of marital rape first came into penal limelight in India in the year 1890, when a Bengal husband had caused the death of his minor (11 years) wife by forced intercourse or marital rape. As a legal consequence of the act the age of the wife suitable for sexual relationship was raised to 12 years in 1891. The Law Commission of India in its 42nd report (1971) has recommended for excluding marital rape from the definition of rape altogether. However, another Law Commission (1980) has preferred to increase the age of consent for a girl to 18 years in commensuration with the minimum age of marriage. But, again, the subsequent Law Commission (2000) has suggested that identification of marital rape as rape may cause excessive

interference with the legal fraternity here is divided over the issue of marital rape as rape may cause excessive interference with the conjugal relationship. These confusing recommendations show that the legal fraternity here is divided over the issue of marital rape while many other countries like Nepal have criminalised it. However, on 14th November, 2012 the Government of India has implemented the Protection of Children from Sexual Abuse Act, 2012 for protecting all persons below the age of 18 years from the offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography. The Act clearly defines all sexual offences and proposes stringent punishment graded as per gravity of the offence. It also ensures speedy trial through special courts.

Psychological researches have confirmed that rape is a product of perverse psychology. Nicholas Groth in his study on rapists (Men Who Rape: the psychology of the offender) has classified the rape-offender under three heads-**the anger-rapist, the power-rapist, and the sadist-rapists**. According to the Groth anger-rapists are those who rape due to the presence of a strong outrage or a spirit of vengeance in their minds against the victims. The act of rape becomes ultimate outburst of that anger. Through the act, the offender tries to strike at different parts of the victim's body with sharp instruments before, during, or after the rape. Power-rapist, on the other hand, is the one who seeks to showcase his power and control over the victim. The desires to subjugate and treat the victim as his subject remain the main purpose of rape for him. Sadist-rapist is the person who gets pleasure by inflicting various pains and torture on the victim in the course of rape. On occasions, infliction of physical pain and torture gives the perpetrator so much sexual pleasure that he may ultimately kill the victim with excessive torture. Psychologists believe that due to the impacts of the social environment in which they live, and also due to the absence of formal and moral education in them rapists generally grow criminal tendencies. The urge to challenge the laws also remains very strong among them. Psychological problems like bipolar disorder, 'mood swings', paedophilic sexual preference, alcoholism or substance dependence- also play

significant roles in rape.

The problem of rape is considered serious in all countries but in India, it is statistically not as serious as it is in the western society. For examples, in the United States, the annual rate of rape offences per one lakh population is about 26, in Canada it is about 8 and in the U. K. it is about 5.5. In comparison, the rate in India is 0.5 per lakh population. Age-wise, the percentage of victims of the rape is highest in the age group of 16 to 30 years (64%) while victims below 10 years account for about 3%. Victims between 10 and 16 yrs. Account for about 13%. It is not only the poor girls who become rape victims but even the employees belonging to the middle class are sexually humiliated by their employers. Women inmates in jail are raped by the superintendents, women crime suspects by the police officers, women patients by hospital personnel, maid-servants by their masters and women daily wage-earners by their contractors and middle man. Even deaf and dumb, lunatic and blind, and women baggers are not spared. Women who come from the lower- middle class and who are the main bread winner of their family bear sexual abuse quietly and without protest.

An empirical study of 42 rape victims revealed the following characteristics in the crimes committed against women: (1) rape does not occur between total strangers; in about half of the cases the rape victim is known to her assailant. (2) Nine out of every ten rapes are situational. (3) About three-fifth rapes (58%) are single rapes, one-fifth (21%) are pair rapes and one-fifth (21%) are group rapes. (4) Nine out of every ten rapes do not involve physical violence or brutality, that is, in a large number of cases, only temptation and/or verbal coercion are used to subdue the victim. (5) Little less than ¾ rapes (70%) occur in the victims or victimizers' homes and about 1/4 (25%) in non-residential building and (6) the age group of 15-20 years has the highest rate among victims while the offenders are mostly in the age group of 23-30. Youth is thus, the main consideration in selecting victims.

Before conclude, I would like to say that the Indian Penal Code recognises rape as a cognizable offence to be tried by Court

of Sessions only. The IPC, in its various Sections contains provisions to deal with rape. Section 354 of the IPC recommends for 2 years of imprisonment for the offence of rape. The state of Madhya Pradesh has introduced sec.354A to make rape a non-bailable offences and has extended the period of imprisonment up to 10 years. In Orissa, too, rape is a non-bailable offence. Till the fag end of 1983 rape trials in courts of India were conducted openly causing much hurt, anguish and insecurity for the victim. Till the fag end of 1983 rape trials in courts of India were conducted openly causing much hurt, anguish and insecurity for the victim. With the introduction of Sec. 327(2) of Criminal Procedure code in camera trial in rape cases has become the norm. The Varma Commission Report also supports in camera trial to give the victim a sense of security. The existing legal provisions prohibit the publication of the name of the rape victim and printing of any photograph of her without prior permission of the court. These measures have been taken for protecting the dignity of the victim. The IPC Section 376 (excepting sub-section 2) a rapist may be given at least 7 years of imprisonment unless the victims the offender's wife or 12 years of age. The Varma Commission (2013) recommends that the guilt must serve the full term of the sentence without any reprisal. At last but not least I must want to say that though there are strict rape laws, very few cases had to conviction of the offender and I believe that no Law will be able to stop this violence .It will only be minimum by self respect and love and give respect and love to others. So let start love and respect each other and stay save in society.

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“Towards Endless Felicity”: The Spiritual Quest in *Rasselas*

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Abstract

Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* is a deep and insightful study of the human desire for happiness. Through the experiences of the novella's protagonist, Rasselas, the prince of Abissinia, the author creates a moral tale that has been perceived variously by readers and critics as ranging from hopelessly pessimistic to religiously instructive.

The motif of a journey is predominant in *Rasselas*. This is the explicit movement of the prince, along with his companions, from the Happy Valley to the external world and back to the Valley in search of true happiness. There are, however, two other implicit movements in the narrative that are intricately linked with the prince's journey: first, there is a movement from youth to old age to death to the soul, which can also be seen as the second movement or transition from worldly pleasures to worldly knowledge and finally to spiritual realization.

By tracing this movement from the physical to the spiritual, this paper contends that Rasselas fails in his quest to find true happiness precisely because happiness is an internal condition of the mind that cannot be attained through external means and more importantly because divine joy, and not human bliss, is the primary subject of the author's work. Johnson, writing as a devout Anglican and moralist, could hardly have championed material contentment over spiritual bliss: this paper thus concludes

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that despite the charges of pessimism leveled against *Rasselas* through the years, the tone of the novella is not completely pessimistic but is rather laced with an optimistic belief in the 'endless felicity' as promised in the Christian afterlife or Eternity.

Key Words: Samuel Johnson, *Rasselas*, journey, happiness, philosophy, Bible

The human search for happiness transcends all barriers of time and space for it is typical of all nations, tribes and cultures irrespective of their differences. Johnson's novella, *Rasselas, The Prince of Abissinia*, is evidently about this pursuit of happiness - symbolized by the journey that the prince and his companions undertake - that at once gives to Johnson's work a certain element of universality which also validates the continued popularity that the work has enjoyed since its publication in 1759 down to the present day.

The setting of the story is significant for the Happy Valley where the first part of the action takes place is often taken as being symbolic of the Garden of Eden. It is an idyllic place, the tranquil residence of the Abyssinian princes and princesses till their time for succession to the royal throne arrives, a place whose residents had all within their reach that art or nature could bestow. In this apparent portrayal, Johnson seems to be drawing on the traditional representation of Amhara as the earthly paradise that even Milton refers to in *Paradise Lost* in his description of Eden:

Nor where Abassin kings their issue Guard,
Mount Amhara, though this by som suppos'd
True Paradise under the Ethio Line
By Nilus head, enclos'd with shining Rock,
A whole dayes journey high... (Paradise Lost, IV, 280-4)

However, as we gradually realize, this Paradise-on-earth is not nearly as perfect as it seems. Johnson had translated in 1735 an actual travel narrative by Father Jerome Lobo called *The Voyage to Abyssinia* from which he knew that in reality the life of the princes in their mountain prison was harsh and unhappy.

Also, pleasure is not to be confused with happiness, being the result of gratifying the senses. This is exactly what Rasselas refers to when, speaking of his own discontentment in the valley, he makes a clear distinction between the instinctive pleasures of animals and the higher, more intellectualized human pleasures that reasserts the medieval idea of the Chain of Being- that is, of man being superior to the other created beings:

What, said he, makes the difference between man and all the rest of the animal creation?

... I am hungry and thirsty like him, but when thirst and hunger cease I am not at rest; I am, like him, pained with want, but am not, like him, satisfied with fullness... nor do I, ye gentle beings, envy your felicity; for it is not the felicity of man... (Chapter 2, 42-43)

The journey motif dominates from the beginning of *Rasselas*. In a manner almost resembling Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*, the journey begins at a point where worldly materialism and pleasures form the core of the scene. Yet, as we gradually become aware, at the heart of it all is the pervading sense of gloom felt by Rasselas as well as by the others who had unknowingly vied for such confinement, compounded with a sense of utter futility of life. This is the reason why Rasselas desperately seeks a means of escape and embarks upon his quest for happiness in the first place, longing for a happiness more lasting and meaningful in essence. His primary objective, however, is to observe human miseries so he may learn the true value of happiness. The experiences that they encounter once on their quest provide them with ample opportunities to observe the same- chapters 17 to 29 are replete with instances of grief and despondency that men from all stations of life inevitably experience. The structural construction of these chapters is also remarkable in its style of contrast and comparison to highlight the deficiencies and fundamental futility of all things material. Geoffrey Tillotson remarked,

At one point- in Chapter 17-18, Johnson achieved a piece of construction that is 'exquisite': in the former chapter the gay

young men are blamed by Rasselas for making no provision for the future, and in the latter, the philosopher who has made that provision finds it nullified- and now it is Rasselas' turn to be rebuked. (Tillotson, 1971, *Introduction*)

Other such instances of active contrast occur in chapters 19-20 where pastoral life and the comfortable life of a rich man are examined respectively. The shepherds, initially embodying the ideals of rustic simplicity and spontaneous natural joy, turn out to be "rude and ignorant", bitter at considering themselves as "condemned to labour for the luxury of the rich..." (Chapter 19, 81-82). The rich man, next, is gracious and well-endowed with all that wealth can buy; yet, as he confesses, "(his) prosperity puts (his) life in danger" (Chapter 20, 83-84) for he is under the constant fear of being plundered by the Bassa. Neither poverty nor wealth, the young prince and princess realize, can guarantee peace of mind and they press on with their quest.

Interestingly, towards the end of this middle section, we observe a recurrence of discourses on knowledge. The fields of learning are all scrutinized diligently and they inevitably turn out to be unsatisfactory and limited: rhetoric, science (astronomy here) and even philosophy (stoical, chapter 18, or that of the hermit in chapter 21) seem to become redundant after a certain limit. Worldly knowledge too, thus fails to provide Rasselas with a definitive principle or way of happiness that he seeks, and his journey continues.

A pivotal moment in the narrative is when Pekuah is kidnapped by an Arab chieftain at the Pyramids (Chapter 33). This incident is vital in that it announces the break or transition in their journey for at this juncture the characters move from a vantage position of objectively observing human misery to experiencing misery themselves which integrates them to the general flow of human life and pain. It is because of this experience that they now truly realize the grimness of human existence that they had so long only theorized about. The wisdom that Nekayah accumulates rings so true now precisely

because it is experiential:

Yet what, said she, is to be expected from our pursuit of happiness, when we find the state of life to be such, that happiness itself is the cause of misery? Why should we endeavour to attain that, of which the possession cannot be secured? (Chapter 36, 117)

Henceforth we trace a movement that is far more pronouncedly spiritual than what we have so long encountered. After an experience of intense pain, the characters appear more balanced while the general narrative too assumes a quiet and somber tone that befits this last part which distinctly upholds the author's primary intention: to establish the solidity of biblical truth and its consolation and hope to a world that is dark and despairing.

There are constant references to biblical thoughts and ideas in this latter part of the text. In chapter 27, Nekayah mentions to her brother that in this world, the good and the bad are alike subjected to arbitrary grief and pain that none can evade. The only solace that the virtuous can derive is the "quietness of conscience, a steady prospect of a happier state; (that) may enable us to endure calamity with patience; but remember that patience must suppose pain." To this can be compared the words in Romans 5: 1-5,

And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. (3) Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; (4) perseverance, character; and character, hope. (5) And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us." (NIV)

Johnson now clearly states that which he had so long merely been hinting at. The royal party has failed to find human happiness despite all their efforts, so he finally offers them knowledge of the only happiness that is attainable, unending, and perpetual: faith in God and in His promise of a blissful eternity with Him. Significantly, at this stage we also realize that the movement that had started at the Happy Valley has

advanced quite far. The narrative that had begun with the youth and inexperience of Rasselas and Nekayah in the valley has passed through their physical experiences in the outer world, thereby bringing them maturity in the process, to this last section where old age (the old man, chapter 45, or the old astronomer) contemplates on the transience of youth and of all that the world holds dear. In a way, such contemplation is reminiscent of Keats:

The weariness, the fever, and the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,

Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow. ('Ode to a Nightingale', 23-30)

Johnson's view, however, is not one of unmitigated sorrow or despair. In the words of the old man in chapter 45, we have an assertion of faith in the Christian afterlife whose hope transcends the sadness of this earthly life:

...expect with serene humility, that hour which nature cannot long delay; and hope to possess in a better state that happiness which here I could not find, and that virtue which I have not attained. (Chapter 45, 137)

As the characters gain new knowledge and wisdom, other important issues too, are raised. In chapter 47, Rasselas makes a significant point: he first remarks that "variety" is "so necessary to content, that even the happy valley disgusted (him) by the recurrence of its luxuries". The distinction comes when he then states his observation of the monks of St. Anthony who, "support without complaint, a life, not of uniform delight, but uniform hardship." Imlac's explanation, voicing the opinion of Johnson himself, makes clear the essential difference between the two: worldly joys and pleasures are limited for they are short-lived and ephemeral. Pursuit of such joy can only conclude in disappointment and discontentment for it is essentially unreal

and elusive. But a person who seeks true and lasting happiness finds it by letting go of worldly temptations and devoting himself instead, to living a simple and meaningful life characterized by faith and good works. The monks, by doing so, Imlac reasons, have found true peace of mind and are “always advancing towards endless felicity.” Imlac adds, however, that a retired and solitary life is not necessary for achieving that spiritual happiness if one can successfully resist the allurements of the world and be contented in enjoying simple and harmless pleasures, remembering always that the end is continually drawing near and with it, either eternal bliss or eternal damnation. This discourse on the fate of the soul in the afterlife is poignant and Imlac’s reminder on the shortness of human life (“the shortness of our present state”, Chapter 48, 149) echoes the words of James 4:14:

Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. (NIV)

This, Johnson seems to be implying, is the only way to the felicity that every human aspires towards and which is worth persevering for. Rasselas and his companions had failed in their search for happiness because they were pursuing that which is not worth pursuing. When they concentrate instead on the happiness that is necessarily spiritual and acknowledge its truth and validity, their quest finally comes to an end. There is nothing more that needs to be learned and Nekayah aptly concludes their entire experience with, “To me...the choice of life is become less important; I hope hereafter to think only on the choice of eternity.” (Chapter 47)

Conclusion

The narrative had begun in the happy valley and the journey with the flooding of the valley by rain. In the last chapter, the story comes a full circle with the inundation of the Nile while the characters peacefully evaluate their journey although this time, it is their mental progress that takes the forefront, the movement from worldly pleasures to worldly knowledge to

divine realization being complete. With their feet firmly grounded on faith, they can now face the realities of life no matter how harsh they may be. As Frederick W. Hilles remarked in his essay, *Rasselas*, ‘An Uninstructive Tale’, “The outlook on life here presented is not pessimistic but realistic” (1965, pg.118). A few months before he wrote *Rasselas*, Johnson wrote a letter to his friend Bennet Langton which ended with these words,

Whether to see life as it is will give us much consolation I know not, but the consolation which is drawn from truth, if any there be, is solid and durable, that which may be derived from error must be like its original fallacious and fugitive. (Hill, 1934, pg. 392)

This indeed is a commendable view of life and even if present readers do not affiliate to Johnson’s specific moral or religious stand-point, the prudence and sincerity his advice can hardly be questioned.

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ETHNIC IDENTITY CRISIS OF THE RAJBANSHIS

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Abstract:

In India, ethnic identity has become an important field of study for social sciences. Ethnic identity movement generally occurs with an aim to preserve, protect and secure the community. The Rajbanshis are the indigenous people of colonial and post-colonial period of India. They had a princely past, but like many other ethnic groups the Rajbanshi community also have been facing different problems for a long time due to their history, partition, colonial interference, migration, geographical alienation, multi-names, etc. which led some of them towards identity crisis. They had been striving for safeguarding their identity, which was spearheaded by different associations and organizations. Their struggle now turned into the form of the Kshatriya Movement and Kamatapur Movement. Thus, it is undeniable that the ethnic identity movement of Rajbanshis is a long drawn battle and still continuing.

Keywords: Ethnic, Identity, Rajbanshi, Migration, Kamatapur Movement

Introduction:

‘Ethnicity’ is one of the most intensely discussed concepts in social sciences. Ethnicity is the emergence of sentiment and

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emotions of a group where it seeks to preserve, protect and secure its separate ethnic identity. The sense of distinct identity in general rests on the belief of uniqueness about one’s own culture, tradition, religion, race and language etc. Paul R Brass has stated that ethnicity as, ‘any group of people dissimilar from other people in terms of objective culture criteria and containing within its membership, either in principle or in practice the elements for complete division of labour and of reproduction forms an ethnic category’ (Brass, 1999:19). Ethnic identity can be defined as a manner in which persons, on account of their ethnic origin, locate themselves psychologically in relation to one or more social systems and in which perceive others as locating them in relation to their system. Ethnic politics starts with the process of identity formation, identity revives and identity protection by certain ethnic groups of the society, who consider them to be inwardly oppressed and marginalized.

Geographically, the Indian sub-continent has facilitated the existence of numerous groups. India’s variety of pluralistic, in terms of language, race, class, religion, culture etc. makes the issue of ‘Identity’ much more complex. From colonial and post-colonial India has known many ethnic based identity conflicts, which have become more refulgenting in post-independence India. So on ethnic conflict has become a part of the political scenario in India. Among several ethnic groups in India Rajbanshi is an ethnic community, which is predominantly found in the states of West Bengal, Assam and some parts of Bihar and Meghalaya. They are also found in Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. The Rajbanshis are aboriginal resident in Northern part of West Bengal, which is also known as North Bengal, particularly in the districts of Cooch Behar, Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur and Malda. The majority of the people in this region belong to the Rajbanshi community. According to Swaraj Basu, “..... The Rajbanshis constituted the most predominant section of the local hindu population in the northern districts of Bengal”. In course of time, they are facing several problems, which led some of them

towards an identity crisis. The objective of the paper is to focus on the identity crisis of Rajbanshis and analyze the issue from a historical perspective.

Historical Analysis of The Rajbanshis:

The origin or ethnological identity of the Rajbanshis is a debatable issue. At first, we need a short discussion on the use of the terms Koch and Rajbanshi synonymously as in the present study. Swaraj Basu in her work *Dynamics of a Caste Movement: The Rajbanshis of North Bengal* has shown broadly two lines of argument regarding the origin of the Rajbanshis; one by colonial official-cum-ethnographers broadly they can be considered as orientalist and another by the Rajbanshi caste publicists (Basu 2003:27). According to the colonial writers B.H. Hodgson, W.W. Hunter and Herbert Risley stated the Rajbanshis were a purified group of 'Koch' who had adopted Hindu culture, tradition and social norms during the reign of Bishwa Singh who established the powerful Koch Kingdom in the beginning of the sixteenth century. The people now known as Rajbanshi are either pure Koches who have distinctly mongoloid features or else a mixed type in which the Koch element usually prevails (Basu 2003:28). There are several views among historians and scholars about their racial origin. Some of the writers like Risely, Colonel, Datton, Dr latham, oldham opine that the Rajbanshis belong to the Dravidian race. Another group headed, Sir Edward Gait, Sidney Endle, Bryan Hodgson, G.A. Grierson, Wandel, W.W. Hunter and Buchnan opine that the Rajbanshis belong to mongoloid stock. Although as per their religious beliefs, customs, social system and customs speeches and physical characteristics it can be clearly said that the Rajbanshis belong to mongoloid race. In due course of time with gradual intermixture with the Dravidians and Mongoloids stocks. According to Nalini Ranjan Roy, the people of Rajbanshi community have the features mixed up with four human streams i.e., Austral-Asiatic, Dravidian, Mongoloid and Aryan, Where Mongoloid features are preponderant (Roy: 2007:6). A.C.

Choudhary viewed that they connected with all cultures of human races i.e., Austral-Asiatic, Dravidian, Mongoloid and Aryan, finally they accepted the Aryan culture and they have converted to Hinduism (Choudhary:2011:9). Therefore, the racial origin of them still remains a matter of controversy.

Kamatapur was a region where the Koch kingdom ruled over for a long period of time from 13 century onwards and inherent in the process of post independent state formation in India. In the sixteenth century, the Koches emerged as a strong influential kingdom by Bishwa Singha, son of Hariya Mandal, the chief of twelve leading families of Meches or Koches of the village Chikangram in present day Goalpara district of Assam. Soon after the death of Hariya, his son Bishwa Singha was able to establish his sovereign power over all petty rulers of the region, and that was later further extended to his son and successor Naranarayan. During the period of Naranarayan the Koch kingdom achieved supreme position. But the glorious days of Koch kingdom did not last long as soon after the death of Chilarai the Kingdom was divided into two parts- Koch Bihar or Kamata and Koch Hajo or Kamrup (Nath:1989: 103-104). In 1776 an agreement was signed between Koch King Dharendra Narayan and the East India Company. This agreement Provided East India Company with supremacy over the Koch kingdom (Roy: 2007:56). As a result of this treaty the Koch-Kamata alias Cooch Behar kingdom became a native state of India. It continued till the time India got Independence from colonial rule in 1947.

Emergence of Identity Movement:

After careful study of the historical background of the 'Rajbanshis' it can be assured that the identical problem of them was an ongoing process which lies its roots from the beginning of their history. In the post-independence era, they are still facing the problem of their identity. As stated above, as a treaty signed in 1776, with Koch kingdom and East India company, by this treaty Koch kingdom was accepted under complete

control of the British authority. Soon after the Koch kingdom became the 'de facto ruler' Koch dynasty. With the invasion of the British in the administration of the country, a new era was started for the Rajbanshi community. The British in Bengal were more dependent on upper caste Hindu Bengalis for political and economic purposes. Thus, they considered themselves political superior and the Rajbanshi were oppressed and neglected, and started to control the people of the tribal Koch dynasty. They also commenced to hold all the chief positions in the administration and the local Rajbanshi were left behind educationally, economically, politically and socially. Another cause of oppression and negligence in the whole system, the Rajbanshi were categorized as the lower castes in society. There were many examples where Rajbanshis were depressed by upper caste Hindus. In such a situation of social oppression the Rajbanshis were turned into "Kshatriya Movement" through which Rajbanshis challenged the lower status attributed to them and claimed for upper status. The Movement lead by Panchanan Barma (1865-1935) a Rajbanshi leader and reformer from Koch Bihar came up to encourage Rajbanshi people to get together and established Kshatriya Sabha in 1910 to inculcate Brahmanical values and practices among Rajbanshi people. The principle of this movement was to remove racial discrimination and to establish social respect and dignity of the Rajbanshi people. Panchanan felt that Rajbanshi must get organized and educated, which he tried to achieve through the Kshatriya Samiti. Thus, the prime and immediate objective of the samiti was to regain the royal or Kshatriya status of the Rajbanshi community in the Hindu social system. The Rajbanshis are proud to call them as 'Rajbanshi' which means descendant of royal blood. But in caste-based society they enjoyed a lower status. They could not progress their social status as the upper caste Hindus were against such reformation. After independence they had to face various oppression in their social life in Bengal and Assam as the administrative power of these states respectively went to hand

to Bengalis and Assamese people. In the later phase the 'Kshatriya Movement' lost its significance as the Rajbanshis were able to get Scheduled Caste status with the initiative of Panchanan Barma. Some of the Rajbanshi people themselves are responsible for their identity issue. It is because some elite and conservative Rajbanshi feel ashamed to identify themselves as Rajbanshi. Some Conservative Rajbanshis feel proud to identify themselves as Bengali in West Bengal. It is because during the time of independence Bengali became a significant race and language and acquired national and international value and concern.

The Present identity movement by the Rajbanshis is connected with the issue of migration. In the case of North Bengal in early 20th century the migration of rich Hindu Bengali gentry from erstwhile East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) to the Rajbanshi dominated areas compiled a feeling of alienation and deprivation. The influx of Hindu gentry created many social as well as economic problems for the Rajbanshis. Swaraj Basu further says that the local situation emerged a ground for the identity consciousness among the people of Rajbanshi community. With the gradual changing of time, they lost everything including land, their everyday livelihood, language, culture, and identity. The immigrant upper caste gentry in time became the most dominant group in the local society, economy and politics. They used the term 'Bahe' to refer to the Rajbanshis that implies their cultural inferiority. Many other socio-cultural factors where the Rajbanshi were humiliated in their everyday life. At present the main concentration of them is in North Bengal and lower Assam that is accounted as their original paradise. The social discrimination was much more observable in both North Bengal and Assam. The feeling of alienation and discrimination created a sense of identity consciousness among Rajbanshis that reflects in the present identity movement by them. Another complicated issue close to them is the absence of a common script and recognized language. Though they have their own oral language but do not have a common script. Therefore, they use Bengali

script in Bengal and Assamese in Assam for their advantage in writings. Another difficult issue is that they are known as various names, the terms such as Rajbanshi (people belong to royal race), Banshi (people belong to same race), Kshatriya (posterity of the kings or warrior class), Deshi (people belong to native land) are used mostly in North Bengal and lower Assam. Although these terms are used by other people and even themselves to refer to the same Rajbanshi community. Apart from these another burning issue of Rajbanshis are given different caste status in different states. In West Bengal they are known as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes in Meghalaya, Other Backward Classes in Assam and Bihar. Therefore, the agitation among the Rajbanshis is increasing which adds to them the forcible identity crisis. In recent times Rajbanshis are trying to preserve and protect their ethnic identity by the Kamatapur Movement.

Rajbanshis Identity Movement and Its Future:

The identity movement by Rajbanshis has a history. In the 20th century the first attempt of social upliftment of Rajbanshis, which is also known as 'Kshatriya Movement' was initiated under the leadership of Panchanan Barma was also a part of their identity movement. In the following year he led a Kshatriyanisation movement among the Rajbanshi community with the aim to remove racial discrimination and establish social respect and dignity of Rajbanshi people. Since independence they have become more sensitive regarding their identity and social dignity. The Rajbanshi people have been striving for protecting their identity through different associations and organizations, which have turned into the Kamtapur Movement. This autonomy movement by the Rajbanshis are demanding a separate Kamtapur state comprising Rajbanshi dominated areas of North Bengal and Assam. The number of districts of North Bengal includes Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Uttar Dinajpur, Dakshin Dinajpur, Malda and Alipurduar. In Assam the number of districts, in which proposed state, these are

Dhubri, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, chirag, Goalpara, Barpeta, Baksa, Nalbari, Kamrup, Udalguri, Darang, Morigaon, Sonitpur and Lakhimpur. Some important spearhead organizations are Kamatapur People's Party (KPP), All Koch Rajbanshi Students Union (AKRSU), Kamatapur Liberation Organisation (KLO) and All Kamatapur Students Organisation Association (AKSO) have played crucial role to continue the movement to achieve the goal. Recently created a new organization 'Greater Cooch Behar People's Association' is another North Bengal based organization agitating for the creation of a separate state of 'Greater Cooch Behar' of Rajbanshis. So, today's the Rajbanshis with the ethnic identity movement focusing to mobilize people's consciousness towards their history, culture, language and tradition to ensure their socio-cultural development. Thus after discussing it is evident that the ethnic identity movement of the Rajbanshis is a long drawn battle and still continuing to preserve, protect and develop their distinct identity.

Conclusion:

Rajbanshis are one of the oldest aboriginal ethnic groups of South Asia. There are still controversies also exists among historians and scholars on the racial origin of Rajbanshi. There was a glorious period of their rule in the past which ended after independence. Socio-cultural as well as economic crisis was a prime reason Rajbanshis present agitation. Apart from this agitation they are demanding a separate state within Indian dominion. The intensity is still continuing recognition of Rajbanshi language under the eighth schedule of the constitution of India along with the demands of cultural and socio-economic development of their community. However, through this movement Rajbanshis should get their socio-cultural identity.

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