



# AL-SHODHANA

*A Multi Disciplinary Refereed Research Journal*

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**Rodrigues**

**St Aloysius College (Autonomous), Mangaluru, Karnataka**

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# Editorial

Keeping up to date with accurate research developments has been enormously challenging amid mushrooming data circulated in the guise of knowledge and mounting workload in an academic year. Despite the challenges, disseminating research findings among the relevant groups is an ethical obligation of a researcher. Considering the reach and the magnitude of multidisciplinary nature of *Al-Shodhana*, research papers on inclusive growth, abnormal behaviour, memes, Basel Mission, health care and human rights are included in this issue.

In a critical assessment on the lacklustre situation of inclusive growth in India, Dr G V Joshi argues for a major overhaul in assessing the economic condition of the underprivileged sections of Indian society. The paper exhaustively analyses the historical situation on inclusive growth and accurately describes the efforts of both union and state governments as far from satisfactory. The idea, despite having a noble vision has failed in uplifting the vulnerable populations due to apathy and lack of political will.

Dr Sonal Singh studies the abnormal behaviour of the female protagonists in *Cry, The Peacock* (Anita Desai), *Wife* (Bharati Mukharjee), and *Hedda Gabler* (Henrik Ibsen). The paper brings out the interface among literature, psychology and life by studying the fictional accounts in the context of defence mechanism, denial of reality, projection, regression, displacement, rationalisation, selective forgetting, etc.

Sanjoop KP studies Memes, an internet phenomenon, and offers a model of meme analysis in the Indian context. Borrowing the context of evolutionary biology, the paper identifies limitations of the model and stresses the need to study the larger socio-political context in which memes operate. The author argues that memes are part of participatory digital culture wherein the users, audiences, consumers and fans create and consume the cultural content for various reasons.

Nandakishore brings forth the apathy of indigenes towards the evangelical attempts of Basel Mission in the Kanara region. The paper argues, based on the Basel Mission Reports that the approach to conversion by the Basel Mission as widely different from the other mission societies. The mission didn't just want a shift in religion, but it considered conversion as a process involving changes in the indigene at multiple levels. For the mission the quality of the new entrants was more important than the number.

Mona Mendonca and Rudolph Noronha deal with the contribution of Christian community in the field of health care in Dakshina Kannada district. The paper traces the evolution of health care in two phases: under British since 1800 and under Christian Missionaries since 1834.

Anjana and Fr William Marcel Rodrigues SJ focus on the coverage of human rights issues in *The Hindu* and *The Times of India* within the time frame of January 2021. The paper establishes a marked difference in the reportage between the said newspapers, especially in the tone of reportage, the placement of news stories and maintaining a balanced view.

I thank the Principal of St Aloysius College (Autonomous), Rev Dr Praveen Martis SJ for his continuous support. I'd like to thank all the contributors and all the members of the editorial board for their cooperation in publishing this issue.

**Dr Girish N**  
**Editor-in-Chief**

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# INCLUSIVE GROWTH IN INDIA: DISAPPOINTING EXPERIENCES LOOMING LARGE

G V Joshi

## **Abstract**

*The vulnerable sections of Indian population are crushed under a trinity of problems: poverty, unemployment and inequality. These problems are deep-rooted and widespread, and Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has aggravated the situation. Both central and state governments have to make relentless efforts to achieve inclusive growth so that the weaker sections are not left behind. Keeping in mind the need for maintaining the federal structure intact, both the governments have to design appropriate strategies to realize the vision of inclusive growth. However, the recent budgetary operations and the subsequent policy pronouncements indicate that the idea of inclusive growth is sidelined by the portals of power.*

**Keywords:** Five year plans, coronavirus, inequality, poverty, disinvestment

## **Context**

The focus of inclusive growth is on creating equal opportunities to all and making them accessible to everyone irrespective of individual circumstances. Economic opportunities are created to all, particularly the poor, to the maximum extent possible (Rauniya and Kanbur, 2009). In India, the concept of inclusive growth has turned out to be elusive in several ways, as a result of which the actual experiences are far from satisfactory. Inclusive growth is a complex process. It is being conceived as a hard nut to crack (Ramaswamy, 2021). Growth becomes inclusive only if it is pro-poor and if the income of the poor grow faster than those of the population as a whole. It should, therefore, be accompanied by a decline in inequality (Dollar and Kraay 2002; Rafael and Ramos 2013). To put it differently, it should carry forward the torch of equity and justice.

The present central government has cast aside the concept of inclusive growth. At a time when inclusive growth is really needed to rescue the vulnerable sections of the society impaired by Covid-19, it is getting evaporated. Appalling poverty, frightening unemployment and tightening inequality of income and wealth — a trinity of problems - have assumed menacing proportions. To add fuel to the fire, efforts are being made, either overtly or covertly, to push the concept

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*Dr G V Joshi, Former Professor and Chairman, Department of Economics, Mangalore University*

of inclusive growth under the carpet by the State. The time is now ripe to review the financial relationship between the centre and the states to keep India's federal structure intact, responsive and vibrant. Grasping this reality, the Supreme Court has recently observed that it is imperative to adhere to a fine balance between the powers and domains of the central and the state governments (Singh, 2021).

Galbraith having close intimacy with stark and hard realities in India observed that "Poverty is cruel: A continuing struggle to escape what is continuously frustrated is more cruel" (1979). In his view, vicious circle of poverty is due mainly to the fact that the people in poor countries, out of the experience of centuries, reconcile themselves to what has for so long been inevitable. It is doubly true when Coronavirus disrupted social relations.

Covid-19 compelled India to experience the highest annual contraction of 7.3 per cent in 2020-2021 (Rout and Muduli, 2021). The International rating agencies namely, *Crisil*, *Moody's Investors*, *Care Ratings* and *Emkay Global* struck pessimistic notes by cutting back their growth projections for 2022 below 10 per cent. Fitch Ratings was conspicuously pessimistic by cutting India's economic growth forecast just to 8.7 per cent saying that the second wave of Coronavirus will delay recovery. The prospects of making growth inclusive are bleak and dismal because the Niti Aayog has estimated that the country must attain and sustain at least 10 per cent growth for poverty removal.

In October 2021, the President of the World Bank David Malpass observed that the Indian economy was recovering from Covid-19 crisis. But he immediately added that it would grow by just 8.3 per cent this year. In his own words, "Indians were hit by the waves of Covid and that is unfortunate". The damage that Covid-19 caused to India's vast and weak informal sector needs no elaboration.

Commenting on the mass poverty in the Economic and Social Commission on Asia and the Pacific Region where India figures, its economic bulletin for December 1996 lamented that the potential contribution of the vast majority of the people to development was constrained by forces beyond their control (Joshi and Prasad, 2014).

On 21 December 2004, in her Presidential Address in the Annual Conference of the Indian Economic Association held at Varanasi, Yashodha Shanmugasundaram was emphasising the rise of health economics figuring significantly in policy making (Yashodha, 2005). The practical significance of health economics has tremendously increased all over the world as a major outcome of the damage caused by Covid-19. The severe limitations of health infrastructure are brought to the forefront in the wake of the spread of Coronavirus shaking budgetary operations of States. Though as much as 69 per cent of India's population resides in rural areas, the doctor to patient ratio here is just 1:25,000 while the WHO has recommended ratio of 1:1000 (Varsha Gowda, 2021).

This research paper, is intended to stress that the forces preventing inclusive growth were in operation much before Coronavirus started creating havoc. These forces have been reinforced and reinvigorated by the pandemic. The roles of the centre, states and local government institutions should become complementary to the goal of inclusive growth that necessitates fiscal federalism.

### **Inclusive Growth: Thoughts, Practices and Experiences**

The framers of the Indian Constitution, saw the need for inclusive growth though they did not explicitly declare it (Mukherjee, 2021). *The Preamble* to the Constitution, the *Directive Principles of the State Policy*, *Article 14* and the relevant parts of *Article 16* of the Constitution advocate the principle of equality and argue that it is the responsibility of the State to evolve an order for providing social, economic and political justice. Noble aspirations of the framers of the Constitution have not succeeded yet. Many policies including Industrial Licensing were announced after 1969. In the same year, major commercial banks were nationalized to remove poverty and to prevent concentration of economic power. The shadow of inclusive growth was very much visible then. Subsequently, the failures of the administrative machinery to realize the goal of economic and social justice came to be misconceived as failures and limitations of the same goal.

The shadow of inclusive growth was perceivable in 1954 when the Congress party under the leadership of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru declared that it

was keenly interested in evolving a socialistic pattern of society. It took the wind out of sails of other political parties with the leftist orientation. Thereafter many leading socialists including Ashok Mehta joined the Congress party. In the 1970s, when the ruling Congress party under the leadership of Mrs Indira Gandhi adopted the strategy of evolving socialistic pattern of society for ameliorating the conditions of the poor, then also many socialists volunteered to join it. However, the goal of inclusive growth were not realised. It was pushed into the oblivion in the 1980s because of the virulent inflationary forces making the rich richer and the poor poorer eclipsed the Indian economy. The same forces are now in operation indicating that when history repeats itself its cost heavily increases. The price rise can promote corruption which is twisting and thwarting the prospects of real inclusive growth (Khan, 2007).

The two land reform measures with a considerable redistributive effect were ceilings on land holdings and tenancy reforms construed as policies necessary for inclusive growth in rural India. The land ceiling measures in a large number of states ended in a fiasco as there were provisions to circumvent or legal measures to defeat the process. After the era of economic reforms began in 1991 the economies of large scale farming were pushed to the front. The economists argued for surplus generation in agriculture by scrapping ceilings on land holdings (Dandekar 1993).

In Karnataka, which was known for enacting progressive and pragmatic land reforms in 1974, it was imagined that implementation of ceilings was not going to be a success. Subsequently, the analysis of land reforms statistics by Rajan showed that the ceiling law impacted a very small number of landowners, roughly 9550, despite large scale administrative endeavor (Rajan,1986). The entire area of surplus land, 2.73 lakh hectares, secured for the redistribution programme came from these landowners, three-fourths of whom were in just four districts of the northern Maidan (Raichur, Bijapur, Gulbarga and Dharwad). The land ceiling laws in many parts of the rural India failed to emerge as measures of inclusive growth in agriculture.

The adequacy of tenancy reform as a measure of inclusive growth in agriculture can be justified on the twin grounds of equity/distributive justice and efficiency/productivity. The need for fresh thinking on tenancy reform arose after the

presentation of the union budget for 2018-2019 by the erstwhile Minister of Finance, Arun Jetli. He declared the government's policy of steadily increasing the volume of institutional credit for agriculture. At the same time, he did not fail to mention that many informal tenant cultivators were forced by circumstances to secure credit from usurious money lenders. Later the Niti Aayog developed a Model Leasing Act, with the intention of strengthening the legal and technical position of the tenant and enabling him to secure a larger share in the product of the land. It aimed at the goal of raising farm productivity of land by strengthening agricultural resilience (Joshi, 2021).

The Coalition Government, led by Janata Dal and BJP, declared on November 1, 2006, the second Agricultural Policy of Karnataka with a positive approach to tenancy. It ensured an elaborate public debate on this issue. But the second policy fell through due to the political change that followed in the State later. Mr Krishna Byre Gouda, in the capacity of Minister of Agriculture in the Government of Karnataka showed in 2017 a favorable reaction to the Model Leasing Act of 2016. But no further step was taken subsequently. In fact with computerized land records, Karnataka should have taken a lead in initiating a policy measure for promoting agricultural tenancy on the basis of the said Model Act. Like Karnataka, many other states have shown lukewarm attitude to the Act though they have not failed in extending half-hearted support to the Central Government's goal of Doubling Farmers Income by 2022.

That adequate justice should be done to the poor in India was pointed out by the Supreme Court of India. In one of its landmark and hard hitting judgments pronounced in October 1996 the Court reminded the centre, states and even local bodies of their constitutional responsibilities of providing residence to both the rural and the urban poor in a phased manner by making provision in their annual budgets. As the Judgment observed, "It is rather unfortunate that even after half century from the date of Independence, no constructive planning has been implemented to ameliorate the conditions of the rural people by providing them regular source of livelihood or infrastructural facilities" (Joshi and Prasad, 2014). This judgment had, however, a highly restricted coverage and could not matter much in reality because it was an observation in a particular case; it was not a law to produce commanding effect. Many such judicial pronouncements with wide and deep social concern have remained till date in cold storage.

The higher rate of economic growth in the reform era (1991) was accompanied by grave inequality of income and wealth. This prompted the Central Government to raise the slogan of inclusive growth in the Eleventh Five Year Plan. The then Prime Minister Manmohan Singh addressing the Planning Commission on October 18, 2006 declared that it would be a historic plan with a distinct goal of more inclusive growth. Building on the growth momentum, increasing the rate of agricultural growth, growth strategy generating much needed employment, public-private partnership for the development of infrastructure and deciding priorities in planning for inclusive growth were but some of the goals which then engaged the attention of the Government of India.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan Document (2007-12) admitted that in spite of impressive growth stories characterizing the Indian scene, the problems of poverty and inequality continued. (Approach Paper, 2006). It listed various forms of divides: between the haves and the have-nots; between rural and urban areas; between the employed and the under/unemployed; between different states, districts and communities; and finally between genders. As the Document deplored, “Such marked inequalities are a matter of concern and, in some cases, even shame. The 11<sup>th</sup> Plan must ensure that the growth process helps to bridge these divides.” We do not come across any explanation or interpretation in the document to suggest that inclusive growth means upliftment of all sections of the society. Using comparable data for the period 1999-2000 and 2004-2005 the document plainly stated that reduction in poverty during this period was only about 0.8 percentage points per year, a negligible rate of decline, not resembling even a drop in the ocean.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Plan document referred to inclusive growth as:

This broad vision of the Eleventh Plan includes several inter-related components: rapid growth that reduces poverty and creates employment opportunities, access to essential services in health and education especially for the poor, equality of opportunity, empowerment through education and skill development, employment opportunities underpinned by the National Rural Employment Programme, environmental sustainability, recognition of women’s agency and good governance.

In this document we do not come across any explanation or interpretation and not even inference to suggest that inclusive growth would mean growth and welfare of all sections of the society.

However, politics of inclusive growth superseded its economics to the extent of becoming a strategy of mobilising votes for UPA from the very beginning. This was done by Mrs Sonia Gandhi in 2009, the President of UPA. She thought of projecting inclusive growth as well-being of all social sections. In her own words, “To be equitable, economic growth has to be sustainable. To be sustainable, economic growth has in turn to be all inclusive. All inclusive is no longer the greatest good of the greatest number. It is Sarvodaya or the rise of all.”

Mrs Sonia Gandhi’s words were quoted with a sense of approval by the then Union Finance Minister Pranav Mukharjee in the interim budget presented in the Lok Sabha on February 16, 2009. Pranav Mukharjee said that the Eleventh Five Year Plan provided a comprehensive framework and strategy for making growth faster and more inclusive. There was nothing in the Plan document to support what Mrs Sonia Gandhi had said to mobilize votes in the national elections that followed after the presentation of the interim budget. The other political leaders, Manmohan Singh, P Chidambaram, S M Krishna etc seized the opportunity of quoting Mrs Sonia Gandhi on different platforms. The erstwhile Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission Montek Singh Aluwalia also agreed with what Mrs Sonia Gandhi had said though he admitted later in 2011 that inclusive growth was a complex and complicated goal to accomplish.

Rangarajan also thought that inclusive growth should support all sections of the society though he did not forget the significance of equity (Rangarajan, 2008). In his special lecture delivered in Mangalore University on August 10, 2007, he identified five stages of economic growth. In the first stage, growth was identified with an increase in the availability of material goods and services and was to be achieved through capital formation. In the second stage, there was a greater concern with the equitable distribution of income. In the third stage the concept of equity was interpreted to mean the provision to every one of what came to be described as “basic needs” such as food, education, safe drinking water and health services. The fourth stage was the emergence of the concept of ‘sustainable development’ focusing attention on balancing today’s concerns

with tomorrow's requirements. In the fifth stage there is much greater concern for inclusive growth which should cover all strata of society. Rangarajan states that emphasis is given to "financial inclusion" in the last stage as a route to inclusive growth.

A failed 11<sup>th</sup> Plan led to the Twelfth Plan (2012-2017) targeting an average annual growth rate of 9 per cent. The objective of the Plan was to achieve faster, sustainable and more inclusive growth. The main drivers of growth indicated were: sound macro-economic fundamentals, impact of economic reforms, dynamism of the private sector, demographic dividends and improvement in productivity (Shetty, 2012). After 2017 there was no economic planning to stress the significance of inclusive growth. The Modi government has scant regard for the task of making growth process inclusive even in the interest of the sections of the society traumatised by Covid-19.

Two important requirements for inclusive growth are; decentralization of powers and promotion of skill development on a large scale to increase employability. The Economic Survey for 2017-18, while admitting that the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments to the Constitution were watershed developments in the country's federal structure for achieving decentralization of powers essential for inclusive growth, asserted that it is necessary to evaluate their performance. This assertion is more than enough to disclose that the central purpose of these Amendments is yet to be fulfilled. Hardly any Panchayat keeps information on soil fertility, existing irrigation facilities and possible ways of creating more, weather profile, mineral resources, prospects of new industries, or even of cottage industries for its own area (Sarkar, 2007). It would not be a surprise if inclusive growth in many villages has remained even today a non-starter.

One of the flagship programmes covering Panchayats, which was introduced in the UPA regime was the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme or Act (MGNREGA). The Finance Minister Arun Jetli caused a pleasant surprise to the opposition parties by maintaining with admirable clarity that MGNREGA would be substantially linked to agriculture and allied sectors. Though much progress was not registered in this direction Jetli's budgetary operations were indicating its role in facilitating inclusive growth. But unfortunately his successor Mrs Nirmala Sitaraman in her budgets did not recognise the significance

of MGNREGA . It became more evident after the first wave of Coronavirus (see the editorial note of *Deccan Herald*, November 11, 2021). The effort of Karnataka in linking MGNREGA to agriculture did not get the success it deserved. Ultimately only dry land cultivation for growing paddy came within the purview of MGNREGA.

A study in Maharashtra that got wide publicity in 2015 found that MGNREGA provided works supporting agriculture. These works helped a large number of small and marginal farmers. Over all, the study including many agricultural operations and assets such as contour trenching, earthen and stone bunds, farm ponds, compartment bunding, land development etc. disproved the widespread perception that MGNREGA did not create anything productive (Ranware et al 2015). The accomplishments of Maharashtra serve as a model for other states if they are seriously and sincerely intended to attain inclusive growth in rural areas by providing employment.

The international seminar on “Employment and Employability of Higher Education Graduates” organised in New Delhi on 19-20 February 2019 by the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) threw much light on the imperative need for making economic growth more inclusive and sustainable. In India, increasing unemployment of the educated is accompanied by a widening job-skill mismatch and declining labour force participation rates, especially among women. The types of skills that are essential for raising employability of youths are communication skills, digital skills, problem solving skills and ‘the ability to learn’ (learning ability) skills in addition to technical skills expected to be possessed by the prospective employees. In order to achieve human centered agenda a two-pronged strategy for South Asian countries including India was highlighted in the aforementioned international seminar—the skill development that strengthens global competitiveness on the one hand and ensuring equitable and sustainable interventions for the disadvantaged groups on the other. With the spread of Coronavirus, the problem of providing jobs to the youngsters has become exceedingly difficult because we do not have even a reliable, authentic and up-to-date jobs data (Bradsher 2021).

India has witnessed decades of exclusive-inclusive logjam. Inclusive growth should be viewed as an improvement in the living condition of the vulnerable

sections and not as well being of all. Efforts to promote inclusive governance by strengthening local self government institutions like Panchayats with amendments to the Constitution may have to be initiated in the light of experiences obtainable in different states.

### **Inclusive Growth: An Appropriate Theoretical Exercise**

A theoretical exercise to treat inclusive growth as a measure to boost up living conditions of the poor with a focus on the principle of equity was made by Ifjal Ali and Hyun Hwa Son in 2007 (Ali and Son, 2007). They used data culled from the experiments made in 1998 and 2004 in Phillipines. Their study focused on (a) access to equity of educational and health services in the Phillipines and (b) how this access and equity of such services changed over time.

Ali and Son suggested that inclusiveness of growth depends on two factors:

- (1) average opportunities available to the population and
- (2) how opportunities are shared among the population.

It can be said that inclusive growth leads to the maximization of the social opportunity function which is more or less akin to Amartya Sen's social welfare function. Then follows the fairly acceptable conceptualisation of inclusive growth:

Inclusive Growth is defined as growth that not only creates new economic opportunities but also one that ensures equal access to the opportunities created for all segments of society, particularly the poor to the maximum possible extent.

This is rooted in the thinking that growth will generally be not pro-poor if left completely to markets.

This conceptualization with very wide applicability in India makes us think about the plight of small and marginal farmers. It is time for making investigations by the states to assess the adequacy of measures for improving the living conditions of small marginal farmers because many matters pertaining to agriculture are in the 'State List' of the Indian Constitution.

In his budget for 2018-19, Jetli estimated that more than 86 per cent of farmers in India were small and marginal farmers. Since they were always in a position

to directly transact at wholesale markets, he found it necessary to develop and upgrade existing 22,000 rural haats into Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrAMs) by building physical infrastructure using MGNREGA and other schemes. Jetli also declared that an Agri-Market Infrastructure Fund with a corpus of Rs 2000 crore would be set up for developing and upgrading agricultural marketing infrastructure in the 22000 GrAMs and 585 APMCs. Now an assessment of all measures undertaken to strengthen GrAMs is required to examine to what extent these have generated an institutional setting necessary for inclusive growth in agriculture.

India is now ranked 168<sup>th</sup> out of 180 countries in the world on the Environment Performance Index. This data can be treated as an evidence on the harsh reality that India's developmental status has reached (Krishna Raj, 2021). Covid 19 and climate change have impacted the livelihood of a large number of small and marginal farmers. They find it extremely difficult to take preventive and precautionary measures. But the Prime Minister, while recognizing the urgent need for modernising agriculture in his 75<sup>th</sup> Mann ki Baat programme on March 29, 2021 could not make a special mention of the vulnerability of small and marginal farmers.

Small and medium enterprises, which now constitute a chunk of MSMEs were saddled with a number of problems in the very beginning of the Twelfth Plan. In his analytical and arresting study (2019) of MSMEs Raju noted that problems like inadequate market research before launching products, adoption of outdated technology, lack of marketing prowess or brand investment and even external risks such as natural disasters or sudden regulatory shifts were sounding death knell for many MSMEs. Severely affected by measures taken by the government to combat Coronavirus many enterprises are now in deep trouble. Instead of espousing the cause of inclusive growth they are on the verge of collapse.

### **Old Problems: More Challenges**

Regardless of how poverty line was used by 2013 by the Planning Commission, it was clear that poverty remained a massive problem even before the pandemic (Asha Kapur Mehta et al 2019; B.S. Prakash 2012). In real life poverty has become much more stupendous and multidimensional (Atul Thakur, 2021).

As the Global Multi Poverty Index reported in 2019, India lifted 271 million citizens out of poverty and degradation between 2006-2016. The picture became drastically different later as reported by the Pew Research Centre. By applying the concept of purchasing power parity the Centre reported that the number of poor people more than doubled—from 60 million to 134 million—just in a year of 2020-21. This indicates that after nearly 45 years, India is back in a state where it can be considered as a nation of mass poverty. An estimate reveals that now India is home to as much as one-fifth of the world population, with still more than one fifth of its population being poor in terms of poverty headcount ratio.

The bewildering rise in the poverty level, is mainly the outcome of the rising unemployment. By September 30, 2021, there was 8.8 million loss of salaried jobs as reported by a veteran journalist Mahesh Vyas. In August 2021, 17 months after the lockdown implemented in April 2020, the aftermath of Covid-19, employment generation continued to remain low than it was in 2019 -2020. In fact employment in August 2021 was 5.7 million lower than in 2019-20 and such job losses are expected to create household stress. Many informal workers in urban areas turned to villages for eking out meager sustenance. What Dandekar said in 1993 in a special lecture in Mangalore University is resounding, *“Agriculture has been treated as a parking lot for the poor” (emphasis mine)*.

In 2018, Oxfam India, an International Organisation of Human Rights, had reported that as much as 73 per cent of the wealth created in the country was appropriated by just 1% of the people who were extremely rich. Its executive officer Nisha Agarwal warned of a rise in the share in the national wealth of a very few billionaires and of a worse conditions for the masses was a clear indicator of a major debacle. (Quoted in Joshi, 2021).

Covid-19 has worsened the situation reducing the income share of the marginalized sections. It affected millions, and snatched their sources of livelihood. The circumstances are such that the Government of India has to adopt comprehensive macroeconomic policies that ameliorate inclusive growth and improve income distribution (Rout and Muduli, 2021). Measures are deemed essential not to idealise the real, but to realize the ideal of inclusive growth when the key segments of the poverty stricken economy are circumscribed by several failures, constraints and travails.

In her budget for 2021-2022, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman, hardly mentioned the need for inclusive growth. She declared in ANNEXURE-III to the budget, Privatisation or Disinvestment/ Strategic Disinvestment Policy, the chief objective of which is to minimize the presence of Central Public Sector Enterprises, (CPSEs) including financial institutions and creating new investment space for private sector. Further she distinguished strategic sectors from non-strategic sectors. In strategic sectors (atomic energy, space, defense, transport and communications, power, petroleum etc) there will be a bare minimum presence of the public sector enterprises. She also declared that in non-strategic sectors, CPSEs will be privatized, otherwise shall be closed. This is in no way related to the dream of inclusive growth. The fact remains that even when economy was recovering in the wake of the second wave of Coronavirus private investment is missing (Saha, 2021).

Subsequently in August 2021, the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman, announced that the government intends to hand over public assets such as railway stations, roads, oil and gas pipelines and power sector projects to operate on lease. This asset monetisation plan of Rs 6 lakh crore on a sustainable basis over a period of four years from the financial year of 2021-22 to finance infrastructure projects would hardly lead to inclusive growth because barring very few exceptions private sector undertakings in India have not exhibited any public spirit. The predicament of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) serves as the vivid instance which reveals the lack of social values of private sector in general.

To conclude, inclusive growth in India should be taken to mean amelioration of the living condition of the vulnerable sections of the society through significant policy measures and not as welfare of all. Coronavirus has strengthened forces which are inimical to the much needed process of inclusive growth. The federal structure now needs to be reviewed. The present Central Government is pursuing policies which induce us to infer that inclusive growth in India has been forgotten that too at a time when it is really needed.

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# THE INTERFACE BETWEEN LITERATURE, PSYCHOLOGY AND LIFE

Sonal Singh

## **Abstract**

*Based on their keen observation of dark depths of human nature and consequent actions, the masters of literature have developed several moving characterizations of abnormal behaviour, bringing out the interface among literature, psychology and life. By providing heart-touching illustrations of psychological phenomena through drama or fiction, the literary artists have poignantly sensitized the readers towards the darker aspects of unconscious sphere of human beings, that often lead to devastation. The intricacies related to human behaviour and thought have always been at the core of various empirical studies conducted by psychologists. However, this statistical data is devoid of any colour and may remain just a mundane reality in the absence of the vivid representation catered through literature. Thus, psychology and literature intersect with one another and in turn can be effective sources for studying the complexities of life. The present paper aims at establishing this relationship through the study of characters in the works of Indian novelists Anita Desai and Bharti Mukherjee and Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen.*

**Keywords:** *defense mechanism, fantasy, projection rationalization, regression*

Psychology studies the patterns of subtlety and complexities of human mind. The examples of such patterns have been vividly portrayed in different genres of literature through the centuries. Thus, psychology and literature intersect with one another and in turn can be effective sources for studying the complexities of life. Taking inspiration from the astounding psychological discoveries and identifying similar patterns in the people around, many writers attempted to showcase the neurotic phenomena and their impact on the individuals as well as the society by drawing characters having similar traits. Out of these writers, the ones, who have poignantly depicted the intense traumatic experiences due to fierce mental as well as physical agony endured by sensitive protagonists, are Indian writers Anita Desai and Bharati Mukherjee and Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen. The present research paper endeavours to trace the relationship among literature, psychology and life through the study of “defense mechanisms” in the characters in Desai’s novel *Cry, The Peacock* (1963), Mukherjee’s novel *Wife* (1975) and Ibsen’s play *Hedda Gabler* (1890).

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According to Freud's theory of personality, (Freud, *TPEL*, 1901) an individual's inner state continually depends on the external environment in which he dwells. This environment may either provide opportunities for the gratification of desires and instincts and thereby providing relief from the tension, or the situation may turn into the one of distress and frustration due to the lack of fulfillment of needs. If the latter becomes frequent, one develops anxiety, in which one's ego is strained to such a level, that it makes it extremely challenging to maintain stability of mind. If the ego is not equipped so as to effectively overcome the crisis through regular actions and procedures, it has to often resort to the means of alternate resources such as "defense mechanism". Defense-oriented reactions are aimed chiefly at protecting the self from hurt and disorganization. They protect the individual from both the external threats, such as devaluating failures, as well as the internal threats, such as guilt arousing longings or actions.

Anita Desai has been known for her brilliant understanding of the intricacies of human mind and behaviour and fictionalizing these through her protagonists with an astute interpretation of challenging situations. She conceptualizes the existential problems of her characters, which can be accurately diagnosed in psychological terms. In *Cry, The Peacock* (1963), Desai's first novel, the protagonist Maya suffers from a deep-set identity crisis that had developed due to multiple inter-related factors. She is an over-sensitive, pampered girl, passionate about even small possessions, and married to her lawyer father's apprentice Gautama, who was a complete ill-match to her. Maya and Gautam were totally antithetical to each other in terms of sensitivity and reactions towards life situations. If Maya was a romantic dreamer, ever starving for love and attention, which she had endlessly enjoyed at her father's place, Gautam was a practical-minded professional, devoid of romantic leanings and incapable of expressing love in the manner Maya expected from him. Thus, Maya's romantic notions received a huge jolt post marriage. Her plight is, however, more a product of her own consciousness and her inability to outgrow from her memories of highly comfortable and over protected childhood. Along with this, there was also the intense impact of the belief in the prophecy of the Albino astrologer which haunts her all the time, according to which one of the married partners was destined to have a tragic short life. In the four years that Maya was married to

Gautama, she had experienced neglect and lack of appreciation and moreover, she was deeply frustrated and hurt by the realization that her husband was totally oblivious to her physical charms. These factors shattered the romantic vision of life that Maya had been carrying all along her growing years. The impact of this excruciating life on the somewhat abnormally sensitive girl was that it made her feel hysterical and eventually turn her into a paranoid personality. One day, in a fit of insanity, she pushes her husband down the roof of their house in the course of their evening walk and thus kills him.

To understand neurosis in Maya, it becomes imperative to consider in some detail the various needs, strivings and reactions occurring in the human beings. Through these we can learn about the various psychological motives leading to different forms of imbalance in personality. In trying to cope with the stressful and upsetting situations, Maya adopted certain “defense mechanisms” to protect herself from hurt and devaluation.

The simplest and most primitive of all defense mechanisms is “denial of reality”, in which one may turn away from the unpleasant sights or may refuse to discuss displeasing topics. While using such defense, the person may also faint when confronted with a traumatic situation, or he may simply deny criticism. The person may also purposefully become so preoccupied with work that there is no time left for him to deal with marital or child-rearing woes, or other personal crises. The use of this type of defense mechanism can be most precisely traced in Maya’s case. As her identity was intact only in her over-protected childhood, Maya tries to establish her identity after marriage by re-creating her fairy world of “Arabian Nights and lovely English and Irish fairy tales...in which much was excluded, which grew steadily more restricted, unnatural even, and in which I (Maya) lived as a toy princess in a toy world.” (Desai, *Cry, the Peacock*). The irony is that even when Maya clearly realizes the unreality of her imagined situation, she cannot come out of it. She makes no attempt at either self-analysis or reality-check and remains unaware of all the harsh realities around her while dwelling in her own illusionary world.

‘Fantasy’ is the second kind of defense mechanism, in which frustration is overcome by the imaginary fulfillment of aspirations and attainment of desires. Under this method, an individual enjoys satisfaction far beyond any that he has

ever been able to experience in reality. 'Fantasy' as a defense mechanism can be traced in Maya's case as we see that she always craves for love, but Gautama flees from it. She persistently demands for contact, relationship and communion with him, but, asleep or awake, Gautama remains a far-off figure, who cannot be one with her in her world of senses. She expresses her grief with the help of the imagery of withered flowers. The lifeless roses on her dressing table are very much like her desires. Unable to cope with her present situation, Maya escapes to her childhood memories and fantasize about her life at her father's house which used to be like a 'Mughal Garden', ever protective, ever pleasurable.

'Projection' is the third defense mechanism which provides protection against one's own shortcomings by displacing the fault onto another person or thing. Instead of acknowledging one's own fault, the individual easily accuses others of being the reason of his failure. A student who fails an examination may blame it on the teacher that the teacher was unfair; the offending youngster may blame the ever-rejecting and non-understanding parents for all the misdeeds and flaws. Fate and bad omen are very common objects of blame under this defense method. Even inanimate objects can be held responsible, like blaming a table for coming in the way and spilling the tea. Projection as a defense reaction can be traced throughout the novel *Cry, The Peacock*. In many ways the albino priest's predictions and Gautama's lack of sympathetic understanding are the fountain heads of Maya's neurosis. Maya lays the blame on Gautama who is always calm and detached as "mediator beneath the Sal tree," and also on the astrologer who remains near her consciousness always, either as a conjurer or as an Evil power. Being an epitome of helplessness and weak-willed, Maya had, in fact, developed the habit of always blaming others for all the failures and calamities in her life. Here we find that in order to protect herself from dangers she makes use of "projection" as a defense mechanism.

The next type of defense mechanism which can be traced in the novel is "Regression", in order to avoid anxiety, an individual may escape to the past, specially to that stage of development that they consider most blissful. When the outside world cannot help Maya, she looks within and flees to her glorified and over protective past where she lived a perfect existence and was treated as a perfect being. Thus, while eluding the real instances of the present, which do not fit into her romantic framework, she seeks shelter in the memories of the

past blissfulness, where no one questioned her actions and decisions. Instead of understanding her husband's practical viewpoint, Maya often detaches her emotions from him and starts living in self-delusion. Her expansive traits remain suppressed in her subconscious mind because she does not want to accept the harsh facts as well as censure of any kind.

Another Indian English Novelist, Bharati Mukherjee, who is an expatriate writer, enjoys an established reputation as a writer with immense knowledge of psychological studies and concepts. By delving deep into the labyrinth of her characters' psyche, she has been able to adroitly represent the basic motives and hidden desires behind complex human thoughts and actions. Her portrayal of the psyche of people suffering from uprootedness, loss and neglect has been extremely convincing and thought-provoking.

Bharati Mukherjee's novel *Wife* (1975) also clearly qualifies under the classification of psychological novel where an intense internal domain of a disturbed individual, suffering from neurological setbacks due to repressed desires, has been graphically depicted. Dimple Basu, the protagonist of this novel, is incompetent of constructively adapting to the challenges of life. She is an extremely puerile girl who ardently looks forward to getting married in the hope that it would bring her freedom from the pettiness of her middle-class existence. She had built her illusionary ideal castle of married life so firmly, that the delay in the fulfillment of this desire made her highly desperate and even suicidal. After an excruciatingly long wait to get married to a person who would fit into her romanticized frame of an ideal husband, she sadly got married to an average middle-class man, named Amit Kumar Basu, who was just opposite to her dream-image of a husband who was supposed to be an embodiment of virtues as well as material success. As expected, right from the initial stages of her marriage, where she had to stay in a joint family, Dimple feels frustrated and deceived, as the concept that for a married woman freedom cannot be without limits and its share of responsibilities, was just opposite to her notion of an ideal married life. The reality of this kind of existence was far from what she had aspired for. As her dream world shatters, she begins to detest her small and dingy new dwelling, her demanding in-laws and even Amit, who remained aloof towards her romantic, fanciful leanings, and failed to feed her desires. She found the married life wanting and despairing in various respects.

Later when Dimple along with her husband goes to America, her hopes are again contradicted. In fact, her life in New York becomes an even graver cause of Dimple's destruction. As Amit spends most of his time outside home, desperately searching for jobs, he falls even lower in the eyes of Dimple. She feels that as Amit's erstwhile superior status in his family has now collapsed, in his frustrated state he has become more self-centered and apathetic towards her emotional needs. Moreover, Dimple did not want to continue living an existence of a docile, decorous, loyal and submissive wife. She tries many ways of breaking the shackles of her traditional identity and turn into an American incarnation of herself. This included her seduction of her land lady's brother and watching American television shows and commercials where women seemed to be getting away from being punished for the crimes as intense as murders. Deeply caught in a whirlwind of distressing emotions as well as constant failures at establishing her self-esteem and identity, Dimple finally kills Amit with a kitchen-knife, achieving satisfaction in a masochist manner.

In this novel too we find that the novelist has minutely dealt with the crisis of the mind of the character, who has used certain common 'defense mechanisms' to fight with the repression of strong desires. As explained previously, 'Fantasy' is a 'defense mechanism', in which an individual gratifies his unfulfilled desires by imaginary achievements of goals and desires. Dimple had always been an escapist in the sense of taking shelter in her highly fantastical world and avoiding the harsh, mundane realities. Before her marriage, at her parents' middle-class set-up in Calcutta, she always dreamt about marrying a rich, handsome and successful neurosurgeon. She fantasized about Cinderella-like fate, where her life changed after meeting her prince charming. She had even fantasized about the image and personality of her future husband, having borrowed images from different commercials,

She borrowed a forehead from an aspirin ad, the lips, eyes and chin from a body-builder and shoulders ad, the stomach and legs from a trousers' ad and put the ideal man by herself in a restaurant on Park Street or by the side of a pool at a five-star hotel. (*Wife*, 23)

However, the wedding instead of bringing her the opportunities to enjoy a luxurious life with freedom from economic woes and social constraints and

blissful moments filled with cocktail parties and romantic getaways, brought her a stifling relationship in an extremely confining existence. Additionally, her husband Amit not only lacks in terms of capacity for passion and romance, but also lacks the inclination for high material achievement. Her aspiration of leading a life of abundance and plenitude received a severe jolt. Moreover, after reaching America, Dimple is trapped between two cultures, and soon gets disillusioned with life. She even stooped her moral conduct to a level where she tried seduction of other men and in the process lost her sense of self-respect. As a result, Dimple again incorporated 'fantasy' as a 'defense-mechanism', and took it to the extreme level where she even started to fantasize about her own death as a punishment after she had been 'sinful' in seducing another man in her own bedroom. She resorts to different methods of self-destruction and imagines various ways of committing suicide. She thinks of burning her head in the oven, slicing her jugular vein, ingesting insecticide, getting choked in a garbage bag, depriving herself of food, falling on to a knife and various other violent methods observed on television shows where people got brutally murdered. Both in her dreams as well as in the state of wakefulness, she sees visions of her death and even the post-mortem being performed on her body.

Dimple displays another psychic peculiarity by using 'displacement' as a defense mechanism when she redirects hostility towards her pregnant state to a least threatening mouse. Dimple considers pregnancy as a restriction to her independence, and in order to get herself rid of the Basu's 'property' in her womb, she kills a mouse thus making use of the defense technique of displacement and reducing her anxiety. The justification given by her was that the mouse "had a strangely swollen body. A very small creature with a fat belly. To Dimple, the dead mouse looked pregnant." (Wife, 35). Having killed the mouse, she actually feels she has killed her own child and freed herself from a restrictive situation.

Later, Dimple is also seen practicing the defense mechanism of 'rationalization,' hunting for reasons to justify one's behaviour or actions. In order to prove herself correct in killing her own unborn child, she tries to rationalize her actions with the belief that nobody had consulted her "before depositing it in her body." (Wife, 31). Despite committing a purposeful homicide, Dimple does not accept this action as a sin for she "had not planned it for months or used something flashy – a red hot poker from the kitchen or large sewing scissors." (Wife, 42)

Dimple suffers from a terrible angst, and therefore “projection” as a ‘defense-mechanism’ can also be traced in her character. She blames Amit for shattering her dream of a fulfilling and a liberating marriage. During her moments of introspection, she always blamed the life and Amit for treating her most viciously. She constantly complains,

Life should have treated her better, should have added and subtracted in different proportions so that she was not left with a chimera. Amit was no more than that. He did not feed her reveries; he was unreal.”  
(*Wife*, 156).

Hence, she commits the act of Amit’s murder in a fit of neurotic frenzy.

Yet another writer, whose works prove to be remarkably “psychologically correct” is the famous Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen. Ibsen’s play *Hedda Gabler* was written around the same time when Freud brought out his psychoanalytic theories. The story of *Hedda Gabler* is that of a plight of a woman who was forced to live in an extremely restrictive society causing repression leading to acute destructive behaviour. In the beginning of the play, the dramatist presented Hedda as a woman from high social strata, who has a strong sense of propriety and who was capable of going to any length to safeguard her respectability and identity in the society. As a result of an upbringing in a rigidly conventional, male dominated society, she developed a need of asserting a free-will at any cost. However, when the environment and society around her tried to stifle her free spirit continuously, she develops a rebellious attitude. The only reason why she married George Tesman was to gain the prospects of living in an enormous mansion, while enjoying certain amenities and decent status in the society. As the marriage of Hedda and Tesman was devoid of a strong base of love, she soon got fed up with the company of her husband who kept himself highly busy with his research even during their wedding trip. The level of frustration and resentment was such that Hedda was not even ready to acknowledge her pregnancy on her return. Now she often recalled with disappointment her rejection of the proposal of Ejlert Lovborg, who although fulfilled her romantic yearnings, lacked the affluence as well as the tag of social respectability. When Hedda discovers that Lovborg is in a relationship with a woman called as Thea Elvsted, a lady whom she strongly derides, she became extremely jealous and took up the task of

wrecking their happiness. Her desire of destroying the bliss of Lovborg and Thea was materialized when she succeeded in ruining the research manuscript of Lovborg (which was a symbol of love-offspring for Lovborg and Thea). Moreover, Hedda, instead of undergoing a feeling of remorse, went ahead to instigate Eilert for killing himself in the state of utter disappointment. However, later, after looking at the high prospects of getting caught when investigated, she finally commits suicide. The decision of ending her life can be considered as an attempt to remove the chances of humiliation as well as grabbing the opportunity of asserting control over her life.

The unusual actions and reactions of Hedda can actually be very well linked to her use of defense mechanism in order to protect her ego and overcome the feelings of insufficiency and littleness. Most of her bold actions were like a cover for her deep-set fears and anxiety, and methods of overcoming the insecurity of losing dignity and status.

In Hedda's case the use of the mechanism of 'Denial of reality', which is an attempt to 'screen out' disagreeable realities by ignoring or refusing to acknowledge them (Coleman, 1969), can be identified in her refusal to acknowledge the fact that she was carrying Tesman's baby in her womb, a state which she regarded as the mark of 'domestication' of women.

Repression, a defense tool that includes 'selective forgetting' in the words of Coleman, is a technique by means of which painful or undesirable experiences can be blocked and excluded from consciousness. This mechanism became operative in the case of Hedda when she made strong efforts to repress those memories which reminded her of her deep love for Ejlert Lovborg. Hedda also often resorted to the mechanism of rationalization, under which are included actions like justifying maladaptive behaviour by faulty logic and ascribing it to noble motive that did not in fact inspire it (Richard M Suinn, 1970). Hedda's act of deliberately concealing Ejlert's manuscript and later provoking him to commit suicide and giving it the garb of rational decision, telling him to let his end be 'beautiful', can be considered as an apt example of the practice of rationalization.

As an illustration of Hedda's use of defense mechanism of displacement, can be counted those incidents when Hedda attempted to achieve those goals through

Ejlert, which neither she, nor Tesman could attain. She tried to turn Ejlert into a lens through which she could see her dreams turn into reality. The fact was that Hedda wanted Ejlert to lead the open, uninhibited existence that she was not in the position to enjoy in her own life.

Thus, it won't be wrong to arrive at this inference that numerous examples from literary works can be cited where creative writers have tried to exemplify dramatically or fictionally what is known about personality, neurosis and many other aspects relevant to psychology as well as life and through these literary works many points of convergence between literature, psychology and life clearly get reflected.

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# THEORIZING MEMES

Sanjoop K P

## Abstract

The paper studies the contemporary phenomenon of Internet Memes focusing on two aspects: a. to historicise the concept of memes-tracing the evolution of the term, and b. to develop a model of meme analysis in the Indian context. The meaning and interpretation of an idea change based on the knowledge domain within which it is analysed. Memes have a history of usage tied to both evolutionary biology and internet-mediated communications. The paper documents these shifts in meaning, identifies certain limitations of theorizing memes based on western academia and provides an alternative model for analysing image-macro memes. It proposes that memes occupy the world of collaborative creation and they must be analysed under the larger lens of participatory media culture.

**Keywords:** digital culture, language, memetic, Meme frame, premise

## The Origin of Memes

Memes in the contemporary sense were not born with internet. There are several examples of memes that predate the era of Internet. A classic example is -"Kilroy meme". Launched during World War II, this meme incorporated a simple drawing of a man with a long nose looking over a wall, alongside a mysterious caption: "Kilroy Was Here" (Fig:1).

Fig. 1.

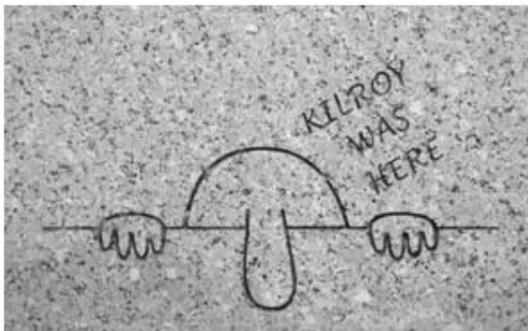


Fig. 2.



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kilroy\\_was\\_here](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kilroy_was_here)

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Though its origins are still a matter of debate, the most accepted version of its history, according to Daniel Gilmore, links it to a Massachusetts shipyard inspector named James J Kilroy (Shifman, 2014). Kilroy's job was to examine riveters' work after they completed their shifts. To keep track of his inspections, he began marking inspected areas with the phrase "Kilroy Was Here." When the ships were ready for launch, soldiers noticed these scribblings all over the ship. Kilroy was everywhere! At some point in the meme's journey, caricature of a little man with a huge nose was added to it. After the war, Kilroy was reincarnated in urban graffiti, as well as in various pop-culture artefacts. (Fig: 2). The meme gained popularity in the American context and outside the country. As Limor Shifman observes, "the slogan's meaning was mysterious and open to interpretation was an advantage, as it allowed each person to endow it with his or her own preferred meaning" (p. 24). The success of the meme depended upon its ease of imitation, its open-ended nature and the historical context that produced it. Moreover, the ability to understand and disseminate or generate new meanings out of the meme allowed membership of a community with a shared social capital of producing and understanding the cultural/political meanings of the meme. Its popularity tells us that people strived to replicate the meme, to join a community of Kilroy writers.

### **Defining a Meme**

Meme is a blanket term, that includes a range of internet activities. Memes are "postmodern folklore" (Shifman, 2014, p. 15) in which shared norms and values are constructed through cultural artefacts such as photoshopped images, animated GIFS, edited/remixed videos, and unconventional language models. They can be "widely shared catchphrases, auto-tuned songs, manipulated stock photos, or recordings of physical performances" (Milner, 2016, p. 2). They can take the form of pictures captioned on *Reddit*, puns hash tagged on *Twitter*, and videos mashed up on *YouTube*. Memes typify the internet ecosystem which is characterised by replication, remixing, repetition, re-appropriation, variation, and imitation, among other things. Instead of developing a uniform framework for defining and theorizing memes, it is important to undertake a culture specific approach towards the study of memes. Throughout this paper, the term "Meme" is used in the sense that it was defined by Richard Dawkins<sup>1</sup> who originally coined the term. Based on his understanding of the information exchange among genes he developed a systematic model to understand the 'propagation' of memes.

Every culture produces its own memes that circulate within the community of meme users and meme producers. Slogans, caricatures, jokes, folk elements, fashions become memetic through constant and subtly varying replications transmitted by a community of users. Richard Dawkins, in *The Selfish Gene* (1976) observes that memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense can be called imitation. Dawkins identified three key elements of a successful genetic variant: copy-fidelity, fecundity, and longevity. In relation to memes, copy-fidelity is the ability to replicate accurately; fecundity is its speed of replication; and longevity its stability over time. Certain memes he said, will be more successful than others because they fulfil a cultural need or are uniquely suited to a specific circumstance (Marwick, 2013). The stylized portrait of Che Guevara that fills the visual ecosystem of Kerala is one such example (Fig 3 & 4). Apart from being a protest symbol of the 'left' in Kerala, its appearance on t-shirts, slippers, umbrellas, abandoned building walls, denotes its prolific and prolonged participation in the popular culture of Kerala. The memetic sign undergoes repeated modifications in the process of its transmission and repeated use in multiple contexts. Though, memes as modes of communication existed prior to the internet era, the digital media enabled a mammoth increase in its spread and the speed at which they could be produced and reproduced.



Fig 3



Fig 4

Source: Scroll.in (photo credit: Praveen Jose)

## Dawkinsian Meme and the Internet Meme

The earliest use of the term 'meme' was in the context of evolutionary biology. Richard Dawkins describes it as, "small units of culture that spread from person to person by copying or imitation"(Shifman, 2014). He tried to apply evolutionary theory to cultural change and this metaphor runs throughout the discussion of the term. He originally proposed the term as a cultural corollary to the *gene*. A 'meme,' is "an idea that functions in a mind the same way a gene or virus functions in the body. And an infectious idea (call it a "viral meme") may leap from mind to mind, much as viruses leap from body to body"(Godwin, 1994). Like genes, memes are replicators that undergo variation, competition, selection, and retention. He imagined a meme as a spreadable idea, like its biological counterpart-the gene. According to Dawkins, memes are ideas which infect language and thought, replicating themselves within the minds and languages of individuals for the sole purpose of replication. Some of the examples of Dawkinsian memes are slogans, catch phrases, fashions, learned skills, and so on (Wiggins, 2019, p. 2).

Scholarship on memes has historically relied on this kind of an epidemiological model and has its limitations. Memes behave very differently from genes and reducing culture to biology would simplify complex human behaviours. According to Shifman, it is "not necessary to think of biology when analysing internet memes. The ideas of replication, and adaptation, can be analysed from a purely sociocultural perspective" (p. 12). Henry Jenkins and his colleagues rightfully assert that the gene-meme<sup>2</sup> metaphor is used in a problematic way, by conceptualizing people as helpless and passive creatures. The depiction of people as active agents is essential for understanding internet memes, particularly when the meaning of the meme is dramatically altered in the course of a meme's journey. The Dawkinsian approach also ignores the discursive aspect of internet meme. Dawkins' definition of meme elaborates on the movement of thoughts and concepts from brain to brain in the form of imitation, but it fails to relate to the complex and multifaceted ways in which content is created, spread, and represented online (Wiggins, 2019, p. 8). However, the greatest drawback of this kind of a formulation of the transmission of memes lies in its failure to recognize human agency and choice, in the construction, curation and consumption of the internet meme. According to Dawkins, memes replicate and mutate by random

chance, in a Darwinian fashion. But internet memes are created and altered by human creativity. Instead of trying to understand the complex tapestry of cultural communication through a simplistic theory of viral spread, it may be better to depart from Dawkins' epidemiological argument and situate meme studies in the larger context of participatory media culture.

Mike Godwin (1994) adopted Dawkins' idea of meme and placed it in the context of participatory media. Prior to Godwin's essay<sup>3</sup>, the meaning of the word meme was limited to Dawkins' definition of the term. Godwin used the term meme in the context of internet mediated communications to elucidate on what he calls "the Nazi comparison meme". This refers to a recurring pattern of behaviour among the participants on internet platforms to derogatorily compare other participants to Nazis, during an argument. In Godwin's words, "the labelling of posters or their ideas as "similar to the Nazis" or "Hitler-like" was a recurrent and often predictable event". Nazi comparison was a "rhetoric hammer", that somehow came handy for the (net dwellers) participants in online chats. Godwin identified this mode of behaviour in several forums and wanted to theorize this phenomenon. He argues there are obvious topics in which the comparison recurs. In discussions about guns and the Second Amendment, for example, gun-control advocates are periodically reminded that Hitler banned personal weapons. And birth-control debates are frequently marked by pro-lifers' insistence that abortionists are engaging in mass murder, worse than that of Nazi death camps. And in any newsgroup in which censorship is discussed, someone inevitably raises the spectre of Nazi book-burning. (paras.1-3)

Nazi comparison memes, became a device for othering online participants who were considered as ideological opponents during online discussions on particular topics.

### **Memes and Virals**

It is essential to differentiate Memes from its closest ally 'Virals', before moving any further. Virals are those internet pieces which could spread quickly to a wide range of users. Often, they are a single cultural unit (such as a video, photo, or joke) that circulates in many copies. An internet message becomes viral when it is actively forwarded from one person to other, "resulting in a rapid increase in the number of people who are exposed to the message" (Hemsley & Mason, 2010, pp. 138-176).

Shifman in her book argues that, a single video or image-macro meme is not an internet meme but part of a meme – “each individual meme is one manifestation of a group of texts that together can be described as the meme” (Shifman, 2014, p. 56). Simply put, some virals are born and buried as virals whereas others evolve to be memetic. In other words, memes thrive on intertextual references, and every newly created meme intertextually refers to other memes, socio-political events and other cultural artefacts like movies, advertisements etc. According to Shifman, if a single photo, video, or a physical performance triggers the creation of memes and if we are able to collect all the derivatives, then the corpus of all the collected memes can be called *a meme*. This is what Shifman calls the *derivatives* of a digital text. A viral content alone cannot become a meme until it enables the production of other digital texts. However, Shifman’s analysis has certain limitations. For instance, Shifman’s analysis presupposes the existence of an original viral image or videos which trigger derivatives. But most of the time, it is impossible to trace a specific video or photo that might have triggered several imitations or variations. Without meme repositories like ‘know your Meme,’ it will be difficult to label some memes as derivatives of a specific viral video or photo. Another consequence of Shifman’s formulation is that, grouping memes based on a single viral content would gloss over the problem of re-encontextualization of the internet meme. Varis and Blommaert (2014) argue “sharing” in *Facebook* is a classic example of re-encontextualizing. Re-encontextualization refers to the

process by means of which a piece of “text” is extracted from its original context- of-use and re-inserted into an entirely different one, involving different participation frameworks, a different kind of textuality. (pp.7-8)

Hence, every sharing creates a different set of derivatives, making this process an unending one. Shifman partially address this issue when she discusses the concept of “stance”. She identifies three dimensions of cultural items that people can easily imitate when creating a meme: content, form, and stance (pp. 39-41). By stance, she means “the ways in which addressers position themselves in relation to the text, its linguistic codes, the addressees, and other potential speakers.”

## Unpacking Image-macro Meme

This section will provide a model of meme analysis in the vernacular context of Kerala. Photographic memes with overlaid texts are referred to as image-macro memes. An Image-macro meme is a photographic image on which a caption, catchphrase or a dialogue is digitally superimposed. They combine the visual and the written text to communicate a desired message and evoke a particular response. Meme comprehension requires the knowledge of three basic components of an image-macro meme: 1. Meme-frame 2. Language 3. The Premise of the meme.

A meme-frame is the visual template into which a meme message is packed. It is also known as a plain meme or blank meme. As the term suggests, meme-frame provides the visual frame work of the meme into which a desired message can be inserted. The creation of a meme-frame demands the aid of editing tools. The simplest form of a meme-frame is one that is self-explanatory. Such meme-frames partially deliver the message through the body language or a particular facial expression of the character presented. Fig 5 depicts one such example; *The Success Kid*. *The Success Kid* is an Internet meme featuring a baby clenching a fistful of sand with a determined facial expression. It began in 2007 and eventually became known as “Success Kid”. Meme-frames like this are edited and remixed to communicate a new idea (Fig 6). This kind of a meme-frame does not require a knowledge of region or culture specific set of references.



Fig 5



Fig 6

Sources: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Success\\_Kid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Success_Kid)  
<https://in.pinterest.com/printmeme/success-kid-memes/>

A complex form of the meme-frame would include culture specific references in it. Complex meme-frame demands the knowledge of cultural texts like cinema, soaps, advertisements, music albums, news on politics etc. An example for the complex form of the meme-frame would be one in which the frame is taken from a very popular movie which is familiar to a linguistically specific audience (Fig 7 & 8).



Fig 7



Fig 8

Source: <https://www.memezero.com/movie/In%20Harihar%20Nagar/>

Fig 7 is a famous scene from the movie *In Harihar Nagar*, featuring the iconic villain John Honai, who terrorizes one of the characters and tries to snatch a briefcase filled with cash from her. Fig 8 is memetic reference to this scene in the movie in order to convey a new and different message. Since, this movie scene sets up the template of the meme, meme comprehension presupposes the viewers' knowledge of the movie and the meaning of this iconic scene. In the context of the Malayalam speaking public of Kerala comic blockbusters (movies like *In Harihar Nagar*, *Punjabi House*, *Chitram*, *Minnaram*, etc) and super-hits of Mammootty, Mohanlal and Suresh Gopi (*The King*, *The Commissioner*, *Narasimham*) etc, have inspired a large number of meme-frames.

The popularity of the meme-frame determines the success of a meme. For instance, Fig 9 is a meme-frame taken from the blockbuster film *Bahubali*. The image shows soldiers bending tall palm trees to cross over a huge fort amidst battle. Fig 10 is a finished meme, in which a premise is inserted through

language. This is done through a caption which reads: *Workers in Gujarat return to their houses after a day's work.* This meme refers to the wall built in Ahmedabad to screen slums ahead of US president Trump's visit to India in February 2020. Fig 8 demonstrates a complex intertextual mixing of two pet themes of the Malayali public: politics and movies, by using a movie frame to deliver a political message. One will find it nearly impossible to translate these with the same emotional effect to someone who does not know the language or the context of the original meme-frame.



Fig. 9



Fig. 10

Sources: <https://www.quora.com/What-are-some-of-the-funniest-scenes-in-Baahubali-2>  
<http://trollmallus.blogspot.com/2017/04/icu-bahubali-trolls-and-many-more.html>

The Language component refers to the ways in which “linguaging” is performed through fixed expressions and speech characteristics. Language restricts the spread of a meme and will arrest it within a specific linguistic boundary. Language includes the peculiarities of dialects, vernacular usages, and slangs to enhance the impact and the communicative capacity of the memes and allow the readers to connect with the issues raised. “I can has cheeseburger?”, a caption that went viral in the western media. On 11 January, 2007 a blogger based in Hawaii posted an image of a smiling cat, with a caption of the cat asking “I can has cheeseburger?” Soon enough it was tagged to a wide variety of other images. The caption, then, quickly became the basis for a particular pidginized variety of written English. This inspired the use of ungrammatical sentence structures in mainstream *Facebook* meme groups like FFC (Fan Fight Club), ICU (International Chalu Union), and Troll Malayalam in Kerala. Such experiments with language produce a community of viewers who are in-the-know of the meme

subculture. To draw an example from the Malayalam context, When the Cochin metro was inaugurated, the presence of a Kummanam Rajasekharan raised eyebrows as he was seen among the dignitaries. The accusation was that Kummanam Rajasekharan, the then BJP state president, was not in the list of dignitaries who were supposed to be a part of the inaugural ceremony (*The News Minute*, 2017). Opposition leader Ramesh Chennithala, local MLA P T Thomas, and Metro Man E Shreedharan were not permitted to share the metro travel with the Prime Minister citing security reasons. Hence, the presence of Mr Rajasekharan seemed uninvited and it was seen as a clear case of security breach. Memes started flowing and the word “*Kummanadi*” was coined which means ‘the act of travelling without buying tickets’ and later the definition has widened to ‘attending events uninvited’. Mr Rajasekharan denied all the allegations regarding the issue, stating that the Kerala police and the Special Protection Group (PSG) of the prime minister had informed him that his name was on the list of invitees. However, all this effort could not stop the spreading of the meme. The online meme logic sometimes transcends the digital spaces to shape the lived experiences of people. It is interesting to note that these new coinages spill over to offline communications too, thereby altering an existing language or slang. Though, the meme related to Mr Rajasekharan emerged in a context of political rivalry, *Kummanadi* is now a common expression that gets into the conversations of people in Kerala, both online and offline. Memes like this, catalysed a verbal migration of Malayalam language. A slang that was confined to a village in Kerala, now has the potential to spread across countries and cultures through online communication.

The most prominent component in a meme is the premise of the meme, because it connects the individual meme to a larger conversation. Participatory media facilitates vast constellations of individual expression, which intertwine into collective commentary, even as specific texts rise and fall. Memes occupy the world of collaborative creation suggested by An Xaio Mina (2019), where it is the larger conversation that matters rather than its individual components. Hence, it could be stated that meme has a fixed premise with novel expressions (Milner, 2016, p. 88). In fact, every new expression can inspire a different string of premises, thereby making meme analysis open ended. Recently in the Indian context, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been part of a series of congratulatory

memes dedicated to the Tokyo Olympic winners. All these memes have an oversized picture of the Prime Minister with the winners occupying only a corner of the poster (Fig 12). This series of memes originated after the Central government’s official event to felicitate medal winners at Tokyo Olympics turned out to be a PR exercise for the Prime Minister. “The stage for the event carried a large banner congratulating the winners-but the biggest photo on the banner was P M Modi’s. The images of the winners were found as a cluster in one corner” (*The Wire*, 2021). Ever since the official event, Prime Minister Narendra Modi featured in a series of Memes. Here the individual meme texts contribute to a larger conversation which reflects deeper political connotations. One way of reading this phenomenon is to see it as an attempt to use soft events-Modi’s visit to the US, his birthday, his 20 years of public office-as opportunities to rehabilitate and celebrate the prime minister’s image. As political scientist Neelanjana Sircar has put it, Modi represents a “politics of vishwas”<sup>4</sup>, built around the idea that “anything good coming out of the government is a result of the Prime Minister’s personal intervention” (Venkataramakrishnan, 2020). The series of memes featuring Modi, attempts to build a counter move against this kind of propaganda push. The meme in Fig 11 refers to Indian fast bowler Jaspreet Bumrah’s five wicket haul in a test match against England. The meme has Jaspreet Bumrah’s photograph in a corner, hardly identifiable, and Modi’s image at the centre, with the caption “well played bumrah”.



Fig 11



Find the pics of winners

Fig 12

Sources: <https://www.scoopwhoop.com/humor/twitter-memes-modi-congratulations-memes/>

## Conclusion

Today, memes have developed into a complete genre of communication among digital users. To fully understand its potential, one must look at the networked ecosystem of digital media and its functioning. Ryan M Milner (2016) uses the metaphor of the *tapestry* to theorize the phenomenon of memetic participation in the internet (pp. 2-4). Memetic participation implies the converging nature of social media which is characterised by a complex web of communication networks. Tapestry signifies an intricate or complex sequence of events. And this metaphor casts individual participatory media texts like tweets, *Facebook* posts and memes as strands that intertwine into threads of interaction, eventually forming whole tapestries of public conversation. According to Milner,

“when everyday members of the public contribute their small conversational strands to the vast cultural tapestry, they are memetically making their world. In other words, the aggregate texts, collectively created, circulated, and transformed by countless cultural participants are memetic”. (pp.2-3).

This kind of a digital environment enables us to operate within a participatory digital culture (Jenkins, et al., 2013). Participatory culture is a term that is often used for designating the involvement of users, audiences, consumers, and fans in the creation of culture and content. Examples are the joint editing of an article on *Wikipedia*, the uploading of images to *Flickr* or *Facebook*, the uploading of videos to *YouTube* and the creation of short messages on *Twitter* or *Weibo*. The participatory culture model is often opposed to the mass media and broadcasting model typical of newspapers, radio, and television, where there is one sender and many recipients. Scholars argue that culture and society become more democratic because users and audiences are enabled to produce culture themselves.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Richard Dawkins in his book “*The Selfish Gene*” (1976), introduced the idea of memes, while discussing the transfer of cultural information from person to person.

<sup>2</sup> Gene-Meme metaphor refers to viewing memes only as a cultural corollary to the gene.

<sup>3</sup> “Meme, Counter-Meme”(1994)

<sup>4</sup> Neelanjana Sircar’s article on Scroll.in titled “ The Politics of Vishwas: Political Mobilization in the 2019 Election” argues that Modi’s 2019 win represents a politics of Vishwas or trust, rather than Vikas or development.

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# MISSIONARY ZEAL VERSUS 'HEATHEN' APATHY: BASEL MISSION EVANGELIC EXPERIENCES IN KANARA

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## **Abstract**

*History of India is studded with a plethora of examples of Christian missionary interactions with the indigenous people. With an intent to propagate Christianity, many missionary societies had made their way to India. The German Basel Evangelic Mission was one of them which entered India in the mid-nineteenth century establishing its first mission centre at Mangalore in the then Kanarese region. The advent of the Basel missionaries in Kanara marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the region. This research paper analyses the Protestant Missionary evangelistic experiences in the Kanarese region. Basel Mission's approach to conversion was distinct and guided by the true Christian principles. The missionaries laboured zealously to establish a society based on the eulogised Christian ideals. Their efforts were directed at 'spiritual upliftment' by 'reforming the heathen from within'. Though the missionaries laboured passionately in carrying out this agenda, the response from the indigenous converts wasn't always promising either in loving or living the Protestant principles. The reasons for the indigene's 'reluctance' to scale up to the missionary expectations were many.*

**Keywords:** *baptism, evangelism, indigenous, missionary, spiritual welfare*

## **Introduction**

Established in 1815 in the city of Basel in Switzerland, Basel Evangelic Mission's primary aim was to propagate among the heathen the pure doctrine of the Gospel. With this aim in mind, missionaries were sent to far off lands like Africa, India and China. In 1834, the first set of missionaries set foot in Kanara and established their first Mission centre in Mangalore. Gradually many more centres were established in the Kanarese region aimed at planting Christ and sound Christian principles in the hearts of the indigenes. In order to fulfil this aim, the missionaries embarked on various activities like studying, documenting, compiling, analysing and interpreting the indigenes' cultural and religious practices. 'The missionary purpose was always simultaneously present in all their actions, and the learning acquired in the field was primarily meant to be applied in proselytism and conversion.' (Xavier:306) They keenly examined the indigenes' beliefs and

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modes of worship, meticulously studied their languages, passionately translated Christian works into vernaculars, and tirelessly travelled in the heathen lands. These were attempts to understand the past and the present of the would be converts, to get acclimatized with the mission land, to get an insight into the religion of the indigenes in order to tell them how hollow it is and to prepare a framework for the project in hand. As the missionaries embarked on their mission of spreading the Christian principles among the 'heathens' they had to encounter many challenges.

When the indigenes were exposed to a seemingly different type of religion and culture, they found it strange, unreal and difficult to perceive. Indigenes' perception of the dynamics of change triggered by the missionary intervention makes an interesting account. The missionaries deemed it necessary for the converted indigenes to adopt certain Christian ways which they loudly proclaimed would redress their problems. On the other hand, the converted indigenes living their transformed identities were caught between two worlds. This research paper analyses these aspects of the 'Missionary-indigenes' interactions and probes the Missionary 'expectations' from the indigene converts during their transactions in the Kanarese region and the motives that drove the indigenes to the new religion as well as the factors that shaped and inhibited the process of becoming 'true Christians'. Also, an attempt is made to explore the socio-cultural milieu that shaped the indigenes response towards the missionaries and their religion and the difficulties faced by both the parties in ridding the old habits and implanting the new 'virtues'. Missionary interactions with the indigenous people in the Kanarese region are recorded in the Basel Mission Reports (henceforth, BMR) which constitute the primary source.

### **Mission's Vision and Approach to Evangelisation**

Basel Mission's vision was the formation of a society based on sound Christian principles to be accomplished "not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, and by patient and hard labour." (BMR 1912:21) The mission's vision is clearly enunciated in the annual reports:

By establishing the kingdom of God we mean to make the people of this country better and happier men and women, to transform and

raise the spiritual, moral and social standard of this race according to the principles taught and lived out by Christ, a reformation not by outward means, but from within. (BMR 1905:33)

In its approach to conversion, Basel Mission was distinctly different from other mission societies. It regarded the quality of the new entrants to the mission more important than their numbers. Basel Mission's approach was widely different from mere proselytising for some creed or denomination. The mission considered conversion as a complex process involving multi-dimensional changes, adaptations, modifications in thought, attitude and the way of life of the converted Christians rather than a mere shift in religion.

Becoming Christians under the Basel Mission had its own preconditions and responsibilities. It was not a straight walk into the new faith but a trial to prove the worthiness of an individual for the new faith. Embracing Christianity also meant adapting to a new mode of living and thinking, discarding the pre-existing beliefs, values, principles, faiths and in some cases even social connections. Basel Mission was distinctly different in this regard from other evangelical societies as it aspired

...to reform the sons of this land, to raise the level of their moral standard, to inspire them with higher thoughts and aspirations, to plant into hearts overgrown with abject and degrading notions, the principles of truth, trust, righteousness and honesty, of purity and self-control, of equality and brotherly love, and to turn them from worldliness and materialism to holiness and love of God. (33)

In order to achieve the desired goals, strict and elaborate rules were drafted (*Rules for the Basel German Evangelic Mission Church*). Adherence to these rules was the hallmark of Basel Mission's approach to evangelisation.

Elaborating on the modus operandi to achieve the desired goal a Basel Mission report states "It is to be performed by the slow, progressive work of spiritual education, with the patience and forbearance, the thoroughness and earnestness, the firmness and love of a father." (33) It was a comprehensive approach aiming at moulding the mind and the heart of the indigenes aspiring to become a Christian. The missionary was expected to be a 'role model' to the 'heathen' in

Christian principles and virtues. The missionaries envisaged the Spirit of Christ to manifest in their lives and conduct, as well as heard and felt distinctly and powerfully in their teaching and preaching. (34) Reformation from within was the mantra which the Basel Mission rigorously adhered to in its evangelic work.

Consequently, Basel Mission adopted a cautious approach while judging the suitability of a candidate for baptism. A sifting process to separate the wheat from the chaff was employed. Elaborate rules were strictly followed before allowing the new enquirers into the Christian fold. Instruction before baptism was regarded inevitable and important as many of those who joined the mission were almost without any knowledge of the Gospel, having only general ideas that the Christian religion must be good and righteous.(BMR 1875:12) The mission policy was clear: “they should not be baptized before they know what baptism is meant for.” (12) The BMR of 1875 clearly sets out the plan of instruction for baptism,

Thus we lay great stress on a careful preparation for baptism, not however aiming at any deep study of Scripture, but just making them acquainted with the chief features of Scripture History, the Creation, the First Sin, the Deluge, the lives of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, the Birth, Life and Death of our blessed Saviour, and then giving some explanation of the Ten Commandments, the Lord’s Prayer and the Apostolic Creed, which if possible we make them learn by heart. Necessarily this course of instruction is meant at the same time to reach the hearts likewise and kindle the flame of Divine love within.(12)

Accordingly, the potential candidates were baptized only after careful instruction and on the condition of good behaviour and a desire to be Christians.(BMR 1879:46) Expounding on the process, BMR of 1875 states:

Commonly a Catechist gives the first part of the instruction, after which the Missionary follows up the teaching. After this the candidates for baptism are brought before the Presbytery of the congregation, who judges of their fitness for baptism. (12)

To ensure that the baptised will remain ‘upright in their renunciation of the life behind them and in their belief in Christ,’ the mission laid great stress on

mentoring and monitoring the old and the new entrants to the congregations through “individual shepherding.” (BMR 1898:60)

### **Spiritual Welfare: Missionary Expectancy and ‘Heathen’ Apathy**

With an unmatched zeal the mission set out to carry out the task at hand. Spiritual welfare of its Christians was the utmost goal of the Basel Missionaries aiming at ‘individual care for souls’. To accomplish this task, European and Native office bearers of the church were trained. Though Basel Mission laid great stress on the moral and spiritual condition of the converts, often the indigenes’ response was far from satisfactory. According to the missionaries conversion in the real sense was a rarity due to lack of knowledge, especially spiritual, among the inquirers. Missionary apprehension about the moral and spiritual condition of the inquirers is constantly reported in their writings. The missionaries took great pains in teaching “What Christianity is?” to the potential converts first. Besides preaching and teaching, regular attempts to keep up the spirituality of the congregation was made through mentoring and assistance in times of need. The BMR of 1876 reports:

The spiritual care of the congregation was ensured by means of services on Sundays and week-days, by speaking with the individual members of the church, by visiting and praying with them in times of disease (contagious diseases of course not excepted), by supervision of their behaviour, by admonishing and punishing transgressors, and in several other ways. (34)

In spite of the elaborate pre-baptism precautions, there were regular instances of the converts relapsing into heathenism, at times so much so that the number expelled from the congregations crossed that of the converted. This problem was ascribed to the lack of spiritual knowledge among the new converts. It was regretted that “not all of those called ‘new converts’ are real converts, or can be called an acquisition to Christ’s church in India.” (58) In spite of guaranteeing “a real desire to obtain salvation through Christ, and a behaviour worthy of an earnest inquirer” there weren’t many worthy conversions.(BMR 1899:60) The disillusionment and annoyance at the deceptiveness of the converts was often expressed in explicit terms:

We cannot see into the hearts of our converts, and so of course we are very often greatly disappointed: so-called converted people now and then after baptism have proved great impostures.(61 )

BMR of 1879 sighs over the state of the Christians baptized for many years who after “ getting colder and colder, finally relapse into heathenism” (12) Pondering on the difficulties of accepting a new religion Joseph Mullens opines “the bonds of caste, reverence for the sacred books, veneration for a long-established priesthood, and a blind attachment to their idolatries” constituted the chief obstacles to the heathen reception of an enlightened religion like Christianity. (3) True conversion of the heart, leading to a complete cultural conversion of the converts erasing the cultural memory from their minds was an impossibility especially with the first generation converts, as the new converts even after conversion continued to stick to their old customs, wavering between the new and the old faiths. Basel Mission church protocols record many such instances of the converts continuing the ‘heathen’ practices. One such entry in the records of Immanuel Church, Padur notes,

Some of them don’t attend the Sunday prayers. Some others, at the time of prayer, are found working at home or elsewhere. And, it’s been heard that some are attending cock-fights, kola and nema (bhuta performances). Those who pay no attention to the protocols may have to be brought before the Pastorate Committee. (6)

For the new entrants, accepting the new and rejecting the old order wasn’t an easy task which is evidenced by plethora of cases of ‘backsliding’ by the converted Christians. Among the other factors, the new converts’ struggles to free from the ‘bhutas’ they had worshipped for years and accept the new god along with the a code of conduct associated with the new religion compelled them to relapse into the comfortable zones of their pre-Christian state. Societal pressure and social isolation impelled many converts to fall back into their original faith. Missionary apprehension about the ‘outside influences’ on the converted Christians who had emigrated to cities like Bombay in search of greener pastures is cited in one of the reports which conjectures that “in their desire to improve their outward circumstances, (they) have fallen into the snares and temptations of that large city and have been spiritually and morally shipwrecked.”(BMR 1912: 31) Young members of the congregation, “who find the

supervision too irksome and desire after greater liberty for the flesh”, moving out to big cities are viewed as the “scum of the congregation”.(BMR 1877:40)

Hence, ‘maintaining the spiritual standards of the congregation’ was bestowed utmost importance by the mission. On this aspect of the missionary agenda, Dennis Fernandes observes

The missionaries made frequent complaints that the congregation was lethargic to spirituality. Continuation of heathen practices and exposure to temptations among the native Christians irritated them. Therefore, the missionaries found the need to tame the neophytes in true Christian sense of the West. Disciplining the congregation formed an important agenda of the missionary activities in Canara. Excommunicating the defaulter was looked upon as an effective method of controlling the congregation. (13)

The gates of the Mission houses were open for everybody with a spiritual quest. But, to the great regret of the missionaries, visitors to the Mission houses rarely came with spiritual desires. More often than not, people came to meet the Pastor with non-spiritual issues such as poverty, debt, quarrels, law suits or seeking assistance in various forms. Though with ‘great expectations’ these converted Christians knocked on the doors of the mission houses, the missionaries in turn couldn’t always yield to their ‘mundane’, and ‘material’ requests and demands. Thus, “not receiving from the Missionary that aid which they expected” many converts turned back to heathenism. (BMR 1876: 13) Missionary writings often complain about the non-spiritual motives that drove the indigenes to the mission fields. Quite often the missionaries are found lamenting that it is the stomach rather than the heart which drove the indigenes to Christianity. BMR of 1847 quoting the case of a family desiring to become Christians grieves: “...for some time they received instruction in the way of truth, but when they had fully understood, that they would get nothing but spiritual gifts... they stayed away.”(9) There were hardly any conversions which were

scarcely the fruit of a thorough change of heart and of a conviction of sin and righteousness, but rather of a general feeling that the Missionary brings truth, and especially a desire to get rid of the demons. (BMR 1875: 13)

It was a daunting task for the preaching parties to drive home the message of the gospel during their interactions with the illiterate, heedless indigenes. BMR of 1884 elucidates,

It is difficult to make people, who cannot read, understand, what the word sin really means. When we speak of papa or karma they think we allude to the different hardships of life, as the fruit or punishment of sin, and can scarcely be brought to understand that every breach of the law of God is, what incriminates man before his Maker. As long as they do not understand and feel the curse of sin, so long they will be indifferent to a Saviour. (30)

Missionary narratives frequently allude to the despairing condition of the illiterate indigenes seeking admission to Christianity. Many of these 'ignorant' people had to be imparted Christian knowledge in a mechanical manner by reading out the bible stories and hymns repeatedly as they entirely depended on their memories:

They are invited to hear by means of a hymn sung with some catechists. After a short prayer, suitable passages are read from the word of God, either in Canarese or Tulu, according to circumstances, and pressed as much as possible upon the hearer's memory, if not upon his heart. (Sherring: 260)

The 'spiritual knowledge' preached by the missionaries was beyond the comprehension of these 'unschooled' 'uninformed' aspirants to Christianity. Moreover, spirituality never made way into the minds and hearts of the natives marred by hunger, disease and insecurity. Material and physical comforts attracted the seekers more often than the spiritual solace offered by the mission. There was another dimension too. Missionaries preaching in a different country to a different race in a different tongue couldn't fully perceive,

the ideas of sin, repentance, incarnation, atonement, and regeneration have essentially a different meaning in Christianity from those in Hinduism, and that the terms of Hindu thought are no more suited for stating Christian truth. (BMR 1912:35)

The motives and motivations to accept the new faith were of different kinds. "In many cases it was the conviction that what the missionaries had been preaching for so many years was true. This conviction was aided by the feeling that their own religion was vain, and their manner of life corrupt." (Sherring: 265) But, of all the motives, the desire to wash off one's sins wasn't the least found. "Perhaps it cannot be said that even in the most promising case, it was the pure sole desire to find pardon of their sins through the blood of Christ that induced the people to seek for admission into the Christian Church." (BMR 1870: 31) Instead, the promise of a better life which was evidenced by the lifestyle of the Native Christians drove some to Christianity.

According to Webster, The converts acquired a Christian identity which affirmed their dignity and status in the eyes of God despite their low social standing... "Great efforts were made to inculcate this new sense of identity, along with the self-esteem and sense of responsibility which went with it... Indeed, they were encouraged to replace their old jati identities with their new Christian identity." (89-90)

Another motivation was the assurance that Christianity is a panacea for all evils emanating from the demons. For some, Christianity became a pretext to escape from the torture of the landlords and to get exemption from all kinds of taxes. "A certain family had a sick child; if the missionary was able to cure the child, they would become Christians" and another man comes up with a proposal that he would become a Christian "if the missionary would lend him Rs. 200 to pay the debt." (BMR 1894:33) There were weird offers too: "Give me a turban, a coat, an European umbrella, a pair of creaking shoes, three times a day a first rate dinner, and I shall become a Christian." (BMR 1901:25) These 'far from spiritual' motives often left the missionaries shocked and perplexed.

## **Conclusion**

It is evident that the Basel Mission's cherished ideal of converting the 'heathen' from 'within' did not yield the desired results. True conversion of the heart was a rarity as most of the converts neither loved nor lived the Christian principles. In their attempts to make the converts 'think', 'feel' and 'behave' like Christians, the missionaries couldn't accomplish much. The missionary expectation of 'a thorough change of heart' was more often than not an illusion as the worldly

desires and material gains became the dominant motivations for becoming Christians. Time and again, when these expectations were not fulfilled, there were many instances of backsliding. The church discipline, steadfast obedience to the Christian values, laborious efforts to spread the gospel, determination of the missionaries at the face of adversities, the resolve and the unperturbed attitude of the mission workers in the face of shame and insults, the hope of a new life, the undaunted courage of the padres to take on the bhutas, the promise of a good life filled with health and happiness, the prospects of good education and respectable profession promised by the new religion— all these factors, but not the eulogised spiritual wellbeing, seem to have driven the indigenes into the new faith. While describing the indigenes' responses to missionary evangelic work in Kanara, missionary narratives abound with phrases such as 'lack of interest in the word preached', 'no longing for salvation', 'aversion to the gospel', 'anti-Christ attitude', 'apathy and aversion of the heathen', 'sad state of affairs' and so on. The dispirited attitude of the indigenes dismayed and distressed the missionaries so much so that time and again the missionary is heard lamenting about the spiritual state of the converts.

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# CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION IN THE EVOLUTION OF HEALTHCARE IN COASTAL KARNATAKA

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## **Abstract**

*Dakshina Kannada and Udupi, the twin districts of Coastal Karnataka, enjoy a relatively sound healthcare system. In the quality of life indices, Infant and child mortality, life expectancy and maternal mortality, etc., they fare well above the state and national averages. Certain aspects of these districts history, geography, culture, and demographic configuration have played a significant role in being an outlier in the arena of the advanced healthcare system. With the advent of the Portuguese in 1505 AD, till the final departure of the British in 1947, the entire region experienced a tremendous change in every aspect of the social, economic, and cultural life. Though healthcare emerges first as a colonial necessity under the British and then as a powerful tool in the hands of the missionaries, both the Protestants and Roman Catholics succeed in evangelizing, and at the same time catering to the needs of the poor and the needy, mainly attending to the medical care of the new converts both in urban and rural areas. This research paper attempts to understand how healthcare evolved in different phases as per the changing demands of the colonizers and then how eventually got standardized first under the Jesuits and then with more laypeople getting advanced education under the Colonial rule in the early 20th century, took the initiative has emerged as pioneer doctors, nurses, paramedics, etc.*

**Keywords:** *Basel Mission, Dakshina Kannada, Healthcare, Jesuits, Roman Catholics*

## **Introduction**

The stretch of the Coastal Karnataka region, forming present-day Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts, got introduced to Western healthcare quite early under its littoral trade. The area, being known to the Western European nations since the Greco-Roman period, became a hotbed of Western trade and influence since the 16th century. The Portuguese forts in Mangalore, Basrur, and Gangolli (established in the 16th century) had hospitals and surgeons to take care of the health of the soldiers and officials. Succeeding centuries witnessed a lot of intrigue among the Western powers, namely the Dutch, French and British, apart from the Portuguese.

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However, as the British colonial rule established in 1799 started to endure for about a century, the western system of administration and governance became part of the region's legacy. Succeeding generations got used to being governed by the British, and they got used to Western education and healthcare. Certain geographical, social, economic, and political factors accentuated this acceptance among the natives. Certain prevalent diseases in the region responded well to the western healthcare and advanced allopathic medicine, and in some cases, homeopathic medicine gave quicker or effective cures. At the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, we find more and more natives accepting Western healthcare and even appealing to the government to improve the facilities available in the urban area and extend them to rural areas. Christian community which is a significant population of this region acted as a catalyst in promoting western healthcare in this region.

### **Healthcare before the period of western influence**

Each District in Karnataka has its unique traditional health practices, which depend mainly on the culture of the people and the availability of the resources in terms of medicines, most of which come from the rich biodiversity of the surrounding nature. Dakshina Kannada-Udupi region, too, had its fair share of native medicinal practices. Even to this day, many of its communities practice indigenous medicines. Use of clove for teeth pain, mustard for gastric troubles, ginger for digestive disorder, and pepper for cough and lung diseases have been practiced with discernible efficacy and effectiveness. These herbal medicines have come from two prominent routes. First, is the Ayurveda-based systems diffused through caste based practitioners. Many families practiced this system, and the art was transferred from generation to generation. Practitioners from Kerala predominantly practiced Ayurveda in Tulunadu, which they mainly borrowed from Arya Vaidyasala at Kotakal (Jose N M, 2007). Since the ancient times the most numerous Community of Tulunadu, the Billavas depended on agriculture and drawing toddy as an occupation. Many books that cover the folklore or lifestyle of Billavas touch upon the subject of medicine given by the country doctors among them. Few to name, Deyi Baidyati (Kumbla, Kasargod), Ane Baidye ('*Baidye*' meaning Vaidya or doctor), Sidda Marda Baidye, Tankaru Baideti (Kotekar, Ramanath, 2011). The Second, among Muslims, there were medicinal practitioners called Hakims. They usually practiced the Unani system, which had come from

Islamic countries and presumed to have Greek origin (Unan means Ionia or Greece in Arabic).

### **Introductuion of Western Health Care in Tulunadu**

The evolution of western mode of health care could be seen in two phases:

The First Phase: Under British (1800 onwards), and The Second Phase: Under Christian missionaries (1834 on wards)

#### **First Phase: Under British (1800 onwards)**

As soon as Mangalore became the administrative headquarters of the Tulunadu region under the British from 1799 to 1947, health services on a modern Western pattern were introduced throughout the district from the coastal towns to the hinterland extending up to the foothills of the Western Ghats over nearly 150 years. In the initial stages, protecting the health of the military and civil administrators became the primary concern. Up to mid 18th century, European medicine, brought to India by the colonizers, served to protect the health of only the Army and the European Community. The reason being, there was a high risk of cholera getting transmitted among the soldiers, which spread from port to port (Nirmala C J, 1970). On the other, epidemics like smallpox, plague, dysentery, diarrhea, malaria, and other fevers resulted in the death of hundreds of people every year (Bipan Chandra et al, 2000). Realizing the need to extend this service to the locals and also health care as an essential tool to propagate their hold on the empire, soon the western concept of Public health was launched as a colonial obligation in all the Presidencies across the country. One of the most critical aspects of healthcare extended by the colonial authority was the hospital work in the early decade of the twentieth century, placed under the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals. Each Province was further divided into Districts, and each District was placed under Civil Surgeons (Rai 2016), and under him were the Assistant Surgeons who were the Indians finishing their courses from Medical Colleges in Madras, Bengal, and Bombay.

Following are some of the measures taken by the colonial government in the arena of Medical and public health in the Madras Presidency which had a major impact on the developments of healthcare in Coastal Karnataka:

- In 1802, vaccination for smallpox began in Madras, and it came to South Canara too. In 1888-89, the number of vaccinated people was 39,250, and successful vaccination cases were 37,256, and the percentage of successful vaccination was 94.92.
- In 1848, Wenlock Hospital was opened primarily as a military hospital. But soon extended its service to the locals. It gained expeditious popularity and recorded a rapid inflow of outpatients over the years (In 1849 number of outpatients treated was 1447, and in 1871, it increased to 3898).
- In April 1864, the Sanitary Commission in Madras was formed. By 1895 about 20 hospitals and dispensaries were established, and all the Taluks of South Canara viz Amindivi islands, Kundapur, Kasargod, Mangalore, Udupi, and Uppinangadi had at least one hospital and a dispensary.
- In 1872, Government hospital was opened in Puttur, and in 1873 at Kundapur which was initially started as a District board dispensary and was taken over by the government in 1928.
- In 1887, government general hospital was started at Udupi where a Civil Surgeon was appointed. He was also the Medical officer of the Government Maternity and Children's Hospital at Udupi.
- In 1893, government hospital at Karkal has established with 8 beds and a small dispensary attached to it.
- The Lady Goshen for the Women and Children was established in 1894.
- In 1899, a Sanitary Board for the presidency was formed. In the same year, Madras registration of the birth and death act was passed. The act was made applicable to Mangalore in the same year.
- In 1916, the District Health Office was created in Mangalore. As on 1st April 1923, a full-fledged 'Public Health Service' began in Mangalore.

- In 1920, the government Maternity and children's hospital was established in Udupi under the administrative control of Civil Surgeon, General Hospital, Udupi
- In 1925, a Police Hospital was amalgamated with the Wenlock Hospital and a new ward with 10 beds was added.
- In 1926, a skin clinic was inaugurated as an adjunct to the headquarters hospital which from 1919 was directly administered by the Madras Presidency.
- In 1937, The Mount Rosary Tuberculosis Sanatorium was established in Moodabidri.
- In 1939, the Madras Health Act was passed and it was soon enforced in the city of Mangalore. (K Abhishankara, 1973)

While promoting dormant colonial intentions through an effective healthcare system, it also provided the government with a façade of benevolence. And thus more and more natives welcomed the western system of healthcare which they felt was more efficient than the indigenous system which they practiced for generations. Due to rapid measures taken by the colonial government diseases such as cholera, smallpox, plague, malaria, influenza, etc. reduced over the years. However, the number of hospitals and dispensaries remained the same till independence. But, as a quick response to any new epidemic disease, several clinics were established in this region. Due to the increase in population, dispensaries were upgraded to full-fledged Civil Hospitals. Although the government had established some hospitals and dispensaries, these were small and ill-equipped with no provisions for surgery and therefore inadequate to meet the health needs of the people. Further, the arrangements made by the government for supplying medicine and medical aid were also on a minimal scale. Health service then also suffered from an acute shortage of qualified health personnel - doctors, nurses, midwives, health educators, etc. This was particularly felt in the rural areas (Bipan Chandra et al, 2000). With more and more natives getting access to western education, their perception of Science had a tremendous impact. During the extended rule of the British, the western-educated natives began to accept western healthcare. On the other, the colonial rule saw Indian

native medicines and health care as a representation of a 'primitive' and 'superstitious' culture that needs to be replaced by innovations of Science. Hence they promoted their methods as an administrative requirement rather than a benevolent step to better local healthcare. Daniel Headrick and Philip Curtin label the Colonial Healthcare system as a 'Tool of Empire' (Philip D Curtin 1989), a necessary adjunct to imperialism. Though it gave a great setback to the indigenous health care system, which had a natural death over few decades in a rush. The government's efforts always fell short, and this is where the Missionaries, both of Basel Mission and Jesuits, played a vital role in filling the void in healthcare infrastructure. Inspired by the Jesuits, the Roman Catholic lay people too played a significant role in both the urban and rural areas of the region.

## **Second Phase: Under Christian Missionaries (1834 onwards)**

### **A) Initiatives taken by the Basel Mission**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the first-ever evangelizing Mission to land on the soil of the coast was the German Evangelical Mission of Basel or The Basel Missionary Society. This Protestant Mission was founded in Basel, Switzerland in 1815. It first sent its missionaries to India to establish a Catechist Seminary. The then mission Director felt the need to choose a mission field on the West Coast of India somewhere between Cochin and Bombay. It was then Samuel Hebich, John Christopher Lehner, and Christopher Leonard Griener who were ordained to go to the new mission on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1834. They set foot in Malabar on 12<sup>th</sup> July 1834 and on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1834 landed in Mangalore. Their main agenda was evangelization, and then rehabilitation of their new converts.

Basel Mission had to take care of the health of its missionaries who worked in these testing conditions away from home. The missionaries were often attacked by many diseases to which their bodies were not immune. In addition to them, even the neo-converts and the new congregations needed medicinal care. Hence, Basel mission strove to provide Western healthcare, especially to its members.

Basel Mission's success in Medical work in South Canara may not match the extent in other areas like education, industrialization, literary work, and printing, etc. There were two reasons for it. Firstly, this mission found it challenging to get an adequate

number of trained medical professionals to serve all its stations and secondly, in Mangalore, in the second half of the 20th century Government Hospital, Fr Muller's Hospital along with many other regional hospitals formed by the Government were already doing satisfactory service. But it did significant service in Udupi, and also in other outposts like Moodbidri and Karkala.

It was the Basel Missionaries who introduced homeopathy medicine to Tulunadu for the first time. Around 1843, homeopathy became famous in Germany, and in Tulunadu it was Maenner who served from 1857 to 1881, and who was called '*Tulu Missionary*' who treated the patients with homeopathy medicine. In 1906 the mission opened a leper asylum with 15 inmates in Mangalore. However, this asylum had to be closed down as no trained doctors were available to treat the inmates.

The major contribution of Basel Mission in Tulunadu in the field of healthcare came in Udupi. This was a bastion of Brahmins, and the native doctors were reluctant to treat the people from the lower castes. In 1885, when the mission took up the initiative to open a hospital, there was opposition from the upper caste Hindus. Finally, on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1923, the Basel Mission Hospital was opened. Though opposition to missionary evangelists was strong, a missionary lady doctor was welcomed by all. In the beginning, this hospital had just a dispensary, and a ward for six women patients, and a small operating room. In the following year, a separate isolation block was provided. It was in 1925, that maternity and a children's ward was added by Dr Eva Lombard.

From 1906 to 1948, the Basel Mission extended its health care system by bringing a great deal of advanced health care facilities in Udupi. Along with this, it also established a nurses' training school called 'School of Christian Service'. In the field of Medicine, Basel Mission made significant contributions. Messers' Pfllebst & Stoltz, two agents of Basel Mission initially recorded about species of plants with their vernacular and scientific name, time of flowering, the habitat, medicinal properties, and common use in Canarase Almanac. In 1881, they brought the book in Kannada named, '*Sahasradha Vrakshadigala Varnane*' (500 Indian plants and their use in medicine). Basel Mission couldn't find an adequate number of doctors from Germany to meet their healthcare goals. Thus, their initial efforts of public healthcare in Mangalore did not fully materialize.

## **B) Initiative taken by the Jesuits**

A significant presence of Roman Catholics has been recorded only after their mass migrations from Goa during the Goa-Bijapur war (1570) and Sambhaji's attack on Goa (1671), and Portuguese wars with the Bhonsle (1738). Apart from this, famines and drought and epidemics, and religious court named Inquisition forced the Roman Catholics of Goa to migrate to an alien land where they had at least a hope of survival even if the cultural and spiritual aspects of their lives were likely to be affected adversely.

In the migration process, the Catholic Community brought the knowledge of local medicines, which were popular in Goa and a few others, which they borrowed from the Portuguese. These medicines were prepared using local ingredients such as herbs and spices. These practitioners came to be known as Country Doctors. In the Canarite Catholic community, one well-known family of country doctors was the D Souza family of Honnavar. In the early years of the 19th century, one member of this family - Domingo Rosario D Souza - settled in Mangalore after marrying the daughter of another country doctor by the name of Jose Aranha. Dr Rosario was the first doctor of the Mangalore Jail at Kodialbail! (Michael Lobo, 2000). However, the Community played a significant role in developing healthcare infrastructure, both physical and in the form of skilled manpower, only after the arrival of Jesuits in 1878.

Jesuits represent the most zealous religious mission in the history of Tulunadu, who put education and health care to the best use as their missionary objective in the late 19th century. To them preaching, teaching, and healing went hand in hand which brought about change in the attitude of the upper-class educated Christians and at the same time working with the marginalized lower-caste Hindus (pariah and the Koragas), giving them a new form of Christian identity. They chose to function primarily at the local and regional level & as the possibility of conversion was gaining strength especially in remote areas where the dominant castes undermined the lower caste group interest. Along with higher education, evangelization, conversion, and then rehabilitation of new converts were the motif of proselytization of the Jesuits. Fathers Angelo F.X. Maffei, Denis Coelho, Faustine Corti, Angelo Gaviraghi, and Alexander Camisa, were the pioneer Jesuit Fathers who contributed to the spiritual, social, and economic formation of these classes.

### C) The Father Muller's Charitable Institution

It had its humble beginning as a Homeopathic Poor Dispensary established by Father Muller, a German missionary, at Kankanady, Mangalore, in the year 1880. The dispensary treated a large number of patients with homeopathic medicines at a moderate cost. It attracted the warm patronage of the public and was gradually expanded into a General Hospital by 1895 with two wards, one for men and another for women (Abhishankara K, 1973). Fr Augustus Muller, who came to Mangalore in 1878 with the first batch of missionaries, initially started working at St Aloysius College as a teacher, preacher, and administrator. With his little box of Homeopathic drugs, which he carried along from Messrs Catellan of Paris, started to treat the students first. His little dispensary, which was located at St Aloysius college, gradually demanded more space with the increasing number of patients; therefore, he was compelled to expand his services by establishing a small booth which later grew into a full-fledged hospital at a new site (10 acres) in Kankanady which was exclusively meant for the lepers which he named "St Joseph's Leprosy Hospital and Asylum" and this became the nucleus of present Fr Mullers Charitable Institutions (Saldanha M A, 1980). Fr Martin, General of the Society of Jesus, gave him the patent for the famous Soleri-Belotti pills, which had a good market (D'mello Fr A S J, 1980).

Other significant developments of these institutions are,

Leprosy hospital with 11 rooms began; first, a General Allopathic Hospital with two wards for male and female patients followed (1905).

In 1901, a new block mainly for women was built. During the plague a epidemic in 1902, during the Plague epidemic, a 75x45 feet Plague hospital in a matter of just 27 days was built, where a total of 128 patients were treated.

In 1907, same building being vacant was turned into a Cholera camp. Of the 210 patients treated for the deadly epidemic, 156 are reported to have been saved from certain death. In recognition of his service Fr. Muller was conferred with *Kaisar-I-Hind* medal at a public Durbar on 4<sup>th</sup> of November 1907. (Gonsalves E., 2005)

## **D) St Joseph's Leprosy Asylum**

Leprosy had been one of the major diseases in South Canara. Per year 12 to 15 thousand people were affected here. Children were the most susceptible who were left crippled and disabled. Along with the disease, they also carried stigmata of leprosy. The first-ever health institute to fight against this disease was Fr Mullers Charitable Institute, which started a hospital for leprosy patients as early as 1890 by Fr Mullers. Initially, it was named St Joseph's Leprosy Hospital and was later renamed St Joseph's Leprosy Asylum. The founder, in the beginning practiced Homeopathic medicine to treated the patients. Initially, there were 30 beds and gradually it increased to 150 beds. Apart from treatment for the inpatients and outpatients, this hospital also treated people with skin diseases. A special program for the school-going children of Mangalore city was also carried out. Children were examined for 'Hansens' disease and treatment was given to early leprosy. Along with this, they also ran village clinics.

Praising the noteworthy contribution of this hospital, Dr C Heinz M D (1965) says, "St Joseph's Leprosy Asylum and hospital at Kankanady has been transforming lives of rural people. The deformity is being corrected by reconstructive surgery and physiotherapy. Medical social workers are active in rehabilitating the cured patients" On the whole, this institution, under the able guidance and leadership of Fr Muller, began to make pioneering efforts in catering to the needs of the sick and at the same time encouraged the natives of Mangalore to pursue their career in medicine which is even today seen as a remarkable achievement.

## **E) Jesuits: Heath Care in Rural Areas**

Most of the villages at the foothills of the Western Ghats, namely, Narol, Arva, Kokkada, Kadaba, Panja, Sulya, and Sampaje were close to the Government Reserve forests, and the people mostly lived in these areas were subjected to Malaria. The Reserve Forests breed mosquitoes, and they spread the disease all over the place. Therefore almost half of the population living in these areas constantly suffered from Malaria and enlargement of the spleen. And there was no medical aid available within easy reach. Even if the poor took the trouble to get medical assistance from the government dispensaries or Hospitals, they were little attended. The Protestants and the Catholics were the first to realize this, and they reach out to the needy as preaching and teaching went hand in hand.

As a result, almost all the large Christian missions in Canara had well-equipped Medical Hospitals and dispensaries that transformed these isolated villages into their mission stations. The doctors from the towns constantly visited these areas in rotation. There was a small stock of medicine and a trained compounder placed at each station during an emergency.

Faustine Corti, Angelo Gaviraghi, and Alexander Camisa, were the pioneer Jesuit Fathers who contributed to expanding healthcare in rural areas especially among the ‘Koragas’ a tribal community among the oldest residents of this region. With the cooperation of the catholic community, these fathers contributed towards the spiritual, social, and economic formation of these classes. Here is a table which shows the establishment of different hospitals in the interiors by the Jesuit priests.

<b>Name of the Hospital</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Founder</b>
Mount Rosary T B Hospital	Alangar	1937	Fr Francis Elias Dsouza
Concetta Hospital	Kinnigoli	1957	Fr Jacob Lobo. Currently managed by Bethany nuns
Goretty Hospital	Kalyanpur	1958	Fr R D Sequeira. Currently managed by the Apostolic sisters
Volavina Halli	Kinya	1973	Nirmal Welfare Association
Fr Patrao Hospital	Puttur	1971	Fr Anthony Patrao

Source: Rakno, *Golden Jubilee Souvenir(1938-1988)*, December 11, 1988

## **F) Roman Catholic Community and Healthcare**

Seeing the progress made by the Protestants under the Basel Missionaries, the Roman Catholic community woke up to the benefits of Western knowledge in the field of education and healthcare. Jesuit missionaries who started the educational institute, press, and workshop soon inspired the other Roman Catholic missionaries and native communities to establish healthcare centers in the same line. The first 2 generations of Catholics who were the beneficiaries of western education under the influence of missionaries took up medicine, as they felt it was a well

remunerating profession and would yield more and more job opportunities in Madras, Mumbai, and Bangalore. In the last quarter of the 19th century, the Community began to make serious efforts to take up formal training in medicine as government medical colleges had been established in 3 presidencies. Therefore, a massive chunk of the Catholic population migrated to big cities in search of better prospects.

At the same time, it is observed that a few lay people rendered free health care service to the natives. Dr L P Fernandes here reserves a special mention. He became the Chief Medical Officer in 1909 and served for 54 long years at Fr Mullers. In appreciation of his service in health care he was conferred with, *Delhi Darbar Medal* (1910), *Pro-Ecclesia-et-Pontifice* (1917), *Kaisar-I-Hind* (1927), and *Kings Jubilee Medal* (1937). Similarly, Casmir Mathais, who in 1915 established a small health centre called '*Gareeb Seva Mandir*' treated both adults and children for free. He was regarded as the popular Ayurvedic doctor of his times, and by the time his hospital celebrated its silver jubilee, he had a record of treating more than 40,483 patients.

Dr Bonaventure Manuel Colaco worked in all Taluk Headquarters hospitals in the District of South Canara and was the Secretary of the District Health and Welfare Association. He rendered his valuable service to reduce infant mortality and was conferred the title of '*Rao Sahib*' in 1925. With a growing demand for health care, many lay people too ventured into new businesses related to health care. For instance, Martin Julian Vaz is credited for being the first person to open an optical shop in Mangalore by the name *Malaria Company* in 1918. His working experience in Fr Muller's had given him practical knowledge of Homeopathy. He offered postal parcel service for those from interiors and rural areas who could not afford to visit his shop. At the time of his death in 1942, the company had links with Burma, Ceylon, Malaya, Persia, South Africa, and goods were imported directly from England and Germany.

The great depression of 1929-32 also helped the rise of private medical practitioners here in Tulu Nadu. As before this year, only European doctors took the initiative as medical practitioners but due to unfavorable economic conditions, the Madras government decided to rely increasingly on private medical practitioners. As a result, we find a large number of lay people emerging as private practitioners or called the Independent Medical Professionals, to provide health care to the natives. Apart from doctors, we have several Catholics who emerged as Homeopaths, Leprologists,

dentists, staff at Fr Muller's, General Practitioners/Health Officers, Health Officers in the armed forces, Medical college staff, Nurses, Pharmacists, Speech Therapists, Veterinarians, etc, who established outposts and outreach centers in different parts of this region (Lobo M, 2000). The Protestants too became active in the regions of Parpale, Karkala, Moodabidri, etc., which shows there was frequently a contest happening between the contemporary missionaries. The Roman Catholic on the other was quick to grab the opportunity and who successfully established hospitals and catered to the need of the people especially in the interiors.

### **G) Women and Healthcare**

The Catholic Church felt that the nuns/religious sisters could serve two purposes one, to teach in mission schools, and two, to give medical aid in the hospitals. The first order of nuns to land in Mangalore to take up health care as their main motto was the *Sisters of Charity*. They had been specially brought from Italy in January 1888 to help Fr Muller. Though they served for a brief period, their contribution towards health care cannot be undermined. For instance, Sr Catherine served for almost 40 years in Fr Muller's, serving food for the patients. Sr Felice Solvia (served Plague patients and died by it), Sr Caterina Saturelli (attended smallpox patients and died of it), and Sr Candida Gualdi, Sr Anna Maria Balsi, Sr Leonilde Pagani, Sr Josephine Pozzali, etc. were dedicated European nuns who served in the hospital (Gonsalves E, 1980). Later on, they took up education as part of their mission.

Apart from the religious, many laywomen pursued their medical degrees from Madras and emerged as doctors. For instance, Flora Saldanha was the first lady doctor (1910), Elizabeth Pais the first lady MBBS degree holder, Dr Lydia Bertilla Colaco, said to be South India's first lady doctor to combine the roles of Physician, Surgeon, Gynaecologist, and also the founder of the Colaco Hospital at Bendur (Lobo Michael, 2000).

During the time of Fr Gaviraghi, a Jesuit priest, many nuns were encouraged to take up health care as a part of healing ministry to open health care centers in the remote areas. This created a demand among the native girls in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century to go for medicine and this demand to study Science compelled the local catholic colleges to start science subjects as part of their curriculum. For example, St Agnes College (1921), which was then the only women's college in the whole of West

Coast, felt the need to have full-fledged Science Courses as early as 1939, to meet the needs of students who intended to qualify for the medical profession in Madras and Bombay.

Apart from the profession of a doctor, many catholic girls took up nursing as a profession. Though nurses arrived in India from the 18th century onwards, the first training school for midwives started in the Madras General Hospital in 1854 (Gill Reema, 2014). During the colonial period, the Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians were primarily recruited into the nursing profession. In the 1960-the 70s, Mangalore happened to be the largest producer of nurses in the State. Joanna Castelino, who joined the *Ursuline Congregation* in 1899, was the first nurse of the Community who served at Fr Muller's, tending particularly to sufferers of plague and cholera, eventually succumbing herself (Lobo M, 2000).

The nursing profession among the catholic gained success in Tulunadu as the Missionaries projected nursing to be a vocation and not a profession. Catholic community being progressive in its outlook, observed women working outside as the norm. On the other hand, nursing was then a women's domain, and they did not need to compete with men. Therefore, the catholic girls were quick in grabbing the opportunity. They never considered it to be 'a dirty work'. And as the nursing institutes were looked up to as European Christian institutions by others, the realm of General Nursing and Midwifery remained exclusively the domain of women.

Fr Muller's was the pioneer institution to startup with 'General Nursing College' in 1959 (The Madras Nurses and Midwives Act 1926). In no time, there was a global demand for nurses, exclusively from Mangalore; therefore, the natives requested the *Sisters of Charity* to establish a training center for nurses and midwives on the model of Fr Muller's hospital at Secunderabad, for they believed that presently "... the young ladies have no other profession besides teaching and working as domestic maids. Therefore nursing would open new avenues not only in South Canara but all over India.. (Pai A A, 1948)".

Among Basel Mission, it was Dr Eva Lombard, who for the first time took up the initiative to build hospitals for women in the district. She was a Swiss lady doctor who was preparing herself for service in India, after the completion of her medical training and internship in 1921. Inspired by the tale told by an English missionary nursing student about the condition of Indian women, she was inspired to work

among women. She approached the Kanarese Mission, which was a caretaker mission run by Swiss brothers during the war. In 1921, she joined the *Kanarese Evangelical Mission* and started working for the women. Eventually, she became aware of the distances people had to travel for medical aid, therefore she started a small weekly dispensary in one of the classrooms of the Mission School at Malpe in 1923. The response of the people was tremendous. The late, Dr T M A Pai (1948) of Manipal, who was a good friend of hers, said “There was a spark of divinity in her. Let us have more such people. It does not matter from which country they come. They are the angels holding the torch of hope and happiness.”

In a couple of decades, she was joined by other women like Dr Marianne Plugfelder, Surgeon and Ophthalmologist, who arrived in Udupi in 1947 and devoted the best years of her life to the service of the people. Dr Irmgard Schempp was another lady who worked in this field. Sister Hanna Aeschmann set up the ‘Christa Sevaki Ashram’ with a dispensary in Parpale, Karkal in 1935. Many other doctors and nurses of this institution too earned native love and respect for the relentless and selfless work. They started outreach work at various distant outposts. Apart from women doctors, few nurses who deserve special mention are Gertrude Karkada (July 1946-December 1977), Elizabeth Reich (October 1949 to May 1967), Beth Hadorn( September 1955 to January 1974), and Helga Schweitzer (November 1963 to 1977). They built up the nursing services, took great pains over nursing education and participated in nursing administration.

## **Conclusion**

Western trade relations and extended colonial rule under the British introduced the natives of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi to Western healthcare. Colonial rulers introduced their system for the benefit of their soldiers and officials who had to work in the humid conditions, which rendered them vulnerable to many tropical diseases. However, the extension of colonial rule on one side resulted in the rise of a middle class that was western educated and more receptive to Western ideas, including healthcare, and on the other motivated the missionaries to absorb their missionary ambitions. They filled the void to some extent by establishing pioneering facilities of healthcare. However, the big void in healthcare couldn't be filled without the active involvement of native human resources. Protestants were very small in number, and the leading native communities were

either averse to newer concepts like Nursing care, etc., or were not yet ready to practice this alien craft in its infancy due to social-religious reasons. However, it was after 1953 that the members of the Brahmin, Gowda Saraswath Brahmin, and Bunt community started to dominate the profession of healthcare, especially taking up the profession of Doctors and establishing new hospitals on western lines in response to the contemporary endeavors of the Christian communities. Though today almost all the pioneer health care institutions aim at transforming their organization, financing, and making provision of healthcare from a public to a private model, back in the 19th century these were the only institutions that were the means for improving the health of the natives in the absence of the advanced healthcare system.

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# COVERAGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN NEWSPAPERS: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF *THE HINDU AND THE TIMES OF INDIA*

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## **Abstract**

*The study focuses on the coverage of human rights issues in two English dailies in India: The Times of India and The Hindu in a specific time frame of one month. It aims at analysing the news stories related to human rights on the basis of categorisation of human rights issues, placement of news stories, news stories with photographs and tone of reporting. Triangulation Method has been used in the study and Content Analysis is used as a tool for data collection.*

**Keywords:** farm bill, human rights, news stories, print media, role of media

## **Introduction**

The constitution of India guarantees and protects the fundamental rights of its citizens. *The Preamble* to the constitution defines the nature of the state, the *Part III* and *Part IV* of the constitution deal with Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy respectively. There has been a radical growth in the print media in the last decade making it one of the most important platforms in the betterment of society. The role of print media in promoting human rights is significant. Print media creates awareness among the people about their rights and exposes the violation to human rights in the society. Despite the formation of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) by the United Nations Organisations, people aren't completely aware of their rights. Therefore, print media can become a catalyst in the promotion of human rights by informing and educating the people about their rights. By mediating on behalf of the public, print media pushes the engines of the State on the correct path, which is its basic responsibility.

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In order to defend human rights, an atmosphere of freedom is a must for print media. Considering the issues of human rights covered in the print media during the year 2020 in India, it is argued that freedom of expression was portrayed selectively. There have been many incidents of caste, sex and gender related violence. There are also cases of imprisoning who were promoting human rights, students, academicians, journalists and activists. There was also a significant case of farmer's protesting against three laws: 'Farmer's Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020,' 'Farmer's (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020,' and 'Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020.'

This study conducts a comparative analysis of *The Hindu* and *The Times of India* on the reporting of human rights issues.

### **Review of literature**

Rao et al (2020) aim at understanding the gaps between human rights issues at the ground level and the issues in corporate reports. The researchers did a quantitative content analysis of reports and corporate documents to understand how companies treat workers of Assam tea plantation with regard to human rights. The study shows that there is a huge gap between the ground reality and what reports say.

Balasubrahmanyam (1996) aims at analysing the issue of gay rights with regard to repeal of same sex laws in India. The article highlights the fact that many groups or sections of society are ignorant of homosexuality and still consider homosexuality as a criminal offence.

Ghatak et al (2012) analysed various provisions of human rights of minorities in the society and a fieldwork case study has been conducted on human rights issues in Malda district of West Bengal. The study discusses different ways of including or advancing the human rights of disadvantaged minority, empowering the law for human rights issues, bringing the minorities to mainstream by implementing various welfare schemes to reduce minority human rights violations.

Sinha (1994) has analysed various case studies to understand the situation of children or child labour in India and it is based on reports by activists, NGOs etc.

It highlights issues like tortures faced by children from the police officials. Media show both kinds of news where government is trying to curb the issue of child labour at the same time atrocities against children.

McDuaie-Ra (2007) did an empirical research on the gender based insecurities in Meghalaya in India. It aims at analysing the role played by civil society to address the issue of gender-based insecurity and understanding the connection between civil society and human security by analysing the limitations of civil society. The research concludes that civil society is dynamic, and if we want to understand those dynamics, we should overcome the repressions of civil society.

Pratap (2019) with an objective of analysing the public opinion on human rights violations done by police in the Lucknow district in Uttar Pradesh, analyses the opinion of audience of print media of the region. For the sampling, two wards were selected out of 110 wards by lottery method of sampling. By random sampling method, 300 questionnaires were distributed. Out of that 250 questionnaires selected from two wards. The study concludes that print media is active in covering violations of human rights by police.

Thomas et al (1993) examine the reason for not taking domestic abuse and violence seriously as a human rights issue and analyse government's responsibility for domestic violence happening in the state. The authors analyse the case studies with regard to the international laws on human rights. The paper concludes that even though there are limitations, human rights approach can be considered as a powerful tool to curb this issue.

Nongmeikapam (2017) did content analysis of a total of 1460 copies of the selected four newspapers in Imphal. The study concludes that newspapers are important in the promotion of human rights and creating awareness among people about their rights.

Ahmad (2019) did comparative analysis of *The Times of India* and *The Indian Express* to find out the ideological differences in reporting these issues and to examine the role played by the two newspapers in the promotion of human rights. The study used the systematic random sampling and collected the data from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2017. The study gathered that human rights news stories have an impact on people. Violations of human rights issues got prominence in both the newspapers.

Sulthana et al (2020) conducted content analysis of four newspapers both in Urdu and English in Pakistan. The study concludes that Urdu newspapers have more coverage of human rights issues comparing to English newspapers.

### **Objectives and Method**

From the review of literature, it is evident that media covers issues related to human rights extensively. The present study focuses on two newspapers in particular *The Hindu* and *The Times of India* to analyse the coverage of human rights issues.

The objectives of the study:

1. to find out the most reported human rights issue in the selected two newspapers
2. to find out which newspaper has reported more human rights issues
3. to understand how the tone of reportage of human rights issues differ in the two selected newspapers
4. to understand the prominence given to the human rights news stories based on front pages and inside pages
5. to find out which newspaper published more human rights news stories with photographs and to analyse how the most reported human rights issue is placed along with the photograph

### **Method**

The researcher used Triangulation Method where both quantitative and qualitative research methods were deployed to complete the study. The Content Analysis is used as a tool for data analysis. The primary sources of the research is the selected newspapers, *The Hindu* and *The Times of India*. They were e-copies of Delhi edition for the month of January, 2021. The secondary sources used are library books, e-books, articles and journals.

### **Sampling**

The sample of the study is based on Purposive Sampling under Non-probability Sampling Technique. In Non-probability Sampling Technique, the units are investigated based on the discernment of the researcher. Researcher chose the

sample deliberately. The researcher wanted to analyse the recent human rights issues in the two selected newspapers. The most significant human rights issue during the time period of the research was Farm Laws and subsequent farmers' protest which influenced the media nationally and internationally. The protest was at its peak during the study period. The purposive sampling of the two national dailies published online from Delhi are taken. Samples of newspapers published from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 till 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2021 is obtained. For the Content Analysis, Purposive Sampling of the selected dailies and its news reports, editorials, letter to editor, photographs along with news stories, special columns, features, articles related to human rights were selected.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis was done based on news category, categorisation of human rights issues, placement of news items in the newspapers based on photographs along with news stories.

To analyse the selected newspapers, *The Hindu* and *The Times of India*, first the data was collected based on the news categories including news (Columns/ features/ articles/ special stories), editorials and letters to the editor published in the month of January, 2021. The readers interpret the importance of each news items through different categories. Table 1, 2 & 3 focus on the data which is based on the different categories.

**Table 1: Number of human rights related stories under the category of News (Features/ articles/ columns/ special stories)**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>News (Features/ articles/ columns/ special stories)</b>
<i>The Hindu</i>	307
<i>The Times of India</i>	261
Total stories	568

Both newspapers published large number of human rights issues. A total of 604 human rights related news stories were found in two newspapers. *The Hindu* has covered a total of 335 news stories related to human rights whereas *The Times of India* covered 269 news stories. They were comprised of stories ranging from human rights protection and promotion to human rights violations. A majority of

the news items fall under the category of columns/ features/ articles/ special stories. *The Hindu* has published about 307 news stories and *The Times of India* published 261 news stories.

**Table 2: Number of human rights related news stories under the category of editorials**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Editorials</b>
<i>The Hindu</i>	10
<i>The Times of India</i>	8
Total stories	18

During the period of the study, in *The Hindu*, 10 editorials emphasised on human rights issues and 8 editorials were related to human rights issues in *The Times of India*. It is presented from the view point of editors on human rights. Both the newspapers published a similar number of news stories. A total of 18 editorials were published from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

**Table 3: Number of human rights related news stories under the category of Letter to editor**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Letter to the editor</b>
<i>The Hindu</i>	18
<i>The Times of India</i>	0
Total stories	18

*The Hindu* had 18 letter to editors and *The Times of India* had no letter to editor. In this case, *The Hindu* tried to connect with the readers and gave more value to their opinion on human rights related issues. This way, *The Hindu* could uphold the human rights also. Most of the letter to the editor in *The Hindu* were based on the farmers' issues and media issues/ journalist issues/ activist issues.

From the above tables, it is found that *The Hindu* has reported more human rights issues in comparison with *The Times of India*. It is found that *The Hindu* is more concerned in the reportage of human rights issues happening in our society.

### Categories of human rights issues

Human rights issues are classified based on the data that has been collected. They have been categorised based on the highest number of reportage first. Table 4 focuses on the data based on the specific human rights issues.

**Table 4: Categorisation of human rights issues and the coverage by selected newspapers**

Human Rights Issues	Number of stories in <i>The Hindu</i>	Number of stories in <i>The Times of India</i>
Farmers' rights	218	156
Rape / punishment for rape cases/ sexual abuse/ sexual harassment	15	34
Murder / attempt to murder	23	33
Terrorism / Naxalism	19	7
Media/ journalists / activists	19	6
Inter-faith / religious / communal hatred	8	10
Child marriage/ child labour/ violence against children	8	8
Migrant workers / labour issues	5	2
Domestic violence/ dowry / marriage	5	1
Women's health/ reproductive rights	4	2
Encounter killing/ Death by police	3	2
Kidnapping	2	3
violence against LGBTQ+	2	2
Suicide	2	2
Rights of the old aged people/ home-less people	2	0
Honour killing	0	1
Rights of the Disabled people's / violence against disabled people	0	0
Violence against Dalits/ tribals	0	0
Refugees	0	0

Both the newspapers have covered a fair number of human rights issues. Most reported issue in both the newspapers was farmers' issues. All the days in the month had news stories of farmers' protest over farm laws. 218 out of 335 in *The Hindu* were issues related to farmers' rights/ farmers' issues. These 218 news stories can be included in news reports/ features/ articles/ special columns/ editorials/ letter to editor. Also, 156 stories out of 269 stories in *The Times of India* were also based on farmers' rights. Farmers protesting against the three farm acts were covered extensively in almost all the newspapers in India, including regional papers. The protest at different parts of India was at its peak in the month of January, 2021. The selected newspapers have given more significance to the farmers' issues as it affects not only farmers but also all the people of India.

Other than farmers' issues, the most appeared stories were of rape issues and murder. *The Hindu* had 23 stories related to murder and *The Times of India* had 33 stories on the same. *The Times of India* had more small news reports on these issues. There is a huge difference between the number of stories related to the rape issues covered in the selected newspapers. *The Hindu* covered 15 stories and *The Times of India* covered 34 news stories. On both rape and murder, *The Times of India* covered much more stories than *The Hindu* comparatively during the study period. *The Times of India* tried to uncover many of these issues to public.

Among the issues on journalists, activists and terrorists, naxalites, *The Hindu* published a good number of stories. It published 19 in each category, but *The Times of India* published 6 and 7 stories on media issues and terrorist issues respectively.

In the category of Inter-faith issues, religious issues, and communal hatred, *The Hindu* published 8 stories and *The Times of India* had 10 stories. Love-jihad related issues has got more prominence under this category. On child marriage, child labour, violence against children/ child issues, both newspapers covered same number of news stories.

*The Hindu* covered 5 stories on each on the issues of migrant workers, labour, domestic violence, dowry, and marriage while *The Times of India* covered 2

news stories respectively. *The Hindu* had 3 news stories on encounter killing whereas *The Times of India* had only 2 stories. On women’s health, reproductive rights, 4 and 2 stories published in *The Hindu* and *The Times of India* respectively.

Kidnapping, LGBTQ+ issues, violence against LGBTQ+, suicide, Rights of old aged people, homeless people have got less coverage in both newspapers. *The Hindu* has published 2 news stories from each category. LGBTQ+ issues are relevant today, but it has got less coverage. *The Times of India* has covered 3 stories on kidnapping, 2 each on LGBTQ+ issues and suicidal issues. It didn’t publish any story on old-age issues.

About honour killing, *The Times of India* had one story and *The Hindu* didn’t have a single story. Both the newspapers didn’t cover issues related to disabled people’s rights/ violence against disabled people, violence against Dalits/ tribals, and refugee rights.

From the table of contents, it is understood that the most covered human rights issue was farmers’ issue. It is covered from positive, negative and neutral point of view. Protests against the three farm laws were extreme during study period. Thus the mentioned newspapers gave importance to that particular issue.

### Placement of News Stories

Even though the newspapers publish stories on all the pages, generally prominent news usually comes on the front pages and comparatively less important stories on inside pages. Table 5 focuses on the data based on the placement of the news.

**Table 5: Placement of human rights issues news in *The Hindu* and *The Times of India***

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Number of human rights stories published on the front pages</b>	<b>Number of human rights stories published on the inside pages</b>	<b>Total number of stories</b>
<i>The Hindu</i>	37	298	335
<i>The Times of India</i>	46	223	269

The content included in the regional, national and international pages were analysed. In total, 604 news stories were analysed in two selected newspapers from 1<sup>st</sup> January till 31<sup>st</sup> January, 2021. It is identified that *The Times of India* got 46 out of 335 news stories on front page published which is the highest. *The Hindu* published 37 news items on the front page out of 269 news stories related to human rights issues. Majority of the news stories in the front page of both the newspapers were related to farmers' issue.

From the table, it is found that *The Times of India* has published more number of human rights related news items on the front page compared to *The Hindu*.

### **News stories with photographs**

Newspapers give importance to certain news stories along with related photographs. Table 6 focuses on the data based on the news stories with photographs and without photographs.

**Table 6: Number of human rights news with photographs and without photographs**

<b>Newspapers</b>	<b>Number of stories with photographs</b>	<b>Number of stories without photographs</b>	<b>Total number of stories</b>
<i>The Hindu</i>	136	199	335
<i>The Times of India</i>	111	158	269
Total	247	357	604

The above table showed the number of news stories related to human rights issues with photographs and without photographs. During the study period, a total of 247 news stories published with photographs on both the selected newspapers. From the analysis, it is identified that the photographs of victims, leaders of political parties, etc have been used in both the newspapers. *The Hindu* published more news items with photographs compared to *The Times of India*. *The Hindu* covered 136 news stories with photographs out of 335 stories published in the given period. *The Times of India* contained 111 news stories with photographs.

## Conclusion

The coverage of human rights issues is the primary responsibility of a newspaper. Based on the analysis of samples, it was found that farmers' issue has received the maximum coverage in the newspapers. *The Hindu* has covered a total of 335 news related to human rights, out of which 218 news stories were based on farmers' issue. *The Times of India* had a total of 269 stories of which 156 stories were farmers' issue. *The Hindu* has covered more human rights issues comparing to *The Times of India*. It covered 335 human rights related news stories whereas *The Times of India* covered only 269 stories. Under the news, editorials, and letter to editor *The Hindu* has published more human rights news stories.

The researcher found that there is a difference in the tone of reportage of human rights issues. The researcher found that the tone of reporting in both the newspapers was different as the priority of each newspaper is different. Titling of issues in both newspapers and the front page comparison of both newspapers gave a clear understanding of the tone of reporting of issues. In the case of farmers' issues, *The Hindu* has a neutral point of view, while *The Times of India* has published most of the stories in favour of the government. In reporting the farmers' issues, *The Times of India* portrayed violence done by the farmers more in the news categories. But *The Hindu* tried to focus on publishing the point of view of both farmers and the government even in editorials and feature articles. Even though *The Times of India* tried to uncover many rape and murder issues, it is found that they hardly followed up with any issues further.

*The Times of India* has published more human rights related news stories on front page than *The Hindu*. *The Times of India* has got 46 news stories on the front page, while *The Hindu* got 37 stories. *The Hindu* has published more news stories with photographs. *The Hindu* published 136 news stories with photographs and *The Times of India* had 111 stories with photographs. In certain news stories, there were more than one photographs to show the significance of the news and also different angles of a single story. For instance, in farmers' issue, multiple photographs were given for one story. In most of the photographs, protesters were shown. When the researcher analysed the news stories related

to farmers' issues, it was found that *The Times of India* tried to focus on showing the violence committed by the farmers during the tractor parade on 26<sup>th</sup> January on the front page itself. While *The Hindu* mentioned the violence but it didn't highlight the photographs of the violence at protests.

Both *The Hindu* and *The Times of India* couldn't balance the issues. Farmers' protest was at its peak during the study period. So both the newspapers gave emphasis to that particular issue. Almost all the pages of the newspapers had news about farmers' protest. Therefore, other human rights issues got less importance and coverage in the selected newspapers.

As print media plays a vital role in disseminating news and creating opinion among public, there is a need for a balanced and objective approach to reporting, specifically about human rights issues. Overt lenience with the perpetrators of human rights violations have to be scrutinised and exposed by the media. As polarisations are rampant across the world using media, Indian media needs to play a pivotal role in upholding democratic principles and rights. The research paper offers a glimpse of biased or less objective reportage by specific news papers which need internal as well as external scrutiny.

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Sapolsky, R. M. (2017). *Behave: The biology of humans at our best and worst*. Penguin Books.

Svendsen, S., & Løber, L. (2020). *The big picture/Academic writing: The one-hour guide* (3rd digital ed.). Hans Reitzel Forlag. <https://thebigpicture-academicwriting.digi.hansreitzel.dk/>

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