



**PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY'S
MODERN COLLEGE OF ARTS,
SCIENCE AND COMMERCE
GANESHKHIND, PUNE**



MINDSCAPE



VOLUME V
↔ ————— ↔
2019-2020

Progressive Education Society's
MODERN COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE AND COMMERCE
Ganeshkhind, Pune-16

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

MINDSCAPE

VOLUME V

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Our Principal Dr. Sanjay Kharat has always been a source of inspiration to us, especially in research, providing us his valuable insights and suggestions for improvement.

Dr. Jyoti Gagangras, Vice-Principal, Arts Faculty, and all the other staff members of the Arts faculty have been appreciative of our efforts and we are thankful to them.

All the students who have worked extremely hard to write and present the research papers and who are the stars of this compendium deserve a lot of praise.

Thanks to Sheldon Fernandes and Shaantanu Kunte who helped in proof reading and Nashome Crasto for overall assistance.

Dr. Sadhana Natu,

Associate Professor and Head

Department of Psychology

FROM THE PRINCIPAL'S DESK

I extend my congratulations to the Head, Faculty, and students of the Department of Psychology for putting together the Fifth Volume of their research compendium Mindscape.

The topics that the students have chosen on the theme Making Psychology Deliverable to Society are so relevant and I am extremely impressed with their hard work and efforts. It is indeed interesting to read all the papers that the students have written.

I am also proud that undergraduate research of this quality is being done at the college and would like to encourage many more students to participate in research.

Once again, I congratulate each student for the efforts and outcome of Mindscape. I also appreciate the efforts of Dr. Sadhana Natu and all the faculty members in encouraging and mentoring the students to take up research and giving them research skills.

**Dr. Sanjay Kharat
Principal.**

ON THE OCCASION OF MINDSCAPE – VOLUME V

In the academic year 2019-20, I have been able to curate and deliver KHOJ, a year- long research training endeavour for UG and PG students which culminates into writing abstracts and research papers. It started with ‘learning to identify, germinate and problematise research ideas, followed up with methodologies, data analysis and finally tips on research writing. These four sessions and the umpteen group and individual catching up sessions have translated into presentations in the conference and writing these research papers. This is against the background of the work of the last six years of ‘catching them young’ and facilitating the ‘research bug biting them’! My colleagues Nashome and Swati have helped and participated whole heartedly in this endeavour. This proves that we do not need a lot of people to achieve these outcomes, we just need committed people who work!

This time we gave the conference at Christ University a miss after five years of selection and participation after the feedback from our students about falling standards and lack of effective organization. Our students did send abstracts to Chikitsa, Women’s Studies National Conference at SPPU and they have been included in the compendium. There was wholehearted participation in the 29th Annual Convention of National Academy of Psychology held in Pondicherry University in December 2019. The students were selected for poster as well as oral presentations. We have published abstracts as well full- length papers from NAOP convention. The wide range of topics selected, and my time spent on mentoring these students, was time well spent, since the students got tremendous response and whole- hearted appreciation in the conference.

Once again, I wish to place on record that my colleague and Vice Principal, Arts Dr Jyoti Gagangras interacted with the students and appreciated their efforts in the exhibition and presentation of their posters and oral presentation that we organized in January in college. Later, Principal Dr Sanjay Kharat who has always supported KHOJ, also appreciated and praised the efforts in the felicitation program of our alumnus Dr Sachin Shinde organized by the department. We are indeed grateful to him.

In this academic year we also had a research collaboration with Akash Wasil, a student at Pennsylvania State University and Harvard University USA whom Dr Sachin Shinde and I mentored. It has culminated in a research paper co authored by all three of us and which has been published in the Asian Journal of Psychiatry an Elsevier, peer reviewed journal. Our students participated and assisted in this cohort study.

All in all, our students are picking up several research skills as well as a multi- disciplinary perspective, both highly essential prerequisites in their further education. I am looking forward to another fruitful year of research engagement in the coming year, despite the COVID 19 Crisis that is looming large!

Dr. Sadhana Natu

Associate Professor and Head

Department of Psychology

DISCLAIMER

Though the papers have research value and all the abstracts were peer reviewed for National Academy of Psychology through a process of blind review, I wish to place on record that they have not gone through a Plagiarism check and the final papers are not peer reviewed.

Dr Sadhana Natu

A NOTE

The Academic Year 2019-2020 has witnessed a boom in young researchers at the Department of Psychology. Every year the volume of Mind Scape has increased. Along with quantity there has also been a rise of the quality in research being conducted.

This year many students wrote for the 28th National Academy of Psychology Conference held in December 2019 at Pondicherry University. The theme of the Conference was ‘Making Psychology Deliverable to Society’ and that spoke to many of the students as being a part of the Department of Psychology they have been exposed to Community based Psychology through the exposure given to them by Dr. Sadhana Natu.

The diverse and creative topics students undertook is proof of them having internalised the efforts of the Head, Dr. Natu to introduce them to community and society-based Psychology.

I congratulate Dr, Natu and all the students who wrote and presented papers at the National and International Conference. I am happy to be a part of this unique and thriving department and look forward to the next Volume of Mind Scape.

Nashome Crasto,

Assistant Professor,

Department of Psychology

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Resuscitating environment by revisiting school ecosystems¹

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Abstract

Moulding young minds towards environment conservation has become crucial. EVS was a separate subject in Indian primary education but as of 2012, NCERT has infused environmental learning into language studies and sciences so that it will not be studied only for grades. Despite this initiative, children still have inadequate exposure to ‘habitat’ and there is little active learning from the natural and social worlds around them (Sharma & Menon). Also, studies attribute the lack of motivation to bring sustainable environmental change to denial, bystander effect and a fatalistic attitude. Against this backdrop, the purpose of the current study is to introduce a form of education that will sensitize and inspire students to contribute to the environment they live in.

To accomplish this, the study aims to analyze the organic school models of two tribal schools- Jeevanshala (Maharashtra, MP) and Imlee Mahua (Chhattisgarh). It also focuses on documenting the struggle component that is part and parcel of these children’s lives and germane to the curriculum they study. The effect of this struggle on the children’s connection with the environment and community will be explored. A qualitative research method will be employed including semi structured interviews of founders and supporters of schools and case study analysis of curriculum, activities, and teaching method. The results of the study will shed light on the role of relevant and relatable education in environmental awareness and sensitization. Recommendations for application of such a model in urban schools will be given using the Thick Description method (Geertz & Ryle), since bringing this model into mainstream is important. Ultimately the research will help mobilize children to work for a healthier, happier planet.

Introduction

¹ This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review

Environmental concerns have been all over the news (local and global) lately. Starting from the burning of Amazon rainforest, to the cutting of Aarey forest to Delhi smog and pollution. Thankfully, today, climate change and global warming is receiving the kind of attention it should. Discussions, debates, messages to spread awareness are happening, however, just talking about it is not enough.

The young Swedish environmentalist, Greta Thunberg, who created ripples all over the world through her UN speech, says, 'If you really understood the situation (climate change) and still kept on failing to act, then you would be evil. And I refuse to believe that'. After all, maintaining neutrality in times of crisis is as unforgivable as aiding it. What the earth needs is a recovery from the abuse it has sustained and that can be achieved only through action. Action, not just in the form of policies and laws, but action that brings common people together to fight for the cause.

To initiate action, any individual requires a sound foundation of awareness of and belongingness to the environment and community she/he lives in and an increased sensitivity to this issue. As education contributes to shaping a person as a whole, it can strengthen this foundation as well. But is the education system in India doing this?

Thoughts about ideal education systems have existed in India for a long time. J. Krishnamurti's philosophy of education states that the intentions of education must be inner transformation and liberation of the human being, from which the society would be transformed. Gandhi's Nai Talim approach stresses on personal responsibility and inculcating self-discipline rather than reliance on external authority. But with our adaptation to westernized, anglicized form of education, all these principles have been lost.

In India, EVS (environmental sciences) has been made compulsory in schools as a strategy to tackle environmental issues. But it does not have the desired outcomes as it is firstly studied for marks and secondly, it is bookish and there is no actual connection to the environment. As children are not exposed to the natural and social worlds around them, they cannot comprehend the depth of the problems around them.

Because of these flaws in mainstream education, one turns to non-formal education for solutions. The tribal schools selected in this study are a good example of substantial effort being done in the non-formal sector to make education matter and add value. The study shows how learning happens for knowledge here unlike the coaching for marks and jobs in most mainstream schools. It analyses how students in the tribal schools develop their personalities, attitudes and beliefs in a

way that is beneficial to the environment and community around them. The schools strive to preserve the culture of the tribes. Hence, the effects of learning in a culture-specific, relatable class on the children have also been taken into consideration in the study.

Rationale

It was my general observation that my peers who came from a diverse or non-mainstream educational background were a lot more aware and sensitive towards environmental issues and the communities they were around. This was the main motivation behind confirming if the observation is true and if yes, then exploring the causes of this phenomenon.

Along with education, this difference in sensitivity and awareness is seen due to the kind of life a person has led, their upbringing, experiences, etc. From these points, the one that interested me the most was finding out if struggle in early life contributes to the shaping of a person. Struggle can be anything from just not being handed everything on a platter to not being able to fulfil basic needs to fighting for rights and to overcoming various kinds of injustice. Hence, the study also tries to determine if struggle can be a factor causing increased awareness and sensitivity.

Only bookish knowledge cannot lead to eco-friendly behaviour. Similarly, learning about applications and techniques to bring about environmental change is not enough, attitudinal change is required. This is what the paper is looking for. People need to feel the pressing need of constantly trying to be environment friendly.

Another angle that intrigued me was that there are several policies formed by governments and researches done by corporates, governmental and non-governmental organizations, grass root level organizations, private parties, and activists for containing the environmental crisis but with no results. Climate solutions already exist. However, we still find the problem escalating. There is no technology or economic barrier, it is rather psychological. It is the lack of will and leadership to move farther and faster. This lack of will and motivation can be attributed to denial, bystander effect and a fatalistic attitude. But it is in the younger generations that we will find the inspiration and courage for this change. The youth should be moulded in such a way that their attitudes, outlook, actions become inherently eco-friendly. The future of the planet is in their hands, so it should be ensured that they are well equipped.

Objectives

On the basis of this data, the study has following objectives-

1. Analyzing the organic school models of two tribal schools namely Jeevanshala (in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh) and Imlee Mahuaa (in Chattisgarh).
2. Documenting the struggle component in the lives of these children and observing how it affects their connection with the environment and the community they live in.
3. Recommending application of such a model to urban, mainstream schools.

Methodology

To fulfill the objectives, the study employs a qualitative approach of data collection and analysis. The methodology includes the following points-

1. Primary data analysis in the form of interviews of the founder of Imlee Mahuaa School and a supporter of Jeevanshala school.

The interviews of following individuals were taken as part of the research-

- Prayaag Joshi, founder of the tribal school Imlee Mahuaa
 - Suhas Kolhekar, activist working closely with Jeevanshala and Narmada Bachao Andolan from NAPM Maharashtra.
 - Shilpa Ballal, independent filmmaker, worked with Jeevanshala, also has made a documentary 'Lakir ke is taraf' highlighting concerns of displaced people because of the Sardar Sarovar Dam project.
2. Secondary data analysis in the form of analysis of curriculum, activities, and teaching method in the schools.
 3. Using Thick Description method (Geertz & Ryle).

Review of Literature

Environmental Education (EE) is used as a tool of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). The implementation of EE in the formal school curriculum has been structured by two national policy documents: The National Curriculum Framework 2005 and the directive of the Supreme Court. In primary schools, there is a graded syllabus for EE and in secondary schools, there is an infusion model. It is said that the main focus of EE should be to expose students to the real-life world, natural and social in which they live, to enable them to analyze, evaluate and draw inferences about problems and concerns related to the environment. (Praveen & Nasreen).

NCERT textbooks serve to fulfil various objectives as decided in the two consultations organized by NCERT on 13-14 February in New Delhi. They were attended by eminent scientists, environmentalists, officials of the government, academicians, teachers, chairpersons of school councils, Directors of SCERTs etc. The focus was on creating a good syllabus for primary and secondary schools. The textbooks lay emphasis on raising awareness levels and sensitizing children about environmental concerns. Aspects of indigenous knowledge have been introduced. There are references and suggestions for conducting activities in and outside of the classroom. (Gopal & Anand).

The above-mentioned research papers provide an insight into the design and purpose of environmental education syllabus in schools. The syllabus serves to provide knowledge. However, the extent to which the students are getting actual knowledge and doing it for the sake of marks is a question mark. The various problems which are seen in Environmental Education system in formal education are-

- The focus of environmental education is exposure to the real world. However, it does not happen by reading textbooks. There is no mention of how this exposure can be given in the real sense.
- Though the infusion model provides an interdisciplinary approach, applications and hands on experience are not mentioned.
- Raising awareness levels and sensitizing children are not possible solely through textbooks.
- There is a reference of indigenous knowledge being provided to the students. But it is of no use if the students are not given actual time to spend in natural and social environments.
- There are oversimplified solutions to overgeneralized problems e.g. Planting trees is a way to reduce forest depletion. Students are not getting a chance to think and link the problem to a bigger picture.
- Teachers are not well equipped or interested in teaching EE in a better way.

Thus, the main drawback of EE is that it is too bookish, and academics oriented. Often, it contains only facts and figures that can shock, but only momentarily. It lacks real depth.

But why look up to tribal people for inspiration? Modern man tends to look down upon indigenous people as primitive, backward, and superstitious. They may be illiterate and disadvantaged in many other ways, but they have a tremendous understanding of ecosystems and

the factors that sustain them. In the words of Sitakant Mahapatra, ‘They still look upon life as a gift to be celebrated; and this ancient Earth as one to be praised, worshipped and celebrated. They are the one to whom the Earth is not something to be used, not a possession or an object for exploitation but a living entity, an object of reverence, and the relationship is one of sacred trust and loving intimacy.’ (S.M. Nair)

They have inherent qualities that make them conserve nature and a culture that worships it. So, there is a lot to learn and adopt from their values.

Analysis

An overview of the schools:

1. Jeevan Shala- Jeevanshala are a group of 13 schools which come under the Narmada Navnirman Abhiyan linked to the Narmada Bachao Andolan. They are situated at the border of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh and fall into villages of both states. A few are also present in Gujarat. For convenience, Jeevan Shala has been considered as a single entity. The students at this school are children primarily from the Bhil tribe. It is primarily a residential school so that children from 4-5 villages nearby can learn here. The eldest students are about 10-12 years of age.
2. Imlee Mahua- It is a learning centre and has not been registered as a school. For convenience it has been referred to as school in the paper. It is in Chhattisgarh in the small hamlet of Balenga Para. The students at the school belong primarily to the Muria Gond tribe and a few belong to some Scheduled Castes or Other Backward castes. Most of them are first generation learners. The age range of the students is 3 to 15 years. There are four divisions or grades as such namely Sapri, Semar, Seethaphal and Soorajmukhi.

The analysis of the models used in the schools has been done based on 5 different criteria. Both primary and secondary data were used for the analysis. A description of happenings in the schools along with the resulting effect on the students have been provided. Thus, the concepts of education used, functioning and benefits of the same are elucidated.

To give recommendations, the analysis has been done using some methods of Thick Description. According to Geertz, Thick Description is composed not only of facts but also of commentary, interpretation, and interpretations of commentary unlike Thin Description which is a superficial and primarily factual account.

History and Objectives:

- **History-**

The villages around the part of Narmada river that were affected due to submergence, had no help from the Government. The schools in these villages were on paper and there were no schools functioning. The Government officers were exploiting the illiterate Adivasis by taking their thumbprints on all kinds of documents. When the activists from the Andolan talked to the tribal people about this corruption and exploitation, the tribal people were convinced about the need of getting education as a way of fighting against the injustice happening to them. Hence Jeevanshalas were started in various villages of Maharashtra, MP, and Gujarat. So, the history of the schools tells us that they were born out of struggle and need. Their motto is “Garaz tithe shaala” or “Where there is need, there is a school”.

Prayaag Joshi, the founder of Imlee Mahuaa says, “I had been working in a passive role with children since the year 2000. In this passive role, I was paying the school and college fees of economically needy students in Chennai in return for oral promises from their parents that they would not withdraw their children from the formal education system as long as their children wished to study. This passive role suited me because at that time I was a full-time business consultant. However, by June 2003 I had decided not to seek employment in any profession and to devote my full time to voluntary work. At that time, I decided to set up a rural school in a location that seemed to feel an acute need for such a school. That is how the idea of starting Imlee Mahuaa was conceived.” The main intention of starting a school like Imlee Mahuaa in a small hamlet is to provide the tribal people education that can liberate them and make them self-sufficient. It also intends to make Adivasis understand that leaving their own culture to adapt mainstream ways is not helping them.

Thus, Jeevanshalas can give a better overview into how struggle affects education along with other factors. Whereas Imlee Mahuaa gives a better insight into innovative learning styles, method of imparting environment education and the purpose of education in general.

- **Objectives-**

The objective of starting Jeevanshala was for the children to learn about Adivasi culture, environment, river Narmada, etc. while learning basic reading and writing skills as well.

The objective of starting Imlee Mahuaa was to provide a happy, healthful, meaningful, and relevant educational experience to the children who came there and to explore and understand the meaning of education through this journey.

These objectives denote the vision that the founders, teachers have for the schools and the expectations of the students from education. The objectives of both schools are person oriented rather than result oriented.

Curriculum and Activities:

When asked about the curriculum and co-curricular activities, Prayaag Joshi rightly said, “We have never labelled any activity as co-curricular. All activities that got included in our evolving weekly program usually got an equal share of the time and were all curricular activities.

Academics never got more time or a higher status. All activities for us are curricular as we are learning these skills for life and not working preferentially towards a particular academic degree.” This applies to both schools.

The curriculum of Government is broadly followed in Jeevanshala. The activists of Narmada Bachao Andolan have also added to the syllabus making it customized as well as appealing to the tribal children. Books written in local languages like ‘Aksharan olkhan’ (Identify the alphabets) and ‘Amrya Kanya’ (Our stories), have also been included. The children visit the jungles to get familiar with medicinal plants used in tribal medicine and other aspects of nature. They learn about tribal customs and history from the village elders. As the Narmada river is close by, most of them learn swimming and boating. Whenever they get clay and colours and they make clay items, draw and paint and usually their creations reflect the nature around them. The bodies of these tribal children are wired to be athletic, so they do well at sports and enjoy it too. Every year

an event called 'Balmela' is conducted where all the schools come together for a few days and compete amongst each other. There are different competitions like sports, singing, dance, drama, boating, etc. The themes of the plays revolve around social issues and the struggle of their own people. The children also exhibit drawings, research on tribal herbs, certain tribal objects, etc. in the Balmela. Several people from different villages, activists and guests attend the Balmela. They stay at the homes of the villagers hosting it, so it is like a cultural exchange. As children from all schools in Maharashtra, MP and Gujarat participate, there is a mixture of Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati happening. This is also a valuable lesson in secularism and the students say, "Hindi, Marathi ya Gujarati ladhne wale hai ek hi jaati" meaning "Language can be any, but all those who are rebelling are of the same caste".

There is no fixed syllabus in Imlee Mahuaa. Books from the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education curriculum, the NCERT curriculum, the CBSE curriculum, the Eklavya (Madhya Pradesh) curriculum and the Chhattisgarh State Board curriculum as well as an array of academic books and resources including Montessori materials are used for learning. The students are asked to use the dictionary and atlas and perform experiments on their own, using materials and apparatus in the Bal Vaigyanik Kits and Arvind Gupta's books, instead of being overdependent on individual teachers. Students may not have affixed syllabus, but they have a weekly routine to follow. It includes gardening, pottery, purchasing foodstuff from the local haat (market), cooking and eating nutritious meals at school, cleaning, accounting, sewing, tailoring, spinning cotton yarn on charkhas, mending torn clothes, embroidery, helping masons construct new school buildings, repairs and maintenance of school premises, mopping the floors with cow dung, cleaning the restrooms, carpentry, walking out into the nature, cycling out, sports, academics, visual art - drawing and painting, performing arts - theatre, vocal and instrumental music, dance, older children teaching younger children, bamboo craft, book lending library, writing personal diaries, etc. The educational program also includes an annual excursion for three to four weeks for all children and staff to visit people and places that were doing environmentally or socially useful work so as to witness first-hand the various challenges that people and communities around the country face, to see places of natural beauty and to visit historical sites to establish a stronger connection with such places and their history. People from other parts of the world including students, teachers, researchers, well-wishers, etc. visit the school and often stay there. They offer exposure to things happening in other parts of the world and learn several things from students as well. This is done with the possibility of making independent and creative minds.

The curriculum of the schools is dynamic and far reaching. It has been designed to suit the needs of the tribal children rather than usher them into a race. However, it is just as challenging and enlightening as regular syllabi. As it concentrates on life skills, the children get a holistic understanding of life. They do not need to learn it separately. Thus, education escapes the restrictive clutches of learning a subject or learning for the exam and becomes a learning of living life.

Teachers and Teaching methods:

The teachers in Jeevanshala are mostly Adivasi youth from nearby villages who have completed education till 10th or 12th standard. Some alumni of Jeevanshala have also volunteered to teach there. After Jeevanshala gained some popularity, teachers from Zilla Parishad also joined. Even though they had B.Ed. and D.Ed. degrees, they had to unlearn their previous teaching methods to teach here. They were taken to experimental schools and given guidance by senior activists of the Andolan to make them understand that Jeevanshala is different. The teaching methods include both formal and informal methods. Initially, when the school did not have any infrastructure, children were taught to write using the mud at the banks of river Narmada.

As the teachers of Jeevanshala are locals, they speak the same tongue as the students. Hence, the students who have not heard any other language (like English) before, are put immediately to ease in the school. The initial classes are taught in the local lingo, making the process of learning easier for the students. Later, they are introduced to other languages. The children find it comfortable to discuss happenings in their village with teachers and street plays, songs are often designed on these village themes. Suhas Kolhekar says, "Such interactions with teachers as well as actual participation in the presentation of their village and struggle enriches students' lives making them feel empowered to save the forests and biodiversity they live in". As the background of the teachers is the same as the students, they respect the same values, customs, and culture as the students. Hence, the students do not have to face discrimination or derogatory remarks on account of their culture, language, caste, etc., which is a common occurrence in mainstream schools. Because of the shared background, the teachers understand the struggle the students have been through and help them cope better. The teachers themselves are highly motivated because of this struggle and say, "Teaching in Jeevanshala is like service". This would not have been possible if the teachers had been from other backgrounds. The young teachers have a particularly good rapport with the villagers too and are treated as family by them.

Likewise, in Imlee Mahuaa, most of the teachers are also local youth belonging to the same tribes as the students. Teaching methods from organizations like the Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education for formal teaching of mathematics are followed. But otherwise all the teachers bring with them teaching methods that they have imbibed over their young lives. Like there is no fixed syllabus, in the same way, there is no compulsion for students to attend classes. Except for multilingual poetry classes and English classes, all other subjects and activities are done by students by their own free will. Also, art is never taught in class. The founders believe that art is something that comes from within and hence is not taught but children are encouraged to do it. Classes are taken usually if a student demands to learn something from the teacher or is having trouble in studying. Otherwise, the students learn by themselves using various facilities of the school, through books, games, play, nature, the work they do at school, excursions and from each other. The teachers just play the role of facilitating this self-learning process. The students do not have a fixed timetable and so they get to decide their schedule according to their own interests. Also, there are no exams taken in Imlee Mahuaa. Children promote themselves to the next class, whenever they feel they are ready.

The teaching method of Imlee Mahuaa is less about the teachers and more about the experiences the students get. Essential hand holding is done, but the students are given freedom to choose what they want to do. While some students choose to follow a well-rounded routine, some carve out specific pieces that interested them. They are not burdened with rules and expectations. This makes their experience of school, enjoyable rather than stressful. As they are given a fully free rein, they learn to take responsibility for their own education. Hence, they are intrinsically motivated and do not need to be controlled or told in any way. Because of the absence of exams, there is no unhealthy competition. Children learn at their own pace.

Environmental learning:

Tribal culture in general is very rooted in nature. Adivasis worship nature and all its elements. It is a part of their culture and beliefs to consume resources as per need only. Mainstream, consumerist societies lack this. Hence, the tribal children do not need to be taught to conserve nature. It is innate to them. Yet, both the schools have given importance to environmental education because the children need to be honed to actively work towards conserving nature.

Children from Jeevanshalas do not need to be taught differently about natural hazards. They have first-hand witnessed submergence of their homes, so they are acutely aware of how destructive nature can be. At the same time, the children know that the flood was caused due to the building

of the dam and hence is a man-made disaster. They worship Waghdev, a deity related to nature. The name of the school itself is Jeevanshala meaning 'Life schools' and the school does live up to it. In school, the children have discussions about food chains and the balance of nature is revealed to them. They are also taught about their rights. So, some students have gone ahead and formed cooperatives to gain fishing rights in the backwaters of Sardar Sarovar dam. They have begun asserting rights over their natural resources which are being stolen from them. Their slogan is "Jaha zamin dubi humari, pani-machli kaise tumhari?" meaning "Where it is our land getting submerged, how can the water and fish belong to you?"

Children and staff of Imlee Mahuaa read the prescribed textbooks on the environment. But the emphasis has been on building sensitive relationships with the environment. This is done by the children by constantly examining day to day lives and habits and changing them to become more environment friendly in small ways, by learning to be sensitive about use of material resources and their disposal, regulating and changing consumption patterns, taking part in proactive work relating to waste disposal, stemming degradation of the soil as well as rejuvenating the environment by planting trees, increasing biomass in the soil in the school, etc. Walking out into nature every weekend is a key process in the environmental education program. During these walks, children get to observe the environment in which they live in quite closely and learn about it. Prayaag Joshi feels, "The sensitivity the children gain can shape their habits of consumption of various natural resources as they grow and become the primary decision-makers of the family". Thus, the education does not stop at learning and application, but has an attitudinal impact on the children. Apart from this learning, the school undertakes some tasks that minimize the school's impact on the environment. All the vessels and utensils used are cleaned mostly with mud and rarely with detergent. The water drained while washing is supplied to plants. School purchases are done in bulk to reduce packaged material and hence reduce non-biodegradable material usage. Children walk or cycle to school. Minimal amount of electricity is used in the functioning of the school. 'Imlee Mahuaa', both the words are names of trees on which the Adivasis rely on. Even the names of the divisions of the classes are inspired from elements of nature. Thus, here, things are not just taught, instead the school is building a live example in front of them and they get to actively participate in it.

Both the schools are providing environmental education in a way that will really make a mark on the children's lives. It is not about facts and data. It is about something the children can see, touch, feel, breathe, eat, grow, and use almost every day. Hence, the children also connect to it, cognitively and emotionally, and voluntarily want to conserve it.

Struggle:

Struggle is an integral part of the lives of children of Jeevanshala. As mentioned earlier, Government officials were taking advantage of the illiteracy and innocence of the tribal people. Jeevanshalas were thus started as a mode to not just educate youngsters, but also to mould them to stand up against this injustice. Jeevanshalas are the product of the Narmada Bachao Andolan. Hence, the students are invariably exposed to the Satyagraha the activists are undertaking to protect the rights and dignity of the displaced Adivasis. The students are adamant that they want to join the Satyagraha. They say, “How can we study if our homes are drowning?” Their motto is “Ladai Padhai saath saath”, meaning “Rebellion and education go hand in hand”. During these peaceful Satyagrahas by the activists and Adivasis, the children experienced first-hand how unfairly their lands were getting submerged and how exploitative and oppressive the Government officials and police could be. In 1994, when the Sardar Sarovar was filled again, many villages got submerged and along with that one Jeevanshala also went under water. The students stood in the water as an act of defiance towards injustice and solidarity towards their school, until the water reached their necks and they had to be dragged away by the police. They went around other villages which were not affected by the floods and collected money and help for all affected areas and not just for their own schools. They have literally built and rebuilt their schools. They have had to rally on roads to be able to give their 4th standard exams externally. Along with the activists, many children have also been to the police stations and now they freely argue with police and officials of Government if they are denied their rights. As they can read and write, they translate the official documents presented by the officials for the villagers. This does not stop at their own villages. The children visit nearby villages where corruption under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is rampant and help the villagers to uncover it. This shows how struggle and shared trauma lead to a community vibe and increased sensitivity. The children develop and perform street plays on the protests. Hence, in the words of Suhas Kolhekar, “It is the children’s lived reality”. Certain life skills are thus imbibed by the children automatically and do not need to be taught. However, the school is harnessing their energy and honing their skills in the right direction. They are taught about various Adivasi leaders and rebels like Birsa Munda and Tantia Bhil. They are told stories about Shobha Wagh, Rehma Vasawe and other bravehearts from Narmada Bachao Andolan who lost their lives while fighting for the cause. Songs and slogans of protest written by the teachers are sung by the students during ‘Balmela’. Visitors watch these performances and understand the depth of problems and vigour

of the small fighters despite the language barrier. In this way, the meaning and essence of struggle is hardwired in the brains of the students and now, they can stand up for themselves wherever they go. This fearlessness can only come from lived experiences. Another point is that the ill effects of pollution have also worried the Adivasis. As the water of Narmada gets polluted day by day, their supply of fish (a staple food) is reducing.

Imlee Mahuaa school is situated in Bastar region of Chattisgarh where conflicts between military forces and Naxalites keep happening. However, the village of Balenga Para is relatively very peaceful and not directly affected. Yet, there is struggle in the life of these Adivasi children in a sense that they are not handed everything on a platter. Even in school, they are not spoon fed. They must work and toil for it. Public examinations must be written in Hindi or English and the native language of Adivasis is not an option. Passing on knowledge is an oral tradition in tribal people and hence, writing is novel to them. Also, the textbooks they use have information and stories that are unrelated to their lives and so the children find it difficult to form meaning out of it. Being first generation learners, they do not have educated backgrounds and Hindi or English language rich backgrounds and have to begin everything from scratch. This has toughened the process of learning for them, but it gives them strength. They can cope with major disasters with equanimity. The struggle also gives rise to a community feeling in them. They prefer to take decisions in favour of the overall group though it could curtail individual benefits. Along with that, an important struggle that they face is coping with the changes in climate that have affected both agriculture and forest gathering. Unseasonal rains, excessive rains, scanty rains, floods have started having significant impacts on the delicate ecosystems of the farmlands and the forests and with that the ability of the people to survive. Only those who are employed as salaried workers are relatively unaffected by these environmental changes. Thus, though survival as such is not a struggle for them, they are witnessed to changes in the environment and are dependent on it. This could have caused increased sensitivity to environmental issues.

Results

1. The education imparted in the schools is **need based**. It is required by the students to survive. They are actual stakeholders in their education and not passive. Hence, the motivation of these children is high because it is not just the question of passing exams but of living life.

2. The schools' outlook and objectives are **person oriented** rather than result oriented. They are serving to make education not just easy and accessible to Adivasis, but also meaningful, useful, and enjoyable. They are not manufacturing products with higher marks, but helping each student to find their own process, interests, and bloom in their own way. Thus, the students are not stressed and overburdened. This is probably why they do not learn environmental education for the sake of marks, but actually understand the complexity of it.
3. Focus on **learning skills for life** and not for exams or towards any degree. Hence, academics is not the focal point. Anything that contributes towards life skill building is taught e.g. Cooking their own food, sewing, swimming, repairing things, etc. Thus, the students are getting moulded to become independent and self-sufficient. Plus, they are getting the correct message that true education involves a well-rounded experience and not undue focus on academics. Other activities including environmental education are not secondary.
4. The students have the **freedom of choice**. They are free to take whatever decisions they want to. This instils a feeling of self confidence in them. They also understand that they are solely responsible for the consequences of their actions. Hence, they act more responsibly. It becomes a habit to think about every decision and to own up to your mistakes. They learn to take ownership of their own education; they are learning for themselves and only if they want to. No one is forcing them into it.
5. The children are given a lot of **exposure** in terms of new experiences. This is seen in the curriculum and teaching methods of the schools. Also, they are learning about the environment by being in the environment. They are taken on excursions to get to know new places, people and are also introduced to various social and environmental issues. They interact with people from all over the world and gain knowledge. Along with that, they are themselves exposed to harsh realities of the world due to the struggles that they face daily. Hence, this exposure gives them the ability to adjust to all kinds of situations unlike the sheltered lives of mainstream children. So, exposure leads to awareness of the surroundings, environment, multiple realities, and the communities of the world. This knowledge is not bookish, it is lived and hence is easily applicable.
6. Often the education offered in mainstream schools has no relation to the reality in which the children live. However, in these schools the children are given **relevant and relatable education**. They are taught about things that matter to them. This is even true in the context of environmental learning, where the children are taught about the

environment and problems that surround them e.g. They are taken into jungles and taught about herbs that are used in tribal medicine. This does not mean that the children are given a microscopic view, they are exposed to the world. But they do not feel as if the environmental and social problems are in some far-flung area about which they can't do anything. They realize that the problems are present in their surroundings and hence, feel empowered to solve them. This can counter the fatalistic attitude and bystander effect that are inhibiting people from acting towards environment conservation.

7. A person tends to act for something about which she/he strongly feels about. Hence, even in the case of environmental problems, it is important that the children feel connected to the environment and community around them. A **sense of belongingness** is required. E.g. The students from Jeevanshala win prizes for their school (like a water tank or new books) in Balmela and not for themselves. This gives them a sense of belonging and being able to do something. Or like in Imlee Mahuaa, the decisions of the schools are taken by the students. So, they feel more connected. They are more likely to work collectively towards achieving a goal. As the children are taught about the environment they live in, about its diversity, its usefulness, and its beauty, they also get the same feeling of belongingness towards it. It makes them more sensitive.
8. The **struggle** component in the lives of these children gives certain skills to them that are difficult to achieve otherwise. It gives them a community vibe, or a sense of belongingness as mentioned before. As they are not given everything they wish for, they learn to work for it. They learn to speak out against injustice and fight for what is right. It gives them strength, fearlessness, and resilience. Hence again, the skills obtained through struggle help in countering fatalistic attitudes and the bystander effect. Struggle is also motivating. Hence, it gives an attitude that is extremely essential for bringing about environmental change.
9. Teachers at these schools are actually concerned about the children and also know where the children are coming from. Hence, they have a deeper understanding about children's needs, strengths, and shortcomings. They are highly motivated to teach. They can communicate better because of shared experiences with students. Also, the teachers are not authoritarian but present to facilitate the children's learning process. This not only puts the children at ease, but also helps them bond with the teachers easily. Such teachers can effectively extract the best out of the children and also have the power to inspire them.

Recommendations

The paper tries to juxtapose the model for an urban scenario where instead of an organic connection, we have books and syllabi to define our relationship with nature. However, if such a model is to be applied in urban, mainstream school settings, it will require customizations.

The general attitude of policy makers, school authorities, teachers, and parents in mainstream towards education is studying to obtain marks, get a degree and do a good job. This is a very narrow-minded view. The other aspects of education like building life skills, personality development, enjoying education, forming relationships with the environment and community around, etc. are lost. All these factors are essential to bring about eco-friendly behaviour by an individual.

1. The first recommendation is that a systemic and attitudinal change should happen in mainstream. All aspects and fronts of education should be given equal importance during school years. A well rounded, well balanced personality is required to solve any kinds of problems, do all kinds of jobs and to live life with fulfilment.
2. The extra attention given to marks in academics should get reduced in mainstream schools. Exams should get the attention they deserve. However, children should be taught from class 1 to go beyond exams. Learning should not be exam oriented. This can be achieved by-
 - Regular parent-teacher-student sessions on education. It can involve understanding the expectations that parents and children have from the school and in return showing them the benefits of a well-rounded education instead of an academically focused one. However, it is impractical to expect that all the attention from exams would get diffused, but efforts should be made by the school to give attention to other activities to a greater extent.
 - During classes, the teachers should try and assess each child's interests and strengths by encouraging children to speak about them and observing them. They can take one on one sessions with the children later to tell them in which ways they can take up their interests further.
3. Building essential skills for life is also possible in the schools in urban settings. Though skills like swimming, boating, constructing school buildings, etc. is not possible in the urban settings, other kinds of work e.g. Sewing or embroidery, repairing appliances in school, cooking basic dishes, etc. can be done on a regular basis. Other activities can also

be done e.g. Sweeping the school and cleaning the restrooms, decorating the school, arranging books in the library, fixing small problems in computers, watering the plants in the school, making a list of expenses of the school, repairing or replacing instruments in the laboratory, giving first aid to fellow schoolmates, etc. The parents should be made aware of how all these skills are important and not demeaning in any way.

4. It is hard to make freedom of choice available to mainstream school goers to a large extent. However, they can be involved in the decision making of simpler events e.g. Deciding their schedule throughout the day, deciding the schedule of events throughout the year, brainstorming if any new events can be organized in school and who should be chief guests, the sports they want to play, etc.
5. There should be varied approaches to learning environmental education in urban classrooms and it should be easier with access to the internet and technology. A book called 'Joy of Learning' was released by NCERT. It contains simple experiments and activities that can introduce children to nature and develop their interest in it. There is a documentary series on Netflix called 'Our Planet' which shows the biodiversity on our planet in a vivid, engaging fashion and subtly shows the harm we are causing it. That could make Environment Education classes more interesting.
6. Because of concretization, it is hard to give the children exposure to natural environments. To counter this problem the following things can be done-
 - Each child could be asked to bring a small plant to be planted in the school. It is their job to tend to it each day and make sure it grows. They should be asked to write a small report on the plant's name, uses, its progress through various months and if possible, to make small drawings of its stages of growth.
 - The children should be asked to observe the behaviour of any animal, bird, or insect that they see every day. They should be asked to note down its features, colours, activities, stages of growth, their importance for the balance in nature, etc.
 - The children can be taken once in a month to some garden, park, hill, or lake in the vicinity of the school. Maybe the older children can take responsibility for the younger children in case it is not possible for teachers to come along. They should be asked to explore the place, collect leaves or flowers that have fallen on the ground, look at stones, soil, insects, birds, animals (in the natural environment and not zoos) and make notes about them. They can even draw, paint, or make clay sculptures of nature's elements.

- The children should be taken to visit organizations that are working to conserve the environment. After returning, the children can discuss what they saw and think of how environment preservation can start from their own school.
 - The children should also be taken to visit organizations doing social work. They can get to understand the social realities of urban poor, migrants, people living in ghettos and bastis, differently abled people, people with mental illnesses, animal rights organizations etc. This can help them develop empathy and sensitivity. The parents should be assured about the safety of the children.
7. The children can be given relevant education outside of their syllabi. Or their syllabi can be made relevant and relatable to their own lives. E.g. Environmental education says we take the concept of ecological footprint or carbon footprint. The children should be given the task to record the carbon footprint of the school and be encouraged to give ways to reduce it. They should be asked to apply their own suggestions and then see if the carbon footprint reduces or not. If it does, they should be given some small token of achievement. The children should be taught about urban settings and how smart usage of technology can help build a greener society. Students should be taught about things happening all over the world, but they should be given indigenous, everyday life examples so that they feel involved in the education they are getting and want to do something for betterment.
 8. A sense of belongingness to the environment and community the children are in can be developed by simple methods. The children should be asked to spend one day observing and interacting with the teachers at the school and participate in their work throughout the day. Similarly, they should spend a day with the administrative staff, the peons and cleaners, the watch guards, etc. They should be asked to inquire about these people's backgrounds, their education, their daily routine and duties, their families, the challenges they have faced, etc. This will sensitize the children. The children can also be asked to sit with their classmates that they do not know well enough and interact with them to find out things in common. This will create a feeling of unity and solidarity in them.
 9. Struggle cannot be injected into the lives of urban, mainstream children. However, the school can do some things to make the children value what they are getting. Mainstream school goers should visit such schools like Jeevanshala, Imlee Mahuaa or even urban schools where the lesser privileged children study. Mainstream schools can look to adopt the model of an integrated school for all i.e. Poor children, differently abled children, children with mental illnesses or intellectual disabilities, etc. all learn in the same school.

Children can learn from their struggle and be empathetic. During classes, instead of spoon-feeding answers, children should be asked to study concepts themselves and venture their ideas. Giving ready-made knowledge is a part of education, but provoking thought and action are higher order goals of education which are not getting fulfilled.

10. The teachers at the mainstream schools need to be motivated to bring about any difference in giving education to the students. They can have degrees and training, but if they do not really care about the students, don't understand their aspirations and their uniqueness, nothing matters. They should nudge the students towards understanding and practicing environmental conservation. Also, they should just facilitate the learning process of children and not take control of it.

Conclusion

If the recommendations provided above are taken up by each school in the country, it will be a small step with big consequences in the long run. This paper highlights that application of environment friendly practices and technology is only going to work if the people, especially youngsters have the right attitudes towards it and a multi-faceted personality to take proper action. Thus, this study concludes with the hope that we all carry for a greener, happier future.

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A WALK IN THE TWILIGHT: AWARENESS ABOUT AGED CARE²

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Abstract

One of the great successes of modern medicine is that an increasing proportion of people are now entering old age often with multiple conditions. In our society, there might be ample acceptance of elderly but little awareness about how to care for them. One must understand and empathize with them as their body slowly begins to wilt.

With this background, this study is intended to spread awareness in elderly homes regarding methods of taking care and psychology of the elderly. The objective is also promoting healthy aging and preventing ill health.

Primary data analysis has been done in the form of semi structured interviews with a few elderly people. The questions asked were based on the care that they received, facilities that they could avail of, their likes and dislikes and their satisfaction with all of these. They were asked about their daily routine and the problems that they faced. This study will prompt future studies which will explore the topic in more depth. This is a qualitative study with a small sample.

There are numerous ways to handle basic situations while taking care of the elderly by which they can feel happier and more satisfied. The awareness about the psychology involved in taking care of the elderly will lead to a better and more satisfactory life for them.

Introduction

Population aging is the most significant result of the process known as demographic transition. Reduction of fertility leads to decline in the proportion of the young in the population. Reduction in mortality means a longer life span for individuals. India is undergoing such a demographic transition.

² This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review

According to population census 2011 there are nearly 104 million elderly persons (aged 60 years and above) in India. Out of which 53 million are females and 51 million are males. A report released by the United Nations Population Fund and HelpAge India suggested that the number of elderly people is expected to grow to 173 Million by 2026.

In most Gerontological literature, people above 60 yrs. of age are considered as 'old' and as constituting the elderly segment of the population. For all people above 60 are "Senior Citizens". In academic research, retirement age is often taken as the index of aged status.

The Indian aged population is currently the second largest in the world.

In our society, there might be ample acceptance of the elderly but little awareness about how to care for them. One must understand and empathize with them as their body slowly begins to wilt. Their organs slow down over time as their body deteriorates. They require a little more time and efforts to do tasks we would do in a jiffy.

Therefore they really like to be consulted for communication. They have a lot to say and like to be listened to. It shows how we are aware of their experiences. They like being acknowledged and knowing that there is someone who wants to do things for them, listen to them and be there for them. Providing simple solutions, putting in a little extra effort for them makes them incredibly happy.

Objectives:

- Promoting healthy aging and preventing ill health.
- Promoting the wellbeing of older people.
- Prevention and management of health problems in Geriatrics.
- Preventive health care in elderly
- To shed light on Geriatric medicine and Geriatric nursing.

Rationale:

Most hospitals do not have a special Geriatric facility. At present most elderly patients are still being treated in general medical wards. Hence, I feel there is a need to encourage Geriatric units in hospitals and clinics. It is necessary to spread awareness about the various ways of taking care of the elderly considering their mental health.

Methodology:

Primary data analysis has been done in the form of semi structured interviews with a few elderly people. The questions asked were based on the care that they received, facilities that they could avail of, their likes and dislikes and their satisfaction with all of these. They were asked about their daily routine and the problems that they faced. This is a qualitative study with a small sample.

Data Analysis:

Based on the interviews conducted, it was clear that:

- The reason for most of the elderly people living there was the sense of security the community provides and to live with people of the same age group.
- The people there seem to be emotionally vulnerable due to physiological changes happening to them due to old age and their increasing dependency on external factors.
- Social gatherings and functions filled them with life and enthusiasm which greatly helped to enhance their mental health.
- The first step is advocacy to raise policy makers awareness of the multiple issues related to aging in the country
- Providing necessary care and support to elderly people within the community setting is recommended instead of opening more old age homes.

Conclusion:

"We cannot heal old age but let us protect it and prolong it." - Sr. J. Ross

In conclusion, current trends in demographic coupled with rapid urbanization and lifestyle changes have led to an emergence of a host of problems faced by the elderly in India. It must be remembered that the quality of life of the elderly calls for a holistic approach and concerted efforts by the health and health related sectors.

The elderly do not need your sympathy. Make the promise to always shower them with your love and care.

Recommendations:

- Advocacy, research, involvement of voluntary agencies, training different levels of Gerontological workers, catalyzing the community, awareness building, organizing older people themselves and networking with international agencies are all essential to empower older Indians.
- In December 2007 Indian Parliament passed a bill known as maintenance of parents and senior citizens act. Laws to protect old people are section 125 (1) (d), section 125(3). Implementation of all these laws should be monitored by the National Council for Older Person. (NCOP).
- Professional training in Geriatrics and Gerontology needs to be promoted. Few universities for e.g. The Indira Gandhi National Open University offers a post-graduate diploma in Geriatric Medicine. There is a need to give emphasis to Geriatric Medicine in undergraduate medical as well as paramedical courses.
- Certain lacunae in the field of research on Gerontology have been identified, such as, lack of attention given towards the aged in rural India, failure to view elderly people as active participants in the economy, the perception of older person as being mere recipients of social welfare services and a lack of focus on policy recommendations.
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War ‘fair’? - understanding military’s approach towards emotional, moral, and ethical conflict of soldiers and its complexities³

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ABSTRACT

Geographical distance, between the targeted group of this study and common citizens, often becomes a barrier in understanding the role and duty of a soldier. Also, there are limited resources and efforts taken to understand the intricacies of this profession. This can result in creation of detrimental jingoism and false popular perceptions about combats and soldiers. Thus, the purpose of this study is to shed light over the various aspects of this job profile that can affect the psychological wellbeing of soldiers.

Amongst various elements causing distress in this occupation, committing homicide is one of the major elements (Friedman, 2005) that can escalate into perpetrator trauma or PTSD. Hence the first objective of this study is to understand how soldiers on warfronts have dealt with the ‘act of killing’ through their available narratives. Also, homicide is considered to be against natural human instincts and values, and it takes immense training to desensitize a human being to execute (Grossman, 1995). Therefore, the second objective of this study is to understand how military training addresses the subject of committing homicide to its soldiers in the training. A qualitative research method will be used. Secondary data analysis will be conducted of the data available from countries like US, Afghanistan drawing parallels to Indian context. The results will try to explore the need for certain changes and addition for addressing the issue of homicides with soldiers and military to increase the sensitisation of the program.

INTRODUCTION

Military organizations have been and still are an integral part of a nation. Many countries spent a significant amount of their currency, developing and building their military forces. The United States of America, China, Russia, Saudi Arabia constitute respectively 36%, 13%, 4.1% and 3.8% of the total global expenditure on the military. India comes at the 5th rank with its 3.5% share of the global total. This can give us an overall idea of how much a nation is invested in its military forces.

³ This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review

Military personnel or soldiers are the functioning body of military across the globe. Though the contribution of technological inventions is changing and adding a lot to this system, human contribution stays of equal importance. India itself has 1.36 million active military forces after China with 2.18 million. The numbers speak of themselves; we can see the amount of people engaged in this job across the globe. The nature of this profession has its own intricacies hence as a civilian our approach must be empathetic to understand them.

The term defense forces imply the meaning ‘protection of the civilians’ from any kind of danger. Despite that, the soldiers often have to deal with combat on various fronts. Be it border issues with neighbouring countries or conflict-ridden areas in the country itself. On various fronts soldiers are equally occupied with their duties. Also, across the world a considerable number of human forces are engaged in warfront-like situations e.g. Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq etc. on this backdrop, there have been a lot of studies that aim to understand the complexities of this profession.

To some extent we are all aware of the physical struggles’ soldiers must face. The environmental challenges they must face vary from some of the lowest temperatures in the world to the land with no water. They often must beat the challenges of living in such critical conditions, with many times poor supply of livelihood. Above all these factors, this profession demands constant alertness and ability to get to work at any given time. Though mentioned above and surely many more challenges are environmental or physical about which the mainstream media has provided us some exposure. But if we consider the mental health aspect of this profession, we are often clueless.

Mental health in general is a taboo. Varying to some extent, situations regarding mental health are similar across the globe. A lot of efforts are being made to just start a conversation about it. When it comes to the mental health of soldiers, the stigma surrounding it gets more rigid. Reasons for this vary from person to person. The taboo surrounding this subject thrives from a mix of masculine portrayal of this profession (making it seem weak to seek help) and stigma about mental health in general. Keeping aside the ability or inability of military institutions to provide sufficient help, approximately 60% of military personnel who experience mental health problems do not seek help. In a meta analytical study it was found that 42.9% of the personnel did not seek help because it made them seem weak. It has been seen that up to 15% of soldiers post deployment are diagnosed with PTSD. (It was 30% during the Vietnam war). Also, in 2012 alone more than 7,500 former US military personnel died by suicide. Even in Indian armed forces 900 personnel died by suicide in last seven years, that is almost twice the number of soldiers lost in the Kargil War (527). This data tells us the severity of the psychological complexities faced by the soldiers.

All this data shows us the current scenario of treatment regarding mental health and barriers addressing them. These all are either curative or intervention-based factors. This paper aims at studying the causative factors and revolves around the preventive means of the cause. Criticality of the environmental setting and exhausting working conditions have a large impact on mental state on a soldier. A lot of soldiers suffer from anxiety, depression, and PTSD like challenges after the war. The causative factors behind this vary with a wide range. In a survey it was observed that the military personnel reported having stressors such as military practices and culture, followed by work/life balance, soldier's own well-being, health care system problems, and relationship problems.

Though again there is another aspect of this causative factor which is quite unexplored and often unspoken of. This cause goes to one of the major task soldiers must perform that is to commit homicide. Amongst various elements causing distress in this occupation, committing homicide is one of the major elements (Friedman, 2005). Though there is a little conversation about how it affects the soldiers and what are the intricacies of this topic. This paper tries to try and understand the different aspects of the same.

OBJECTIVES

Given the following are some objectives this study tries and explores.

1. To understand how soldiers on warfronts have dealt with the 'act of killing' through their available narratives and what effect it has on them.
2. To understand how military training addresses the subject of committing homicide to its soldiers in the training.

RATIONALE

War is destructive. With no disregard for the cause, it can be said that war, combat, or war like situation bring destruction and harm especially to soldiers. It has been a long time since India experienced an actual war-like situation. There are few people who have experienced that time. Hence it takes purposeful efforts to understand the actual intensity and consequences of war. But still the portrayal of war is glorified in the media. E.g. After a recent attack on Pulwama, platforms of social media were flooded with messages demanding war. As a part of this cohort, who uses social media and is around people who are warmongers, it becomes essential for oneself to get a reality check. This study tries to bring in perspective of soldiers on this matter, who have fought some battles. It tries to convey what it means to fight a battle and their struggles.

A soldier is often portrayed as someone who is always on duty, fighting and almost on a killing spree (e.g.in movies, American sniper, or Uri). Though in reality many times only 0.5 percent of the population is on active duty and the military community argues that all these assumptions breed harmful stereotypes. Also, along with fighting battles, military personnel have other duties and responsibilities as well, such as guarding and protecting people and properties under threat and helping in disaster relief and emergency management efforts. Most of the times more important than what "we" (civilians) may think is "their " job. This encourages one to study the nuances of this profession and cross check our beliefs and understanding of something so complicated.

Our society has always tried and inculcated values and norms which tell us that killing other humans is not acceptable or justified at all (with few exceptions). Human species has become more civilized and evolved over the time with resistance to kill other humans. Hence given the conditions under which a soldier works it takes a toll on them to deal with the fact that they in some or the other way have committed homicide (Friedman, 2005). Behind the layering of stigma for various causes this becomes a more stigmatized subject to deal with even in a professional setting. Thus, it must be understood how we can deal with it and what are more appropriate ways to handle this subject.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The study is referring to the previous material available on the internet. It is solely based on secondary data analysis.

The narratives which are used for analysis are from few interviews. Channels like BBC and Washington post published articles written by few experienced military veterans and scholars on mental health of soldiers. In an interview with BBC a former military officer shared his experiences with soldiers and how they are dealing with their challenges. The article also provides us insight on how actually military institutions perceive mental health. There are few experiences the veteran shares of his colleagues and few other soldiers. Another article in the Washington post gives us an overview of the debate on whether killing comes to humans naturally or not. It shares a debate between a military officer of higher post and another senior experienced officer within depth knowledge of psychology.

Another article by The Wire gives us an overview of the Indian military scenario. The article is written by former officer Raghu Raman who tells us about the under researched area of Indian military and mental health of soldiers.

A website called PBS has posted a series of interviews of 8 officers from the department of Veterans affairs in the US. These are all either experienced scholars from military services or psychology scholars. The interviews try to gain their perspective on how killing affects a soldier's mental health specifically. These officers have provided their experienced and knowledgeable insights on intricacies of the subject.

A meta analytical study by Marie-Louise Sharp et al titled 'Stigma as a Barrier to Seeking Health Care Among Military Personnel with Mental Health Problems' gives us an in-depth knowledge of how a soldier's mental health is highly stigmatized. They also give us various causative factors for the reluctance soldiers must seek mental health.

Quite a big part of this study refers to content from the book 'On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society' by Dave Grossman. It gives a historical, anthropological, and biological perspective on killing. It explains what psychophysical processes happen within an individual when they kill. The author also explores the role of society in how killing has been portrayed.

METHODOLOGY

This paper uses the method of secondary data analysis. The material used for study was obtained from various sources such as the internet, books, newspaper articles and journals.

Data available from the interviews of military analysts on the internet was used to understand the military's approach towards the construct under investigation. It provided perspectives of professionals, scholars, analysts, and veterans.

Analysis:

Part I

A soldier's job, most of the time, comes with the fact that they may have to kill. This surely has an impact on their mental health, and this has been happening for a long time. In WW2 an SLA martial observed that the fear of killing rather than the fear of being killed was the most common

cause of the battle failure. He found out that in WW I only 15-20% of combat infantry were able to fire their weapons on the enemy and there were 80% that were de facto conscientious objectors when it came to the point of firing their weapon. This shows us that there is a natural instinctive and psychological inhibition to kill. He also mentions that every soldier has his inner conflict regarding the act of killing and it exacerbates when troops are fighting their own citizens

Even in a quite recent time of reference a lieutenant colonel serving in the US military who was on duty in Iraq and Afghanistan shared his experience in an interview with BBC. He mentioned that soldiers do not like to address the fact that they have killed other people, they avoid talking about it and if asked often to lie about the reality. He also said that "They (soldiers) don't like to talk about it. In general, if you are a soldier and you have killed in war, you lie and say no. It tends to be the secret we have that we are not proud of. We want to fight bravely, but it's hard to be proud of killing another person."

An army veteran shared his story as well about his PTSD and its original trigger. Dante Sowell who is now an ex-army personnel suffers from PTSD and he says it started when he was killed for the first time in combat in Iraq. This is a small snippet from his narrative.

"My PTSD was triggered when I killed the first enemy in combat. It all happened so fast ... I was like, oh my God, I just killed this man. Why? I thought about how easy it was and how my training played a part. What they do not tell you is that when you take a life, you lose parts yourself. If you take a life, you lose a part of yourself. No matter if a person's trying to come after you or not, you are still taking another person's life. It is someone's son, it's someone's father, it's someone's friend. I guess that was the start of my PTSD. It affects me in my day-to-day life. I still have severe PTSD, I just learn to deal with it, I know my triggers and avoid those triggers."

If we talk about the Indian context, Indian military analyst and an ex-army officer also have expressed himself in an interview. He says there is no switch in the human mind which can periodically convert a kind soldier, who rescues victims from natural disasters, into a killer and then back again, without it affecting his mental state.

Part II

The military training forces all over the world play an important role in developing all required military skills in an individual. The actual method through which training happens is all confidential but the theories and principles used are studied by few. The subject itself is a stigma enough hence it becomes important how the military handles and approaches the very inseparable part of the soldier's profession. This paper reviewed what few military analysts, trainer and soldier have expressed regarding this subject.

It seems like militaries all over the world do not address the 'act of killing' in their training. There are already few countries who at least acknowledge mental health in general and thus there can be some conversation about how killing affects the mental wellbeing of a soldier. Though these are all developed countries and the platform to discuss all this is not even available in many other countries. But the data available is mainly from these developed countries like the US and Britain etc. Even in these militaries they have not found the right ways to do things.

We can take the example of the US. Their military forces are one of the biggest and powerful in the world. But in history they have had non-firers. After SLA martial found out that 75-80% of

soldiers did not shoot to kill there were many studies to find out why that happened. Here are some of the studies and their implication in current times.

Lt Col Kilner, of the US Army, says the way to keep soldiers psychologically on an even keel is to reason with them - not to take away their choice and intellectual involvement with what happens in battle. Marshall's conclusions led the military to change the way soldiers were trained, to bring home the reality of confronting the enemy. For example, shooting practice no longer uses bullseyes, but human-shaped cut-outs that pop up unexpectedly. Also, Dave Grossman provides help to the U.S. military to become more effective in fighting wars. He says the Army then changed its combat training to desensitize soldiers to the humanity of the enemy. The new training was effective, and as a result, 55 percent of the infantrymen in the Korean War fired their weapons, and 90 to 95 percent fired them in Vietnam.

In a research done on police officers firing guns that can be applicable for the soldier's scenario Dr. Laurence Miller, a Florida-based police psychologist and law-enforcement educator expresses herself. He says that poor training and education mixed with aggressiveness are prime factors into a police officer firing a gun. "Officers who feel that their training and experience have given them a broad toolbox of nonviolent de-escalation strategies are least likely to use force as a first response," he explains. Regardless of training, the impulse not to kill is still strong — 85 percent of American police killed on duty in 2015 never discharged their weapons, according to an FBI statement released this year.

After acknowledging some research, the military changed their training technique. Their soldiers became more efficient for war and combat. But the question of a soldier's mental health remains unanswered. What training does to a soldier was studied by few researchers. A Vermont based mental health counsellor who provides counselling for soldiers from all kinds of combat services shared his opinion in an interview. He works for the department of veteran affairs. He believes that the military ignores and denies acknowledging the fact that one of the major reasons soldiers face mental health issues is that they have to kill. The military training programmers and post-deployment questionnaires ask you all the other questions but do not address the fact that they have been killed (Jim Dooley). Another officer in mental health services shares that very often military will call the enemy by some subhuman name -- you know, "gooks." "Who cares about gooks?" (a foreigner especially a person of south Asian descent). He believes that military training dehumanizes human beings, whether it's by names or just firing up "God's on our side; this is our war; we're fighting this, and we should be fighting, and God is proud of us". A lot of killing is done just with that as the reason. (Andrew Pomerantz).

There are people that believe that there is no way to train someone to kill and be totally unaffected; that even on a subconscious level, something happens when you commit that act, when you actually pull the trigger. And there are others that believe that by drill and training that they will get the result, whatever may the results be.

The modern training techniques basically revolve around training men to develop a strong muscle memory reflex in soldiers. They grasp killing at an unconscious level and: gun. Shoot. Kill. A normal human being, now when they want to fire, the forebrain is shut down, the midbrain takes over, and they slam head-on into a resistance to killing your own kind. The only way to overcome that resistance is through operant conditioning, to make killing a condition reflex. E.g. Instead of firing at a bull's-eye target, the modern soldier fires at man-shaped silhouettes that pop up for brief periods of time inside a designated firing lane. The soldiers learn

that they have only a brief second to engage the target, and if they do it properly their behaviour is immediately reinforced when the target falls. If he knocks down enough targets, the soldier gets a marksmanship badge and usually a three-day pass.

After training on rifle ranges in this manner, an automatic, conditioned response called automaticity sets in, and the soldier then becomes conditioned to respond to the appropriate stimulus in the desired manner. This process may seem simple, basic, and obvious, but there is evidence to indicate that it is one of the key ingredients in a methodology that has raised the firing rate from 15 to 20 percent in World War II to 90 to 95 percent in Vietnam.

But soldiers do not seem to look at it the way the military does. One soldier shared that acts of killing are veiled by jargon, or not spoken about at all. He says, “The military recruits’ people to kill, trains people to kill, makes the orders. Yet after the fact, we do not talk about killing. They talk about destroying, engaging, dropping, bagging - you do not hear the word killing. And that is something that adds up to the trauma that soldiers are already facing.

When talking about Indian context an Indian military analyst Raghu Raman talks about the way the military trains our soldiers. He is a former military servant as well. He says

“Every firing range of the Indian Army has these words inscribed on the firing butt. “No Pity, No Regret, No Remorse”. Chants like “*Ek goli – ek dushman*” (One bullet, one enemy) are enchanted to remove any element of pity or remorse from the minds of soldiers during their training.” To him, the military in India is ignorant towards the psychological complexities of a soldier’s profession. He says that it is a non-human treatment to soldiers.

Raghu Raman strongly believes that we must change the very DNA of a ‘macho’ army where not wearing earplugs while firing loud explosive rocket launchers should be considered a sign of stupidity and not machismo. He says we need to allow our soldiers to be vulnerable sometimes so that they can deal with their emotional and mental trauma.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

It can be said that we have a long way to go when it comes to the mental health of soldiers fighting all kinds of battles. Globally except few countries soldiers are seen as manpower of the country which seems to result in losing the human aspect of this human resource. There are various challenges globally as the culture and societies vary across regions and they play a huge role in deciding the fate of these soldiers. A few developed countries have done considerable amounts of research on this issue. But the soldiers who suffer do not find it that easy to deal with it. Again, whatever support is given by the militaries and governments to these soldiers, is after they have suffered a lot and are haunted by the horrors of their respective battlefield. There are no substantial majors to decrease the intensity of their issues, if not the issue itself. All the pre-deployment or during the training sessions seem to avoid acknowledging the dark side of a soldier’s profession.

The denial of the soldiers to ask help and our ignorance towards them from the psychological frame of reference seem to have another underlying factor in it. This profession of soldiers and fighters is hugely influenced by toxic masculinity. It is quite an obvious reflection of our society. The aggressive nature of this profession linked with masculinity hence brings its (masculinity) issues with it as well. But this exacerbates the situation. Firstly, there is the stigma about mental

health and then there is the fear of being weak that comes with the pressure of being ‘macho’. This fear is so impactful that many soldiers seem to be afraid of losing their job because they asked for psychological help. They also are very clueless and fearful of their senior’s perception towards mental health.

There seems to be a popular debate about the trauma faced by these soldiers after killing. Some people say that if the training techniques are improved soldiers will not face the moral dilemma at the warfront and any sort of psychological discomfort afterwards and there are quite a few examples of this. Some other people would argue this (including soldiers who are suffering mental health issues) saying that regardless of that a considerable amount of people will still experience the traumas or the issues, in spite of what the training inculcates in you. This is due to the highly unpredictable nature and circumstances under which soldiers must work. But considering both the sides, some facts do not change, that are,

- a. Whatever is the consequence of the training, it is eventually based on the principle of very human nature of an individual. Though the application of various scientific and psychological principles we are training these soldiers to kill for an agenda set by others. And this training is dehumanizing, as how it is defined.
- b. Many soldiers argue that even after (and with) technological advancement in weaponry there comes a time when many soldiers must face intimate killing and this, as the narratives tell us, ‘kills something inside them’.

CONCLUSION

Given below are the few conclusions that can be derived from this study:

1. Killing is a key cause that impacts the mental health of soldiers and causes psychosocial issues of various intensities. We are yet to understand the complete science and psychology behind killing and its aftermath.
2. India has a stigmatized perception of mental health that worsens the situation of soldiers who are in dire need of psychological assistance. The onus is equally on the military, government and us, the society.
3. Military and all other combat services are still hesitant to address the reality of a soldier’s job. There is a need to critique the principles of the training methodology.
4. We also have a significant impact on the soldier’s mental health and how killing affects it. Allowing soldiers to be vulnerable and taking away the pressure of being strong and tough all the time can be a one step towards bettering the situation (Jim Dooley). Another impactful way of doing it is through putting considerable thought before glorifying the portrayal of soldiers and war in mainstream media.

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BREAKING BINARIES: TOWARDS NORMALISING GENDER NEUTRAL CLOTHING⁴

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Throughout history clothing has been playing a major role in defining an individual's identity. Since childhood, a person is conditioned to wear gender specific clothing. The purpose of the study is to explore how gender binaries in clothing can be broken. The paper presents an overview of the history of clothing and how it is limited to only two genders, male and female. It will also explore how gender binaries in clothing were constructed and how they continue to exist. Primary data analysis in the form of semi structured interviews of young and middle-aged adults will be conducted. Secondary data analysis of literature available on Gendered Clothing will be done. The study will provide suggestions on avoiding gender binaries in clothing and ways to accept non-gendered clothing. The contribution of this study is to create awareness about the concept that individual's clothing can be gender neutral.

Keywords: Clothing, Breaking Binaries, Normalize, Gender Neutral, Society, Acceptance

INTRODUCTION:

From the 18th century to modern day, clothes have been designed based on gender assumptions. What is Clothing? Clothing (also known as clothes, apparel, and attire) is items worn on the body. Clothing is typically made of fabrics or textiles but over time has included garments made from animal skin or other thin sheets of materials put together. The wearing of clothing is mostly restricted to human beings and has been a feature of all human societies. The amount and type of clothing worn depends on gender, body type, social and geographic considerations. It is hard to know when clothing was first developed, but some research which estimates the introduction of clothing roughly 42,000-72,000 years ago. Earlier, clothing was introduced because of the only reason to create a barrier between the skin and the environment. Clothing serves as a protection from the elements, rough surfaces, rash-causing plants, insect bites, splinters, thorns, and prickles.

⁴ **This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review**

Clothes can insulate against cold or hot conditions, and they can provide a hygienic barrier, keeping infectious and toxic materials away from the body. Clothing also provides protection from ultraviolet radiation. Slowly clothing became a social norm and being deprived of clothing in front of others became embarrassment. Clothing is one of the most essential parts that form our lifestyle whether we pay attention to it or not. Through the ages, clothing has always been a form of self-expression and self-identity. Hence, it is especially important that a person who is wearing it should feel that their self-expression and identity is fulfilled. But clothing is gendered which creates division and categorizes people. Thus, this paper is an effort to introduce the concept of gender free/neutral clothing which will free clothing and people from a box of gendered clothing.

Gender Binary refers to the notion that gender comes in two distinct flavors: men and women, in which men are masculine, women are feminine, and, importantly, men are of the male sex and women are of the female sex. Much of the world around is based upon this binary understanding of sex and gender (Karen L. Blair). This obviously affects everything men's section vs. women's section (in clothing), barbershops vs. salons, and men's rooms vs. women's rooms.

One of the first things new parents often learn about child is their sex. Based on the biological genitals' parents tend to assume the gender of the baby. If the baby is a boy, parents tend to describe him as strong, tough, and handsome, whereas if the baby is a girl, they tend to view them as sweet, gentle and beautiful. And coordinates masculinity with male sex and femininity with female sex.

Gender Neutral Clothing

Gender Neutrality is the idea that policies, language and other social institutions (social structures, gender roles or gender identity) should avoid distinguishing roles according to people's sex or gender, in order to avoid discrimination arising from the impression that there are social roles for which one gender is more suited than other. Fashion has created a gender-structured world of clothing. But its clear borders are starting to break down as the androgynous and unisex style came into picture. **Unisex** fashion refers to clothing designed to be suitable for both sexes and to a style in which men and women look and dress in a similar way, wherein their sexuality is indistinguishable (Callan 1998). **Androgynous** on the other hand is a combination of part male and female in appearance which allows for an undetermined sex, described as having mixed sex notions of male and female (Soones and Stevenson 2005). But here we are only talking about gender neutrality in clothing manufacturing. Gender is a spectrum rather than a system with two opposite concepts. Femininity and masculinity also sociologically serve to that spectrum by

helping to describe gender identities. What the clothing industry should work for is to blur the gender lines, disregard the binary system; therefore, it will prompt a new way of thinking for clothing. Men, women, and every person in between or out of the concept of gender should be able to wear whatever piece of cloth they think that will express their gender, mood, style or preference. A way of dressing that chooses self-identity over gender.

RATIONALE

Since childhood, a person is conditioned to wear gender specific clothing. If it is a boy (biologically male) these colors, designs, shapes are for you and those are for a girl (biologically female). I have always tried to understand why there is such a difference made almost in every aspect of these two sexes. Afterwards I realized people often assume sex and gender as a same thing. **Gender** is a social construction, a tool that is used to express people's perceptions of what they think it means to be male or female (Kaiser 1997:65) and **Sex** refers to the 'biological anatomy' differences between male and female (Kaiser 1997:66). So according to this concept person's assigned sex at birth and their understanding and perception of their own gender can be different. But the society made by humans fails to understand this thing. Here, the study mainly focuses on the aspect of clothing. Clothes do have no gender; humans have just associated different styles of clothes with males and females (dresses with females and suits with males). The systems have become more flexible with society being more accepting of women wearing men's clothes, but not the other way around. But, why should there be such a difference between men's clothing and women's clothing? Why the clothing industry does make such a difference while making clothes is because gender is a social construct hence gendered clothing is also an imposition of society. Gendered clothing provides only two boxes which create sexual division, and this affects people who do not fit in those two categories. Clothing industry with the help of society can make it possible to have gender free/neutral clothing. So, the main purpose of doing this research was to break gender binaries in terms of clothing and promote the idea of gender free/neutral clothing.

METHODOLOGY

Qualitative approach was given for this research study.

1. Primary data analysis- Includes semi structured interviews of 4 young adults (2 female and 2 male) and 4 middle adults (2 male and 2 female)

2. Secondary data analysis- Includes analysis of information available online in the form of books, articles, research paper done on gender and gendered clothing and other resources about clothing.

PRIMARY DATA ANALYSIS

It is assumed that all the interviewees are non-prejudiced. Their answers are purely based on their opinions and experiences.

The people that have been interviewed are the following-

- 2 middle age adult female who are psychology professional
- 2 middle age adult male who are from corporate sector
- 2 young age adult female who are psychology student
- 2 young age adult male- 1 who is economics student and 1 fashion design student who also identify as a queer person.

(For diverse opinions I have tried to include people from psychology, corporate sector, and fashion design backgrounds. As today's youth is tomorrow's 'inclusive future'. The reason behind choosing young adults and middle age adults is to know their opinions and plus their view towards gender free/neutral clothing.)

5 questions were asked which have been clubbed together into 3 sets and are stated below with the analysis.

1. Subjects were asked; when they go for shopping what kind of clothes they tend to look for. (Masculine, feminine, mix if available or they look for clothes according to their gender.)
And do clothes have gender.

Out of 8 subjects 3 male strongly said that they do shopping according to their gender. The 4th male subject said that he likes to buy clothes from the women's section. 4 of the females said that they generally do shopping from the women's section but, sometimes they do shop from the men's section. They do not follow hard and fast rules. One of the females said that her clothing is mixed. She shops dresses from the women's section and shoes, jackets from the men's section. And when further asked do clothes have gender; 6 out of 8 subjects said that clothes do not have gender. However, one subject said that clothes are designed for specific gender and one said that clothes are made according to male and female body structure. But clothes shouldn't be categorized to genders specifically. One subject said that "gender for

anything is manmade”. Even for humans’ sexual differences are biological but gender differences are assigned. Same is with clothes. 3 of the subjects said that these gender differences in clothing are reducing. And 2 males out of 8 subjects said that clothes do have gender.

2. Subjects were asked; when they go for shopping do, they like the differentiated compartments. Meaning men’s section and women’s section.

3 male outs of 8 subjects said that they do like and prefer separate compartments. The most common answer was it makes easy to find and easy to make choices. 2 subjects said that they have got used to such differentiation. 1 subject said that she does not like the differentiated compartments. Separation is done for so called convenience. And 3 subjects said that they would prefer if sections were combined. 1 subject said that if the sections would not have been differentiated both the genders (meaning male and female) would uninhibitedly buy clothes for themselves that were traditionally assigned to the opposite gender. And such compartmentalization of clothes creates question marks for the people who might not identify with traditional gender expectations and roles. One of the female subjects said that no one can stop you from buying clothes from the men’s section. As she shops from the men's section. However, one of the male subjects said that whenever he tries to shop from the women's section people treat and view him differently which in his opinion is wrong. He feels that trail rooms should be unisex as he experienced people at the mall do not allow taking female clothes to try at the men’s trial room.

3. Subjects were asked; what do they understand by the term gender free/neutral clothing and do they like the idea of making clothes gender free/neutral.

6 out of 8 subjects understood the exact meaning of the term gender/free neutral clothing. And their answers were similar. (Clothes which are not assigned to one specific gender/clothing which can be worn by all irrespective of sex and gender/clothing that suits everyone/ item which cannot be categorized to a gender.) One subject gave an example of a skirt which can be worn by any gender, but society has assigned female gender to it. Another subject said that clothing which can be worn by either gender. (Meaning male and female) And one subject understood the term gender free/neutral only generic/primary clothing being worn by genders in different styles. And when

further asked do they like the idea of making clothes gender free/neutral; 6 out of 8 subjects said that they do like the idea of making clothes gender neutral. One of the subjects said that clothing should be a choice of an individual. And one subject said clothes need to be made gender free/neutral not only commercially but also attitudinally (mindsets of the people assigning gender to clothes.) If this happens people would unabashedly wear what they want to. One subject said that gender free/neutral clothing idea should be made more popularized as it will minimize difference in fashion standards and expectations between genders but should not be imposed on everyone as people might not feel comfortable eliminating gendered clothing. The clothing style in today's date we identify as 'gendered' should not be restricted to one specific gender. If clothing becomes gender free/neutral her ideal shopping would be mixed from feminine, masculine, mixed etc.; "without being pressured to shop from only one of the sections." 2 out 8 subject said that they do not like the idea of making clothes gender free/neutral. One of these subjects said that it will be difficult to identify people and the other said that traditional clothes should remain gender specific.

SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

On Quora I found many articles/people's opinions which talks about gendered clothing and gender free clothing.

Lewis Farr for Quora writes: It has been the practice and program of society to dictate what a person should like and wear. The fact that it violates the natural order of individuals having freedom to select their own apparel by the tastes and desires they have.

Leiah Jackson for Quora writes: For the sheer reason that most people believe that people are and should be either one gender or the other. She says that people arrogantly believe that gender has to do with sexual orientation. She says that everyone should continue to wear whatever they like, regardless of the gender ideas of it, until people just forget about gender specific clothing altogether.

Matthew Jakodi for Quora writes: He does not believe that clothing should have a gender separation at all, but it does because it always has.

Marcus Lester for Quora writes: Social conventions are what they are. He says, one of the greatest bits of wisdom he has ever learned was not to seek reasonable explanations for unreasonable behavior. He further adds, in the US; pants were once considered taboo for women. Now they wear

them in great variety. At the same time, the highest prelates of the Roman Catholic Church wear “robes” that look a lot like skirts and blouses/jackets.

Marc Bain for Quartz writes: For centuries, humans pretty much wore similar clothes, regardless of their gender. In ancient Rome, most of the design of a cloth garment took place on the loom, which meant everyone wore what were essentially long rectangles of draped fabric. Those long rectangles eventually developed a hole for the wearer’s head and stitched sides, becoming a tunic. Both men and women wore them through the middle ages, and the differences between them were minimal: a women’s tunic would reach her ankles, while a men would come to his knees. Perhaps the greatest distinction conferred by a person’s dress was social status, as reflected in sumptuary laws stating that only certain people could wear velvet, and that lower classes were confined to drab wool or linen.

Marissa Fessenden for Smithsonian writes: The Japanese kimono replaced two-piece outfits of shirt and trousers starting in the Heian period (which lasted 794 to 1185), according to Fashion Encyclopedia. Men and women wore kimonos belted at the waist with an obi or sash. The sarong, worn by people from southeast Asia, the Arabian Peninsula and the Horn of Africa is also a ubiquitous fabric wrap that can be (and is) worn by any gender.

In history, Elizabethan era men were not allowed to wear whatever they liked. It did not matter how wealthy they were – the color, fabric and material of their clothes were dictated by their rank, status, or position and this was enforced by English law. These laws about clothing were called sumptuary laws; ‘Statutes of Apparel’ which were enforced by Queen Elizabeth I in Greenwich on 15 June 1574. It contained a list of men with their status and what clothing fabric, color they should be allowed and wear.

Karen L. Blair for Psychology Today writes: The extent to which men conform to stereotypical masculine behaviors and interests and the extent to which women conform to stereotypical feminine behaviors and interests can be described as gender conformity. When individuals stray from their expected gender roles or behave in gender non-conforming ways they tend to be evaluated negatively. (And also, there is difference in connotations applied to the concepts of a tomboy girl versus a sissy boy)

The psychology of clothing: meaning of colors, body image and gender expression in fashion-
Research paper by Duje KODZOMAN.

Here the author talks about what are the psychological consequences of clothing, and how does clothing express something about the user. The psychology behind clothing is classified into 3 categories 1) the meaning of colors in clothing psychology; 2) the socio-psychological impact of clothing; and 3) gender (in)equality regarding clothing. Author writes color is critical to creating attractiveness or unattractiveness. The use of color has become an important expression of who we are, how we feel and what we believe. People use color to express their social identity, hierarchy, emotions, political leanings, personal identity, self-image, and aesthetic tastes [12, 27, 28,]. Clothing color conveys values, attitudes, personalities, and tendencies towards conformity or individuality [27]. An individual's body image plays an important role in clothing preferences and attitudes [29]. Clothing is an extended dimension of one's bodily self [30] and is used to change the appearance of the body [31]. Wearing formal clothing is associated with perceptions of more professionalism but also less approachability [39, 40]. Wearing formal clothing is related to psychological formality and social distance, whereas casual clothing is related to intimacy and familiarity.

Review of Literature

The history of gendered and gender-neutral clothing Funda Arslan, Bogazici University.

Here the author talks about the history of clothing, gendered and gender-neutral clothing. The first clothes were made from natural elements: animal skin and furs, grasses and leaves, bones, and shells. As humans changed the conditions they lived in, clothes have also changed with them. The 19th century men adopted long trousers rather than knee breeches. In the 1920s, women's dresses turned into more 'masculine' clothes compared to what had been worn before. From 70s 80s, a masculine style for women was embraced as more women were able to work along with men. Japanese designers blurred lines of androgyny and explored avant-garde silhouettes. The 21st century fashion is a continuation of 90s styles, a mix of previous decades and, in fact, opens to anything. The most distinguishing factor when designing and manufacturing clothes have obviously been sex and gender. However, this was after clothes were gendered. Sex is mostly matter of biology whereas gender is a social and cultural construct. Gender also brings another term with it, gender identity and gender expression. While most people identify as their assigned sex some do not. The latter is the expression of one's gender through clothing, behavior, haircut, and such. Because gender is a social and cultural construct and it is a changing concept from one society to another, expressions of gender cannot be necessarily seen as an indication to one's gender identity.

In her book *Pink & Blue: Telling Boys from Girls in America* (2012), Jo B Paoletti explains how parents dressed their infants in the Victorian era. Babies wore white dresses regardless of their sex or gender for practical reasons. In fact, young children wearing gendered clothing was seen as inappropriate because of their innocence as children.

The color codes accepted for infants today were shaped during the 1940s by American manufacturers and retailers. Before that, it can be seen in an infant department's article that the colors used for children clothing was the exact opposite of today's. Since it was more delicate and prettier blue was for girls, and pink was for boys because it was more decided and stronger. Because more individualized clothes sell more (Paoletti,2012), it seems like this 'trend' of specification of colors works out for both parents and sellers.

Until the 18th century, there were no notable differences between the dresses of women and men, both wore long garnished costumes (Arvanitidou, Gasouka, 2013). Men were the ones who showed off their wealth and elegance. Fashion became feminized in the 19th century, when sexual division through dressing became more important than social order (Steele, 1989), and at the same time men ceased to use attires like jewelry, some fabrics and perfumes which they used before to show the abundance of their wealth. What made women prominent in fashion was that men embraced the areas of politics and business while the responsibility of demonstrating social status and elegance was left in women's hands. In the Victorian era, specific ideas of gender and sexuality created a sexual division which caused the recreation of dress codes and progressively women were given the role of the fashionable gender (Craik, 1993).

With the increased number of women working along with men after 1960, the need of self-expression through dress codes emerged among men because fashion always keeps up with changing social roles (Hammad Raza) and thus, men not being the only one working was the reason for the alterations of menswear (Arvanitidou, Gasouka, 2013). In the late 20th century, clothing also helped women seek equality. They rejected or adopted clothes, trying to blur the lines of femininity which was shaped by the patriarchal system. For instance, women wore trousers, which they fought for to wear since 1850 (Arvanitidou, Gasouka, 2013), without being judged (Arnold, 2001).

Today, clothing plays a considerable role in creating the problems faced by people who do not 'fit' in the gender binary system. Even if some fit, it is generally not a guarantee to not be criticized by society. Women are ridiculed when they wear 'men's clothes' and vice versa.

(Funda Arslan, the history of gendered and gender-neutral clothing)

Fashion has no gender: Eliminating gender norms to create a successful unisex collection for the Durban market. (Talitha Jessica Retalck)

The research paper of this fashion technology student focuses on creating unisex clothes. The review of literature here really gives much information about gender and clothing. (Following pasted as it is.)

Gender is one of the first identities that a human being acquires. From birth, babies are dressed according to their gender with an option of either pink for female or blue resembling male (Hollander 1994: 4). During childhood, children are influenced by members in their lives as well as their surroundings to conform to traditional culture and gender expectations. Males are dressed in clothing representative of male references such as active or „sporty“ clothing while females are often dressed in ways that encourage positive comments on their appearance and in typically “girly”, ballerina inspired clothing (Hollander 1994: 4). Sandra Bem explains how children develop gender roles by the influence of caregivers and other significant people in their life. Children would be influenced to follow specific genders not only in the way they were dressed but also by what activities they are pushed into and what specific behavior they were punished and rewarded for (Bem 1983: 598). According to Spence in *Masculinity, Femininity and Gender-related Traits*, Bem views it a loss for individuals to be reduced to half of psychological traits due to traditional gender conforming and instead felt that an equal combination of both would allow for flexibility, benefiting society and individuals alike (Maher and Maher 1984: 22). Koesterer (2010: 2) cites Bem that psychological androgyny was the strongest and most positive representation of gender as it proved to be successful because of its flexibility. The theorists view is that the eradication of the “basic gender template” and “male, female” concepts will give enhanced freedom to those who wish to express their individuality (Maher and Maher 1984: 23-24). “Because clothes cover the anatomy of one’s self, people draw perceptions of one’s gender based on what they see, even if it is not reality” (Butler 1990). Butler argues that biological sex does not necessarily indicate or signify gender, and that gender is a social construct and not necessarily determined by biology (1990). As gender is separated and sorted into only two groups, Kaiser states that, “social expectations about what it means to be male or female tend to be differentiated in an oversimplified manner” (1997: 66). Butler and Bem argue that the distinctions

between sex and gender have no similarities and therefore gender cannot be decided based on sex. Sex refers to the biological anatomy differences between male and female whereas gender is socially created and reconstructed (Kaiser 1997: 66). The irrelevance of gender allows for individualism and the freedom to express one's self identity. With gender being insignificant and as individual gender is decided based on appearance (Butler 1990), which mostly consists of fashion, one may argue that genderless fashion is relevant to express that identity. Throughout history, the creation of personal image has been a constant struggle for both men and women alike (Schreier 1989: 1). The need to differentiate between males and females has always emanated. Even when males and females dressed alike with small waists and well-rounded hips in the 1840's, the need to distinguish gender has always been necessary in society (Schreier 1989: 4). The stereotypical view that men are portrayed as „masculine“ and need to dress in a masculine manner while women need to dress in a feminine manner implies that men and women are completely different in personal characteristics (Steele 1989: 8), although it is known that there are women with interests and characteristics that are usually associated with men and vice versa. Distinctions between masculine and feminine are constantly made. Males and Females could wear similar clothing, but gender distinctions will still be made based on textiles, patterns and fabrication (Kidwell and Steele 1989: 128). The only true way to eradicate masculine and feminine differences and characteristics is to completely equalize clothing.

Result and Discussion

Secondary data showed most people assume that there are only two genders male and female and people assume that an individual should be either one gender. Data also showed that most people assume sex and gender as a same thing. History of clothing showed that for century's people wore similar clothes there were no gender or sexual differences initially. Data also showed that gender is a social construct and it is a changing concept from one society to another. Data also showed that children are usually influenced for specific gender roles and behavior. Data showed that there have been only two sexes and two gender concepts in most people's minds. Discussion here 'is this learned behavior or observational?'

Primary data showed that people have been shopping gender specific because they have seen it since they started understanding the world. They have been told/ restricted to do so. Discussion here 'Is people are more concerned about gender conformity?' Data also showed that some people believe that clothes have gender. Discussion here 'Gender should be an individual's

choice or society's imposition?' Data also showed that it is easy for a female to shop from the men's section but it's not easy the other way around. People view and treat differently. Data also showed that most people would prefer a combined display of clothes, but some would prefer the differentiation. Discussion here 'Trial rooms should be unisex?' Data also showed that most of the people understood the meaning of gender free/neutral clothing. But still some only considered two genders and not all. Most of the people like the idea of making clothes gender neutral but, some still believe that the clothes which were traditionally identified to one specific gender should continue in the same manner. Data also showed that some feel that it will be difficult to identify people separately if clothes were made gender neutral. Discussion here 'Do people always want to fit everything in the boxes?'

Conclusion

Society has assigned gender to clothes/made clothes restricted to only one specific gender. And people blindly and even though knowing the fact that clothes do not have gender are following the gender lines. Most of the people are engaged to fulfill gender expectations and roles. Although clothes are made according to either male or female body structures which can be surely changed with time. Gender conformity also an issue comes while clothing for an individual as the society has restricted their view towards gendered clothing. This issue needs more awareness and to be addressed. As clothing is an important part of human life and individual's identity. In history we have seen people wore similar clothes irrespective of sex and gender. This needs to be regained. Our current definition of gender free/neutral clothing is based on our idea and definition of gendered clothing. The aim should be to view all clothes gender free/neutral. Meaning some people might feel comfortable in only gendered clothing. Manufacturing of clothes in a way gender free/neutral would take time, as it requires more depth study and ideas to manufacture it. But, at this moment people can at least view and accept if an individual does clothe which were traditionally considered for only one specific gender should be normal. We have a long way to build an inclusive society where there are no sexual or gender differences. And a newborn baby would not be tagged with a specific gender until they identify themselves with their own concept of themselves. There would not be a pressure or restriction to buy clothes from specific sections.

Needs, Aspirations and Achievements of the people of the unorganized sector: Bringing the “unorganized” sector centre stage⁵

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Introduction

The challenges that India is facing is not a new phenomenon, poverty being one of the largest. The vicious cycle of poverty forces one to take up challenging jobs providing no security in any sphere. This especially prevails more in the “unorganized sector.” The sector which is not registered with the government and whose terms of employment are not fixed and regular is considered as an unorganized sector (Surbhi S, 2017). Also known as ‘informal sector’, it accounts for 93% of total employment, 73% of nonagricultural employment and 50% of the country’s GDP (MS Ramanujam and KL Rawal, JStor, July 2010). This sector can be characterized by many socio-economic hardships like no job security, low incomes, occupational hazards, etc. Despite the government's initiatives, only 6% of the unorganized sector is covered by the social security measures¹. Therefore, the effectiveness and implementation of the government policies is very questionable. Many genuine target beneficiaries are not able to get the benefits to which they are entitled. It has been noticed that there are no reliable statistics about the unorganized sector and as a result it remains highly neglected². The unorganized sector has been reduced to mere unreliable statistics and extraordinarily little work has been done that explores the psycho-social arena of their lives. Also, to support the arguments against the laws, many loopholes could be found out. This paper tries to understand this neglect and their achievements and provide a psycho- social perspective that would facilitate the better understanding of their life situations. The economic hardships are adversely affecting the mental health of this sector. Therefore, the attitudinal change is very important to begin with.

⁵ **This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review**

Rationale-

Our dependence on the unorganized sector itself makes it important to study about it. The critical condition of this sector is a well-known phenomenon in the country. Much of the Indian population depends on and derives its livelihood from this sector. It has and still is particularly challenging to acquire a better standard of living for them. However, it was noticed that very few attempts were made to explore the psycho-social realm and at some places they are merely reduced to some statistical data revealing their economic contribution to GDP. Therefore, I found it important to explore the factors that helped them to coexist, compete in a healthy way and also study the 'intra-group' phenomenon.

If we talk about the upliftment, it should be studied from all the perspectives to make sense! Very few attempts have been made to document their achievements. It interested me how an entrepreneur from an unorganized sector can handle or manage everything right from manufacturing to selling of the product. There are many lessons it has got to offer that can be adapted by other sectors too.

Unemployment rates are higher and because of which a certain population switches to the informal sector. Hence it is especially important to create an environment that can facilitate the overall development.

Methodology-

A qualitative research methodology was used for the paper which included the following:

- **Primary data analysis-** It included semi-structured structured interviews of an expert from Kagad Kach Patra Kashtatakari Panchayat (KKPKP), Pune. The organization helps and supports the waste pickers and their families. This helped in the understanding of the intra-group dynamics of the unorganized sector.
- **Secondary data analysis-** Analysis of a book by Rashmi Bansal- Poor Little Rich Slum; Organizational analysis of KKPKP; Analysis of a video by Raghu Raman on the management lessons from the street was done.

Discussion-

Primary Data Analysis

Interview analysis-

The co-founder of the organization Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP) was interviewed. She has been working towards the rights of the waste pickers. It was important to understand the intra group dynamics of the people of the unorganized sector. It was assumed that she would be able to provide an insight into the challenges faced by them. The inside stories were expected to be coming into light which would help in the research. The society's outlook, influence of media, conflicts, management lessons, coexistence, psycho-social aspects, and society's contribution to the unorganized sector were studied. (Note- the answers were given with respect to the people of the slums in Pune)

It is an established fact that the occupations were divided based on the rigid caste system separating the society into "upper" and "lower" strata. As a result of this, the society's outlook for a person doing a menial job was negative. The injustice meted out to them is not an alien phenomenon. However, with the passage of time certain aspects changed. The interviewee said that a positive change is being noted especially in the middle-class people because they experience the services of the informal sector firsthand. The interdependence and mutual need have come into the picture and has acted as a fuel to establish this positive relationship. Despite some conflicts people do realize that the unorganized sector is working hard for a dignified living. They have worked hard in their groups and out of organizations which made people aware of the work they do and its importance.

When we talk about awareness drives, the media plays an important role. In the interview it came to notice that the media has highlighted the contribution of the people of the unorganized sector to the environment. However, on the other side, some of the movies like Slumdog Millionaire didn't seem to have impacted the lives of the unorganized sector much, it is in fact seen to be glamorizing it.

The challenges faced by the unorganized sector had come forth during the interview. The inter-group conflicts had been highlighted. The negative publicity is also a cause of concern for the people of the unorganized sector. The relationship with the service receivers becomes negative when asked for raise or holiday for instance.

However, the intra-group conflict also needs to be recognized and there had been cases of people seeing courts, physical or verbal abuse and suicides. The organization tries to intervene and ask them to resolve it by talking it out, but it does not always work. It was getting increasingly difficult to manage the conflicts between the people of the unorganized sector. On the other side people unite for their rights and there is a lot of give-and-take which has been highlighted with some examples. There is a lot of harmony and cooperation between the people of the unorganized sector. One such example is that the waste pickers do not travel by bus due to the time involved and the heavy weights that they must carry. The rickshaw drivers often provide rides to them at an extremely low cost and free at times. Solidarity between them is strong. These aspects could be learnt from the unorganized sector that needs to be appreciated and implemented in the other sectors as well.

When discussed about the management lessons that can be adopted elsewhere, an extraordinarily strong opinion on maximum utilization of resources was formed. The interviewee used the word “Jugaad” (in a positive way) that helps them to extract the best out of the available resources.

The person also highlighted the return of investment in a small area to be contributing a lot to the society. They have an amazing sense of managing finance even if they might not be financially literate. The example that she gave was that even though the market logic dictates to get maximum returns you will sell at the highest price to the respective trader. However, this does not hold true in the case of the waste pickers. They deal with the traders who often give them advances in the time of crisis and help them. They must consider all the factors like transport that could cost them additional sum. Even though it might seem that there is more profit at the other trader, they have to guard against every factor, and they manage thoughtfully.

One might glorify the corporation that exists among these groups. However, it is very crucial to understand that the competition that is involved is very intense. There is competition for less resources as the pie for the unorganized sector is extremely limited. To get the maximum good crap (for waste pickers) you have to get at the bins or houses earlier than anyone else. One might even work at lesser wages willingly even in more exploitative conditions to hold on to their respective jobs. This happens as there are more unemployment rates and they do not have any access to education or property because of which they are caught in the vicious circle of poverty. They must work and be satisfied with the job they have because there is a large pool of labourers existing. One might lose their source of income if they demand for a ‘higher appropriate wage’. However, they understand the problem and are creating organizations and groups that would

fight for their rights. Despite this the question remains of how long will they be able to fight with no source to fill their stomach? This serves as a reason for many to exploit the services and the living conditions remain bad.

To exceed any sector needs the psychosocial support of society. As discussed earlier in the society's outlook towards the unorganized sector is gradually changing. However, the majority remains the same. It would be extremely easy to be sympathetic but when it comes to rights and equality the attitudes change. "Value to workers work as well as recognition of their rights", as said by the interviewee may prove to be an especially important element in this entire process. We need to promote and cultivate this as a society.

It is important to recognize that the unorganized sector brings value and makes our life comfortable. It is especially important to build a '*symbiotic relationship*'. The organizations that work towards the betterment of this sector try to make them realize to establish a common cause between their customers and them. There exists a class of buyers who cannot afford ola or uber, they must be taken care of too and this is how it would prove to be a support. How can this be made possible? A dialogue between both the parties is very essential. We must involve the unorganized sector at centre stage and allocate them market space. Hence those kinds of informal forums are necessary to build and local planning is important that can be achieved or established through dialogues.

Today's students are tomorrow's employees and hence it is important to involve them into the upliftment of this sector. When asked about how youngsters could contribute to this, it was noted that it was important to create a dialogue forum because this is something that the youth can understand and relate to! They may also intern or volunteer with some organizations and can participate in programs that work for the betterment of this sector. Anyone from any profession can still contribute to them by helping them out to understand the marketing strategies. For example, people with the help of GIS mapping can help in suggesting about the area where they might get more customers and better profits. The application of your knowledge can impact this sector positively!

Secondary Data Analysis

Book- Poor Little Rich Slum

Rashmi Bansal is an Indian nonfictional writer, entrepreneur and youth expert. She has written books like Connecting the dots, Stay hungry stay foolish, Take me home, Poor little rich slum, I

have a dream, etc. which revolve around the lives of the entrepreneurs from the low income groups who may not generally pursue a management degree. Her writings are inspirational and motivate people to reach great heights. She highlights the achievements of the unorganized sector which might have remained unnoticed. Her books gave recognition to many of the entrepreneurs and their struggle. Her style of narration is characterized by motivational quotes and Hindi phrases by the people that shows the simplicity and the brilliant 'fundas' of their lives! Her book allows us to think from the other's perspective and establish a virtual communication. These provide an excellent source that can provide an insight into the tough living conditions for people who have not witnessed any kind of poverty. The real economy lies here! It is particularly important to consider the factors that influence this sector and try to make a difference. Her books serve as a channel that allows one to get a taste of the activities that happen here. Hence this paper tries to highlight the achievements and aspirations of the people of the unorganized sector by analyzing one of her books, Poor Little Rich Slum.

"Politicians promise many things but forget after elections. So, we have to be self-sufficient." (Dilip Gadekar, Ekvira Mitra Mandal). Poor Little Rich Slum is all about the many entrepreneurs in Dharavi, one of the largest slums of the world in Mumbai. People here believe in 'self-help' as much of the execution of the laws is questionable. This is an excellent example where she has tried to document the achievements of the unorganized sector which is about human aspirations. She has highlighted how despite the tough living conditions, people are motivated to be happy, work and try to change their "fate". It tries to change perspectives not only about the "typical slum" but also about the people who aspire to make that difference. The book is all about the entrepreneurial drives, NGOs, and activists. It tries to understand that the real economy lies here!

Poor little rich slum tries to trace the growth of some of the first occupational communities in Dharavi like potters from Gujarat, tanners from Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh and shoemakers from Maharashtra. The book tries to show that people make the best use of the available resources at affordable prices. Hence even the rich crowd seems to be turning here. We can notice that Rashmi Bansal tries to bring into the picture how some captured the market. Not only does it talk about the struggles but also what Dharavi is for them. Some of the case studies in the book show that people have worked harder and have willingly come back to the community and work for it to change it into better. One such example is about Jockin Arputham, who is now an activist and has founded the national some dwellers association to join the society for the promotion of area resource centres and is also a Padma shri award winner. He was a simple street boy who cleaned toilets in Bombay and has worked to improve his condition and contribute to

his community. She also talks about various volunteers and NGO that have started with people ready to help. There is a mention about Dharavi Redevelopment Plan, Dharavi Bachao Andolan, etc. that involves realistic data collection. This is done to check against the data contamination that happens elsewhere. It does not glorify the stories but holds a neutral perspective that speaks for itself. It is beyond the GDP figures and growth rates and focuses on developmental aspects. It records how people have chosen to make a difference with respect to the place, clean water, legal rights, education, better infrastructure, etc.

Raghu Raman Video

The unorganized sector is one of the most ignored one so much so that we do not consider them to be even businesses. It contributes a large amount to the GDP and provides employment to many however it remains the informal one. He in this video tries to highlight the potential of this industry. We need to consider the contribution of the sector in real sense. The management lessons one can take from the unorganized sector are stated as follows-

- 1) **The return of investment per square foot** - is large as compared to the huge spaces that are consumed by the big MNCs. Therefore, it can be easily understood that allocating the market space would do a great deal and may improve the national economy as well as the real per capita income. The person (of the unorganized sector) exactly knows the customers' needs and believes in utilization of his/her time wisely.
- 2) **Equitable distribution of profits**- it has been noticed that in this sector the income is equally divided between the entire supply chain. Hence it is profitable to many of its agents.
- 3) **Degree of empowerment of decision making**- the people working in this sector have the liberty to give decisions quickly and deal with the customers. There is much more fluidity and as a result of seasonality the person needs to develop better decision making and problem-solving skills. Their entire supply chain, pitch, product mix, market segmentation, etc. changes every 15 to 20 times in a year.
- 4) **Launching new products**- we see a lot of people selling innovative products on the signal's streets, etc. We can imagine the planning, infrastructure, supply chain, bargaining of equipment, etc. that is involved in the process.

5) **Equal opportunity market**- there is employment for everyone and there are multiple services. If we consider the example of street shopping, we see multiple shops selling the same product at a remarkably similar price. We must recognize the competition that it involves and the efforts that everyone takes. They must convince their customers and establish a relationship with his or her customer within 2 minutes or else they starve!

We must seriously understand the amount of disservice that we do to the entire industry by not considering their contribution. This is the sector that is creating job space and if we neglect it, the unemployment level is likely to rise.

How can we make a difference?

Raghu Raman states the idea of creating a 'we-see' fund, meaning, when I see I make a difference by giving ideas or helping in any way possible. It is important to teach and train this sector to increase productivity and improve the standard of living of the unorganized sector. This is not just the responsibility of the government but also that of the public. Youngsters can have a great contribution towards this by helping them out with the planning, training, cleaning, setting, etc. They can act as marketing or sales consultants and give them a fighting chance. This could prove to be a two-way learning process. We can start training ourselves to look at these jobs as dignified ones and help in the development process!

Organizational Analysis-

"We pick up what someone has discarded as having no value and give it value through our labour." Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat (KKPKP) works for the betterment of waste pickers, itinerant waste buyers, waste collectors and other informal recyclers. The organization states that they were treated like the trash that they collected, and people would shoo them away like they were dogs. To fight against this, they gathered together and formed this trade union that would unite them against a common cause and enable them to fight for themselves. This organization works in the spheres of education, work, health, social security and building alliances for the people of this community. We will explore some of these realms in detail as follows:

1) **Education**- access to education is the biggest challenge. No education gets no job, since there is no job there is no education and there is extraordinarily little that they can do. Hence the organization decided to help them in various ways to achieve this target. They have various programs designed to do the same. Some of them are as follows:

- * Jyoti Savitrinchi Lekra- In this program they facilitate the SSC, HSC and graduated students which acts as a motivational factor for them to continue to trace this path.
- * Each year the organization distributes notebooks to about 2500 children.
- * Higher education- The credit cooperative Bank of KKPKP provides loans that can be repaid in EMIs, at an amount convenient to the members to facilitate higher education.
- *Scholarships - the government scheme, “Free matriculation scholarship for children of parents in unclean occupations”, under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, do not include waste pickers as they are not considered to be “unclean” jobs. It is only for the children of sweepers, tanner, flayers, and scavengers. The organization states that the children of the waste pickers are denied the benefits of the scholarship while the money allocated under this scheme remains underutilized. However, with their fights and struggles they were able to provide this fund to about 540 children in March 2016 while the others did not receive.
- * Transport assistance scheme- KKPKP provides bicycles to girls as there are many dropouts from the school after a certain age as the distance to the other school increases and they are married off. This helps them to continue their education and build a future for themselves.

The organization also works on:

Eliminating child labour - since 2001 waste packing is included in the list of hazards occupation prohibited for kids under the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986. However, there is no implementation of this because waste picking is self-employment and their families depend on this income. However, in 2007, a rapid survey was conducted across three days to check and interview children who collect waste and are engaged in this activity either full time or part time. In November 2008, the PMC sent out notices and put up boards banning child labour at the garbage depot. In December 2008, the labor department conducted a raid⁴.

Eliminating child marriage- the organization started an initiative called 'Shiksha ki Shikshan'. The scheme has a cash prize for girls who are unmarried and studying at the age of 18. And many more such initiatives are taken by the organization.

Impact- A study conducted by KKPKP and Azim Premji University in 2014, the union succeeded in admitting 53 kids out of 102 families in private schools under the 25% right to education provision. 60% of kids admitted under RTE in 2013 according to a survey are males and 40% are females.

2) **Work:**

The scrap trade has a pyramid structure. There are scrap collectors, itinerant buyers, retailers and then re processors. This differs in terms of factors like socio economic background, work conditions, market environment and levels of income.

They provide credit to the people and have established the Credit Cooperative Bank of KKP. According to them they save Rs. 100 per month and get back when they retire. It is a very safe investment for the future.

When we analyze the demography of people involved in this, we see that mostly women are the scrap collectors (the lowest in the hierarchy) and only 20% are men as this job is seen to be dirty and demeaning. The higher status jobs are taken over by men who are itinerant buyers. The organization claims that upward occupational mobility is another issue that needs consideration. a small population out of which only 27% men go to itinerant buying and 10% females.

The organization also provides health insurance to these people.

We can conclude by saying that these organizations working behind the scenes have made a substantial difference in the lives of the people of the unorganized sector and need more recognition and support. There are more people required to be working in this sector. Very less percentage of people can reach the highest level and the rest needs to be absorbed elsewhere. The real economy lies here, and the development of this sector would result in the development of the entire workforce.

Results-

Historically, the unorganized sector has been suffering due to the neglect of the authorities and the public. However, this is time that we reflect and try to understand not only the extrinsic but also the intrinsic factors that will help us to reach the root cause of this inconvenience and work towards it. Therefore, to understand this, the following points should be considered. They are divided into individual and organizational level-

1) **Challenges-**

- **Individual level-** The “low” social status results in the disrespectful attitude of society towards this sector. Since there is surplus labour, people are often forced to work at the same place even if there is no job satisfaction. This helplessness is

misused, and they are often treated inhumanely. The demand for pay raise or holidays is always questioned.

Moreover, the intra-group conflicts keep on happening to the extent that it becomes difficult for them to step ahead. There is a hierarchy within the group that hampers the development.

- **Organizational level-** Despite the laws that exist, the system is fraudulent. A video report by KKPKP states that 90-95% of people are paid for 8-10 days only as against 30 days attendance record³. People often get creative in finding out the loopholes and turning the profits themselves. Moreover, when occupational security is concerned, the people get reluctant in denying kids to work because they are a part of their income.

2) **How can we help?**

- **Individual level-** The foremost thing we can do is to recognize the value that they add to our lives because of which we sustain in our own work. It is also important to pay them appropriately. It is important to build forums where communication can happen. Irrespective of what profession one may be in, applying our knowledge to help would do a great job. People can intern and volunteer at organizations that work for the betterment of this sector.
- **Organizational level-** We need organizations like KKPKP that would educate people about their rights and equality. The genuine beneficiaries need to be spotted.

3) **How can they help?**

This is a two way give and take process that eventually helps both.

- At the individual level we would be able to expand our knowledge of the market while working with these entities. It would develop our various skills right from our decision making and problem-solving skills to our training as not less than sales and marketing consultants!
- At the organizational level, it would not only provide employment and contribute to the national income but also increase the real per capita income of the people resulting in the increase in the improving the standard of living.

Conclusion-

If this inconvenience does not stop, the unemployment rates would continue to increase. The actual potential of the unorganized sector needs to come at the centre stage and plans to improve the conditions need to be made. The battle is long but if there is better recognition and inclusion, it could be won!

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LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX⁶

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Abstract

It is important to include sex education as a part of school curriculum. Sex education is defined as a broad program that aims to build a strong foundation for lifelong sexual health by acquiring information and attitudes, beliefs and values about one's identity, relationships, and intimacy. (Kevan Wylie, Shahjahan Ismail, Ashika Shajahan, T.S. Sathyanarayan, 2015 Oct-Dec) As young people grow up, they face important decisions about relationships, sexuality, and sexual behavior. The decisions they make can impact their health and mental well-being for the rest of their lives. In India, the question remains whether we have reached the point where we speak “the word” freely without apprehension. Unfortunately, even today sex education in most schools even today is limited to the education of sex in reptiles and animals like toads and when it comes to the point of teaching students the portion where sex in human being is involved, the teacher generally breezes through with just the basic introduction to the reproductive parts. (Viji Athreye, 2018)

This paper aims to explore why parents do not talk about sex with their children. It will also explore children's expectations from their parents regarding sex education. Semi-structured interviews with parents and children will be conducted. The contribution will be to raise awareness about importance of sex education. It will also reduce stigma and initiate a dialogue and increase the acceptance of sex education. With the term 'Family Life Education' (FLE) can hope to teach the roles and responsibilities of males and females towards each other in all relationships in familial and social contexts. Thus, endowing the knowledge is necessary to maintain sexual health as they navigate through the vulnerabilities of life.

Introduction

In India, the question remains whether we have reached the point where we speak “the S word” freely. Sex education is defined as a broad program that aims to build a strong foundation for lifelong sexual health by acquiring information and attitudes, beliefs, and values about one's identity, relationships, and intimacy. (Julia Chung, 2017). Sex education has been widely

⁶ This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review

controversial and majorly discussed topic all around the world. However, it varies greatly across countries and cultures. India has the largest adolescent population, which is 243 million, with more than 50% of the adolescent population living in urban areas. This indicates the importance of healthcare needs in India. (Viji Athreye, updated 2019). In India, many people belong to the middle class. Some parents from this class find it exceedingly difficult communicating with their children when it comes about the topic “sex”. The United Nation held the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in 1994 which included India. The Sexual and Reproductive Rights (SRR) of adolescents and young people were affirmed in many countries as well as India. The conference understood that for adolescents and the youth to be able to make informed decisions on all matters concerning their sexuality and reproduction, they require comprehensive education on sexuality. In 2007, The government of India initiated the Adolescents Education Program (AEP) and decided to provide compulsory sex education to the youngsters and adolescents. India is changing in all aspects, even though thoughts are becoming modern but at certain point peoples’ morals and values are based on typical cultural background that is why sex education or talking about sex is a difficult task for some people.

Rationale

Though India is reaching newer milestones, a lot of Indians are still hesitating to talk about sex and sex education freely. Parents from typical psycho-socio-cultural backgrounds do not talk openly to their children. Talking about sex or any sexual activity is an outrageous behaviour in public and in families. In schools, while teaching the lessons with human reproduction and sexual intercourse, the teacher generally breezes through with the basic introduction to the reproductive parts. There are many workshops conducted on health and hygiene under the title of sex education. Parents confine their talks to the mechanics and biology of sex and tend to omit the more difficult or embarrassing topics such as homosexuality and orgasms. Lack of extension of sex education to every class in the society leads to unfulfilled curiosities of children. Conversations between peers about sex or any sexual activity, increases more curiosity in children’s mind and they try to seek answers by wrong ways viz. Porn sites and Porn magazines. Due to inaccurate and incomplete knowledge of sex, people may contract Sexually Transmitted Diseases like AIDS, or unwanted teenage pregnancies etc. All these points reflect lack of awareness among people. By expressing their thoughts and opinions regarding this topic to guardians, parents and experts, counsellors and trained teachers can help clear their doubts. The negatively uncontrollable feeling of having sex or any sexual activity can be channelized into positive energy and thoughts by guiding them.

Objectives

Following are the objectives of the present paper,

- To raise awareness about importance of sex education.
- To understand children’s expectations from their parents.
- To understand parents’ expectations from their children and why they do not talk about sex.

- To study the acceptance of parents regarding sex education.

Review of Literature

Short descriptions of the studies done by some researchers like, Michelle Fine, James A and Cherry A, McGee Banks (John Wiley and Sons,2019), Douglas Kirby are as follows-

- Schools from the lower income sector do not have sex education program as compared to other sector which is a major drawback in many developing countries. This situation needs to be changed by giving equal importance to this topic in all the sectors.
- Despite substantial evidence on the success of both school-based health clinics and access to sexuality information the majority of public schools do not sanction or provide such information as a result female student, particularly low income once suffers most from the inadequacies of present sex education policy.
- Ethnic, cultural, social class and linguistic gaps are widening communication between teachers and students.
- Teachers should gain knowledge, attitudes, and skills through their ‘Teachers education program’ which will help them to overcome this communication gap between teachers and parents.

Methodology and Description of sample-

To fulfil the objectives, the study employs the approach of data collection and analysis. The methodology includes the following points-

- The methodology used for this research is Qualitative Research Method.
- Semi-structured interviews with parents and children were conducted.
- There were 4 families taken as a sample who have a single child. In which two families were with the girl child and two families were with the boy child.
- The sample was taken with similar cultural background but different psycho-social-economic background.
- The data collected from interviews has been used for primary analysis.

Data Analysis

Though this topic has been studied by many researchers all over the world, it is necessary to perceive it in the Indian context. In typical psycho-socio-cultural background families and in modern families both parents have awareness about sex education, but they do not know how to communicate without hesitation. In both the conditions parents believe that it is important for girls to know about Menstruation and it is incredibly important for boys as well. Findings show that

parents from both backgrounds know about ‘Good touch, Bad touch’ and they have taught their children about this and to be aware of such kinds of things. Parents tend to be more comfortable to talk about Good touch and Bad touch rather than sex education. In both conditions’ parents believe that it is their parents’ duty and responsibility to provide basic information rather than be dependent on teachers. In both conditions’ parents believe that training for communication with their children is important.

- Common findings from the research include, Fathers tend to avoid taking part in sex education discussion and even if fathers do talk to their children about sex, they limit the conversation to less intimate and more socially acceptable issues. Mothers are more likely to talk about intimate, emotional and psychological aspects of sex than fathers. But mothers talk more about sex to their daughters than their sons. Hence same sex parent was more involved with the child.
- In typical psycho-socio-cultural conditions lack of communication is observed which leads to an increase in problems. Lack of education is commonly seen which results into lower possibility for accepting things related to sex. Due to lower psycho-social-cultural conditions from generation to generation it is difficult to discuss this topic. Because of the taboo around this topic they feel shameful to attend seminars and counselling.
- In modern family’s communication is better than in typical psycho-socio-cultural conditions. Higher possibility to accept things related to sex could be seen. Because of parent’s good psycho-socio-cultural background and higher levels of education they tend to communicate openly with their children. Parents believe that seminars and counsellings can help them to solve their children’s problem in a better way. Children expect the parents to accept the changing mentality and perspective of their child. Providing comfort and consolation to discuss any problem, parents should act calmly even if something inappropriate (according to the parents) happens. It will help in building the trust between parents and child.
- The parents talked about things related to sex and sex education in the interviews but admitted to not being able to easily accept and hence discuss these things with their offspring.

Limitations

A small sample was taken for the study.

The regional Marathi families were taken as samples.

Results

- In many cases sex education goes against individuals’ morals and believes.
- Teachers appointed for the task are mostly not well trained.
- The age should be defined for sex education to avoid polluting their minds with curiosity.
- Though people belong to different conditions, but they face the same problems.

Conclusion

A healthy society needs a healthy family and to have such a family, the members must have psychological health and desirable interrelationship. (Burnstein. translated by poorabedi et al,2005)

Through 'Family life education (FLE) we can teach the roles and responsibilities of males and females towards each other.

It is important to include sex education as a part of school curriculum in every sector\area.

Indian families are slowly accepting the concept of sex education, but they may need more time to be fully able to talk freely about things related to sex with their offspring.

Future implications

- Conducting counselling sessions for parents.
- Giving appropriate training for teachers for better communication with children.
- The counsellors should be well trained.
- Spreading awareness about sex education as much as possible in every region.

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OF LOST HOMES AND RE-BUILT LIVES
ANALYSIS OF SELECT NARRATIVES OF DISPLACED
KASHMIRI FAMILIES⁷

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ABSTRACT

Conflict has been a fact of life in Kashmir since the political partition of India (1947), which caused one of the most distressing human upheavals in world history. Political insecurity and subsequent wars resulted in the advent of militancy in the valley, and the insurgency in 1989 led to the **exodus of Kashmiri Pandits**.

The proposed study is an attempt to understand the impact of this forced migration on the mental health of the migrants, and how new, unfamiliar environments, complexity of language barriers, and cultural disparities have added to the **psychological distress** of Kashmiri migrants after they've settled elsewhere. It is also pertinent to explore and examine how these feelings of **rootlessness** and **gradual loss of communitarian identity** have transferred to the second generation of Kashmiri migrants.

Questions about the multitude of their experiences during the exodus, and their subsequent lives as migrants are asked, and examined using narrative analysis. For secondary data collection, the proposed study endeavours to undertake a brief study of the selected writings of Kashmiri Pandits and analyze them from psycho-social perspectives, to gain an insight into what **erosion of identity** means to these migrants, who are indeed, “refugees in their own country”.

⁷ **This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review**

The results will bring out a correlation between the qualitative analysis and the responses of the participants about how mental health declines as conflict simmers and how “home” has now become a fluid and abstruse concept for them, coupled with a fear of **ethnic extinction**.

This study also highlights the wide scope for researchers to investigate further, have an in-depth understanding of the pattern of mental health issues among the migrants, and formulate effective and acceptable intervention strategies.

INTRODUCTION

“Gar firdaus bar-rue zamin ast, hami asto, hamin asto, hamin ast”

If there is a heaven on earth, it is here, it is here.

Kashmir ensures that despite the unrest and the violence, its sheer beauty continues to give meaning to Amir Khusro’s famous words.

How did the valley of Kashmir, a region of streams and solitude, famed for its immense beauty and tranquil sceneries, become the focus of disputes that led to several deaths, loss of homes, jobs, and the very identity of being a Kashmiri? The journey of Jammu and Kashmir, a region of tremendous strategic importance, from being an independent kingdom to its current status of a battleground – and the dire consequences of the same have sure been written about, but the complexities of loss of culture, traditions, and the associated inter-generational effects have not been thoroughly reviewed.

Since the partition of India in 1947, the Kashmir Valley has been subject to continual political insecurity. Following three Indo-Pakistani wars (1947, 1965 and 1971) and one Indo-Chinese war (1962), an internal resistance movement for self-determination developed. In 1989, an **insurgency** began, resulting in 27 years of militant and military activity. The violent separatist movement that erupted in 1989, led to several sporadic strikes and demonstrations.

By 2012, approximately 70,000 Kashmiris had lost their lives in the conflict and 10,000 people had been reported missing. (**Kashmir Mental Health Survey Report 2015**)

From the years 1989 to 1981, nearly 400,000 Kashmiri Pandits were expelled from their native place, the Kashmir valley, after explicit threats were sent their way. Events that followed could be best described by the phrase: **from home to homelessness**.

Consequences of the conflict have been extremely traumatic for the people in the valley. Constant **armed conflict** between the Hindu and Muslim communities and indecision regarding the ownership of the valley, were issues that caused displacement and associated mental health and physical health problems.

Though every kind of migration involves a lot of adjustment, some individuals and families voluntarily move out of their homes in hope of a better life in terms of education, employment, and living standards. It is to be noted that the Kashmiri Pandit families, however, were forced out of their homeland and have had to **live a life of compulsion**, not of choice.

Displacement and its accompanying stressors affect the displaced individuals and their families, lack of preparedness, difficulties in adjusting to the new environment, the complexity of language difficulties, cultural disparities and adverse experiences have caused distress to them. The Pandits were forced to live a life of misery in the migrant camps in Jammu and other places in an unfamiliar climate. These pathetic conditions of living in the migrant camps, coupled with the loss of home resulted in the Pandits, especially their elders, being overcome by trauma, depression, and dementia. (**Basharat Shameem**, Kashmir's Exile Poetry: An Aesthetic of Loss)

A dominant image of the forcefully displaced people is associated with loss that is both material, and existential. The Kashmiri Pandits, a Hindu minority have historically been associated with power and knowledge in the region. The exodus is regarded by many Pandits to result in a loss of their status in the region. While most studies of displaced peoples focus on the marginalized, one of the dimensions of this study is also to explore how the **once privileged experience marginalization**. Until 1989 there were 75,343 Kashmiri Pandit families settled in the valley but due to militancy 74,692 families were forced to evict from their homeland and migrate to various parts of India with only 651 families occupying the various parts of the Kashmir valley these days (Data Collected from **J&K Population Department**).

Years of conflict in Jammu and Kashmir have taken a toll on people's mental health in the state as well. According to a survey conducted by **Médecins Sans Frontières** (MSF), Doctors without Borders, in 2015, nearly 1.8 million adults (45% of the adult population) in the Kashmir Valley

show symptoms of significant mental distress. These figures highlight the fact that this issue needs **urgent attention** and intervention strategies.

The Kashmiri Pandits encountered unimaginably terrible conditions in their forcibly initiated new life as ‘refugees’ in their own country. It is important, in my opinion, to address the trauma of the conflict and its adverse effects on their lives and mental health.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this paper are as follows:

- To understand the impact of the forced exodus on the mental health of the migrants, and how new, unfamiliar environments, complexity of language barriers, and cultural disparities have added to the **psychological distress** of the displaced Kashmiri families, after they’ve settled elsewhere.
- It also aims to explore and examine how feelings of **rootlessness** and a **gradual loss of communitarian identity** have transferred to the second generation of Kashmiri migrants.
- Within the permissible time and space, the study would also undertake a brief analysis of a few select poems from **Suvir Kaul’s** *Of Gardens and Graves*, a few stories and excerpts from *On Uncertain Ground: A study of Displaced Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu and Kashmir* by **Ankur Datta**, and **Rahul Pandita’s** novel *Our Moon has Blood Clots*.

Addressing the themes of loss of culture, suffering, and rootlessness in the context of forced migration, this study explores the experiences and narratives of Kashmiri Pandits as they rebuild their lives after displacement.

RATIONALE

Migration process has specific stresses in its each phase on migrants; the specific psychological distress is influenced by the nature of the migration experience that the person undergoes. (**Virupaksha, H.G** - Migration and mental health: An interface).

The communication difficulties due to language and cultural differences, adverse experiences before, during and after migration, gradual loss of customs and traditions, deteriorating economic status of the family, may pose as major challenges for migrants; and the people may not expect, or be prepared for such unforeseen hurdles.

After the exodus of 1990, most of the Kashmiri Pandits were still hopeful that they would return to their homes in the Valley one day. But the months stretched into years, and, now the years have stretched into decades, but the end seems to be nowhere in sight.

Being faced with these unexpected stressors, when **internally displaced individuals** and migrants are identified with any sort of psychological distress or whenever they approach for help, the clinicians need to be trained and equipped enough to address these issues.

In such a situation, it is required that the professionals inquire systematically- the whole process of migration, social, cultural background, socio-economic status, considering the fact that migration transforms notions of personal identity and societies too, struggle with the process of re-defining their collective identities. Having been in **exile** for more than two decades now, many Kashmiri Pandits are taking to poetry, essays, and other forms of art to express their profound angst on their life as migrants. In their **newfound voices**, they can be seen longing for their lost homes and lamenting about the drastic changes that the exodus brought into their lives.

The verbal descriptions by the displaced individuals and their penned down experiences will help in understanding and identifying the problems they have faced in the past, what they continue to face right now, and what unfortunately, cannot be easily forgotten in the near future. As the internally displaced are often at risk of being hidden amidst other migrant groups, it is important, in my opinion, to bring this complex **historical, political** and also **psycho-social phenomenon** to the forefront and study how it has changed several lives, and continues to do so now.

These stories of lost homes, disrupted lives and shattered aspirations- and how these “**refugees in their own country**” coped with these stressors, will help us to formulate, and offer culturally appropriate, effective and acceptable mental health intervention strategies, and promote the psycho-social wellbeing of the migrants.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In our search for a lasting solution to the Kashmir problem, both in its external and internal dimensions, we shall not traverse solely on the beaten track of the past. Mindsets will have to be altered and historical baggage jettisoned.

—Atal Bihari Vajpayee, former Prime minister of India, January 2002

- In **Kashmir : Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace**, the author **Sumantra Bose** discusses the exodus of Kashmiri Pandits by saying, “The sight of huge **pro-azaadi demonstrations** chanting Islamic religious slogans across the Valley in January–February 1990 may have further intimidated local Pandits and contributed to their exodus. On 15 March 1990, by which date the Pandit exodus was substantially complete, the All-India Kashmiri Pandit Conference, a community organization, asserted that a total of thirty-two Pandits had been killed by Muslim militants since the previous autumn—a plausible claim. The displacement of Pandits from the Valley has been the prime tool of Indian officials, politicians, and media in the propaganda war over Kashmir since 1990.”

But the Pandit issue is a much more complex, multifaceted issue.

- **Puri (1993)** explains the circumstances that followed the accession and eventually led to the inflow and spread of insurgency that forced the Kashmiri Pandits out of their homeland. The violation of trust of the Kashmiri communities by the government following the accession and plebiscite, “...hit the most sensitive point of the Kashmiri people psyche as it threatened the autonomy and identity of Kashmir for the protection of which the Kashmiris had fought against their coreligionists in Pakistan and had opted for India...” (pg. 29)
- The sense of victimization, the hyper-sensitivity to threats to their cultural identity and the outrage at the human rights violation (**Sonpar, 2010**) results in deep psychological impact on mental health and self-esteem leading to clinical depression, alienation and very often violent behaviour and thoughts of revenge.
- **Mahapatra (2013)** points out that displacement is neither one-time nor new to the Kashmiris and how it is altering people’s identity and space within the state. He identifies these displaced people as **survivors** rather than victims because despite all the terrors and uncertainties, they go on with their lives - though cynical about certain things but trying to make adjustments.

- “In Srinagar you can still find a small Hindu temple on the banks of the river Jhelum, lost amongst the hundred and one mosques of Srinagar. Its entrance is always heavily guarded by BSF forces and it is protected by sandbags on all sides, as it has been hit a few years ago by a rocket fired by Muslim militants. Inside, a handful of Kashmiri Pandits are still trying to preserve this sacred place, where a natural lingam is said to have emerged 3000 years ago and where their forefathers have worshipped for twenty generations.”

—**François Gautier**, ideologue

Gautier, in **Territory of Desire**: representing the valley of Kashmir (by Ananya Jahanara Kabir) “handful” of Kashmiri Pandits are described to be valiantly safeguarding their ancient patrimony against the massed and militant worshippers of Srinagar’s “hundred and one mosques”.

- A study titled “Psychiatric morbidity in adult Kashmiri migrants living in a migrant camp at Jammu” hypothesized that -Internal displaced persons can be seen as different from refugees in the sense that they are not displaced to a different country but still similarities exists between the two because of significant "cultural shock" and pre-displacement isolation. Refugees or internally displaced persons leave their homeland and culture with little hope of return. "Culture shock" is thus overwhelming, especially for the unrelenting older generations, with less ability to adapt. Displacement is often accompanied by physical and/or psychological trauma. Even without the accompanying trauma, displacement is a wrenching event.
- **Basharat Shameem** writes how the rise of militancy in the late 1980s and early 1990s changed the scenario dramatically; the timeless bondage of love and trust between the two communities suddenly received a jolt. “The Pandits were suddenly overcome with apprehensions of fear and persecution while the Muslims began to harbour suspicion.”

The **Kashmir Mental Health Survey 2015**, by MSF, stated that nearly 1.8 million (45%) adults in the Kashmir Valley are experiencing symptoms of mental distress, with 41% exhibiting probable depression, 26% probable anxiety and 19% probable PTSD.

Hence, this paper is an attempt to understand the psychological, cultural, and physical effects on the displaced Kashmiri Pandit individuals and families.

METHODOLOGY

Primary data collection

The primary data collection for this study consisted of the following two parts:

- A **questionnaire - survey** asking for detailed views of the displaced Kashmiris on various aspects related to their forced exodus and subsequent settlement elsewhere was circulated among the several digital platforms that serve the purpose of connectivity between Kashmiri Pandits. Their answers, a collection of first-hand testimonies was analyzed to understand the multitude of experiences which emanate from their exodus and their subsequent life as “migrants”.
- To understand how loss of culture, disintegration of communitarian identity, and dissolution of traditions has affected the generations, **semi-structured** interviews were conducted with three generations within the same family, and **narrative analysis** was used to get an insight into the **inter-generational** similarities and/or differences in their experiences and perceptions.

Secondary data collection

Having been in exile for more than two decades now, many Kashmiri Pandits are taking to **poetry** and **other forms of art** to express their profound angst in life after being forcefully made to leave their homeland. For secondary data collection, this study aims to undertake a brief analysis of a few select poems from **Suvir Kaul’s** *Of Gardens and Graves*, a few stories and excerpts from *On Uncertain Ground: A study of Displaced Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu and Kashmir* by **Ankur Datta**, and **Rahul Pandita’s** novel *Our Moon has Blood Clots*. Secondary data analysis was done by understanding these from a socio-political and psychological perspective, to comprehend how in their newfound voices, the displaced Kashmiris can be seen yearning for their lost homes.

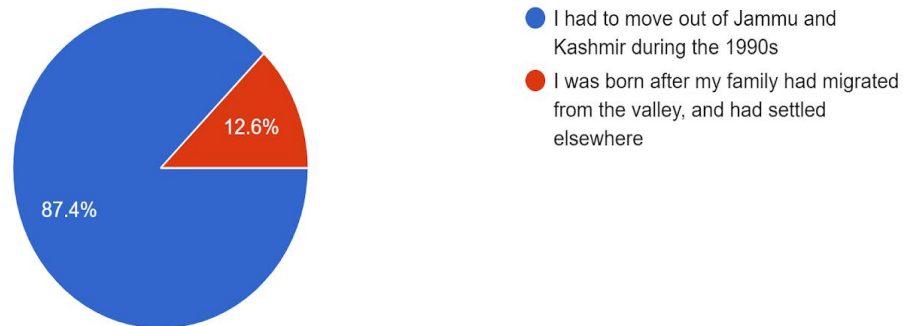
RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The questionnaire-survey had 350 respondents in total, all belonging to displaced Kashmiri families, and the youngest respondent was 18 years old, whereas the oldest was 76 years old.

Such a wide difference in age also ensures that the data collected has information from various perspectives and inclusive of varied experiences in the same community.

Please select one of the options given below :

340 responses



The very first question that was asked was whether the respondent was a first generation “migrant” or was born after his/her family had settled elsewhere- this was done to ensure that their responses could be analyzed based on how the first-hand experience of trauma was different than other experiences.

- I. The question asked about where the individuals and their families settled after bringing out diverse responses, and it was revealed that most of the replies called this settlement as “**house**” or “**temporary settlement**” and not home. Most of the respondents settled in Jammu, Delhi, Pune, Bangalore, but there were several replies from London, The United States of America and even Dhaka.

“Half of our family members (joint family) found a roof in Jammu. Out of 4 members in my immediate family.... our father worked at Srinagar, my brother left for Bangalore, my mother lived at Jammu and I kept shuffling places.”

One of the replies just makes it extremely evident, how rootless and unsettled several displaced families still feel.

- II. The question enquiring about what, in their opinion, was the **biggest challenge**, or the most difficult part about adjusting to the new place post migration elicited responses that highlighted several different aspects like the scorching hot climate of Jammu, something that they were not accustomed to, loss of job and education opportunities, language

difficulties, dissolution of communitarian identity, loss of money and property, and the trauma of being forced out of one's home.

“It was language barrier and non-acceptance by some Jammuites due to their reservations. There was no clue how to go about in future. I was studying in B. Com Final Year and had no idea to complete my studies. We had to fight for our basic rights of education. There were people who had to live in Tents in 48 Degree Celsius due to which many lost their lives due to sunstrokes and many died due to snake bites. People living outside had to pay hefty rents for the stables to live in. Many of the women folk had to face the nuisance of the local goons which created another nightmare for them. Government relief given to people having no avenues had also to go through many struggles.”

“Climate, loss of both immovable and movable property. Psychological depression among my parents and women folk”

“Everything - People, food, climate, basic necessities, financial issues, job, education, language, culture, acceptance”

III. The question regarding language and fluency in Kashmiri had varied responses. However, 75% of the respondents replied by saying that the language, its usage, and understanding has been negatively impacted after displacement.

“Very much affected, although I'm fluent in speaking kashmiri but I had to adapt to it. Since the usage of the language in migrants has gone down drastically.”

“I can't speak Kashmiri at all since I was born in a Hindi centric region and the trauma due to displacement forced my family to talk less and less about what they went through. Not many efforts were out to teach me and my sibling our language, the happiness to teach kind of got lost. At least that's what I believe.”

“Post migration, the speakers of kashmiri language have drastically reduced over time. The new generation of KPs in Jammu might speak kashmiri, but the families settled away have shown a decline in new kashmiri speakers”

IV. Approximately **84% of the respondents**, talking about the quality of life of the new generation the “migrants” said that though this generation is receiving better opportunities for education and job related matters, but the fact that they are steering away from their culture, not by choice that too, and that there is a dissolution of the identity of kashmiris as a whole, is truly sad.

- “My mother now aged 95 years never accepts my home at Faridabad as HOME. For her HOME means only her original home at Karan Nagar Srinagar...”
- “Imagine visiting your birthplace as a tourist and being treated like that only”
- “My parents always had this dream that we could be going back to Kashmir soon which never happened, and they passed away.”
- “I left when I was 12 years old, and since then never returned back. I have lost all my childhood memories, my associations and all together my entire childhood. In fact, I feel like we never had any childhood. Starting again from scratch was difficult, though our community stands strong to overcome this. But still the stress continues with our lives and the faint thought of not being at our homes still remains there.”
- “It has made us like orphans. For the last 30 yrs. no action has been taken to settle us back in the valley.”

- “Experiences are many. It has been 30 years now and we still are fighting for our existence. We had started from zero post exodus and somehow marked ourselves but have lost our home. We have been living in a worse situation with no facilities whereas we had all the world amenities in our home. Mentally, Physically, Emotionally, socially we have lost our people, our ancestors. Despite living for 30 years out of our homeland, I still have hope that one fine day, I will go back to my homeland and live with dignity and honour , where I can preach and practice my religion and tradition without fear.”

- “The fall from the grace or the forced exodus has left many adults (above the age of 65 presently) around me with subclinical depression. They do not speak about it due to the associated Taboo, but it is quite visible through their behavioural patterns if we try to pay them any attention. They have accustomed themselves to the daily Sadness, Grief, Hopelessness, and loneliness. Adapting to new climates, new neighbourhoods, new cultures has led to loss of self-identity for many of them.”

These unedited, candid responses are what need to be heard. The human cost and the lost childhoods and years cannot be reduced to stats or numbers or sentences.

- ❖ To understand how different the experiences are intergenerationally, three generations of a displaced Kashmiri family were interviewed.

- **Person A**, a 75-year-old Kashmiri Pandit settled in Pune now, spoke about his life before and after the exodus and the adjustments he’s had to make. Immediately teary-eyed while reminiscing all of the past incidents, he talks about how their home in Srinagar was one of the biggest ones, with 11 rooms, a huge backyard full of flowers in full bloom, and the most loved member of their family, their pet dog.
 He spoke at length about how he owned an enormous shop in the heart of the city, business going extremely well, when the threats and unrest began. Letters filled with hatred and death threats were slid into their houses because they were Hindus, asking them to either leave, convert to Islam, or die. He saw their happy life crashing before his eyes as him, and his whole family fled Srinagar on a cold January morning, at 3 a.m., without any of their belongings, and practically nowhere to go. Stripped of all luxuries, forced to stay in a cramped rented room in the scorching hot region of Jammu, they still could not come to

terms with what had happened. News of people who decided to stay back, being shot point-blank, women being kidnapped and raped flooded the streets.

From one of the most successful businesses in Srinagar, he had to come to Pune, looking for ways to establish his business back from level zero. Even thinking about the sheer amount of courage, patience, hard work and the support shown by his wife and sister makes him shudder.

“ woh waqt bhi nahia raha,

Yeh waqt bhi nahi rahega”,

He said, as he toiled day-in and day-out to make his place in a completely new city, with an unfamiliar language, different people, and unknown traditions.

He repeated time and again that it's truly tragic, what has happened, and unfortunately, all of his chances and hopes of returning to his beloved birthplace seems bleak then, and seem even more unlikely now.

It is difficult for the Pandits to delineate their past from their present. For instance, in his poem “Exile”, **Subhash Kak** writes: “Memories get hazy/even recounting doesn't help.” **K L Chowdhary** also yearns for this past in his poem “Keys”:

*Even after a decade in exile
I hang, from my girdle, this bunch of keys,
keys that I carried with me
when I was forced to flee,
keys to my home,
keys to my relics, my diary, my library,
keys that opened the sanctum
where my gods reside...*

- **Person B**, son of Person A had similar things to say as his father. Only in his early twenties when they were forced out of their homeland, he still clearly remembers how a militant had pointed a loaded gun at him and warned him that if his family didn't move out by the next day, they would be shot. His education got compromised, he had to help his father establish a business in an unknown city, learn a new language, take care of the traumatized

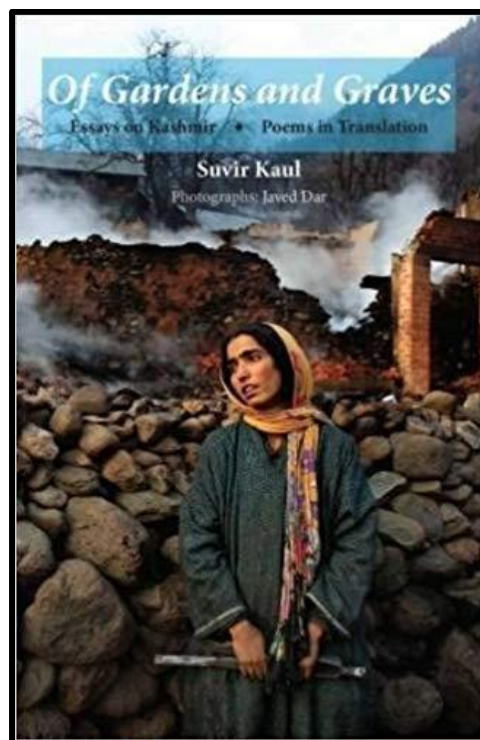
joint family members that once lived so happily back home. He said, “Traditions come only after survival” and this in a period of turmoil and trying to make ends meet, how does one think of traditions? From realizing that some of his friends will never be found, since they had “disappeared”, to coming to terms with the fact that going back home was not an option anymore, he continued, with a heavy heart, to plan his future in a city far away from home, with no belongings, his graduation interrupted half-way, and the trauma of having witnessed all of this in such a youthful age. Even after being miles away from home, he talks in his mother tongue, Kashmiri and celebrates the festivals in a traditional Kashmiri way.

- **Person C**, son of Person B and grandson of Person A, had some different things to say. 18 years old, born and brought up in Pune, he agreed with the fact that this current generation has gotten more opportunities with respect to education and job-related matters. He had only heard stories of the trauma and injustice done to his forefathers and expressed his longing to not be treated as a tourist in the place that he belongs to. He says that though he is sure every household has adhered to most of the rituals but **what is lost is lost forever**. He feels lucky that he was born after the violence and the displacement but expresses his angst towards what has happened. Preserving their own traditions and culture has been a struggle for every Kashmiri Hindu. Because of relocations every now and then, after the migration, they are losing the touch with their culture. He says that they, now, celebrate only the main festivals and have forgotten the small rituals, or it will be better to say that most of the current generations are not aware of the same. Not knowing what to answer when someone asks him where he’s from, he talked about how he doesn’t really identify with being a native of the state where he was born, but doesn’t even know how he can call himself a Kashmiri, when he speaks broken kashmiri, visits his ancestors’ homeland like a guest, and feels that there is a huge cultural disconnect as of today.

These narratives just prove that culture is also rooted in the place from where it originates. We can replicate the traditions or ceremonies, but not their essence. We, as Kashmiri Pandits have indulged ourselves in this process of globalization and have **forgotten our own place in that globe**. While the previous generation had to sacrifice their studies and peace to survive, the current generation feels the longing and yearning of HOME, a true home and not a temporary settlement.

If these narratives and experiences and feelings are not heard, about the effects on their mental and physical health, how can we ever come up with solutions, or even know what needs to be done? These are the questions we need to think about.

❖ **Of Gardens and Graves** by Suvir Kaul



In *of Gardens and Graves* Suvir Kaul examines the disruption of everyday life in Kashmir in the years following the region's militarization in 1990. Kaul's autobiographical and analytical essays are a “combination of political analysis, literary criticism, memoir, and journalistic observation.”

These poems serve as an **archive** of the feelings and desires of Kashmiris who have faced tremendous physical and psychological violence.

*In the mirror of that lake,
what should I see?
from its depths
that stranger- like corpse stares*

*I have often thrown a stone—
I wished to smash that mirror
ripples formed, spread, dissipated
and at the furthest reaches of the silent lake
The same corpse kept staring the corpse!*

In this excerpt from “**Corpse**” by Shabir “Azar,” a quiet, calm and reflective poem, talks about the pristine lakes in Kashmir, reflecting like a mirror, but instead of his own reflection in the exquisitely clean water of the lake, he sees a corpse. The unnatural deaths due to the series of violent events in Kashmir, and natural beauty in Kashmir, are talked about here. There is recognition, and a sad acceptance of the truth of life there, which seems to be violence.

*My friend, who slit the throat of speech and sounds?
Every man has forgotten youthful bonds
On balconies no one attends to the birds
The cuckoo gurgles its song, but no one hears the truth
Strange smoke smoulders across the skies
But all have sealed and sealed their mouths
In graveyards today dear ones are put to sleep in piles
Which enemy has left after killing them?
Of matters on this side of the mountains, do not even ask
Burning in fires, in such a state, lost birds O friend,
When will they awake again,
the Kashmiri’s Wounds will heal, when will they apply balm, the Kashmiris?*

Arjan Dev Kaul’s “Majboor” poem *Kasheer* lucidly, but sorrowfully explains the condition Kashmir was in when insurgency began, and killings and bloodshed became an everyday sight for the locals.

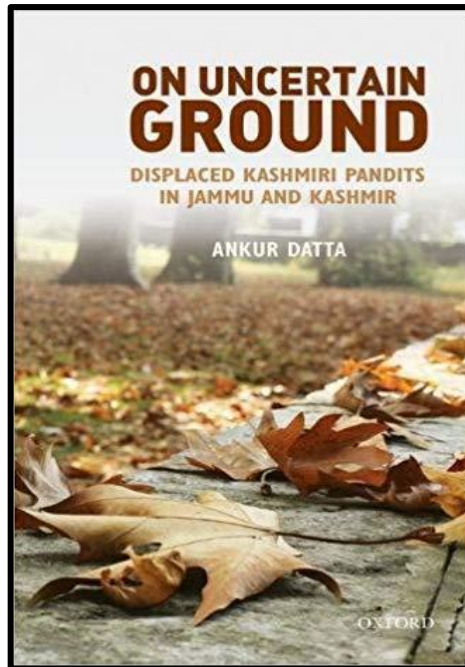
“This sort of turmoil and struggle is a way of life now, the supposed exception that has become the norm. And of course there is an entire generation that has grown up after 1989 that knows the Indian state only in the form of the intrusive actions of the Army or the various paramilitary forces, that is, an entire generation whose politics and sense of self are shaped by their constant interaction with the militarized state, with everyday brutality that can only be experienced as the actions of an occupying power”

Over the last decade and more, it has become clear to observers that no volume of documentation of the suffering of Kashmiris is going to have any substantial impact on policy planners, and that Kashmir is effectively at the mercy of competing Indian and Pakistani nationalisms, a pawn in their larger geopolitical calculations

-Suvir Kaul

Suvir Kaul’s impressive collection of accounts and poems, along with photographs and interpretative essays on the politics and history of Kashmir, tells us what has gone wrong and is still going wrong in Kashmir and how the daily suffering and trauma of ordinary people sometimes gets thrown in the background.

- ❖ **On Uncertain Ground:** A study of Displaced Kashmiri Pandits in Jammu and Kashmir by Ankur Datta



Presented in the form of a traditional ethnography that describes the life of the displaced Kashmiri Pandit families in Porkhu Camp in Jammu, this literary is a very good contribution to the literature on forced migration and a useful case study of a population about which little is known. One of the most important chapters, in my opinion, is the one that examines the attempts of Kashmiri Pandit migrants to claim the status of victims of violence. The Kashmiri Pandits represent themselves as Indian citizens who were forced to leave Kashmir because of their support of the Indian state. However, to understand the politics related to victimhood and support, according to the author, it is necessary to assess the vocabularies of victimhood employed by the Pandits.

As the author delves into the interrelated concerns of “**place-making**” and “**political claim-making**” in the displaced Pandit community by drawing on fieldwork conducted in 2005–2007 in the resettlement camps of Jammu.

Like many communities associated with diaspora, the displaced Pandits “see their lives shaped by migration” (p. 128).

Through a range of extensive interviews, the experiences of normalcy and exception are examined and the author also identified some of the dramatic social changes taking place within these settlements.

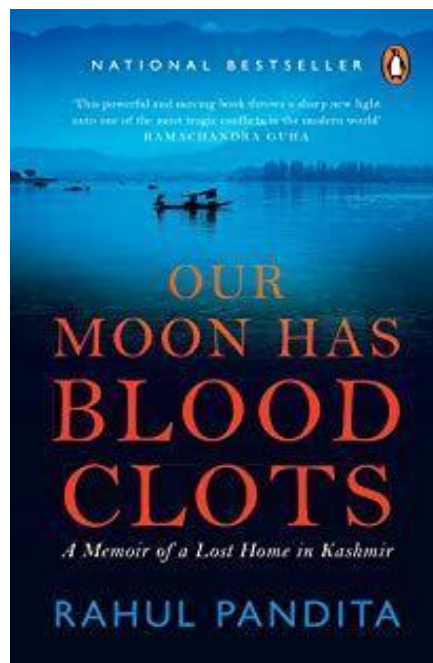
“The trauma of displacement for the Pandits was related to reconciling the loss of prior status with the discontent of the present” (p. 22).

Pandits, whose social status was often associated with middle- or upper-class professions, were forced by economic necessity to do manual work (mazdūrī). Many had also left spacious homes in the Kashmir Valley for the cramped one room tenements.

*“Perhaps the greatest contribution of Datta’s book is in revealing how the Kashmiri Pandit experience underscores the **ubiquity of modern displacement** and the role of identity in that experience.”*

- Kyle Gardner, Ph.D. candidate in history at the University of Chicago.

❖ **Our Moon has Blood Clots** by Rahul Pandita



Rahul Pandita is a journalist and the winner of the International Red Cross Award for conflict reporting. In 1990, Rahul and his family, who at that time lived in the Kashmir Valley were forced to leave their home. His book, **Our Moon Has Blood Clots: A Memoir of a Lost Home in Kashmir**, is the story of Kashmir, in which hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri Pandits were tortured, killed and forced to leave their homes by Islamist militants and to spend the rest of their lives in exile in their own country.

“They found the old man dead in his torn tent, with a pack of chilled milk pressed against his right cheek. It was our first June in exile, and the heat felt like a blow in the back of the head. His neighbour, who discovered his lifeless body in the refugee camp, recalled later that he had found his Stewart Warner radio on, playing an old Hindi film song:

Aadmi musafir hai

Aata hail, Janata hai

Man is a traveller

He comes, he goes

The departed was known to our family. His son and my father were friends.”

“Another problem is the apathy of the media and a majority of India’s intellectual class who refuse to even acknowledge the suffering of the Pandits. No campaigns were ever run for us; no fellowships or grants given for research on our exodus. For the media, the Kashmir issue has remained largely black and white—here are a people who were victims of brutalization at the hands of the Indian state. But the media has failed to see, and has largely ignored the fact that the same people also victimized another”

Scars of displacement and loss are rarely forgotten. They lie in the recesses of memory, only to return with a force that is hard to ignore.

From the data analysis, from both, primary and secondary sources, it becomes clear that the idea of loss is central to the narratives, poetry, novels and other forms of art or literary work. The elements of a lost joy and the current moments of suffering and yearning were highlighted throughout the process of analysis.

“O my Koshur mother, I swear, you are my vision and you are my cognition.” Thus, declares **Rahman Rahi** in his emotionally taut poem, **“Jalwa te zubur”** (The Epiphany of David). Written in Kashmiri in 1965, and recently re-anthologized, it is a passionate declaration of love and need for the mother tongue. And, this very point was emphasized by almost everyone who was a part of the questionnaire, and every literary work whose excerpts were briefly analyzed.

Besides these poets and authors, there are many other displaced Pandits, who write in various languages, and express the deep angst of living in exodus, away from the land of their birth. Upon brief readings and analysis of literary works, it is quite evident that such narratives and stories throw in new and interesting perspectives with which we try to redefine our existing knowledge.

OBSERVATIONS

The psychosocial repercussions of the political conflict and the events that followed have been attributed to the suspension of *Kashmiriyat*.

What most of the second generation of the individuals of the displaced families had to say was that they have no organized access to valuable papers of Kashmiri Pandits and other thinkers, writers, and artists that reflect their perceptions of Kashmiri social, political, and ideological movements.

However, a variety of experiences and stories suggests that not all the displaced individuals are likely to face similar experiences before or after migration.

By imparting some knowledge in Kashmiri to the new generation they might be providing them with an effective tool to understand some cultural resources through the Kashmiri medium. Some literary resources include the mystic poet Lalleshwari, the Bhakti poets Parmananda, Krishna Razdan, Zinda Kaul "Masterji" and several others. However, the attempts of a community to survive disintegration, trauma, dissociation of a certain communitarian identity, eventually leads to attempts at preserving this legacy of Kashmiri culture and what they so fondly call *Kashmiriyat*.

CONCLUSION

As some may argue, that young Kashmiris have been exposed to the possibilities of alternative futures, which might be true in a few cases, but the question still stands : is the trauma of being forced out of one's home something that can be easily overcome? With democratic dissent curbed, violent and separatist sentiments coming to the forefront in one's homeland, can anyone ever be at peace?

The Kashmir issue is often cast as a mere "**territorial dispute**" between two neighbours in South Asia. But there is much more to the story than that. It is pertinent to recognize the complex and multi-faceted dimensions of the events that have led to so much of bloodshed, forced displacement and missing individuals.

Any ethically informed discussion about the Valley's inhabitants and the families that once lived happily there, must, therefore, consider the opinions and voices of the ones who were directly associated with, or affected by the events that took place. It thus becomes important to listen to and analyze the first-hand accounts of the Kashmiri Pandits, to understand their past, present, and the solutions to a better, hopeful future.

Having been forced to survive in inhuman conditions in various cities of India with 20-25 people sharing a room, how lack of education and employment opportunities have only exacerbated their grim situation, and how much assistance and chances of empowerment did the Government provide them with, are questions that need to be asked, and deserve to be answered. There is a need to reach the people, and ask the important questions by keeping in mind what they've been through, and what is it that they actually need to combat the feelings of rootlessness and loss of culture, language, literature, traditions and customs – and also the dire effects the events have had on their physical and mental health.

The findings of this study, in accordance with the published work, often points towards the fact that for Kashmiri Pandits, **justice has not only been delayed, it has been denied.** It is of foremost importance, in my opinion, to understand the structural causes of this conflict, but also for providing opportunities to establish a **just, viable, and lasting solution.**

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Challenges Faced by Children of Divorced.

An Exploratory Study⁸

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ABSTRACT

Children are supposed to grow in a family setting where both mother and father take their respective roles in upbringing of the child (KUDENGAMUGOVE, JUNE 2017). Single Parent families may face challenges in catering to their children's needs. Divorce can be a stress-full experience and can be extremely upsetting for the children. Life is difficult for most Single Parent families. This paper attempts to study problems faced by single parents. It also aims to explore the impact of the divorce on the child.

A Questionnaire will be administered to single parents of both the genders. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the family and analysis of the challenges faced by them will be conducted. The contribution of the study will be in panning out the range of mental health issues faced by families of divorce.

INTRODUCTION

A complete family consists of a mother, a father and children with mutual love, respect, support and the sense of belonging to each other. Such a family is the fundamental factor in the emotional, social, and moral development of the child. A complete family is a natural environment where the child is socialized in the broadest sense

Each year, millions of children around the globe face family disruption, and in many countries, divorce rates are rising. Children experience divorce deeply and personally. The potential for negative short- and long-term consequences is considerably higher for children whose parents divorce than for those from non-divorced families

When a mother and father divorce, the effect of divorce on child behavior can take many forms. The negative effect of divorce on children can extend past the initial emotional reactions of sadness, anger, and resentment. Children of divorced parents are more likely to suffer academically or to end up in trouble with the law later. Of course, not all children of divorce react to the situation the same way, but divorce and children statistics show that the odds of a child suffering more long-term effects of his or her parents splitting up are rather high.

⁸ This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review

At any age, it can be traumatic to witness the dissolution of parents' marriage and the breakup of the family. Kids may feel shocked, uncertain, or angry. Some may even feel guilty, blaming themselves for the problems at home.

Depending on the age of the child, divorce can have a different effect on him or her. If he is an adolescent, for example, divorce may be easier because he or she has already come into their form of independence, while a younger child still depends on his or her parents for more things.

The first, two years after the divorce. Kids are likely to experience distress, anger, anxiety, and disbelief. But many kids seem to bounce back. They get used to changes in their daily routines and they grow comfortable with their living arrangements.

The emotional impact divorce has on children the situation can be quite scary, confusing, and frustrating

Rationale

From the last few decades divorce rates across the country have been increasing rapidly. Many researches have taken place regarding this issue.

Exploring the causes for increasing rate is the motive of this paper

Acknowledging the problems faced by single parents and their kids during and after the divorce.

Society should be empathetic towards single parent families.

Methodology

This paper involves both primary and secondary data

Primary data analysis is in the form of semi-structured interviews of a few parents and kids

Secondary data analysis was done from information available on web sources like journals, books, etc.

Primary Analysis

Primary data analysis was done by interviewing 3 parents and 3 children.

The result of the study revealed that financial problems were the main stressor for most single mothers. Single mothers reported that they felt lonely, helpless, hopeless, etc. The single parents mentioned that it was exceedingly difficult to adjust in that environment after divorce mostly the mothers. They mentioned that it was hard to handle the responsibility of a child.

Most of the children mentioned that they are in a dilemma of which parent to live with.

Some of the children mentioned that they accepted their situation because they know that they cannot fix them.

Some children mentioned they depend on their friends or people close to them to get an escape from tension they were suffering from.

Secondary Analysis

A separation or divorce is a highly stressful and emotional experience for everyone involved, but children often feel that their whole world has turned upside down. At any age, it can be traumatic to witness the dissolution of your parents' marriage and the breakup of the family. Kids may feel shocked, uncertain, or angry. Some may even feel guilty, blaming themselves for the problems at home. Divorce is never a seamless process and, inevitably, such a transitional time does not happen without some measure of grief and hardship. But you can dramatically reduce your children's pain by making their well-being your top priority.

Patience, reassurance, and listening ear can minimize tension as your children learn to cope with unfamiliar circumstances. By providing routines your kids can rely on, you remind them that they can count on you for stability, structure, and care. And by maintaining a working relationship with your ex, you can help your kids avoid the stress and anguish that comes with watching parents in conflict. With your support, your kids can not only successfully navigate this unsettling time, but even emerge from it feeling loved, confident, and strong—and even with a closer bond to both parents.

Conclusions

Parents and children individually and collectively must go through daily emotional challenges and deal with them in a mature way.

Society should be empathetic towards single parent families.

Future Implications

Children living with single parents faced many problems in their day-to-day life.

Society thinks that they have freedom but most of them are introverted because their parents do not have enough time to spend with their child.

Single parents they tried to maintain routine e.g. working, jobs, other family functions, etc.

Parents started to look after themselves, take good care of their kids as well.

Society should be empathetic towards single parent families.

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Camera Obscura:

An Analysis of a Caste Narrative⁹

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ABSTRACT

India is a country with a history of caste discrimination, and this is one of the world's longest surviving social structural hierarchies. This paper aims to find more effective ways to improve lives of marginalized people and provide them tools to tackle the caste discrimination and prejudices. The subjectivity of narratives offers a window into personal experience of daily life, thus complementing the experimental method (Baumeister, Votman, & Stillwell, 1993).

Objectives-

- Understanding subtle forms of discrimination and hierarchy in the society.
- Outlining the effective strategies by which people have overcome discrimination.
- Analyzing the strategies that motivated marginalized groups for growth and development.

For methodology, a qualitative secondary data analysis will be done of narratives about caste discrimination. The paper will contextualize an article from '*What Babasaheb Ambedkar Means to Me*' and a Documentary '*Modikhanyachya Don Goshti*' (Two Tales of Modikhana) by Gouri Patwardhan.

It analyses personalized life narrative of 'Pushpa and Sudhir Waghmare' to understand significant turning points in their life and answers the questions - 'How did they work against discrimination?' and 'How did they lead their community to live the ideology of their leader through individual and collective efforts?'

⁹ This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review

Analysis of autobiographical life stories provide the opportunity to explicitly address temporality and the individual's reconstruction of developmental processes and are linked closely with the study of narrative identity.

The narrative chosen for an analysis may be ridden by systematic biases and may slip into the present study. Even then, it is important to document and analyze them.

Introduction

Caste is the world's longest surviving social hierarchy. Throughout Indian society, inequality expresses itself through that notorious social system which is called the "caste system". Usually when referring to the various divisions of people within Hinduism, foreigners, and Indians familiar with English use the word caste. The word 'caste' is of Latin origin. 'castus' (the English words 'chaste and chastity' come from this term) in Latin stands for 'pure-something not mixed'. The word seems to have been used in the sense of race by the Spaniards and to have been applied to India by the Portuguese in the middle of the fifteenth century. Through this word, the early Portuguese settlers in

India used to describe the different sections of the Hindu community which were divided into distinct 'castas' of greater or less dignity and blood purity. It seems that a Portuguese gentleman named Garcia de Orta was the first to use this word. In English, the word 'cast' in the sense of race appears in 1555. The English word 'caste' is used to denote both varna and jati. (The Brahminical view of caste by Berreman and Gerald D in Contributions to Indian sociology 5: 16-23)

Every country has groups of "haves" and "have-nots" but what makes the caste system so damning is that one can never move or escape from one group or caste to another as one is locked into a caste for life.

This centuries old ingrained system makes it almost impossible for members of the lowest castes or out castes to rise above their suppressed status, so they remain in uneducated squalor. The lowest and out castes are not culturally allowed to better their lot in life.

As it came to be popularly understood by the early twentieth century, there was something simple and straightforward about the Indian caste system. The Orientalists and colonial administrators had worked out its ethnographic details and theories quite well. In fact, the idea of Scheduled Castes (SCs) or Depressed Classes' had also been worked out by the colonial rulers. According to

this understanding, caste derived its legitimacy from classical Hindu scriptures. The framework of the varna hierarchy, as worked out so meticulously by Manu, was the beginning and the ultimate explanation of the caste system. Though the varna theory did not provide any specific position to the 'untouchables' in the Hindu rankings of social grouping, they could easily be accommodated at the bottom of the caste hierarchy, outside the varna system, by using the larger logic of the system. (156, CASTE 'N POLITICS BY SURINDER JODHKA, OXFORD COMPANION TO POLITICS IN INDIA).

Caste was not merely an institution that characterized the structure of social stratification; it represented the core of India. It was both an institution and an ideology. Institutionally, 'caste' provided a framework for arranging and organizing social groups in terms of their statuses and positions in the social and economic system. As an ideology, caste was a system of values and ideas that legitimized and reinforced the existing structures of social inequality. Caste was an epitome of the traditional society, a 'closed system' where generation after generation of individuals did similar kinds of work and lived similar kinds of lives. (156, CASTE 'N POLITICS BY SURINDER JODHKA, OXFORD COMPANION TO POLITICS IN INDIA).

Caste is a major subject matter in contemporary Indian political thinking. It has extinguished human dignity. It is a capital of elites that helps them in holding control over other people. Though affirmative actions have given freedom to marginalized people but exclusion from social and cultural programs persists.

This study outlines the discriminatory practices and tries to provide ways to tackle them.

RATIONALE

In the 21st century, a large part of India remains marginalized because of caste, where opportunities of advancing, of breaking away from menial chores and of coming up in society are denied repeatedly.

The sheer inhumanity of exclusion is still deeply embedded within our society, be it at education, jobs, housing, or in context of the freedom to exercise religious beliefs.

We believed and were told that the caste system does not exist anymore and is buried to death in today's world from childhood when we learnt about reformist movements in India. Students are led to believe that the caste system existed in the Indian Subcontinent ages ago but that it has vanished in independent, modern, and democratic India.

But the fact states a different picture. From September 2015 to June 2019, 621 cases of crime were observed by Amnesty International which were fuelled by caste issues. (Halt the Hate Website).

The role and significance of caste is changing in today's India. The rationale behind choosing this topic was to understand the severity of the caste system that people ignore knowingly or unknowingly. The feeling of understanding of caste issues, developed by insights from my teacher in social psychology class made me think about it and was one of the reasons behind choosing this topic.

OBJECTIVES

- Understanding subtle forms of discrimination and hierarchy in the society.
- Outlining the effective strategies by which people have overcome discrimination.
- Analyzing the strategies that motivated marginalized groups for growth and development.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Ants Amongst Elephants by Sujatha Gidla.

The book is an account of Gidla's family, from the life of her grandparents to her own. It gives readers an unsettling and visceral understanding of how discrimination, segregation and stereotypes have endured throughout the second half of the 20th century and today. "In Indian villages and towns, everyone knows everyone else. Each caste has its own special role and its own place to live. The Brahmins (who perform priestly functions), the potters, the blacksmiths, the carpenters, the washer people and so on — they each have their own separate place to live within the village. The untouchables, whose special role — whose hereditary duty — is to labor in the fields of others or to do other work that Hindu society considers filthy, are not allowed to live in the village at all. They must live outside the boundaries of the village proper. They are not allowed to enter temples. Not allowed to come near sources of drinking water used by other castes. Not allowed to eat sitting next to a caste Hindu or to use the same utensils.", Gidla writes, showing the segregation faced by marginalized communities daily.

2. Caste Matters by Suraj Yengde.

In this book, Suraj Yengde, a first-generation Dalit scholar educated across continents, challenges deep-seated beliefs about caste and unpacks its many layers. He describes his experiences of growing up in a Dalit basti, the multiple humiliations suffered by Dalits daily, and their incredible resilience enabled by love and humour. While explaining the virus of the caste system, Yengde says, “Caste as a social construct is a deceptive substance, known for its elemental capacity to digress from its primary motive of existence that governs this oldest system of human oppression, subjugation and degradation. Originated in the Hindu social order, it has infiltrated all faiths on the Indian subcontinent. As old as the order of Indic civilization, the phenomenon of controlling human capacity, creativity and labour has been core to its ideological performance secured by strict legal order. Caste in India is an absolute sanction – of the dominant class over the dominated...”

Numerous examples are all over the book stating the physical and psychological violence faced by marginalized communities. Suraj Yengde's book is a theoretically sophisticated, anthropologically interesting, historically wide ranging and morally compelling reflection on caste in India.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this paper is qualitative secondary data analysis of narratives about caste discrimination. The paper analyses an article from the book *'What Babasaheb Ambedkar Means to Me'*, a Documentary *'Modikhanyachya Don Goshti'* (Two Tales of Modikhana) by Gouri Patwardhan. Various articles written by prominent authors were reviewed for the study.

DATA ANALYSIS

A Tribute to my teachers (Article) and 'Modikhanyachya Don Goshti' (Documentary) by Gauri Patwardhan.

In the article 'A Tribute to my teachers' from the book 'What Babasaheb Ambedkar means to me', Gauri Patwardhan talks about her work as a filmmaker working on the film of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. During the making of the film, Patwardhan visited 'Modikhana', a predominantly Dalit

Neighbourhood and centre of Dalit movement in Pune to meet Waghmare Family. Patwardhan, until that day, believed that she had no caste and never encountered any instance where she needed to mention her caste. She admits that she faced the harsh reality of caste that day and suddenly got hit by the reality that everyone around her had caste and how it determined their relationship with others. Her idea of individuality was cracked, and she suddenly became aware of the fact that filmmakers and artists around her were upper caste people, mostly. In this article she talks about Sudhir and Pushpa Waghmare who constantly emphasized Dr. Ambedkar's teachings on people.

“...when I began working on Modikhanyachya Don Goshti (Two tales of Modikhana) that I really began to grasp Dr Ambedkar's political ideology and its truly revolutionary dimensions.”, says Patwardhan. She, further narrating her experience tells us, “Through daily visits to Modikhana and conversations with Sudhir Waghmare and his family over a period of a year and through reading Dalit autobiographies and works on and by Dr Ambedkar, I could see, slowly, how the great leader had shaken and motivated his people into challenging the caste system and brought about a revolution.” She passionately believes that though she had read Ambedkar before, it was only through her regular visits to Modikhana that helped her understand the greatness of Dr. Ambedkar.

The article contains daily life discriminatory experiences and abuses faced by Dalit people.

In one such instance, Patwardhan quotes Sudhir Waghmare, “Our people were denied food and water, their livelihood taken away, and in some places, women were paraded naked... As they declared bahiskar (boycott) on us.”

Patwardhan feels that Ambedkar’s ideology is a lived one and cannot be separated from his people.

The article talks about the effective strategies marginalized people used or use to resist the abuse they face. People have preserved the ideology of Dr. Ambedkar through individual and collective efforts, through the imagery of him they created in poetry, songs, performance and literature and the practice of Dhamma, through many scholarly works they published on him and by him.

While exploring this world, Patwardhan says, “it seems logical that this should escape my upper caste world and community of elite intellectuals, artists, writers, journalists, poets and filmmakers living as we do in a segregated world. It is as if we are all sitting in 'Camera Obscura,' that dark room in which the world is projected upside down through a hole. It is through here that we would like to control the world outside, weave our narratives of justice and equality that hide our

privileges and yet be its protagonist to perpetuate the Brahmanical power, while claiming the opposite.”

She feels that the ideology of Ambedkar cannot be understood without understanding his people.

RESULT

From various narratives of Dalit scholars and people of India, it is harsh reality that even decades after Independence, the caste mentality of Indian people has not vanished completely, though the Constitution asks for it. Caste is still being used to oppress Bahujans by those who claim to have divinity over other people given by religion. People of India, mainly upper caste people, are in denial mode and think that caste repression and untouchability has completely disappeared, which is not the case.

Upper caste people need to introspect themselves. It is need of time to recognize the discrimination. They should question their privileges.

But despite privileged being favoured all over, Buddha’s message of 'Atta Deepo Bhava' – ‘Be your own light’ has become a way of resilience for marginalized people.

CONCLUSION

From this study, we can understand the mental and physical abuse marginalized people go through throughout their life daily. Since caste is embedded in the mentality of Indian people, people need to be made aware of the sad reality of the caste system. Various people are trying to make people aware of the traumas faced by marginalized people. However, society can change its attitude towards marginalized sections by Overcoming caste blindness and seeing the real picture.

In such an evolutionary imagining of India, caste is expected to disappear with the unfolding of the processes of industrialization, urbanization, and modernization. Politics has no place in such an understanding of caste or processes of social change. Even when mainstream anthropologists of this genre talked about social inequality and untouchability, it was rarely described as being an oppressive system, with an agency that enforced codes of behaviour and reproduced regimes of subordination and domination. (JODHKA)

This paper aims to contribute a little to eradicate the oppressive caste system by throwing light on some narratives about caste.

It seeks the hope that everyone should understand and acknowledge basic human rights of others and should not label them with derogatory titles.

Though caste system is the longest surviving social hierarchy of India, it is time to vanish it out clearly and permanently.

Limitations

This is a qualitative study and thus has individual opinions and thought process about the topic.

It may be ridden with systematic biases, even though it is important to study it.

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Helping the Helpers: A study of the work experiences and mental well-being of CBO workers¹⁰

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ABSTRACT

The community-based organizations and NGOs play an important role in taking care of mental health of the underprivileged. The employees of such organizations must deal with problems ranging from mild to severe. Thus, there is a high need of self-efficacy required in their work to create ways to help others as well as keep one's own mental health in place. The study of vicarious traumatization has earlier referred to harmful changes that occur in professionals' views of themselves and the world, because of exposure to the traumatic experience of their client (McCann and Pearlman).

The purpose of this study is to record work experiences of the field workers of organizations working in community mental health. It also tries to identify motivational factors that encourage them to carry on their work of helping others and investigate the effects of their socio-economic background in their work. The research study aims to analyze the causes of guilt distress and psychological problems after their interaction with underprivileged groups.

The methodology to be followed while conducting this research will include:

- Primary data collection as semi-structured interviews of few employees from NGOs/CBOs in Pune.
- Secondary data analysis of job satisfaction indexes available from other similar studies.

The expected results will provide insight about challenges of mental health workers and suggest ways to improve their work experience.

This research will lead to an emphasis upon further research in reducing negative effects on mental health of these workers and create innovative methods to serve underprivileged communities.

¹⁰ **This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review**

Keywords: Community Based Organizations, Motivation, Mental health, Distress, Underprivileged.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health is a major concern worldwide and India is not far behind in sharing this concern. Progress in mental health service delivery has been slow in most low- and middle-income countries. The barriers include the existing public-health priorities and its influence on funding; challenges in delivery of mental health care in primary-care settings; the low numbers of those trained in mental health care; and the lack of mental health perspective in public health leadership.

In India, the government launched the National Mental Health Program (NMHP) in 1982, keeping in view the heavy burden of mental illness in the community, and the absolute inadequacy of mental health care infrastructure in the country to deal with it.

Apart from the government, the community-based organizations have played a major role in reaching out to the people to provide mental health care facilities in the South Asian countries. They have been working with those people who could not access the government and private sector programs and were left behind in the queue.

Community based organizations (CBOs) are institutions, recognized by governments as non-profit or welfare oriented, which play a key role as advocates, service providers, activists, and researchers on a range of issues pertaining to human and social development. Historically, CBOs have played a critical role in promoting and facilitating health and educational activities in India. Prior to independence, religious bodies set up several educational institutions, health facilities and other charities. These movements were often led by charismatic individuals, driven by a sense of missionary zeal. Many CBO's were born in response to major disasters and crises with the aim of providing emergency relief and rehabilitation. Since independence, there has been a meteoric rise in the profile, breadth, and range of CBOs in the country. (Thara and Patel,2003)

The field workers employed in the Community Based Organizations are trained by mental health professionals and devise target groups specific methods to help the underprivileged. Their services range from spreading awareness about mental health, reducing stigma related to people suffering from mental disorders, prevention of such disorders, guidelines to be followed by families in dealing with family members who are patients and encouraging more and more individuals to reach out to seek professional help when in need.

But research has indicated that the mental health of the employees of Community Based Organizations themselves, sometimes get affected while equipping others in dealing with their problems.

This research study aims to analyze the causes of guilt distress and psychological issues after their interaction with the underprivileged groups who are facing different kinds of problems. The purpose of this study is also to record work experiences of the field workers of organizations working in community mental health. It tries to identify motivational factors that encourage them to carry on their work of helping others and investigate effects of their socio-economic background in their work.

The previous research conducted around this subject matter has indicated that there remains a chance of vicarious traumatization in mental health workers while on the field, among the groups who are deprived of proper living conditions, living in a state of poverty, going through hard times in life, suffering from mental disorders or in a socially deprived condition.

The research study has been taken into work to shift the spotlight from the care-receiver to the caregivers. It is equally important to take care of the mental health of the employees of the CBOs as it is of their clients. It has been observed through the statistics that not many people are willing to take up the mental health issues of the underprivileged, rather most prefer to work through private facilities. So, it was felt necessary to understand the motivational factors that drive the employees of such organizations to take up such jobs. This research study will try to see the implications of their work experienced into their personal lives as well.

RATIONALE

The topic for research was chosen so as to take into consideration a less researched topic about the community-based organizations.

These CBOs play a major role throughout India and mostly in the low-income countries where mental healthcare is not easily accessible for all.

The individuals have gone through traumatic experiences on the field. The mental health workers are prone to various mental challenges as they remain in contact with the poor and downtrodden social classes with tragic experiences.

The research paper throws light on the consequences of various issues of people handled by the field workers of CBOs on them individually.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Rising mental health issues among humanitarian workers- France 24 (13.05.2018)

According to an article published on the website of France 24, a French media agency, mental health issues among humanitarian workers are worryingly high. The various reasons that were listed as behind these consequences were inadequate training in self-care and lack of structure and support from the organizations they are working for. The statements mentioned by the experts and the workers were as follows:

McDonald says when he ‘burned out’ and had to be prescribed medication, it was not just because of what he had experienced in Syria, but also the “horribly bad management”.

Dr Idit Albert, a clinical psychologist specializing in anxiety disorders and trauma, believes that one of the problems is the stigma of mental health in this sector. She points out that, “you wouldn’t send firemen into a fire without the right equipment or training, it’s like in any other profession of care; we’re not talking about providing people with lavish lifestyles but what they need to be able to carry out their work, cope with the situations and be able to resume their lives when they return home.”

“Mandatory breaks became an actual thing. People were struggling to look after themselves because their focus was outwards, but when people burnout, they can become destructive, which can affect those in their care.” This feeling of compassion is what drives aid workers and volunteers, but if the worker becomes unbalanced, they can be a danger to themselves and those they are trying to help. It can even lead to “compassion fatigue”, where even the most compassionate can “lose sight of their end goals or become cynical and detached”, Dr Albert explains.

2. Aid workers speak out about mental health: 'I was afraid they would think I couldn't handle it': The Guardian (Holly Young, 23 Nov 2015)

In a Guardian survey of aid workers, 79% said they had experienced a mental health issue and 93% said these were work-related.

When asked, “Have you personally experienced or been diagnosed with any of the following during your time working in the sector?”; this is the response they got.

51 people reported that they had suffered from anxiety, 44 reported to suffer from depression, 29 had gone through PTSD, 22 people reported having Panic attacks, 10 had suffered from alcoholism and 7 from eating disorders. 11 said they suffered from other mental disorders.

One of the aid workers said that while she was going through PTSD, the organization that she worked for handled it impeccably, both informally and formally.

Some years ago, when she went through several symptoms clearly demonstrating PTSD, then the organization that she worked for tried to make her accept blame for the things rather than offer support. They were clearly trying to cover up negligence and accused of insubordination and immaturity.

Another worker who had gone through issues such as depression, anxiety, sleep disorder said that once she left the organization it was hard to get care. Meaningful action on this issue did not happen until it became mandatory for donors to fund NGOs to provide this follow up care as a standard part of their budgets and HR policies.

METHODOLOGY

The present study uses a mixed method of research in the form of primary data collection through semi- structured interviews and a qualitative analysis of previous research done around the subject matter of this study.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS:

The use of the term Community Based Organizations as used in this study is not limited to only a certain type of institutions working for the underprivileged sections of society but a range of fields such as education, health, mental health and women empowerment.

Primary data analysis of semi structured interviews of 2 professionals who work in the reputed CBOs in the Pune City was done to get a first-hand narrative of the real picture of the persons' mental health, difficulties, work motivation and challenges who constantly work for the betterment of others.

A total of 9 questions were asked which are stated as follows:

- 1) How did you start working in this organization and how long have you been working here?
- 2) What is your motivation behind working in this field and do you have any other work experience of the similar kind?
- 3) Can you describe your nature of work here?
- 4) What do you feel about your job?
- 5) What effects does this job have on you as a person and on your personal life?
- 6) Have there been any incidents on the job which affected your mental health in any form?
- 7) Working with underprivileged people from the community, how do you see yourself when you witness their problems?
- 8) What measures do you adapt to take care of your mental health?
- 9) As an organization, what steps are taken here to help its employees and professionals to take care of their own mental health?

The first interviewee is Mrs. Ankita Yadav, who works as the Associate Project Director at the Doorstep School, Pune. The DSS, also known as "The Society for Doorstep Schools" provides education and support to the children from the marginalized sections of the society such as pavement dwellers, slum dwellers, construction site families and many other underprivileged families.

The second interviewee is a professional from a reputed CBO from Pune who did not want his personal identity and that of his organization to be addressed in this research study.

Their responses to the above listed questions have been recorded as under:

The first interviewee started working with her organization 9 years ago while the other one started working about 10 years ago. Mrs. Yadav works as an Associate Project Director and her work

profile includes managing projects, communicating with prospective funders and organizers. Her previous work experience included working for a community-based research organization. The other respondent works as the head of counselling especially for the persons affected by CMDs and SMDs and handles the documentation.

When asked about how they feel about their work, the first respondent said that it keeps her “connected to ground reality”. She gets to deal with a spectrum of people and their families. She feels good that her MSW degree is put to work. The second respondent said that such work is very important to develop the understanding about mental health among those who do not have access to any paid professional help and have various stigmas related to getting treated for mental health issues along with physical health related problems.

Both the respondents said that a sense of internal satisfaction is the chief motivating factor behind taking the decision to work in a Community Based Organization. Working with communities and seeing their dynamics and understanding the issues make her feel humble as was shared by Mrs. Yadav.

The second interviewee said that his job had increased the level of empathy and a sense of self-worth was developed by him. Both the professionals said that their work had often affected their personal lives as the work hours are not fixed and the nature of field work did not give them enough time to spare with their families. The second interviewee also said that he does not have an idea when an emergency will arise with one of his organizational clients and he had to run leaving whatever he had at that very moment. He also shared an instance when one of his clients had suicidal thoughts and called him to inform that he was committing suicide. The person had to call his colleagues at the nearest center and make sure to reach the client’s place in a noticeably short span of time.

When asked about the effects of their nature of work on their own mental health the first interviewee said that she feels exhausted and upset sometimes as their field requires a high patience level and working with human beings is unpredictable. The second professional said that while his work makes him happy as his skills are put to use for social good but he has to also go through insomnia and distress as a result of exhaustion or the events faced by him while in the field. Many times, he had to go through traumatic experiences such as visiting families whose family members were murdered or going to the clients who refused to come to an organizational setup for therapy and would rather prefer being in their own house.

Both the professionals responded positively when asked whether any measures had been taken by their respective organizations to take care of their employees' mental health. The Doorstep School conducted REBT sessions for its workers to relieve them of stress. The other Community Based Organization had developed some of the guidelines for its employees such as to perform self-care activities before and after the work hours and also had kept channels open for communication when any of them felt like seeking help for themselves.

SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of previous research conducted on the subject matter of work motivation and the work stress of the CBO employees has been done from countries such as the USA and Poland.

1. The research published in *journal of traumatic stress, 1990* conducted by McCann and Pearlman titled **Vicarious Traumatization: A framework for understanding the psychological effects of working with victims** discusses therapist's reactions to clients' traumatic material.

The term Vicarious trauma (Pearlman and Saakvitne,1995) sometimes also called compassion fatigue, is the latest term that describes a phenomenon generally associated with the "cost of caring" for others. Other terms for vicarious traumatization are secondary traumatic stress (Stemm 1995) and secondary victimization (Figley,1982) It is believed that counsellors working with trauma survivors experience vicarious trauma because of the work they do. It is the emotional residue of exposure that counsellors have from working with people as they are hearing their stories and become witnesses to their pain and fear.

It is important not to confuse vicarious trauma with burnout. Burnout is generally something that happens over time, and as it builds up a change, such as time off or a new and sometimes different job, can take care of burnout or improve it. Vicarious trauma, however, is a state of tension and preoccupation of the stories/trauma experiences described by clients. This tension and preoccupation might be experienced by counselors in several ways.

The results indicated that people working with NGOs who dealt with communities living in the disaster ridden areas or suffered from mental disorders experienced high levels of burnout and a sense of vicarious traumatization. Their personal daily life routines were affected deeply as a sense of privilege prevented them from using the items that were considered luxurious according to them.

2. Nature of NGO volunteers' and employees' motivation, implications, and recommendations for managerial staff (Joanne Schmidt, 2016)

The findings from this research study indicated that the prime motivational factors for those who worked in the NGOs were creative approach to tasks that enables development, a sense of usefulness ensuing from pursuit of social objectives, possibility of self-fulfillment. For people working in such setups, motivation is not linked with financial rewards but relates to “something more”. This additional motivator is most frequently the need to engage in activities defined in the ethical or social utility terms.

Others types of factors that pushed the employees of the NGOs were- need for security; wish to achieve – through work – social values unrelated to the work itself, e.g. esteem among people; pursuit of intrinsic satisfaction resulting from a specific role (self-fulfillment at work, self-acceptance); pursuit of social satisfaction resulting from membership of various informal groups in the workplace; desire to pursue social goals.

The research results show that the level of satisfaction of those involved in NGO activities is high. In fact, in the surveyed organizations there were no people who were dissatisfied with their job or other activities in the organization.

RESULTS

The present research has successfully analyzed the causes of guilt distress and psychological issues faced by mental health professionals working with deprived communities through CBOs and identified the motivational factors that derive them to take on this challenging occupation. The psychological issues, range from depression and anxiety to PTSD and severe panic attacks and continue to trouble aid workers.

The causes of distress were identified as burnout, lack of self-care and lack of support from their organizations to address the said problems. Furthermore, it was found that the employees of the organizations were not equipped with necessary skills to cope and detox from their experiences with clients and resume their personal lives.

Through the secondary data analysis, it was found that the employees of such organizations are at the risk of developing Vicarious Traumatization. Their personal daily life routines can be affected deeply as a sense of privilege prevents them from using the items that were considered luxurious according to them.

The most common form of motivation can be identified as a sense of being connected to ground reality along with a sense of being useful for society in some way. The feeling of self fulfilment encourages these people to take the tough job of providing mental health care and share the experiences of people living in the communities.

The problems faced by the employees of the CBOs can vary from little work stress due to long working hours to insomnia and semi-permanent disturbance of their state of mind. These points were concluded from the interviews given by the two CBO workers from Pune.

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, it can be said that there is a high need of organizational reforms in the training of CBO employees who work closely with people and their problems. The focus of such organizations can be shifted a little from the 'client centric' to 'human centric' so that their employees also find a place in the 'care' policies adopted by them.

Though it has been found in many previous studies that the motivation of the people who decide to take such jobs are intrinsic in nature, there is a need to engage them in extrinsic factors provided by their organizations. This may help them to take more interest in their work and not get completely detached from themselves while neglecting themselves to keep focus outwards.

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A Happy India? Of problems, progress, and possibilities¹¹

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ABSTRACT

This research paper attempts to analyze the prerequisites needed to achieve a functional mental health system. With a goal of attainable mental wellbeing in mind, there is a need to consider social, cultural, political, and economic issues that need to be stabilized. For example, a developed country like Denmark that has reached a level of steadiness in its PEST (political, economic, sociocultural, and technological) environment factors so that the government can focus on the mental wellbeing of the people. In India, where the population is still a huge obstacle that needs effective reforms, it is a tremendous challenge to make eunoia deliverable to people from every socioeconomic stratum. According to the Mental Health ATLAS 2019 (a WHO member state profile), there are only 2 mental health workers per 100,000 of the population. “The World Data Lab anticipates that due to methodological adjustments, the level of extreme poverty in India which was 50 million people has come down to 40 million, which is less than 4% of the population”, which is still a gargantuan figure. This again poses a hindrance because according to WHO statistics, the total mental health expenditure per person is a mere 4 INR.

For 50 million people who struggle to satisfy their physical needs of food, clothing and shelter, the concept of ‘being mentally healthy’ is a faraway notion. The state of mind of the residents of a country depends on many determinants like population, poverty, economic and political stability, national security, literacy, social norms and structure, freedom, social support, standard of living etc.

The objective of this study is to compare the mental health policy of India to that of a country like Denmark, that has a fully functioning mental health model that boasts of having records of almost every resident that has sought help at some point in their life since 1969. It aims to highlight

¹¹ **This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review**

cultural differences and the varied perspectives of mental health between India and Denmark; and attempt to draw an inspiration that may aid praxis of a beneficial wellbeing policy.

INTRODUCTION

Making mental health accessible is a goal that can be achieved after overcoming many hurdles. Mental Health is the top rung of a ladder that requires the passage of countless prerequisites such as the controllability of the population, education of the masses, availability of skilled professionals, security, a stable government and policies, and an inclusive healthcare system. There are countless studies that establish a strong relation between mental health and the standard of living in a country. For example, a study done in Great Britain on British, Scottish, and Welsh participants in 1998 showed an association of common mental health disorders with the poor conditions of living including low household income and not saving from income. Therefore, it is important to understand the layers of mental health and its delivery to be able to reach as many people as possible.

OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this research is to highlight the struggles India faces in the process of making mental health deliverable. The goal of this paper is to expand on the various factors that determine the mental health of a citizen and the larger population of India. It will establish the variants between urban and rural India, the difference in culture, society and the type of sustaining economy that is relied upon in both regions that affects mental health. Additionally, this paper attempts to understand the fully functional mental model of Denmark that has records of in-house psychiatric and outhouse patients dating back to 1969; and whether it can serve as an inspiration for policy makers in India.

RATIONALE

The significance of this study is to delve into the layers of social strata in urban and rural India; and establish the major problems that exist as roadblocks in the deliverance of mental health.

Rural residents have problems that are more sustenance based and face day to day struggles like improper sanitation, lack of education, lack of employment, poverty, societal pressures, lack of awareness and an all-round low standard of living. This paper is useful for policy makers to take the necessary steps to cater to the diverse population of India. It intends to present urban problems as well and propose solutions; it focuses on issues like population, economic and political stability, national security, and environmental conditions that contribute to a citizen's mental wellbeing.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many studies were found that were supportive of the interrelation between mental health and material standard of living, poverty, socioeconomic status, unemployment, and poor housing.

“Material standard of living, social class, and the prevalence of the common mental disorders in Great Britain” is a study conducted by S.Weich and G.Lewis in 1998 that stated, “The common mental disorders were significantly associated with poor material standard of living, including low household income and not saving from income, after adjusting for occupational social class and other potential confounders. An independent association was also found with occupational social class of the head of household among women, but not men, after adjusting for material standard of living. Like mortality and physical morbidity, common mental disorders are associated with a poor material standard of living, independent of occupational social class. These findings support the view that recent widening of inequalities in material standards of living in the United Kingdom pose a substantial threat to health.” This study clearly states the correlation between poor material standard of living, low household income and social class, and can be applied to the Indian context as well, where in low income households such as those of domestic workers’, it is very often observed that the husband is unemployed due to lack of jobs and often resorts to behaviours of alcoholism and domestic violence. In cases like these, the domestic worker is the breadwinner of the family, withstanding the physical toll of working all day, the financial burden and the abuse of a spouse. This often results in an abusive environment for even the children for whom it can be very damaging. Additionally, because of a singular working member in the family, there are often never any savings that take place therefore not allowing an improvement in the standard of living.

“Poverty and mental health: A review to inform the Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s Anti-Poverty Strategy. London: Mental Health Foundation” is a review by Iris Elliott, PhD in 2016 and it states,

“The review begins by considering the relationship between poverty and mental health and proposes a conceptual framework for addressing this. Mental health is a universal asset that we all share. Good mental health supports us all to reach our potential, individually and collectively. The Mental Health Foundation has argued that mental health is a mediating factor between economic and social conditions. Poor mental health experienced by individuals is a significant cause of wider social and health problems, including low levels of education achievement and work productivity, poor community cohesion, high levels of physical ill health, premature mortality, violence, and relationship breakdown. Poverty’s dynamic character means that the risk of experiencing mental health exists for more people that are in poverty. This underlines the importance of preventing poverty as well as progressing routes out of it.” It also emphasizes, “Individuals’, families’, communities’ and nations’ mental health is determined by a wide range of socio-economic factors (referred to as ‘social determinants’), which both influence health status and the physical, social and personal resources available for dealing with environmental stressors, satisfying needs and realizing potential. The social determinants of mental health are not limited to individual attributes (emotions, thoughts, behaviours and interactions with others), but also include social, cultural, economic, political and environmental factors such as living standards, working conditions, social protection and community social supports.” This review makes especially important points in that mental health is not just dependent on an individual’s psychological characteristics but is also hugely impacted by their environments. For example, a person who lives in a peaceful country, earns a sufficient amount of money, lives in a clean home with enough space and food is much more likely to be mentally well than someone who lives in a country that has high political tensions, instability and insecurity, is unemployed and doesn’t have an adequate home. The stress that the latter is constantly under makes them much more susceptible to mental disorders, and there is little hope for treatment.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed for this study is Secondary Data Analysis of already existing research, news articles, journal and magazine articles, surveys, technical reports, organizational records, book excerpts and other such data to ratify the interwoven nature of determinants like population,

the economy, politics, security, stability, social climate and overall environment with relation to the mental health of the People.

An effort will be made to discern the prevailing initiatives taken by the government to tackle common mental health disorders (CMDs) that citizens face; their objectives, goals and progress will also be highlighted.

Problems of urban and rural populations will be distinguished from each other and solutions shall be suggested. Intersectionality is a major theme of this study. An attempt will be made to explain the multi-layered identity of an Indian citizen and its dynamic with mental health and stigma.

Examination of the mental health status of India on a global level will be done; a comparison between India and Denmark shall be stated to call attention to the standard that can be achieved in terms of a functioning mental health system. Differences between the two countries will also be stressed.

Lastly, the paper shall take a critical look at practices that do not accommodate the strata of diversity that is embedded into many countries of the “Global South” and the African-Asian Country Mental Health Gap.

SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

I. Rural Mental Health

The rural population of India faces problems that stem from the want of necessities. These needs are those of proper nutrition, shelter, clean water, security, financial security, education, and employment. The presence or absence of these resources impacts mental health a great deal. It is very important to understand the interlinking of these factors to the social structures of caste, class and gender. For example, people belonging to a certain caste are restricted to certain areas of work that they must do because the caste dictates so. Sometimes, people who are from a lower caste are forced to do menial, degrading work that does not pay very much and takes a dig at their self-image and self-esteem. The consequence of this segregation of society in this manner has a double effect: they don't earn very much so there is little scope of an improvement in lifestyle, opportunities of learning for the young of the household and mentally, there is a feeling of being looked down upon by the “upper castes”, alienation and isolation in the society. This discrimination is a huge barrier in the way of mental health achievement. “Among several equalities offered to deprived castes, educational equality is enshrined in the constitution of free

India. However, spread of education among the deprived castes has remained very slow due to their poverty and ignorance, especially during the first 3-4 decades.^{9,10} In the initial years, high dropout rate from the schools was observed among deprived caste students while later when these students started making their presence felt in the educational institutions in ever increasing number, they became the source of irritation, heart-burn and intercommunity tension.¹¹ Capacity to respond to and benefit from education depends upon child's intellect, language and emotional maturity. Since the children from the traditionally deprived communities lack a role model to follow in education, they carry low aspiration for money, material things and occupational status. It is observed that they have exceptionally low self-concept, low self-esteem, and lower need to achieve. They have overwhelming concern for immediate needs for sustenance with a static level of aspirations. They are extremely cautious and avoid taking risks where the possibility of failure is there. They are generally vague, fantasy oriented in their future planning, comparatively older and from illiterate parents.¹² These features are common in the first-generation children. India's deprived caste illiterate parents engaged in repugnant and defiling occupations breed emotionally fewer stable children. Due to lack of meaningful interaction in early childhood, they have poor verbal language expression and lack of stimulation makes their intellect sluggish. Destined for low achievement because of lack of qualitative interaction and inadequate development of cognitive and linguistic skills, they lag behind in their scholastic achievements. They have to go a long way to prove that education could bring a desirable change in their psycho-social status." This is an excerpt from DELHI PSYCHIATRY JOURNAL, 2007 by Ram Chander Jiloha.

Another especially important factor in rural India is the lack of anonymity in society that opens people who are experiencing mental disturbances and choose to seek help, to ridicule from others due to negative bias and stigma. A practice of calling people with mental disorders, "crazy", "loony" discourage those who need help from seeking it. "The entrenched stigma of mental illness can create barriers to support. People with mental illness can be isolated, as Professor Kenny explains. 'In our interviews people spoke about being called a "monster" or having teenagers throw stones at their house. They're picked on at the supermarket because they wander around talking to themselves.' People caring for family members with mental illness also felt disconnected. 'I'll never forget the woman who told us: "If my daughter had cancer, the whole community would be around with casseroles. They would bring flowers and support. But because she is got a serious mental illness, people don't know what to say. They do not know what to do, so they stay away.'" Professor Kenny believes it is a lack of understanding that creates stigma. 'People don't mean to be cruel or horrible. In many ways, I think it is about the fear we have around any group that's

different. You can understand why some people might be terrified.” In Indian society, sufferers of mental illness are often called names like “paagal”, “mental”, or “sanki” which are demeaning words and may worsen conditions for them.

Poverty is one of the most significant social determinants of health and mental health, intersecting with all other determinants, including education, local social and community conditions, race/ethnicity, gender, immigration status, health and access to health care, neighbourhood factors, and the built environment (e.g., homes, buildings, streets, parks infrastructure). The mental health effects of poverty are wide ranging and reach across the lifespan. Poverty in childhood is associated with lower school achievement; worse cognitive, behavioural, and attention-related outcomes; higher rates of delinquency, depressive and anxiety disorders; and higher rates of almost every psychiatric disorder in adulthood. Poverty in adulthood is linked to depressive disorders, anxiety disorders, psychological distress, and suicide. Poverty affects mental health through an array of social and biological mechanisms acting at multiple levels, including individuals, families, local communities, and nations. Individual-level mediators in the relationship between poverty and mental health include financial stress, chronic and acute stressful life events exposure, hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis changes, other brain circuit changes (e.g., language processing, executive functioning), poor prenatal health and birth outcomes, inadequate nutrition, and toxin exposure (e.g., lead). Family-level mediators include parental relationship stress, parental psychopathology (especially depression), low parental warmth or investment, hostile and inconsistent parenting, low-stimulation home environments, and child abuse and neglect.

“In a 2010 review of 115 studies that spanned 33 countries across the developed and developing worlds, nearly 80 percent of the studies showed that poverty comes with higher rates of mental illness. Among people living in poverty, those studies also found, mental illnesses were more severe, lasted longer and had worse outcomes. And there's growing evidence that levels of depression are higher in poorer countries than in wealthier ones. Those kinds of findings challenge a long-held myth of the "poor but happy African sitting under a palm tree," says Johannes Haushofer, an economist and neurobiologist who studies interactions between poverty and mental health at Princeton University. Some studies have found higher levels of the stress hormone cortisol in people living in poverty. In Mexican households that received cash grants, found a 2009 study, young children had lower cortisol levels compared to kids from families that did not get extra money. Rates of violence are also higher among people who face economic tension. Living amid violence can exacerbate depression, Lund adds. And studies have found connections between mental illness and poverty-associated conditions, such as not having enough to eat, not making

enough money to live on and having a greater chance of developing risks for physical illnesses.” This snippet from an article written by Emily Sohn simplifies the interrelation of poverty and mental illness. Many farmers in India commit suicide and parricide because they are unable to pay off the landowner or zamindar’s debts and cannot sustain themselves any longer.

“Unemployment has been linked with a number of psychological disorders, particularly anxiety, depression, and substance abuse; dangerous behaviours including suicide and violence toward family members or others also correlate with unemployment. These associations hold true not only in surveys of those already unemployed but also in studies that follow one or several individuals with no psychological difficulties into a period of unemployment.” The relationship between unemployment and mental illness is also interdependent i.e. unemployment may lead to mental disorders, but mental disorders may also lead to unemployment. “When you lose your job, not only is your usual source of income gone, but also your personal work relationships, daily structures, and an important sense of self-purpose. Unemployment can be, and often is, a shock to your whole system. You can experience some of the same feelings and stresses that you would if you were seriously injured, going through a divorce, or mourning the loss of a loved one. You can go through some or all of the stages of grieving just as you would with any other major loss.” (Canadian Mental Health Association website, Coping with Unemployment: www.cmha.ca) The loss of a job can have the following effects: Lowering of standard of living, anxiety, feelings of insecurity, fall in self-esteem, loss of contact with co-workers etc. As mentioned before, the stigma attached with mental illness is also a threat to job security as people do not want to employ someone who they deem “crazy”. Another example of this situation is when people with low stress and frustration tolerance become substance dependent, they usually find themselves out of work as people don’t want them to be a bad influence, to do inefficient work, to mess things up or just because it makes them look bad.

The lack of resources and infrastructure in rural India may also be a stressing factor, for example, lack of sanitation, bad roads, fewer schools and disinterested faculties, lack of clean water, lack of infrastructure, hospitals are all sources of distress.

“The notion of mental health is demonized among the rural population and is thought to be the “possession or embodiment of an evil spirit in an individual” that makes them behave in a bizarre manner. The folks of agrarian societies have a huge deal of respect for faith healers and consider them the primary approach for treatment, which denies them the required medical/therapeutic intervention from mental health professionals. Myths surrounding mental illnesses, sexuality, and

menstruation have an omnipresent prevalence across rural and urban parts of the country. The discrepancy lies in understanding these constructs and taking relevant measures to incorporate them as a part of living by de-stigmatizing them. This happens largely in urban settings, given awareness and access to resources. Research and media are evidence to the stringent prevailing fallacies about mental illnesses, menstruation, and sexuality in rural India, where there is ostracization, stigma, and bleak understanding with regard to the above-mentioned phenomenon. From a cultural perspective, mental disorders are associated with a considerable amount of stigma in Indian society, leading to neglect and marginalization. Such individuals and their families face numerous challenges in daily life, both for managing the condition, as well as for making them productive due to prevailing attitudes, media portrayals, societal discrimination, and deprived opportunities.”

Mental health in the rural setting can be achieved through proper outreach programs and campaigns by not just the government but also Community Based Organizations by educating the people, making them aware of living a life without biases, respecting everyone equally and accepting mental disorders. The government has launched the National Mental Health Programme (NMHP) in 1982, keeping in view the heavy burden of mental illness in the community, and the absolute inadequacy of mental health care infrastructure in the country to deal with it. CBOs like MPower, Atmiyata and the MINDS foundation are making strides in the right direction.

ii. Urban Mental Health

Challenges to mental health in urban areas include loneliness, violence, high crime rates, homelessness, noise and other pollutants, traffic accidents, drug abuse, and insufficiency of mental health services. Many people move to the city in search of better services, economic and social opportunities, and distance from past negative experiences. Some of the reasons that some people may seek these things happen to be risk factors for mental health problems: for example, poverty, unemployment, homelessness, physical and mental health problems, previous trauma, personal crises, family break up, addiction, and immigration. This social drift engenders a population who are particularly predisposed to mental disorders.

“People who live in the city experience an increased stimulus level: density, crowding, noise, smells, sights, disarray, pollution and intensity of other inputs. Every part of the urban environment is deliberately designed to assert meanings and messages. These stimuli trigger action and thought

on a latent level of awareness, and become more potent as an inability to ‘cope’ sets in. This can have the effect of overload: increasing the body's baseline levels of arousal, stress, and preparedness, but also driving people to seek relief: quiet, private spaces; over time this urge may evolve into social isolation associated with depression and anxiety, and also forms the basis of the ecological hypothesis of schizophrenia. People who live in the city may find that they have less access to the factors that are protective for good mental health than those in rural areas. For example, they may have diminished access to nature, fewer opportunities to integrate exercise as part of their daily routines, and reduced leisure time as increased time is spent at work and commuting around the city. People may find themselves feeling unsafe, having less privacy, and even less sleep, due to factors like crowding, light, noise, and stress. Rural to urban migration often sees people leaving behind their strong social networks of friends and family, and it takes time to develop similarly supportive social capital in the city. This may particularly be the case as urban dwellers may be reluctant to engage in social interactions, to avoid overstimulation, due to safety concerns, or because of the reduced likelihood of future relationships with everyone they encounter. As these protective factors erode, people become more vulnerable to developing mental health problems.” (Centre for Urban Design and Mental Health)

When we refer to psychiatric disorders anxiety and depression are more prevalent among urban women than men and are believed to be more prevalent in poor than in non-poor urban neighborhoods (Naomar Almeida-Filho et al 2004). The meta-analysis by Reddy and Chandrashekhara (1998) revealed higher prevalence of mental disorders in urban areas i.e., 80.6%, whereas it was 48.9% in rural areas. Mental disorders primarily composed of depression and neurotic disorders. In many cases, the constant cycle of work-commute-work may lead to increased stress, tiredness, exhaustion, and burnout. According to Healthline, “Compared to rural residents, researchers have found that urbanites are 21 percent more likely to have anxiety disorders and 39 percent more likely to have mood disorders. A 2017 meta-analysis, Trusted Source also found that rates of the following mental health conditions were higher among those living in urban areas: PTSD, anger management, generalized anxiety disorder. The same was true for more serious psychological disorders like schizophrenia and paranoia.

Here is how it works: The constant stimulation of city life can propel the body into a stressful state, known as the fight-or-flight response. That can make us more vulnerable to mental health concerns, such as depression, anxiety, and substance use. This might help explain why 19.1 percent of Americans live with an anxiety disorder, while 6.7 percent have depression. City living can also chip away at your psychological immune system, which can be precarious for those with a family

history of mental illness. According to psychologists Trusted Source, this environmental stress can increase their risk of developing a psychiatric condition, such as anxiety, depression, or bipolar disorder. Even though urban life may lead to emotional distress, shame and stigma can stop young adults from talking about their struggles. This may explain why they feel lonelier than older generations, according to a Cigna study.”

A 2017 study suggests too much exposure to air pollution and city noise may cause damage to a person’s cardiovascular health.

It seems traffic noise may interfere with sleep quality and cause cortisol, the stress hormone, to spike. Over time, elevated levels of this hormone can increase a person’s risk for developing cardiovascular disease.

It also seems urban dwellers may be more prone to insomnia and sleep difficulties. In a survey of more than 15,000 individuals, researchers at Stanford University found that the bright lights of a city can dampen a person’s ability to get a good night’s rest. According to the survey, 6 percent of people living in highly lit, urban areas slept less than six hours each night. They also found that 29 percent of these urbanites were dissatisfied with the quality of their nighttime rest. Crowded city life can also make us more prone to contracting viruses, especially during cold and flu season. Studies have also found that people living in urban areas often eat too much processed and fast food, which puts them at greater risk for weight gain, high blood pressure, and diabetes.

Some solutions for the above mentioned problems faced by the urban population is to seek help as there are more accessible mental healthcare professionals, to be more collectively responsible, to be a part of an organic community, to digitally detox and to disconnect from the stimuli overloaded environment of the city. “Many urban planners and public-health professionals are now starting to realize that if physical health is not solely the remit of physicians, mental health need not solely be the remit of psychiatrists. In order to improve the mental health of city-living populations, the public-health, mental-health, and urban-planning sectors need to start working together to find shared solutions instead of operating in silos.” Some set objectives can be to: encourage collaboration among all stakeholders, including grassroot and community organizations, civil society groups, local and national governments, international organizations, private sector companies, religious groups and academic institutions; improve access to mental healthcare and encourage the development of novel drugs and therapies for the treatment of mental health conditions; enhance care pathways and insurance schemes for treating

specific mental disorders by defining and adopting standards of care and increase the number of mental health professionals.

iii. Existing Governmental Mental Health Organizations in India-

National Mental Health Program

The Mental Health Care Act 2017 was passed on 7 April, 2017 and came into force from July 7, 2018. The law was described in its opening paragraph as "An Act to provide for mental healthcare and services for persons with mental illness and to protect, promote and fulfill the rights of such persons during delivery of mental healthcare and services and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto. "This Act superseded the previously existing Mental Health Act, 1987 that was passed on 22 May 1987. Recognizing that Persons with mental illness constitute a vulnerable section of society and are subject to discrimination in our society; Families bear disproportionate financial, physical, mental, emotional and social burden of providing treatment and care for their relatives with mental illness; Persons with mental illness should be treated like other persons with health problems and the environment around them should be made conducive to facilitate recovery rehabilitation and full participation in society.

The Government of India launched the National Mental Health Program (NMHP) in 1982, keeping in view the heavy burden of mental illness in the community, and the absolute inadequacy of mental health care infrastructure in the country to deal with it. The district Mental Health Program was added to the Program in 1996. The Program was re-strategizing in 2003 to include two schemes, viz. Modernization of State Mental Hospitals and Up-gradation of Psychiatric Wings of Medical Colleges/General Hospitals. The Manpower development scheme (Scheme-A & B) became part of the Program in 2009.

Three main components of National Mental Health Program -

- a. Treatment of Mentally ill
- b. Rehabilitation
- c. Prevention and promotion of positive mental health.

The objectives of the NMHP are to ensure the availability and accessibility of minimum mental

healthcare for all in the foreseeable future; to encourage the application of mental health knowledge in general healthcare and in social development; to promote community participation in the mental health service development; and to enhance human resource in mental health subspecialties.

Strategies -

- a. Integration mental health with primary health care through the NMHP
- b. Provision of tertiary care institutions for treatment of mental disorders
- c. Eradicating stigmatization of mentally ill patients and protecting their rights through regulatory institutions like the Central Mental Health Authority, and State Mental health Authority.

District Mental Health Program: Envisages provision of basic mental health care services at the community level. The Objectives are to provide sustainable basic mental health services to the community and to integrate these services with other health services; early detection and treatment of patients within the community itself; to reduce the stigma of mental illness through public awareness and to treat and rehabilitate mental patients within the community.

iv. India's Global Mental Health Status

A report by the World Health Organization (WHO) revealed that 7.5 per cent of the Indian population suffers from some form of mental disorder. Mental illnesses constitute one-sixth of all health-related disorders and India accounted for nearly 15% of the global mental, neurological and substance abuse disorder burden. The treatment gap, which is defined as the prevalence of mental illnesses and the proportion of patients that get treatment, is over 70 per cent. WHO also predicts that by 2020, roughly 20 per cent of India will suffer from mental illnesses. And to cater to this demographic, we have less than 4,000 mental health professionals. Research indicates that women are twice as likely to develop common mental disorders, such as anxiety and depression, when compared to men. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), women are also more likely to experience trauma, often due to sexual assault or abuse, and therefore tend to suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Research has also shown that 20 percent of Indian mothers are likely to be affected by postpartum depression. The National Mental Health Survey 2015-16 conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru, under the purview of the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, reveals that

9.8 million teenagers in the age group 13-17 years suffer depression and other mental health disorders and are “in need of active intervention”. According to a study by the Lancet, suicide deaths ranked first among all causes of death in women aged 15-29 years in 26 of the 31 states, and in women aged 15-39 years in 24 states in the country.

According to many news articles, a WHO report named India as the most depressed country in the world.

“South Asia, home to 23% of the world's population and with 40% of the poorest people, has approximately 150–200 million mentally ill. For centuries, the mentally ill were managed by the community in several ways, ranging from physical restraint by using chains to treatment by ancient systems of medicine such as Ayurveda. Asylums or mental hospitals came with the British rule in India and colonization in other South Asian countries. While providing treatment and some relief for the mentally ill, they also were edifices of neglect, abuse, and violation of human rights. While many such hospitals in Asia have undergone changes for the better, some of them still retain the old character and are largely custodial in their function. In India, the 42 mental hospitals catered to a mere 20% of the population, all in urban areas, with no services being available for the vast rural areas.” For years there has been a gap between the Global North and the Global South on almost every aspect of competency, economy, development, technology, politics, and even mental health. The Global North includes nations that are more developed, high income countries whereas the Global South includes those nations that are either underdeveloped or developing. On a Global level, the South is still trying to catch up with the standards set by the North in terms of Nutrition, Standard of Living, Governance, Educational opportunities while at the same time producing creative initiative so as to not lose their most skilled manpower to the North. The Asian-African Mental Health Gap is the concept that, “As it has often been observed, eighty percent of the world's population living in developing countries has access to less than twenty percent of the world's resources, while twenty percent of the world's population in the developed world has access to more than eighty percent of the world's resources.’ What is new about Fidler's thesis is his prediction that globalization will adversely affect populations in the developing world by destroying indigenous or traditional medicine and simultaneously do little to place Western medicine in their reach. In the event of a failure to synthesize traditional medicine with Western medicine (which is unlikely to occur), poor people in the developing world will witness traditional medicine eroded by the impact of globalizing Western cultures. At the same time, it is unlikely that Western medicine will be readily available to these populations because it will be either too expensive or simply not available in sufficient quantity or quality.” This Gap leaves the Global

South struggling to ever catch up with the advancements made in leaps and bounds in the Global North. One of the major problems as a result of this is that not only is more than half of the entire world alienated but also global solutions only focus on the problems of the “first world countries” thus disregarding the much bigger population of the “second and third world” countries deeming them not as important. This practice is largely problematic and must be remedied.

v. Comparing the Global North to the Global South

The objective of this comparison between the mental health system and environment of a country belonging to the Global North i.e. Denmark to that of a country belonging to a country from the Global South i.e. India is to clearly showcase the vast difference in the development, awareness and education and to allow Indian policy makers to find inspiration in the functionality of Denmark’s functional mental wellbeing system.

This is an excerpt from Psychology Today’s article from 2014, “The World Happiness Report 2013, written by leading academics, finds that levels of self-reported happiness are higher in Denmark than anywhere else, with fellow Scandinavian countries Norway and Sweden also in the top five. The US is 17th and the UK 22nd. The lowest ranked nations – out of 156 – are Rwanda, Burundi, the Central African Republic, Benin, and last of all Togo. Why are the Danish so happy? The World Happiness Report cites factors such as healthy life expectancy, GDP per capita, levels of social support, freedom to make life choices, perceptions of corruption, and the degree of generosity shown by citizens. Other experts have highlighted Denmark's high degree of income equality: this is a country, it seems, where people truly are "in it together".

Given that levels of happiness are so high in Denmark, it is reasonable to assume that Danes also enjoy good mental health. But a study published this month by the American Medical Association tells a quite different story – one that demonstrates just how common mental health problems are, regardless of where people happen to live. One of the many positive aspects of life in Denmark is its universal health care system. As part of that system, treatment for mental illness is recorded in the Danish Psychiatric Research Register: a resource that provides scientists with a treasure trove of data. Since 1969, for every person living in Denmark the register has logged admissions to psychiatric hospitals, visits to outpatient psychiatric clinics, attendance at psychiatric emergency departments, and all diagnoses. As such, it provides a comprehensive and uniquely detailed picture of treatment for psychological problems in the country. Based on the register's data, researchers

estimated that 38% of Danish women and 32% of Danish men will receive treatment for a mental disorder at some point during their lifetime. Remember: these statistics only include cases serious enough for professional help to be required. Of course, there are likely to be many more people with mental health conditions who for one reason or another do not seek treatment. Therefore representative epidemiological surveys often produce even higher estimates for mental ill health than the Danish study. But for all those who criticize such surveys for including problems that are mild or transient, this latest research constitutes a forceful riposte. Mental illness is not a figment of over-eager clinicians' imagination; the problem is real and widespread. When it comes to so-called "internalizing" conditions, rates for Danish women are higher than for Danish men: for anxiety disorders 19% of women will receive treatment compared with 13% of men; for depression, the figures are 16% and 9% respectively. Men, on the other hand, are more vulnerable to "externalizing" disorders: in Denmark 8% of men will receive treatment for alcohol or drug problems, twice the figure for women. Eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia are much more prevalent among females (3%) than males (0.2%). Boys, however, show higher rates than girls of problems in early childhood such as autism (0.9%, 0.2%) and learning disabilities (1.8%, 1.2%).” The Danish people do not shy away from seeking help for their mental troubles and are often encouraged to come forward. Many different therapeutic cultural aspects are introduced to build communities that support each other and promote intimacy.

One of these practices is that of ‘hygge’, and it refers to high-quality social interactions. Hygge can be used as a noun, adjective or verb (to hygge oneself), and events and places can also be hyggelige (hygge-like). Hygge is sometimes translated as “cozy,” but a better definition of hygge is “intentional intimacy,” which can happen when you have safe, balanced, and harmonious shared experiences. “A cup of coffee with a friend in front of a fireplace might qualify, as could a summer picnic in the park. A family might have a hygge evening that entails board games and treats, or friends might get together for a casual dinner with dimmed lighting, good food and easy-going fun. Spaces can also be described as hyggelige (“Your new house is so hyggeligt”) and a common way of telling a host thank you after a dinner is to say that it was hyggeligt (meaning, we had a good time). Most Danish social events are expected to be hyggelige, so it would be a harsh critique to say that a party or dinner was not hyggelige. Research on hygge has found that in Denmark, it is integral to people’s sense of well-being. It acts as a buffer against stress, while also creating a space to build camaraderie. In a highly individualized country like Denmark, hygge can promote egalitarianism and strengthen trust. It would be fair to say that hygge is fully integrated into the Danish cultural psyche and culture.” In Aalborg, Denmark, a new program has been initiated where

those who are unemployed or on state sick leave were invited to go on two or three cultural excursions a week for ten weeks. There are eight strands to Aalborg's program, including singing (which is proven to release dopamine and promote a sense of belonging when conducted among a group), visiting the city archive to learn about local history and genealogy, and music appreciation. There are also visits to the theatre to watch new productions, and coaching sessions in which actors teach participants about body language to help with confidence in job interviews. The program has an agreement with the Aalborg Symphony Orchestra in which participants are taken to watch rehearsals and performances, something that often leads to tears, says Nielsen. Researchers have found that watching music performed live reduces stress. Participants also visit the local art museum and take part in creative workshops, an activity proven to develop resilience. Participants are also encouraged to snuggle up under blankets in a dimly lit room in an Aalborg library while a librarian reads to them for two hours." They have named the program 'KultureVitaminer' which translates to 'culture vitamins'.

Other than these efforts, the Danish Welfare System is one of the best in the world. Danes pay some of the highest income tax rates in the world — 45 percent for an average Danish annual income of \$43,000 and 52 percent for those who earn more than \$67,000. But in exchange for forking over half their earnings, every Dane gets free health care, free K-college education (students are actually paid \$900 a month), highly subsidized childcare and generous unemployment benefits. If you lose a job in Denmark, it is not necessarily a big deal. In fact, unemployment is built into the system. Thanks to the "flexicurity model," employers in Denmark have a lot more freedom to fire employees because there are government programs to retrain workers and better position them for the job market. The relatively high level of safety in Denmark compared to many other countries means that Danish children enjoy much more freedom and independence than their counterparts elsewhere in the world. It is common to see children travelling alone on public transport as young as age 8 or 9 - the other passengers keep an eye on them. It is also common practice for parents to leave their babies outside in their baby carriages to nap, even during the chilly Danish winter.

And it is usually safe to walk or bicycle in Denmark at any time of the day or night. Denmark has made healthcare (and mental healthcare) very accessible through universal healthcare i.e. most healthcare is paid for by the government, funded by tax- income. This includes visits to a general physician, treatment in hospitals, both emergency care, or by referral from your general

physician/primary care physician, your general physician may also refer you to privately practicing specialists, which is then also fully covered by the government. For therapy, a referral from the general practitioner is required and you have the right to receive psychotherapy with public financial support. This requires that you have a CPR number, and a so-called "yellow card" - the Danish public health insurance certificate.

Denmark has a stable government that is intolerant of corruption and a Gross Domestic Product of \$286.8 billion, showcases growth of 2.1%, 1.6% 5-year compound annual growth and \$49,883 per capita income. It has an unemployment rate of 5.7% (33,000 unemployed citizens) and a literacy rate of 99% for both men and women. Denmark has been a member of NATO since its founding in 1949, and membership in NATO remains highly popular. They also enjoy close ties with neighbouring countries, Sweden, and Norway. Denmark's poverty rate was 0.50% in 2015 which was a 0.2% decline from 2014. All the above conditions (Economic, Social, and Political) indicate a very good standard of living and thus more mentally healthy citizens.

India is a democratic country plagued with corruption, a Gross Domestic Product of \$9.5 trillion, showcases growth of 6.7%, 7.2% 5-year compound annual growth and \$7,183 per capita income. It has an unemployment rate of 6.1% (18,000,000 unemployed citizens) and a literacy rate among males is 72.3% and among females is 56.8%. India has also played an important and influential role in other international organizations like East Asia Summit,[5] World Trade Organization,[6] International Monetary Fund (IMF) and is regionally a part of SAARC. India is allied with Israel, Afghanistan, Bhutan, USA, Japan, and Russia. India shares a tumultuous relationship with its neighbour Pakistan. India's poverty rate is 21.9%.

As seen in the above statistics, India has a few issues of corruption, unemployment, literacy, gender inequality and poverty. Additionally, Denmark ranks 11th on the Human Development Index whereas India ranks 129th. The difference in the standard of living is clear and impacts the mental health of the People a great deal.

Although, it must be said that there are major differences between India and Denmark. Firstly, the territory of Denmark is just 42,933 km² whereas India has a territory of 3.287 million km²; in proportion, Denmark's population is just 5.6 million whereas India is home to 1.37 billion people. India is an agrarian economy which is slowly moving towards industrialization whereas Denmark's primary source of income is trade, service, and manufacturing. India is also one of the most diverse countries in the world with layers and layers of social and cultural strata.

CONCLUSION

Government efforts towards mental health should be more strategic, informed and catering to the grassroots as well as the “better off”. Making mental wellbeing accessible in a diverse, multifaceted country like India is a tall order but the fulfilment is a certain possibility with the right steps in the right direction. Sensitization to stigma, gender roles, caste, class, religion must be advocated rather than pitting the dissimilar against each other. In the end, there are more similarities than differences. Global organizations must allocate sufficient resources to countries that may not be as developed and not participate in alienation.

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THE BLIND SIDE: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF YOUTH CAREER ASPIRATIONS WITH RESPECT TO CIVIL SERVICES¹²

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Abstract

Motivated less by the opportunity to serve their country, but more by the fringe benefits of holding important bureaucratic positions, the UPSC saw 10 lakh individuals apply for the civil service examinations in 2017 (Kunwar 2019). Going through prelims, mains, and the interview stage, only 990 individuals were successful in grabbing the jobs and only 100 got selected for IAS. The ratio of individuals applying versus those who have been successful in being employed by the State has always been this colossal. This makes it imperative to study why so many Indian youth, despite knowing the harsh realities of the test, continue to be fixated with the idea of achieving the bureaucratic title. This study probes into the domain of career aspirations of individuals currently getting a bachelor's degree in Arts, belonging to various castes and classes, who wish to become IAS/IPS/IFS officers. The objectives of this study will be to find out where these aspirations stem from, what does this career path mean to them and if they have what is needed for gainful employment in the civil services through semi-structured interviews. Secondary data analysis of select few articles on civil services and the coaching classes industry will also be done. The expected results will provide an insight into the reasons for the pursuit of the masses in the career field of civil services. The study will also suggest ways to diversify the career choices of young adults and help them change their attitude towards the prestige and glamour attached to the said profession.

¹² **This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review**

OBJECTIVES

To find why many Indian youth aspire to a career in the civil services and where these career aspirations stem from.

Suggest ways to diversify the career choices of young adults and to change their attitudes towards the prestige and glamour attached to the said profession

METHODOLOGY

This study comprises 2 research methodologies.

Primary data analysis of a structured survey with 14 respondents who are currently pursuing or have recently completed a bachelor's degree in arts/humanities and aspire to a career in the civil services was conducted. This was done to gain an insight on why so many youngsters aspire to this career choice amongst the various others that fit in line with their career and personal goals.

The respondents were asked a total of 23 questions through Google forms and have been clubbed together as follows -

- 1.1. What are some of your personal and career goals?
- 1.2. How did you get introduced to this field and what does a career in the civil services mean to you? Does this career field attract you for the power or the privileges it comes with? What kind of officer do you aspire to become?
- 1.3. What are some other ways you could fulfil your personal and career goals though why these options might not be the best ones forward for you?
- 1.4. Do you think getting a degree is beneficial to a career in civil services and are you interested in the subjects chosen by you in the degree?
- 1.5. Are you aware of the possibilities that you may not be successful in being employed as only 0.001% get lucky when it comes to the civil service positions? What would your plan of action look like if you are unsuccessful in the examination attempts and have you thought of a career plan B.

The respondents were also asked questions regarding the steps taken by them to prepare for the examinations. Questions were as follows

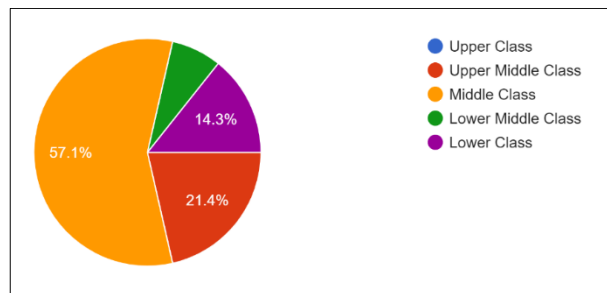
- 2.1 How many hours do you spend studying for the examination in a day?

2.2 How are you preparing for the examinations and have you joined any coaching institutions for the same?

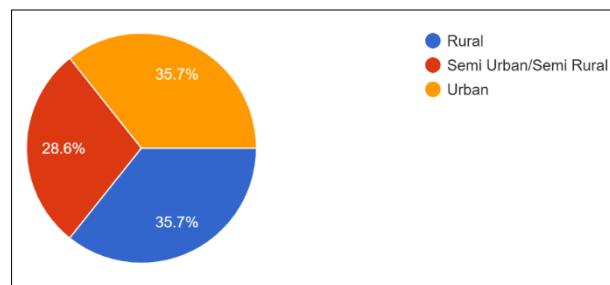
2.3 How much did you spend on the classes and do you think these are a good investment in your future?

Demographic details of the respondents with regards to their age, gender, the economic strata they belonged to and if they came from rural or urban settings was collected. Educational details of the respondents were also collected to find out what subjects they had opted for in their degree program and the year they are in.

Characteristics of the group of participants included 8 male and 6 female respondents aged 18-24. 21.4% of the respondents belonged to the upper middle class, 57.1% belonged to the middle class and 21.4% belonged to lower middle and lower classes.



35.7% respondents belonged to urban and rural settings while 28.6% respondents considered themselves semi-urban/semi-rural (The terms semi urban/ semi-rural in this study connote to living both in urban and rural settings and having experiences from both the spheres that have been influential in their lives alike)



11 participants of the study were in the last year of their bachelor's degree 1 in FYBA 1 in FYMA and 1 who had completed a BA degree and was currently working as a tax inspector. 5 respondents were majoring in psychology, 4 in economics 2 in political science, 2 in sociology and 1 in history.

An interview was also conducted with a psychologist who currently teaches students of arts at bachelor's level to understand this obsession behind this career path. The questions asked were as follows-

Secondary data analysis of a select few newspaper and web articles critiquing the coaching classes for UPSC and the Civil services in general was also done to understand the craze behind the aspirations for UPSC ranks.

DATA ANALYSIS

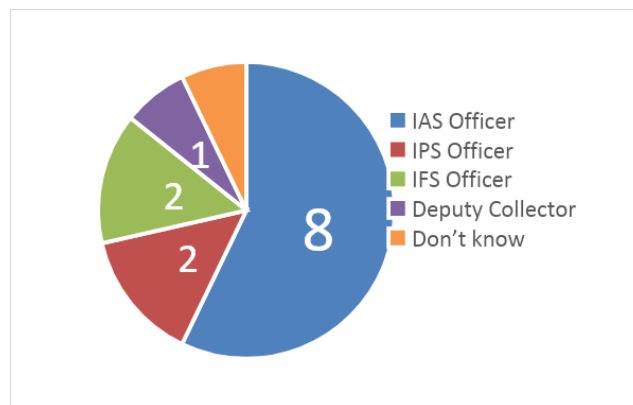
❖ Primary Data Analysis: Survey

1. Career Aspirations

1.1 The respondents were asked about their career and personal goals from life to understand where the career aspirations for civil services stem from. While most of the individuals' personal goals ranged from one's 'mental and physical growth' to 'being a master at a form of yoga' and 'petting all the street dogs one can find', 50% of the individuals explicitly mentioned in their replies a desire to 'crack the UPSC examinations' and to 'be in a position of power to bring about a change in the society', which ranged from 'eradicating corruption from the country' to 'bringing new amendments in current laws made for the safety of women' and 'reversing the decaying state of the environment'. These same individuals mentioned in their career goals that their only goal career wise was 'to become an IAS officer'. Other individuals while mentioning a career in the civil services as a part of their career aspirations/ goals also mentioned other avenues where they could excel career wise.

1.2. The respondents were asked the question of how they got introduced to this career field and what it represents in their life. 65% of the individuals replied that they got introduced to civil services through their families or friends, more specifically their fathers while the rest stated reasons such as coming across frequent articles about IAS/IPS officers in the newspapers, inspiration from a character in a TV serial who was an officer by profession and opting for UPSC after not being able to enroll oneself in the army. An individual also stated that they did not actually aspire to a career in this field but were interested in giving the examinations to increase one's general knowledge and to also be amongst the many others who are giving the examinations. To most respondents the words UPSC/Civil services meant a chance or a medium to work for the

nation and the society, to uplift the needy, backward sections of the society and to work towards being a better citizen of their country. According to some respondents it is the only way some desperate chance can be brought out in the society and the public only looks up to someone who is in a position of power. The respondents were then asked if this career field appealed to them for the power or the privileges it comes with and the kind of officer they would like to become after successfully going through all the stages of the examinations. Every single individual said that power and the status that came with it were the most important aspect of the job profile. Individuals who came from rural households did not fail to mention how that would help them change the state of their villages. Most respondents didn't seem to have a real incline towards the materialistic privileges that come with the job title (Ex- govt assigned car, servants, housing etc.) however a few (specially who came from lower middle / lower classes) did mention that the privileges would be an added bonus which will help them bring some financial stability to their family.



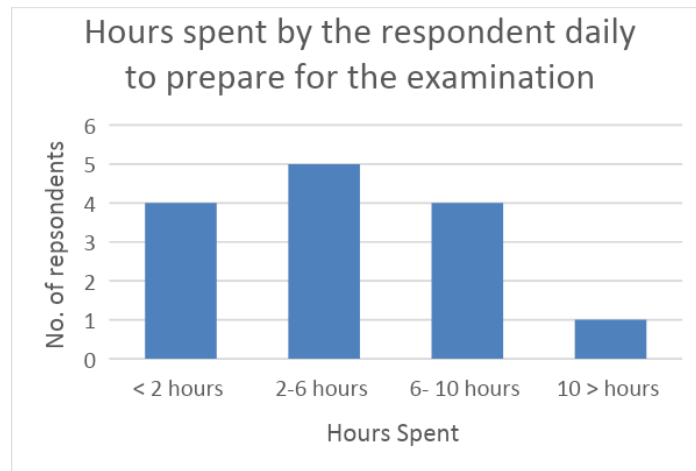
1.3. The respondents were asked what were some other ways they could fulfil their personal and career goals (instead of the civil services route), however, why these options might not be the best ones forward for them? Responses ranged from opening/ joining an NGO, joining the army, working in the field of their current specialization, or becoming a lawyer. One respondent mentioned being part of think tanks to fulfil his personal and career goals, which according to him gave suggestions and recommendations to the govt about formation of the foreign policy. 2 respondents were adamant that there are no other career fields that will help them achieve what they aspire to, personal or career wise. For the 2nd part of the question 50% of the respondents mentioned that Civil Services was just one of the career options and that they hadn't totally disregarded the alternate career avenues and mentioned they would equally satisfy them personally and career wise so as to say they weren't fixated with the idea of getting a Civil Services position. The rest 50% were adamant that though there may be other career paths they would not find the satisfaction and gratification that they would when becoming an IAS/IPS/IFS officer.

1.4. The respondents were asked if they thought getting a degree will benefit them in their career in the civil services and if they were genuinely interested in the subjects chosen by them in their degree. Most respondents said that getting a degree will benefit them later in their life though when asked to elaborate how, most individuals had very myopic answers to present. Most respondents answered how the subjects they have chosen would help them in certain optional papers at UPSC offers its candidates with, in the mains examination. Very few actually went on to expand how the particular subjects they had chosen for their mains and general have helped them expand their mental horizons with respect to the larger society, which they will be able to apply once employed. One individual who responded getting the degree just for UPSC examinations mentioned that it keeps them going because semester/yearly examinations help them stay in the exam pattern zone which will benefit them when it comes to the UPSC examinations.

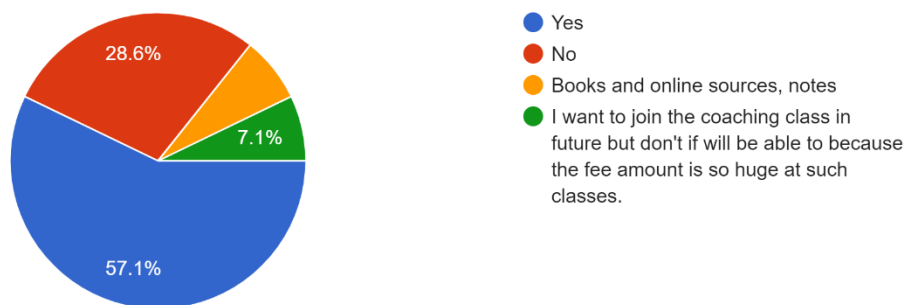
1.5. The respondents were asked if they were aware of the possibility that they may not be successful in being employed by the state as only 0.001% get lucky when it comes to the civil service positions. All but 3 respondents said they were aware of this possibility and had thought of a second course of action after being unsuccessful in the examinations. The respondents were then asked what their plan of action would look like after failing the exam once and after being unlucky all together. After a 1st failed attempt all respondents said they would like to have a go at the examinations again and learn from their mistakes made the 1st time. 2 respondents mentioned that they would like to try for the examinations only 2 more times and if not successful move on to career path B. Respondents who had mentioned a liking for their subject majors in earlier questions said that they would go ahead in those fields after failing while the rest responded that they wouldn't know what they would do or they hadn't thought of this possibility.

2. Preparations for the examinations

The respondents were asked questions regarding the steps undertaken by them to prepare for the examinations. Here are some figures that have been obtained from the survey.



Have you ever joined any coaching classes to prepare for the exams? What other ways have you been preparing for them?



The respondents who attended coaching classes spent on an average an amount of around 1.5 lakhs on them for a time duration of 3 years. Some respondents went to coaching classes on the weekdays for 3-4 hours while some had classes the entire weekends. The respondents were asked if they thought these classes benefitted them and 5 said yes, 1 said no and 2 said maybe. Ones who did not attend these classes were of the opinion that these classes show a path to follow and ‘help in achieving success if used carefully’. When asked how the respondents found these classes i.e. were, they reliable and helped students prepare for the exams, the average response was a rating of a 6.5 out of 10.

❖ News Article Analysis

Various news articles critiquing the career aspirations of individuals wanting to ‘crack’ the UPSC examinations and the coaching centres these individuals enrolled themselves in were analyzed to get some answers as to why so many Indian youngsters want to clear these examinations and avail the bureaucratic positions that the state offers.

According to the article named 'UPSC is a disease in our country', UPSC examinations and UPSC rank holders are put on a pedestal and considered a marketable commodity with which dreams and aspirations to a good life, a well-respected place in the society with the added (fringe) benefits are sold to lakhs and lakhs of Indian students every year by the multi crore rupee 'UPSC coaching classes' industry. Individuals who have been successful in clearing even the basic examinations are treated as gods by their juniors and are constantly surrounded by them to get some tips and tricks to 'crack' these examinations. Author of the article talks about how people remotely related to the candidate flock around them to strengthen relations for when they might need some favours in the future and quotes Prof Harvey that global capitalism thrives through relations and networking which are primarily based on personal affiliations rather than individuals worth and the potential to perform. The article also talks about how individuals from lower/ backward castes and classes see clearing these examinations as a change for upward mobility in the political and social framework of the nation for the entire caste/class. An article mentioned a 30-year-old individual who like many others though getting selected for Indian Police Services was still preparing for the Indian Administrative Services exam as becoming an IAS officer is much more socially lucrative than being an IPS officer.

The health of these aspirants is in shambles too, with students spending hours and hours on end locked inside their rooms with the study material they often neglect physically and mental along the way. Many have physiological problems ranging from digestive issues and heartburn constantly thinking and worrying about the exams to mental health problems such as anxiety and depression up to the point of suicide. A big large number of these aspirants have been pursuing this career path all because their family or close ones encouraged them to become a Class 1 officer and the candidates feel immense guilt and shame with each failing which often pushes them to the path of self-harm or suicide.

On the topic of coaching centres all around the nation the articles mention that these classes assume a model of one size fits all solution when it comes to 'cracking' the civil services examinations. C-SAT examination does work on selection, but de selection and coaching services provide an instant tablet that they can pop in (Prasanth Nair, IAS). They tend to forget that every individual has their own set of strengths and weaknesses just like a different degree of aptitude for certain tasks and areas of expertise. An average individual pays more than 1 lakh rupees to these institutes alone to get the coaching. The individuals shifting to UPSC coaching hubs such as Delhi, Kota, Pune Nagpur also have the added basic costs of room rent, 3-time meals, electricity, water supply, transportation, and internet to pay for. Coaching institutions are very rarely worth it, can provide

with proper guidance and have a proper curriculum set in place. Scams under the name of UPSC coaching centres run all across the country where individuals are robbed of their money under the pretext of getting lessons on how to clear these examinations from institutes who advertise having a high success rate/ IAS rank holders to their name. Many of these institutions are in fact run by people who replicate the same exploitative structures which once exploited them to mint easy money all thanks to the agents of this multi crore rupee industry who are In Fact an aspirant/candidates' own close friends, family neighbours and relative who keep glorifying the position of a civil servant. The articles go on to say that these institutions have become an unregulated market where there seem to be no checks in place to curb the mental, physical and monetary exploitation of individuals who come from places far away from their home town just to have a shot at the civil services.

❖ Interview Analysis:

Most of these students come to cities/ coaching hubs from rural and semi urban backgrounds where there is still an aspirational high to achieve success through UPSC and its state equivalent. People who have cleared Class 1 or Class 2 examination process go back to their native places popularizing this career path to the junior crowd. Bureaucracy in India has always stood for power and corruption of which these youngster may get a sense of high from and think their life will be sorted if they get into this career These youngsters don't have any actual knowledge of the career field, what it requires from you an administrator and also fail to recognize the risk, money, failure involved in this process. Majority of these aspirants opt for an Arts degree because humanities offers subjects like history, geography, economics, agriculture, political science etc. which are also the options given for the mains exams of the C-SAT. The students think opting for these subjects will help them ace their UPSC papers but fail to recognize that the syllabus of the degree subjects is drastically different from what is the syllabus of the optional mains paper. The aspirants do not realise that civil services require a certain kind of personality, aptitude, interest without which getting in the arena is worthless. Students also need to be prepared with a Plan B and a Plan C to shift to if their plan A of "cracking" the civil services examinations turns out to be a flop show. The mental and physical health of these individuals is of poor quality. Constantly being in the competitive environment, failure and the fear of failure, locking yourself up for 3-5 year with study material with limited human interaction so as to not lose focus on your studies is bound to push an individual to the land of stress, self-doubt, possibly depression and if gone to the extreme then suicide. The state is dire, but nobody seems to care for these young adults as everyone in the

industry is busy profiting on their ‘aspirations’. Information and awareness need to be spread about other career options/ routes that will help an individual achieve their personal and career goals with life. There are traditional careers and then there are new career paths.

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THE HOLY WAR – A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS AND DISCRIMINATION IN INDIA WITH REFERENCE TO CHRISTIANITY AND SIKHISM¹³

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ABSTRACT

India is a country with an extremely large population, and not everyone belongs to the same group. The country is divided on lines of religion, caste, class, region, language, sexuality, etc. This paper seeks to explore the diversity of the population in terms of religion and brings up incidences of conflicts that have happened in the past 4 decades between different religions.

The purpose of the paper is to bring awareness about religious conflicts within the country with respect to Christianity and Sikhism, and on the discrimination within religions.

The objectives of the paper are:-

- To understand the cause of religious conflicts and the impact it has on those religious groups (Hinduism, Sikhism and Christianity),
- To determine whether young adults are aware of these disparities,
- To find ways/methods of conflict resolution with these communities.

For the methodology, primary data analysis will be done in the form of semi-structured interviews of a few young adults. Secondary data analysis will be done of newspaper articles and web resources.

This paper will prompt future in-depth studies on this topic, as conflicts within these communities are not highly researched. Since this is a qualitative research and a small sample study, further research can be done on it.

¹³ **This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review**

KEY WORDS

Religious Conflicts, Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, Disparities, Discrimination, Conflict Resolution.

INTRODUCTION

(Indian/Global context)

India is one of the most diverse countries in the world. It can be seen in the geographical topography, regions, cultures, languages, architecture, religions, art forms, etc. Even though English and Hindi are widely used for official purposes, India is the only country that has 22 official languages.

According to the Constitution of India, the Freedom of Religion (Article 25 – 28) is a fundamental right of every citizen: -

- (Article 25) Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice, and propagation of religion.
- (Article 26) Freedom to manage religious affairs.
- (Article 27) Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any religion.
- (Article 28) Freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain education institutions.

India is a country in which its citizens practice various religions like Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, Islam, Jainism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, etc. Over 70 percent of the entire population are Hindus, while the remainder form minority groups of the other religions. All these religions are quite different in their own way, but the core teachings of peace, love and harmony, and forgiveness are similar.

Due to such great differences in the religious beliefs of people, conflicts have risen.

History of Sikhism in India

The beginning of Sikhism (*sikha*, discipline) early in the sixteenth century followed a major development in the history of religions in India over the previous 800 years, namely, the arrival and growth of Islam. Nanak Dev (1469-1539), the founder of Sikhism, was an upper-caste Hindu

(of the Khatri caste of traders, originally Kshatriyas). From his experiences and reflections, he developed an acute dissatisfaction with the ritualism, Idol worship, Magic, and the miracles of faith into which he was born, and with the stranglehold of the Brahmans over it.

Nanak also took a positive view of worldly existence, and of the householder's life and productive labour. He rejected caste distinctions and the traditional idea of renunciation. Above all, he extolled the virtue of a life of religious obedience and devotion focused on an abstract concept of divinity and affirming the same through 'name remembrance' (*name simran*), that is, recitation and singing of hymns. Declaring that there were no true Hindus or Muslims to be found anywhere, he called for a third path consisting of moral duty (*Dharma*), human effort (*karma*), spiritual knowledge, truth, and divine benevolence.

In all this, Nanak was carrying forward the medieval Sant tradition of syncretic religious devotionism, which had given rise to many 'paths' (*panths*) or sects. The disciples who gathered around him and carried forward his teachings after his death came to be called the Nanak Panthis or, later, Sikhs. Some of his followers did not follow all his core teachings and, like his son who became a renouncer, founded other sects. Other changes and dilutions of dogma and practice, particularly the latter, occurred over the next two centuries, blurring the distinction between Sikhism and caste Hinduism, and rendering the Sikh identity rather 'misty'. Simultaneously, changing historical circumstances – which brought the Jhats into the Sikh fold in large numbers, and also created suspicions in the minds of the Muslim rulers about the loyalty of the Sikhs – radically altered the pacifist character of the Sikh community.

The tenth guru of the Sikhs, Gobind Rai (1666 – 1708), intervened effectively on all fronts – theological, practical, social and political – and created a sharpened sense of identity among the Sikhs by instituting (in 1699) a ritual of initiation (called *pahul*), and laying down norms of conduct including the injunction to retain bodily hair unshorn. He also asked all Sikh men to uniformly substitute Singh ('lion', the caste name of the Rajputs) for their various last names, and the women were to call themselves Kaur ('lioness').

The institution of these requirements also created unintended divisions among the Sikhs, between those who went through *pahul*, also called *Amritdhari* ('bearer of nectar', the baptismal water); those who kept their hair and beards, the *Keshdhari* ('bearer of hair'); and those who affirmed the Sikh identity but did not immediately follow the new injunction, called the *Sahajdhari* ('bearer of spontaneous, inner light'). The first category also called themselves the *Khalsa*, or the 'pure' and the 'chosen of God' and were to play a hegemonistic role in defining the Sikh identity.

A hundred years after Guru Gobind Singh established the Khalsa, a Jhat Sikh chieftain, Ranjit Singh (1780 – 1839) established the Kingdom of Lahore. However, it did not last long after his death. In the aftermath of the defeat of the Sikhs by the British in 1846, several reformist movements emerged among the Sikhs. Of these, the most notable were the *Nirankari* and the *Namdhari* movements. Both sectarian in character and acknowledged gurus after Gobind Singh, who had proclaimed closure of the line of personal gurus. The beliefs of these sects were therefore considered violative of the true Khalsa faith by orthodox Sikhs. The *Nirankaris* called for the teachings of Guru Nanak who had characterized divinity as formless (*nirankar*). The *Namdharis* focused their attention on regenerating the Khalsa as instituted by Guru Gobind. A modernist version of the same effort [namely, Khalsa rejuvenation] was the agenda of the so-called Singh Sabhas which also had a considerable agenda of secular goals. Currently, the Namdharis are not very much in the news, conflict with the Nirankaris and the orthodox Akalis have resulted in violence and loss of life. The fundamentalist preacher Jarnail Singh Bhindrawale, who later came into conflict with the government on the issue of Sikh grievances, originally appeared in public (in 1978) as a fierce opponent for the Nirankaris.

From the foregoing account of developments in the long history of Indian religions, pluralistic tendencies characterize them all, particularly Hinduism, which lacks a founder or a set of fundamentals of belief and practice or a 'church'. And yet they share a concern with unity in diversity, or the absolute transcending it is myriad expressions. The notions of dharma and karma are key ideas in the metaphysical foundations of each.

History of Christianity in India

(Christianity is believed to have come to India in the 1st century through Saint Thomas who formed the Saint Thomas Christians in Kerala. Later in the 15th and 16th centuries European Missionaries brought in Christianity in places such as Goa and Mangalore. Protestant Missionaries came in the 18th and 19th centuries to North-East India.)

Of the religions that originated outside India but found a home here, Christianity is the oldest. If traditional students believed it was brought to Kerala by the Apostle Saint Thomas under the auspices of the Nestorian church. Written records testify to the presence of Christians in India from the sixth century onwards. The Thomas Christians are also known as Syrian Christians for, originally, their liturgy was in Syriac and they acknowledged the jurisdiction of Syrian Patriarch of the East in Damascus (Syria). Conversions seem to have been made locally among upper-caste

Hindus only. The community has remained confined to Kerala. It subscribes to the various fundamentals of Christian faith - such as Immaculate Conception, the Divinity of Jesus, and the Status of the Bible as revealed scripture - and practice (for example, celebration of the Eucharist).

In the middle of the sixteenth century, Jesuit missionaries made Goa as their base after it became a part of the Portuguese Colonial Empire, and spread out to other parts of South India, and Sri Lanka and even ventured north. Inevitably, they encountered the Thomas Christians, who were asked to sever ties with the Nestorian church and come under the jurisdiction of Rome. This led to a split among them: while about one half of the community complied, the rest resisted, and reaffirmed their loyalty to the Syrian Patriarch of Antioch. A long lasting issue causing dissension among the Thomas Christians as well as the Jesuits was whether missionary activity was to be confined among the upper castes, and whether it was to be deemed as a religious institution and abolished, or only a secular social arrangement and therefore tolerated.

The arrival of the British in India in the mid-eighteenth century had at first no impact on the spread of Christianity, as the East India company in deference to the wishes of the home government did not allow missionary activity. It was only in the early nineteenth century that the British Parliament removed the restriction and chaplains of the Company began to make converts. The Anglican diocese of Calcutta was founded in 1814. To begin with, Anglican chaplains administered to the spiritual needs of the British in India, but an Indian Church had also come into existence by the end of the nineteenth century. A close association of the Church with the State (the colonial dispensation) was a liability and came to be loosened by the 1930s. Meanwhile, Anglicans, Protestants and non-conformist societies had sent out missions, producing a plurality of churches and an interflow between congregations. Thus, some Thomas Christians became Protestants and established the Mar Thomas (Syriac for St Thomas) Church. The majority, however, remained loyal to the Syrian Patriarch, nominally acknowledging his spiritual authority, but otherwise independent. They are known as the members of the Jacobite or Orthodox Church.

In 1947, the year of India's Independence, the Anglican Methodist and other Protestant churches came together to establish the Church of South India. Cinderella efforts in the north resulted in the establishment of a united Protestant church in 1970. The predominance of Roman Catholics nearly (60 percent) is a noteworthy feature of the Christian community in India. Also, noteworthy has been the search for Indian idioms of expression. Christians of all denominations have retained many of their conversion beliefs, attitudes, and ceremonies incorporating them into Christianity. Evangelicalism has also remained alive and is indeed a cherished goal. The fundamental right to

propagate one's religion and not merely to profess and practice it, was written into the Indian Constitution (Article 30), to accommodate Christian sentiment on the subject.

RATIONALE

This paper is easily relatable to those belonging to the minority communities mentioned, along with other minority communities of religion, language, region, sexuality, etc. It also brings into focus the struggles of these groups, especially while trying to fit in with the mainstream society and majoritarian influences.

Unfortunately, this is not a highly researched area of study as it looks at the negative impact of social violence and discrimination of minority communities that may not actually have a 'voice' today. Bringing to light the problems that these groups have faced due to majoritarian groups, makes us realize that we as a country have failed them.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the paper are:-

- To understand the cause of religious conflicts and the impact it has on those religious groups (Hinduism, Sikhism and Christianity),
- To determine whether young adults are aware of these disparities,
- To find ways/methods of conflict resolution with these communities.

METHODOLOGY

Primary Data Analysis

A semi-structured interview is open, allowing new ideas to be brought up during the interview because of what the interviewee says. Semi-structured interviews are widely used in qualitative research. This paper involves the use of both primary and secondary data analysis.

The primary data analysis has been done by interviewing a few young adults [12], from which 6 were belonging/following/practicing Sikhism, and the other 6 were of Christianity. Of the total young adults, 7 individuals were females, and 5 individuals were males.

CHRISTIANITY

- All persons mentioned that they were somewhat aware of the violence against Christians in India. While not everyone was open about describing the types of conflicts, an individual said that the conflicts he has witnessed are not always visible in society. They all had mentioned that these conflicts have a lasting impact on a person's mind. It can cause anxiety, fear of the unknown, hatred, division, uncertainty, etc. People enter the violent acts without even understanding the root cause of what is happening.
- While everyone mentioned that they did not believe so, they were optimistic that at least a few might be aware of the discrimination.
- 3 individuals said that they have not faced religious discrimination, while 1 mentioned that she was not being treated fairly due to her religion, another because her surname is 'Hindu' while she isn't, and the last in relation with accusations against the Bible. All the individuals mentioned that they do believe that there is discrimination within Christianity. They also said that it was based on the sects of Christianity, and on the understanding and interpretation of the Bible.
- They all believed that conflict resolution was important, and that dialogue, proper communication was necessary for positive impact. However, one individual mentioned that it would be difficult to achieve it because of the vastness of the population. Proper dialogue and communication, regular meetings with various religious heads for general peace, open to discussion, and making people aware about it.

(All persons mentioned that they were somewhat aware of the violence against Christians in India.

Only one mentioned that they have faced religious discrimination, while the others did not.

They all had mentioned that these conflicts have a lasting impact on a person's mind. It can cause anxiety, fear of the unknown, hatred, division, uncertainty. People enter the violent acts without even understanding the root cause of what is happening.

While everyone mentioned that they did not believe so, they were optimistic that at least a few might be aware of the discrimination.

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While not everyone was open about describing the conflicts, an individual said that the conflicts he has witnessed are not always visible in society.

All the individuals mentioned that they do believe that there is discrimination within Christianity. They also said that it was based on the sects of Christianity, and on the understanding and interpretation of the Bible.)

SIKHISM

- 2 individuals were able to provide a proper and in-depth view about the Anti-Sikh riots. They had mentioned the impact the riots had on the Sikh community, in terms of loss or life, property, livelihood and injury. They also stated that the aftermath of the riots forced the Sikh community to believe that they were a minority group in the country. They also mentioned that there was low tolerance between the different sects of Sikhism, and that the interactions between different sects and classes of Sikhism were non-existent.
- They spoke about various forms of modern violence, like the tearing of the '*Guru Granth Sahib*', and how people who were Dalit Sikhs, being attacked by villagers because of their caste. While some optimistically stated that everyone in the community was aware about these conflicts, a few had said that people in rural areas might not be totally aware about it.
- However, everyone mentioned that conflict resolution was very important, and in need of in this diverse setting.

(2 individuals were able to provide a proper and in-depth view about the anti-Sikh riots. The others weren't able to speak about it or were not totally aware about its history.

They also mentioned that there was low tolerance between the different sects of Sikhism, and that the interactions between different sects and classes of Sikhism were low/nonexistent.

2 individuals had mentioned the impact the riots had on the Sikh community, in terms of loss or life, property, livelihood and injury. They also stated that the aftermath of the riots forced the Sikh community to believe that they were a minority group in the country.

They spoke about various forms of modern violence, like the tearing of the guru granth sahib, and how people who are Dalit Sikhs being attacked by villagers because of their caste.

No one mentioned that they faced any form of discrimination based on religion.

While some optimistically stated that everyone in the community was aware about these conflicts, a few had stated that people in rural areas might not be totally aware about it.

Peaceful negotiation is necessary for good conflict resolution. Also, due to India's diversity, people should be aware and respectful of others' identities, religions, and cultures. Conflicts can be reduced if each community is given due justice to their demands and everyone is given equal respect and importance. Also, good leaders are required to understand the grievances of the people and help them.

Conflict resolution is the key to growth in society. It has a positive impact on all the communities by making them more sensitive and tolerant towards the other communities. Peaceful resolution always results in a positive conclusion and leads to the avoidance of unwanted loss of life and property. The key is to align the beliefs of all communities to harbor brotherhood and unity through conflict resolution.)

Secondary Data Analysis

The secondary data analysis was done on web resources like newspaper articles, books, magazines, journals, etc. It is an analysis of the overview as well as the aftermath of the religious conflicts in Christianity and Sikhism.

Anti-Sikh riots [overview]

In the 1970s, Sikhs in Punjab had sought autonomy and complained about domination by the Hindu. The Indira Gandhi government arrested thousands of Sikhs for their opposition and demands particularly during Indian Emergency. In Indira Gandhi's attempt to "save democracy" through the Emergency, India's constitution was suspended, 140,000 people were arrested without due process, of which 40,000 were Sikhs.

After the Emergency was lifted, during elections, she supported Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a Sikh leader, to undermine the Akali Dal, the largest Sikh political party. However, Bhindranwale began to oppose the central government and moved his political base to the Darbar Sahib (Golden temple) in Amritsar, demanding creation of Punjab as a new country. In June 1984, under orders from Indira Gandhi, the Indian army attacked the Golden temple with tanks and armoured vehicles, due to the presence of Sikh Khalistanis armed with weapons inside. Thousands of Sikhs died during the attack. In retaliation for the storming of the Golden temple, Indira Gandhi was assassinated on 31 October 1984 by two Sikh bodyguards.

The assassination provoked mass rioting against Sikh. During the 1984 anti-Sikh pogroms in Delhi, government and police officials aided Indian National Congress party worker gangs in "methodically and systematically" targeting Sikhs and Sikh homes. As a result of the pogroms 10,000–17,000 were burned alive or otherwise killed, Sikh people suffered massive property damage, and at least 50,000 Sikhs were displaced.

The 1984 riots fueled the Sikh insurgency movement. In the peak years of the insurgency, religious violence by separatists, government-sponsored groups, and the paramilitary arms of the government was endemic on all sides. Human Rights Watch reports that separatists were responsible for "massacre of civilians, attacks upon Hindu minorities in the state, indiscriminate bomb attacks in crowded places, and the assassination of a number of political leaders". Human Rights Watch also stated that the Indian Government's response "led to the arbitrary detention, torture, extrajudicial execution, and enforced disappearance of thousands of Sikhs". The insurgency paralyzed Punjab's economy until peace initiatives and elections were held in the 1990s. Allegations of cover-up and shielding of political leaders of Indian National Congress over their role in 1984 riot crimes, have been widespread.

Anti-Christian violence [overview]

A 1999 Human Rights Watch report states increasing levels of religious violence on Christians in India, perpetrated by Hindu organizations. In 2000, acts of religious violence against Christians included forcible reconversion of converted Christians to Hinduism, distribution of threatening literature and destruction of Christian cemeteries. According to a 2008 report by Hudson Institute, "extremist Hindus have increased their attacks on Christians, until there are now several hundred per year. But it did not make news in the U.S. until a foreigner was attacked." In Orissa, starting December 2007, Christians have been attacked in Kandhamal and other districts, resulting in the deaths of two Hindus and one Christian, and the destruction of houses and churches. Hindus claim that Christians killed a Hindu saint Laxmananand, and the attacks on Christians were in retaliation. However, there was no conclusive proof to support this claim. Twenty people were arrested following the attacks on churches. Similarly, starting 14 September 2008, there were numerous incidents of violence against the Christian community in Karnataka.

In 2007, foreign Christian missionaries became targets of attacks.

Graham Stuart Staines (1941 – 23 January 1999) an Australian Christian missionary who, along with his two sons Philip (aged 10) and Timothy (aged 6), was burnt to death by a gang of Hindu Bajrang Dal fundamentalists while sleeping in his station wagon at Manoharpur village in Kendujhar district in Odisha, India on 23 January 1999. (In 2003, a Bajrang Dal activist, Dara Singh, was convicted of leading the gang that murdered Graham Staines and his sons and was sentenced to life in prison.)

In its annual human rights reports for 1999, the United States Department of State criticized India for "increasing societal violence against Christians." The report listed over 90 incidents of anti-Christian violence, ranging from damage of religious property to violence against Christian pilgrims.

In Madhya Pradesh, unidentified persons set two statues inside St Peter and Paul Church in Jabalpur on fire. In Karnataka, religious violence was targeted against Christians in 2008.

DISCUSSION

This is not a quantitative study but a qualitative study. This indicates that the results are not very observable. They have a subtle influence on an individual's opinions and thinking process.

This paper will prompt future in-depth studies on this topic, as conflicts within these communities are not highly researched.

It is a small sample study. Thus, the results produced are finite. If this study is replicated on a larger scale, the base finding would remain the same, but there would be some diversity in the general awareness of people, as well as in the methods of conflict resolution.

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CONNECTION ERROR:

Assessing Accessibility of School Counselors¹⁴

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ABSTRACT:

Mental health issues among students are automatically assumed to be related to academics. Few (school psychology) studies in India have focused only on problems such as learning disabilities that are typically assessed in school settings (Ramalingam & Nath, 2012). However, the identity of being a 'student' does not eclipse the fact that the child/adolescent is also a part of larger society, and that mental health issues could be related to non-academic factors like family, abuse, etc.

The reason for the focus on a 'student population' as opposed to the 'child and adolescent population' is due to the comparative convenience of introducing large-scale mental health awareness and intervention through schools, instead of trying to reach out to children/adolescents individually. School counselors play a crucial role in countering the child and adolescent mental health crisis. Although India is struggling to meet the demand for psychologists, their availability does not imply accessibility, especially in the case of school counselors.

The present study aims to explore the extent of utilization of school counselors who are already available in certain schools, and suggestions about making them more approachable to students will be made. The role of teachers as a bridge between students and counselors will be investigated. Primary data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews of some students, teachers, and school counselors of selected schools in Pune. Secondary data analysis of previously conducted studies has been used to suggest changes to improve the student-counselor connection.

OBJECTIVES:

The present study aims to explore the extent of utilization of school counselors who are already

¹⁴ **This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review**

available in certain schools. Suggestions about making school counselors more approachable to students will be made.

RATIONALE:

Many psychologists are working towards shortening the treatment gap as well as trying to manage the shortage of mental health professionals in our country. The current researcher felt it would be interesting to explore how psychologists are received and utilized in settings where they are already available. This study could thus highlight what factors need to be improved in current as well as upcoming initiatives that are trying to provide counselors to the public, to ensure their approachability and utilization.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

A study by **Venkatesan & Shyam (2015)** showed that counselors want to focus on student problems and issues, while parents and teachers want them to undertake academic advising, student discipline, conflict resolution, crisis intervention, career choice and guidance. The school administration and students expect them to liaise, handle admissions and conduct staff enrichment programs. They observed that consequently, others tend to view school counselors as substitute teachers, quasi-administrators or as necessary to be involved in non-counseling tasks like examination or invigilation duties, counting or collecting answer scripts, teaching special elective courses, time or attendance keepers, record assistants or paper filing clerks thereby severely hindering their main role (Perera-Diltz & Matson, 2008; Perusse et. al. 2004). In the West, school counseling has advanced to mandatorily address issues like student-counselor ratio, opportunity cost of non-counseling or super-specialty areas like kindergarten counseling, promotion of equity and child rights, advocacy, students with multicultural issues, CWSN, disadvantaged and marginalized populations, teenage pregnancy, HIV, childhood suicide, sudden death, drug- alcohol abuse, physical-sexual abuse, school shootings, kidnaps, fire mishaps, building collapses, hurricanes and terrorist threats (Barrett, Lester & Durham, 2011; Stone & Dahir, 2006; Farber, 2005; Sears & Granello, 2002).

Kodad and Kazi (2014) found that there was an imminent need for counselling in the following areas:

- **Academic success:** The school counselors can help the students in realizing their highest potential and can help in removing blocks to academic success, if any.
- **Career and vocational guidance:** School counsellors can help by providing information on various career and vocational options available as well as guide the students in choosing the right career based on suitable aptitude tests.

- **Personal and Social development:** The school counsellor helps to identify talents of the students and helps to nurture these talents. The school counsellor helps in improving the communication and interpersonal skills of the students.

- **Resolving psychosocial problems:** Stress, loneliness, bullying, ragging, peer adjustments, parental and teacher pressure are some of the possible psychosocial problems of students which can be resolved by a school counsellor. In extreme cases, the counsellor may refer the students to psychologist, psychiatrist, or other specialized personnel.

- **Counselling for the parents:** An especially important revelation is that the parents also need to be counselled. The student counsellor may provide counselling to the parents on the following issues: i. The necessity to accept the child as he is with his strengths and weaknesses. ii. The ill effects of undue pressure and stress on the child to excel academically. iii. The interests and aptitude of the child and his suitability and choice of career. iv. Learning disabilities of the child, if any, and the coping strategies. v. The psychosocial problems of the child, if any and the coping strategies. vi. Removing the stigma attached to counselling.

- **Counselling for the teachers and the school staff:** The teachers and the school staff also need counselling to deal effectively with the huge number of students coming from diverse backgrounds and holding unique individualities. The counsellor should focus on the following issues: i. An understanding of the futility of the Corporal Punishment. ii. Understanding that each child is unique and accepts every student as he is. iii. Identifying learning disabilities of the students. iv. Identifying psychosocial / adjustment problems of the child. v. Ways to bring the best out of each student. vi. Overall development of the students.

- **Counsellor as an individual and as a team member:** The school counsellor works individually with the students as well as in the capacity of a team member, the team comprising the teachers, the school staff, and the parents.

- **Training for school counsellors in India:** This is one area which needs to be strengthened as there are very few institutes in India offering courses on school counselling.

- **Counselling in private and government schools in India:** It is found that counselling as a profession has made a place in most of the high-profile private schools of India. However, it is yet to establish itself in government schools, though there is news of a Government Order to be issued for appointment of school counsellors.

- **Preventive, Remedial and Developmental functions of school counseling:** A school counsellor helps in early identification of problem behaviours and takes suitable steps to prevent the onset of psychosocial problems. i. In the case of psychosocial problems detected after their onset, the school counsellor works towards finding suitable remedies. ii. The school counselor also engages in individual and group developmental activities

METHODOLOGY:

For the current study, primary data was collected using online structured questionnaires, in an attempt to understand how students perceived school counselors, what factors made them hesitate to approach the counselor, and what changes they would want in order to improve the counselor's approachability. 30 students between the ages of 16 to 18 years, from 6 I.C.S.E. schools, were interviewed. 3 Teachers from different I.C.S.E. schools were interviewed in order to understand the teachers' perspective and understanding of students' mental health issues, as well as to assess the criteria they use it to decide whether a student needs to be referred to the school counselor. 3 School counselors from different schools were interviewed to understand the kind of issues they are usually asked to help a student with, and to enquire about mental health awareness workshops or training given to teachers and students by the school.

DATA FINDINGS:

A. Questionnaire for Students:

An online questionnaire was sent out and was filled by 30 students, between the ages of 16 and 18 years. These students had completed their schooling from I.C.S.E. schools in Pune. The questionnaire included a section about the current study and the purpose of the questionnaire, for informed consent.

Demographic details that were asked were: Age, Gender, and the Name of the school.

Age of Respondents (n=30):

Age	No. of Respondents
16	17
17	6
18	7

Gender of Respondents (n = 30):

Gender	No. of Respondents
Male	14
Female	16

School attended by Respondents (n = 30):

School	No. of Respondents
S1	8
S2	8
S3	3
S4	3
S5	6
S6	1

The questionnaire for students consisted of 8 questions:

1. Was a school counselor available for the students in your school?
2. What issues do school counselors generally help students with?
3. Do you know any friends/ classmates who would go to the school counselor?
4. Have you ever gone to the school counselor during your school years?
5. In what situations would you personally feel the need to seek the school counselor's help?
6. Are there any reasons that would make you hesitate to seek the counselor?
7. Would you have any prior expectations from a counselor?
8. According to you, how can school counselors be made more approachable for students?

The first 4 questions enquired about the awareness of the availability of a school counselor whereas the next 4 questions aimed to understand the student's perspective of the counselor and to improve their experience of counseling. 2 out of the 30 respondents expressed that they were not sure if a school counselor was available in their school at all. This first question is the very fundamental issue that needs to be actively

addressed. Schools should advertise the availability of a school counselor through notice boards and through teachers regularly at the very least. 4 respondents were not sure about what issues the students could approach a school counselor for. 1 respondent believed that school counselors only identify the issue, and then refer the student to a private practitioner for therapy. 4 students were not aware that the school counselor could help them with psycho-social issues. 4 students believed school counselors only helped with psycho-social issues and not academic difficulty and behavioral issues. Thus, 13 out of 30 respondents were not fully aware of the functions of a school counselor, despite knowing that a counselors were available for them in their school.

However, 27 out of 30 respondents revealed that they knew at least one friend or classmate who would visit the school counselor. These 27 respondents included 12 out of the 13 students who were not aware of the functions of the school counselor. This could indicate that conversations about mental health between classmates (if they occur at all) are not contributing to awareness about the counselor's services as much as they should. 9 out of 30 respondents reported that they had visited the school counselor at least once in their school years. These 9 respondents also knew other classmates who have visited the school counselor. Only 2 out of these 9 respondents were not aware that school counselors helped with psycho-social issues too, apart from academic difficulties.

18 out of the 21 respondents who had never visited the counselor in school, knew other classmates who had. 11 out of these 18 respondents were still not fully aware of the range of issues that school counselors helped students with.

Thus, students who have visited the counselor at least once were better aware of the services provided by the counselor as opposed to those who had not visited the counselor at all.

The 4 questions assessing awareness showed an overall shortfall.

For the 5th question that asked what issue would personally cause the respondent to visit the school counselor, 10 out of 30 students gave only school and academic-related reasons. 2 respondents said that they would not approach the counselor at all. The rest gave responses such as stress, depression, mood swings and family issues. 8 out of 30 respondents said that they would hesitate to approach the counselor due to fear of being vulnerable and being judged by the counselor. 6 respondents expressed concerns related to confidentiality and privacy. 5 respondents said they would worry about being labelled and how their peers would react. 3 respondents said they could have difficulty in expressing or communicating their difficulties to a counselor. 11 out of 30 respondents mentioned that they would not hesitate to visit the school counselor, but it is interesting to note that 5 of these 11 students had expressed that they would approach the counselor only for academic problems.

When asked about what expectations would the respondents have from a counselor, 9 out of 30 respondents explicitly used the word 'understanding', saying that they would expect the counselor to be understanding. 13 respondents expressed that they would not have any expectations from the counselor. Other respondents mentioned expectations of confidentiality, comfort, approachability, and objectivity.

Respondents were asked what improvements could be made to make the counselors seem more approachable. The following suggestions were made:

1. The school and teachers should frequently encourage students to approach the counselor
2. The counselor should be visible to students as a member of the school, someone who is seen frequently around the campus.
3. There should be a clear distinction made between counselors and teachers so that the students can feel more comfortable about approaching them. The Counselor's position should not be equated with that of a teacher that are often viewed as disciplinarians.
4. Give students the option of approaching their teachers initially if they are hesitant to visit the counselor directly.
5. The counselors must be open and talk freely about topics like sexuality and depression

when addressing classes so that students can trust the counselor to not be judgmental.

6. There should be regular workshops/ assemblies where the counselor addresses the students and talks about what the counselor helps the students with and how.

Assure confidentiality. Normalize visiting the counselor as students fear being labelled.

B. Questionnaire for Teachers:

3 Teachers from different I.C.S.E. schools answered the online questionnaire. This questionnaire included a section about the purpose of the questionnaire as well as the current study, for informed consent. Demographic details that were asked were: Age, Designation, Duration of Teaching career, and Name of affiliated School.

One of the teachers had taught in two schools, thus the findings describe 4 different schools.

Teacher	Designation	Teaching Experience
T1	Grade 2 Class Teacher	6 years
T2	Music Teacher	8 years
T3	English & History teacher for 8th, 9th 10th grade	39 years

All 3 teachers were aware that a school counselor was available for the students on campus. When asked if they felt whether school counselors should share school duties like substitution, invigilation, etc., teacher T1 agreed, teacher T3 disagreed and teacher T2 said she was not sure. The teachers were asked to select the issues that counselors helped students with. One of the teachers (T2) was not aware that school counselors addressed psycho-social issues. One of the teachers (T3) believed that teachers were responsible for addressing academic difficulties, and

Thus, counselors addressed only behavioral and psycho-social issues. Only one out of the three teachers (T1) reported that school counselors addressed academic difficulty, behavioral issues as well as psycho-social issues.

The teachers were asked if they were given any specific instructions about referring students to the counselor. Teacher T2 shared, “We are expected to make children feel comfortable about visiting the counselor. Not to make them feel like there is any problem with them, but that it is good to have an adult friend to talk to and the counselor is an awesome person. We are expected to report to

the counselor about any behavioural issues and when the children confide in us about their personal problems. Teachers are not allowed to counsel the child because not all teachers are well equipped to counsel.”

Teacher T3 reported, “Yes we are told to send students who seem disturbed and those who misbehave beyond limits, also those who do not concentrate in class.”

Teacher T1 shared that yes, they were given instructions, but chose not to elaborate.

The teachers were asked about the signs they personally looked out for in students that they felt required them to refer the student to the counselor.

Teacher T1 shared, “.Children who can't cope with academics because of disturbed families, [as well as] Behavioral issues.”

Teacher T2 shared, “[if] The child shows signs of laziness, apathy, aggression, sudden outbursts, indifference, gives up on tasks, shyness, never raises his hand even if he knows the answers, doesn't take on any responsibility. Children whose writing is slow, too many errors in writing, difficulty concentrating, difficulty understanding simple concepts, difficulty in expressing his thoughts.”

Teacher T3 shared, “They lack concentration, seek attention by misbehaving or disrupting the class and might resort to being abusive and use physical violence.”

All three teachers had reported that they had referred many students to the counselor over the years and that they also knew many teachers in their school who had done the same.

Teacher T3 also added that she felt school counselors should regularly address teachers and parents about mental health issues to raise awareness so that they can help the children better, as well as identify their own mental health issues.

C. Questionnaire for Counselors:

Three school counselors answered the online questionnaire. The questionnaire included a section

for informed consent. Demographic details of the counselors were:

Counselor	No. of Schools affiliated to	Counseling Experience
C1	1	First year as a school counselor
C2	2	5 years
C3	1	6 years

The counselors were asked if they were assigned other school duties, and if they felt that counselors should be given these duties.

Counselor C1 shared, “Supervision and moderation work, selective substitution. No, I am totally against such extra duties.”

Counselor C2 shared, “Yes, I was asked to do substitution, I was made a co-teacher to the class. No, they should not be given such duties, because that is not what the job profile of a counselor asks for.”

Counselor C3 also said, “Yes, I am given extra duties, and these duties should definitely not be given to a school counselor.”

The counselors were asked to name the range of issues that they have helped students with.

Counselor C1 reported that she had received cases for Selective attention, incomplete homework, and lack of interest in studies, bullying, low confidence, some cases of swearing and hitting classmates.

Counselor C2 reported that she had received cases of Learning difficulties, bullying, behavior issues, and poor social skills.

Counselor C3 reported that she had received cases of Learning difficulties, behavioral issues, psychosomatic concerns, ADHD, self-esteem, and other issues.

All three counselors thus majorly reported cases related to academic issues and behaviour issues and did not mention any case related to psycho-social issues. The cases that they seem to have addressed were probably teacher referrals and does not indicate any student personally approaching them for psycho-social issues.

The counselors were asked if they could think of any factors that made students hesitate to approach the counselor. Counselor C1 believed that fear of being labelled by teachers and classmates could be a factor. Counselor C2 believed concerns about confidentiality, fear of how peers would react, as well as fear of being labelled were factors. Counselor C3 believed that students feared the stigma that was attached with asking for help related to mental health.

All 3 counselors reported that the schools that they worked with did not conduct any regular workshops, orientation programs or training sessions for teachers and/or students that were explicitly directed at raising awareness about mental health, or for encouraging students to approach the counselor.

Counselor C1 suggested that teachers should not complain about the child in front of the child and the class, and probably say that they have the chance to express their needs and problems to the counsellor. She added that schools should conduct more awareness programs to highlight the range of issues that counselors help students with. Counselor C2 suggested that teachers could try spending time with students in ways where they could build a rapport with the child apart from studies, maybe by doing activities. Counselor C3 suggested that efforts should be made to normalize the whole process of sending the child to a counselor.

DISCUSSION:

I.C.S.E. schools are held to a high standard in our country. Children in these schools are expected to be more aware about the world since they belong to a certain

socio-economic class and enjoy a certain position of privilege. These schools have access to extensive and expensive infrastructure. These schools have another element that most public schools still do not have access to a school counselor.

A May 2019 article featured by India Times reported that despite the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) guidelines making it mandatory for schools to have counsellors on board, only three percent private schools, as per a report by the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), have actual appointment records. For the government schools, the situation is far worse.

While other schools are striving to work towards making mandatory, full-time, on-campus

counselors a reality, it is important to assess the extent to which these counselors are being utilized in schools where they are already available. Thus, the current study chose to include I.C.S.E. schools.

In the current study, 30 students from 6 schools, 3 teachers who had taught across 4 schools, and 3 school counselors who had worked with 4 schools, responded to a structured online questionnaire. A total of 9 schools across Pune city were thus represented in some way in this study.

A disappointing discovery was made in the current study: Even in I.C.S.E. schools, not all students were aware that a school counselor was available on campus. 2 out of the 30 students, both from different schools, constitute a relatively small minority, but even then, this response was not expected by the researcher. This brings to light that a considerably basic, simple effort on the school's part is not being made: To advertise the availability of a counselor on campus! This would seem to be an obvious step in making mental health care more accessible, but this step is not being taken by the school.

In addition to this, almost half of the students (13 out of 30) were not fully aware of the range of issues that a school counselor could help them with, despite most of them (27 out of 30) knowing at least one classmate who would visit the counselor in school. Even 1 of the 3 teachers in this study was not aware that school counselors helped students with psycho-social issues too. **Lack of awareness about the functions of the school counselor existed despite students knowing other classmates who had gone for counseling. Furthermore, not all the students who had gone for counseling themselves were aware that school counselors helped with psycho-social issues as well.**

The most common suggestion made by students, teachers, and counselors alike, was that workshops should be held for students not just for awareness, but for increasing familiarity and comfort with the school counselor as well. Currently, none of the 9 schools included in this study have regular workshops/trainings/seminars for students aimed at increasing awareness about mental health or the counselor's role.

Teachers and students cannot be expected to take an initiative in this aspect as the awareness is targeted at them. Thus, the researcher feels that school counselors should take the onus of increasing awareness upon themselves, in all schools that they work with. Simple posters across the campus, briefly addressing students during assemblies, addressing classrooms during free periods, simply being seen on campus during breaks and recess can lead to huge strides in building awareness and familiarity about the availability and functions of the school counselor.

Accessibility, however, requires teachers to play an important role. Teachers need to be trained and sensitized by the school counselor about looking out for signs and symptoms apart from the

ones that manifest themselves as poor academic performance.

The signs shared by teachers showed that they looked out for observable difficulties in academics, and cases of misbehaviour and lack of initiative behavior despite having potential.

None of the teachers reported that they directly spoke to the class about the counselor in general, or that a child approached the teacher personally to discuss any personal issue that they needed help with. The signs that they looked out for would not be observable in students with high-functioning mental health issues.

Counselors are perceived by students as someone to whom teachers send naughty students and poor learners. Teachers should positively refer to the school counselor as someone who can help students to improve themselves irrespective of their academic performance or quality of behaviour, rather than someone who 'fixes' them.

Teachers as well as counselors need to understand the factors that deter students from approaching the counselor for help. The deterrents listed out by students were not unique or unforeseen. Fear of being vulnerable and being judged by the counselor was the most common deterrent mentioned by the students (8 out of 30), whereas concerns related to confidentiality and privacy came second (6 out of 30). Fear of being labelled, how their peers would react, and difficulty in expressing or communicating their difficulties to a counselor were other deterrents mentioned. Although counselors were mostly aware about these deterrents, it was not clear as to what action was being undertaken to counter them.

Students as well as counselors expressed that students have a much better rapport with teachers, and thus, teachers should allow and encourage non-academic conversations between themselves and students. This can help teachers identify psycho-social issues that could otherwise be more difficult to detect.

As highlighted by Kodad & Kadi (2014), school counselors are needed for various purposes, and counselors should take the initiative to strive towards not letting themselves get restricted within the school setting. One of the functions of the counselor, as mentioned by them, included counseling parents as well as school staff. Even if counseling is not practical due to constraints and shortage of resources, the school counselors can attempt to at least address parents and teachers regularly. This not only makes them more aware and sensitive towards their own mental health but can also encourage students to approach the counselor if it is normalized by their teachers and parents.

Each student should be sent to the counselor at least once during their secondary school years to discuss career aspirations. Counselors should regularly address, if not provide personalized

counseling, for students when they begin their 10th standard. The sole purpose for this suggestion is that if any student wishes to visit the counselor, they would not be seen as an exception. It could help familiarize counselors, as well as normalize seeking help.

As this would increase the counselors' workload manifold, it should be the school administration's responsibility to respect the job profile of a counselor and not assign them other staff tasks such as substitutions, invigilations, etc.

Schools are one of the most influential institutions in an individual's life. School counselors could be a source of early identification and management of problematic behaviours and unhealthy coping strategies in young students. Given the huge student population in our country, it is without doubt that school counselors would be able to make a substantial and powerful difference in our nation's mental health crisis. Normalizing and encouraging help-seeking behaviour for mental health in the school years could go a long way in lifelong mental health for the individual. Thus, enrichment of the connection between school counselors and students are crucial.

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SHIFTING THE BALANCE – MANAGING CROSS CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND IDENTITY ¹⁵

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OBJECTIVES

1. To understand how and why discrimination of immigrants is caused in a diverse society (India) due to cultural differences.
2. To understand how an immigrants identity is affected due to cultural diversity in India.

METHODOLOGY

1. Primary data analysis has been done by interviewing few young immigrants in Maharashtra.
2. Secondary data analysis has been done by way of previous studies and online data on the same.

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

1. This paper prompts future studies which will explore the topic in more depth.
2. This is a qualitative and a small sample study.

¹⁵ This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review

INTRODUCTION

India is one of the culturally diverse countries of the world. Immigration of young adults for education or job purposes in our country leads to cultural and ethnic diversity. Questions of identity arise of where they fit in and who they are in this diverse society. When people migrate from one nation to another which also leads to cultural change, carry their knowledge and a sense of distress with them. Their cultural identity is likely to be changed that encourages a sense of belongingness.

“Diversity” refers to the ways that people are different from one another. For instance, gender, culture, religion, sexuality etc.

“Discrimination” is when people treat others badly because they are different from them in some way.

As the research’s ground focus is on immigrants. Here is a basic understanding of the terms. “Immigration” is the international movement of people to a destination country of which they do not possess citizenship to settle or reside there, especially as permanent residents.

Large number of immigrants visit India for education or employment purposes and reside here for a short span of time. They are often called expatriates.

RATIONALE

Discrimination is widely spread in India even today. Possible reasons are prejudices and Stereotype pre-existing in the society. People are judged on how to look, language they speak , sexuality , religion etc. Immigration of young adults enriches the diversity, economic growth, and equality. However, experiences of discrimination break the relationship trust of immigrants Socially and politically as well. Questions of identity arise, of “who they are” and “where they fit” in this diversified country. The adaptation process is complex and may lead to frustration for the same.

This paper will help us to understand if an immigrant youth has faced any kind of discrimination in India and how their identity gets affected due to cultural differences.

Cultural diversity is incredibly significant since people with different cultures have unpleasant feelings for each other because of misunderstandings. Therefore, it is important to know what kind of cultural experiences people from other nations had here in India during their stay for job / education purposes.

Each and every individual face discrimination of some or the other kind at least once in their lifetime. This thought motivated me to understand the possible reasons of discrimination of those who migrate from other countries to India. Also, related studies done previously by great researchers enlightened my work by enhancing my knowledge for the above .

This question of identity not only affects an immigrant but says a lot about India as a whole, globally.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. Migration, cultural bereavement and cultural identity by Dinesh Bhugra and Matthew A Becker.

Individuals who migrate experience multiple stresses that can impact their mental wellbeing, including the loss of cultural norms, religious customs, and social support systems, adjustment to a new culture and changes in identity and concept of self. Migration involves the loss of the familiar, including language, attitudes, values, social structures and support networks. Bhugra notes that racial, cultural, and ethnic identities form part of one's identity, and identity will change with development at a personal as well as at a social level along with migration and acculturation.

2. GULF NEWS ARTICLE

While having an interaction with one of the African student, studying in Indian University , he quoted that ,

“Most of the Africans in India are criminals. I do not know why Indians think we are drug-peddlers or burglars. I am not saying all of us are innocent, but for the fault of a few, all Africans who come to India should not be seen through the prism of discrimination and hatred”.

METHODOLOGY

A semi structured interview is open and allows the flow of new ideas by interviewee. Semi structured interviews are used mostly in qualitative research.

This paper involves both primary and secondary data analysis.

Primary data analysis has been done by interviewing a few young immigrant adults, living in Nagpur and Pune, who are there for the purpose of job , education or just to explore the Indian culture.

Primary data analysis has been done by interviewing 7 immigrant youths.

Today's youths are more aware of the changing time and have more exposure to the other communities and cultures which provide them with better understanding of what “multi culture is “.

When asked if they faced any kind of exclusion or discrimination in India where they live based on race , gender etc. , 6 out of 7 agreed that they faced discrimination at their education place , public places or at their respective office . When asked what the reasons for this discrimination were. Following data was highlighted -

- 4 out of 7 immigrant youths stated that they faced discrimination based on gender. One of the interviewees from Poland said that the gap between man and woman is so huge in India and for the same reason she felt excluded as a participant wherever she went. She also stated that after the work, people (Indians) were more interested in hanging out with her boyfriend for movies, snacks etc. than her as she is a female which made her furious sometimes. The other immigrant female states the same thing above that her point of view was not appreciated much in college just because she is an immigrant and above that a female. However, she stated that the impact was reduced, because she looks more Indian which reduced the impact of gender discrimination but could not be escaped though.

One of the immigrants being a gay man faced a lot of issue in India. He was not openly accepted at his workplace and was sometimes being mocked. He also stated that people here in India have a hard time accepting the gender of an individual. However, it is a quite common thing to be a gay man in his country and is widely accepted. He also stated that local transportation like auto and cab drivers used to charge them a huge amount just because we are foreigners and they think we lack information about things. That is the reason, it's very necessary to have basic information about the country where one moves, he stated.

The other immigrant from Belgium faced the similar issue of gender discrimination. She stated that her opinions and ideas were not much appreciated at the workplace when compared to males by seniors and colleagues just because she is a female. It was very strange for her as she did not face this issue ever in her country.

When the immigrants were asked what all the possible reasons for discrimination in a multi-cultural society like India are. Following reasons were drawn -

- Stereotyping pre-existing in the society that whites do have a very forward culture which can tarnish the Indian culture as well.
- Lack of awareness about other countries and their culture. Teenagers listen to the story what peers or parents tell without validating it, which leads to spreading of wrong information.
- One immigrant stated that, there's A huge disparity between the poor in slums and elites which makes India to be one of the most discriminatory country.
- Indian media portray whites to be as beautiful and acceptable and black to be of low status which affects the mindset of the public as a whole.

- India at a whole is collective society so if parents have a strong opinion about some caste or country. Children generally follow them without looking for correct information which is why there is no end to discrimination in India as multi-cultural country.

When the interviewees were asked if they ever felt judged based on the place where they came from which ultimately affected their identity, 4 out of 7 agreed to this statement. Following descriptions were given -

- Immigrant from Germany stated that he was being judged by a lot of people when he used to eat with his left hand in public places. He was being judged by the way he ate food. It was very strange for him because it is quite common to eat by left hand at his place. Also, he added that some of his Indian friends used to mock him, saying that it is a bad etiquette to eat by left hand in India. Other 2 immigrants stated that showing affection by holding hands, kissing at public places is quite common in their country but when they did anything as such, people gave very awkward looks as if they have committed any crime. One local commented in regional language that, "these people are destroying our Indian culture and should not be allowed to visit in India". The interviewee further added that it was very strange for her to listen to something like this and people literally must hide somewhere in India to make love. One of interviewee stated that she was being judged to speak up openly about sexuality and intimacy in public. Everybody around just started staring at her, judgmentally. She was confused for a few minutes as if she said anything wrong. Most of the people in India still feel that immigrants do spoil Indian culture, which is absolutely not true, she added.

Secondary data analysis has been done by way of preview studies and materials available on the internet.

A group of researchers which includes Esther Garza, Norma Guzman studied "International students' challenges and adjustment to college". As per the analysis, immigrant students cannot escape the cultural shock and changes that they experience during their studies in different countries. This change occurs across physical, biological, social relationship, identity, culture and psychologically. Immigrant students must undergo language difficulties, difficulties in adjusting to various cultures, misunderstandings and complications in peer and faculty communication, poor adaptation etc. Researchers also added that international students undergo isolation and loneliness for being neglected in the class due to various kinds of barriers and places where they belong to.

An article published by Aletta Andre - Being African in India: 'We are seen as demons'.

In that she said that, an African student named Zaharadden was interviewed in Noida (New Delhi). He said that, "People often look at me as if I am different, and hard to be trusted," the tall, softly spoken student explains. "I try to be friendly. I speak Hindi and always laugh. But when I offer biscuits to the neighbours' children, they don't accept." He also told the media that they were often looked upon suspiciously and African students no longer feel safe in India; we must deal with racism at every turn.

Agnes Szabo and professor Colleen Ward in 'Identity development during cultural transition: The role of social-cognitive identity processes' said that immigrants who are more resistant to change and prefer to follow tradition and social norms of their heritage culture are more at risk of identity confusion. However, it is possible for immigrants to prefer the values and norms of the heritage culture, but at the same time develop commitments to the host society. This also leads to better adaptation such as greater self-esteem, self-acceptance, and self-confidence.

RESULT

From the work done so far, it seems that immigrant youth face transitional difficulties. They do undergo cultural shock. The adjustment and adaptation take time. Migration leads to loss of familiarity including language, culture, ethics, social network etc. Therefore, questions of identity arise like, "who they are" and "where they fit in. Cultural diversity is incredibly significant as people from different culture have an unpleasant feeling for each

other due to misunderstandings. What seems to be common in the immigrant's country is certainly viewed as an unpleasant act in India which puts them into fear of when to react and what to react to.

India as a multi-cultural country has deep roots for problems related to discrimination and prejudices ranging from caste, sexuality, race, place of origin etc. racial, cultural and ethnic identities form part of one's identity, and identity will change with development at a personal as well as at a social level along with migration and acculturation.

DISCUSSION

From the result of primary analysis in the form of semi structured interview, it is viewed that: Despite several decades of legislation outlawing discrimination against immigrants on the basis of race, gender, religion and national origins, research documents that it still exists in the India. Discrimination can seriously cause harm those who experience it. This paper will be highly relatable especially to those who belong to African countries as many cases have been reported from immigrants of Nigeria, Kenya, South Africa etc.

The laws are designed in favour of immigrant protection. However, in India there is not a

strong law system in order to implement it.

This is a qualitative and small sample study. However, it proposes a parameter for future quantitative studies. This is just exploratory research which helps to gain an insight for problems, opinions, and expressions beneath immigrants.

This paper prompts the problem faced by immigrants in some parts of Maharashtra. The reasons and problems may vary at large scale, but results may remain the same.

CONCLUSION

Using qualitative research methods, socio-cultural adaptation of international students and colleagues is studied. To maintain the generalization, this research included international students from various countries. The finding indicates that international students face a lot of problems in adjusting and adapting. It takes time and efforts and requires support from different aspects. Humanism only implies that we should be just and fair in our approach: that we should try to understand that immigrant people and cultures also have their legitimate material, moral and social needs, and aspirations. Instead of imposing our conservative 'vision' on them, we should let them choose and facilitate and expedite their choices and vision. Language barriers could affect students' academic learning, participation in different events, and cultural understanding. Therefore, universities should have English program to support their language proficiency.

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BACK TO SCHOOL - INCLUSION OF MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOL CURRICULUM¹⁶

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Abstract

Why is introducing mental health in school curriculum important? As defined by world's health organization "Health is a state of physical, mental and social well-being in which disease and infirmity are absent." Mental health goes hand in hand with physical health. Thus, there is need to introduce basic knowledge about mental health in schools so that student will get an exposure of what mental health actually is ,and they will be well equipped in eliminating the stereotypes and stigmas related to existing in the society.

The objectives of this paper are-

- 1) To know opinions of psychologists and doctors on importance of mental health in school curriculum.
- 2) To know Teacher's perception of needs and their role in supporting children's mental health in schools.
- 3) To analysis the studies done in various countries related to mental health in schools.

The methodology used for this paper is a) primary data collection by taking a semi-structured interview of psychologists, doctors, and teachers as they are closely related to mental health and children. b) Secondary data analysis of previous research data on mental health in schools.

¹⁶ **This paper has not gone through a Plagiarism check and Peer Review**

This paper aims at promoting positive responses to emerging emotional and behavioral problems, and it will provide social and learning environments that are supportive to emotional well-being.

Introduction

Why is introducing mental health in school curriculum important? As defined by World's health organization "Health is a state of physical, mental and social well-being in which disease and infirmity are absent." Mental health goes hand in hand with physical health. Students learn about physical health but are unaware of mental health.

Mental health problems are on the rise among adolescents and young adults. (AJMC) Fifty percent of mental illness begins by the age of 14, according to the American Psychiatric Association. Suicide is the third leading cause of death for people aged 10 to 24. Therefore, adolescence is potentially important time for mental health education. Children spend most of their time in schools. Most of the stress and anxiety come from school and the individuals there. For example - academic stress, increase in competition among students, bullying and many more. We should take steps to ensure that children are better able to adapt and cope up with challenges they face.

It is a need to increase mental health literacy (MHL). Mental health literacy is a construct that has arisen from the domain of health literacy (HL). Mental health literacy has been defined as: understanding how to obtain and maintain positive mental health; understanding mental disorders and their treatments; decreasing stigma related to mental health and disorders; and enhancing help - seeking efficacy. The best way to understand mental health is to educate children, teacher as well as parents. That starts with making mental health a required part of education across all schools so that children will get an exposure of what mental health actually is , and they will be equipped in eliminating the stereotypes and stigmas that revolves around mental health in India.

Thus, there is a need to introduce basic knowledge about mental health and create awareness in schools.

This paper aims at promoting positive responses to emerging behavioral problems and to provide social and learning environment that are supportive to emotional well-being and collective growth.

Rationale

It is a need of an hour to spread basic information of mental health in school curriculum. There are many misconceptions regarding mental health and illness. Fear and stigma are associated with mental illness, this stops people from reaching out and seeking help, and they continue to suffer. People are not aware of that mental health disorders are just like physical illnesses. To eliminate these stigmas awareness about mental health is essential. So, it should be included in school curriculum.

Why curriculum?

In some school's counselors are appointed to meet the need of children's mental health problems. Only the better off schools can do this. So, to spread this knowledge to every student and to break socio-economic barrier, inclusion of mental health in school curriculum is must.

Why school children?

They are the future generation of doctors, teachers and the " general public " with the power of sustain stigmas and discrimination related to mental health, or eliminate it .

They do not have clear idea of mental health and the stereotypes associated with it are not fully developed until adolescence or early adulthood. So, they are a target audience for attitude change programs seeking to influence young minds before unhealthy attitude and beliefs towards mental health and illness become entrenched.

Objectives

The objectives of this paper are-

- 1) To know opinions of psychologists and doctors on importance of mental health in school curriculum.
- 2) To know Teacher's perception of needs and their role in supporting children's mental health in schools.
- 3) To analysis the studies done in various countries related to mental health in schools.

Methodology

Methods of data collection for this paper –

Primary data analysis and secondary data analysis.

Primary data analysis

It is qualitative in nature. This includes semi structured interviews of doctors, psychologist and teachers on their views on importance of mental health in school curriculum.

Description of primary data -

This study was conducted by interviewing 6 people that included 2 doctors, 2 teachers and 2 psychologists. The interviewees were asked questions based on why there is a need of including mental health in school curriculum and importance of mental health in school curriculum, topics that should be included in curriculum, at what age or class they should be introduced to this topic, and their roles in supporting children's mental health in schools.

Being physical health and mental health expert doctors and psychologists have an important role in the recognition of mental health problems and in promoting mental well-being of all children. Doctors and psychologists know about the mind body continuum. Mental health affects physical health and vice-versa. So, mental health professionals and physical health professionals are chosen as a sample in this study. They also influence the process of making a curriculum.

Analysis is based on following criteria:

-Need and Importance

-Change

-Barriers and solutions

-Role

All interviewees said yes when they were asked about the need of mental health in school curriculum. As overall problems are increased, they have a larger effect on children's mental health. Such as:

- changing family structures is affecting children's mental health

-changing lifestyles, immense technological advances, academic problems, increased social life have contributed to stress.

- Aggression and violence among students are a matter of concern these days. The factors like substance abuse, Combination of stressful family socioeconomic factors, child sexual abuse, bullying leads to aggression and violence among children. (AACAP)

Sometimes, all these problems can lead to suicides.

Children must face all these problems from school age. There are counselors in most schools to solve these problems and help them, but they are not available in all schools. So, for their own understanding of mental health and self-learning as a subject in interesting ways can help them. It need not be the syllabus they have to learn, instead of that it can be introduced through tasks and doing things.

When asked about benefits and changes that would take place if mental health is introduced in schools, they agreed that it will be beneficial and there will be positive changes supporting mental health of children. One of them also said that we are already seeing that child sexual abuse prevention workshops for parents, teachers and students are helping in great deal. Similarly, if they are exposed to self-care, emotional intelligence, good communication, expression of their feelings and conflict resolution for couple of years it will help them.

- They will be able to identify and open about their own problems and seek help.

- There is a need of more sensitization and awareness about mental illness. There is little inclusion for people with mental illness. Most schools are not equipped to deal with any mental illness. That is because we lack awareness and sensitivity. Awareness about mental health could help.

- Stigmas and stereotypes associated with mental health and illness will be reduced to greater extent.

Hence, for the awareness exposure to mental health is essential. This can be done by introducing mental health in curriculum.

Inclusion of mental health in schools is not an easy task. There are various barriers when it comes to introducing mental health in schools.

-In all school's systems it is a question of work load and training. The training facilities are quite inadequate. As our systems go right now, probably those who are counselors can be

given this additional responsibility of teaching and taking mental health workshops with children.

- There is a shortage of mental health professionals. We need more mental health professionals in India. According to reports from the Indian Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the country needs around 13,000 psychiatrists. To achieve an ideal ratio of psychiatrists to population is about 1: 8000 to 10,000 but currently has just about 3,500 - which is about one psychiatrist for over 2 lakh people! About other mental health professionals, the ratio is even worse - the need of Clinical Psychologists is 20,000 and there are only 1000 available. Also, there are financial barriers to mental health care. Only better off schools have counselors, but local and economically weak schools cannot afford a counselor. This be a job opportunity for MA psychology students. They can do this as an internship, so we have resources and there is a need that can be matched.

Doctors, psychologist, teacher, and parents have an important role in the recognition of mental health problems and in promoting mental wellbeing of all children. Hence it is important to know their roles. Therefore, the interviewees were asked about their roles in supporting children's mental health.

- Doctors said that if they identify a mental health problem in patients, they can encourage them to go to a mental health professional and seek help.

- Psychologists said that they should do psychological screening as a part of medical checkup in schools because adolescence depression is setting in. They can take mental health awareness workshops in schools.

- Teachers said that they should observe students and their behavior and if they think someone has a problem, they can have a dialogue with them or can send them to counsellors and talk to their parents.

The interviewees also stated that there is a crucial role of parents in children's mental health. Parents should provide emotional support to their children. They should accept the child's weaknesses and try to improve them. There should be a good communication between parents and children. The environment at home and the things parents say and do has an influence on child's mental health. They should learn early signs of mental health problems and they should know when and where to seek help. Parents should respect and listen to their children's feelings.

As per the interviewee's basic knowledge about mental health, how to maintain mental health hygiene, common mental health disorders and their causes and symptoms should be included in the school curriculum.

Secondary data analysis

Analysis of previous studies done in various countries related to mental health in schools.

Data is collected from previous research data on mental health in schools. There are various studies done in different countries.

COUNTRIES	AIMS	METHODS	RESULTS AND CONCLUSION
Tanzania, East Africa	<p>1. For mental health promotion, prevention, stigma reduction and care.</p> <p>2. Successful application of a school mental health literacy (MHL) curriculum to increase teacher MHL and therefore help to improve mental health of students.</p>	<p>1. Teacher training workshops on the classroom application of the African guide were used to evaluate its impact on mental health literacy in a sample of Tanzanian secondary school teachers.</p> <p>2. Pre and post training assessment of participant knowledge and attitude was conducted.</p>	<p>Results demonstrate highly significant improvements in teacher's mental health knowledge.</p> <p>Teacher's stigma against mental health decreased significantly.</p> <p>Teachers have reported high rates of help seeking efficacy for themselves as well as students.</p>
UK	To provide basic information of mental illness, and tackle stigma and discrimination.	635 students attended mental health awareness lesson and completed the questionnaire.	<p>Mental health awareness and emotional health promotion into the school curriculum is important.</p> <p>It also provides a basic framework for understanding emotional well-being and mental illness.</p> <p>Programs received a positive response from students and school representatives.</p>
Canada	Improving knowledge and beliefs about mental health may promote help – seeking by adolescents who are suffering from mental health problems.	<p>The participants 118 grade – 9 students 9 (61 boys and 57 girls).</p> <p>The program consisted two 50 minutes sessions. the effects of the program were evaluated before, immediately after 3</p>	<p>Knowledge of mental health /illness and desirable behavior for help – seeking was significantly improved.</p> <p>School staff led programs may have a significant effect on improvement of MHL in secondary school students.</p>

		months after the program, using a self-report questionnaire.	
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According to the research review, school based mental health programs can reach large number of children with more effective way and it will help improving mental health in children.

Review of literature

- A teaching role in mental health

Schools and teachers have an important role in the recognition of mental health problems and in promoting mental wellbeing for all children.

“Research has shown that mental health promotion and prevention programs have significant benefits for children and teenagers. The earlier the intervention and the quicker a problem is picked up, treated and managed, the better the long-term outcome for the child and family,” says consultant psychiatrist Dr Sarah Buckley.

“The role that schools and teachers play in promoting positive mental health in children should not be underestimated. Creating a school ethos which promotes and builds strengths among students, whatever their academic profile, can turn risk into resilience and significantly reduce the prevalence and impact of mental health disorders,” Buckley says.

She explains: “Sometimes teachers are the first people to identify a problem and to let parents know so that they can hopefully access services for their child. We saw the need for a resource or guide for teachers to go to for advice and information on mental health in children and teenagers.”

(<https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/health-family/a-teaching-role-in-mental-health-1.635316?mode=amp>)

The article supports that inclusion of mental health in schools can have positive changes supporting children's mental health and behavioral problems.

There are subjects which are related to mental health in some schools.

In SSC board schools they have personality development as a subject.

In personality development students learn:

- What is personality?
- Self - awareness, goal setting
- Self-monitoring
- Team building
- EQ and stress management

Value education is also a part of curriculum in some schools. In value education they learn:

- Education and values - definition and concept
- Value education and personal development - character formation, introspection
- Value education towards national and global development.
- Constitutional Values: Sovereign, Democracy, Socialism, Secularism, Equality, Justice, Liberty, Freedom, Fraternity
- Social Values: Pity and Probity, Self-Control, Universal Brotherhood.
- Professional Values
- Religious and Moral Values: Tolerance, Wisdom, character.
- Aesthetic Values: Love and Appreciation of literature, fine arts, and respect for the same.
- Environmental Ethical Values

In SSC -10th standard's science book it includes a lesson on social health.

-Social health - Social health is the ability of a person to establish relationship with other persons. Ability to change one's own behavior according to changing social conditions is an important characteristic of social health.

- Factors disturbing social health -Mental stress, Addiction, Incurable disease
- Stress management.

These books have topics related to mental health. The term mental health is not mentioned anywhere. They is too narrowed down topics and are not on a larger point of view.

- Physical health education has a long history and is included in school curriculum long ago.

ICSE board -Science 9th standard book includes:

-Diseases – Causes and Control

-Hygiene – A Key to Healthy Life

CBSE board -Science 9th standard book includes:

Why do we fall ill?

-Significance of health.

-Diseases - causes control

-Prevention and treatment.

-Acute and chronic diseases.

We recognize that a child's physical health education is important enough to have attention devoted to it. It is now time that we should take steps towards their mental health too. As there is information about common physical health diseases in the curriculum, there should be information about common mental health disorders too.

Results

-Data shows that there is a need of mental health inclusion in school curriculum.

- There is an increase in mental health problems and suicide cases in the school students.

-Various schools have counselors to reach out and help students but many schools do not have this advantage due to lack of economic support or lack of support from school administration.

- Many countries are taking initiative to support mental health in schools. Mental health workshops are being held and they are showing positive changes.

Conclusion

-There is a necessity of mental health inclusion in school curriculum.

-As it can cater emerging problems that affects the mental health of adolescence and young adults.

- Inclusion of mental health in schools can address increasing psychological problems of students and will provide holistic approach for development of students.

- Children will stay mentally healthy which will help them to face challenges, stresses, and setbacks. It will also prepare them to be more efficient. Children can connect with self and others and respond to challenging situations and will be able to focus and concentrate.

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ABSTRACTS

Put on Your Dancing Shoes: A Study of Dance Movement Therapy

Aasawari Kulkarni

In society, the pace of development in the field of mental health appears to be slow (Ind Psychiatry J., 2016). Dance is a cultural staple in India. Each state has its own traditional, classical, and/or folk-dance styles (Rangparia,2011). When applied therapeutically dance has health benefits. Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) and its awareness has not reached mainstream society. Thus, the purpose of this research firstly, is to understand how DMT has evolved and how helpful it is. Secondly, it is to reduce the taboo of availing mental health therapy by using methods that are not considered to be clinical.

The objectives of this paper are:

- 1) To analyze the development and the current situation of DMT at the organizational level, with respect to 'Artsphere'.
- 2) To study DMT as a profession and the approaches it uses.
- 3) To explore the benefits of DMT.

For methodology, Primary Data Analysis will be done in the form of semi-structured interviews of DMT practitioners. Secondary Data Analysis, of any source and information available online, will be done.

This paper will contribute by spreading awareness. Findings from this paper would be useful for aspiring dance therapists. This is a qualitative analysis, and a small sample study. This paper will prompt for in depth and future studies on this topic.

Keywords: Dance Movement Therapy, Profession, Awareness, Mental Health.

Hello! How May I Assist Myself? – Unraveling Barriers to Mental Health Service Accessibility Among Corporate Call Center Employees

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Abstract

A scarcity evident in making psychological assistance deliverable in workplaces often depicts the presence of mental health services but marked with a dearth in accessing them. Moreover, they are accessed mainly due to employees having anger issues or needing behavioral corrections; but undermine the need for healing in aspects of mood issues, depression, anxiety, and sleep problems. This further adds to a culture of stigma in seeking mental assistance (Stuart, 2004).

This study focuses on mental health service accessibility, employee willingness to perceive it as a part of wellness and the awareness of supervisors with even knowing that services as these exist. Call center employees have emotionally charged work pressures as they frequently suffer from emotional abuse from unsatisfied customers (Jeong et al., 2005).

The **objectives** of this study will, therefore, focus on –

- Understanding the stigma in seeking mental health assistance or aid
- Finding what gaps lead to an unawareness and a deficiency in accessing mental health services
- Gather ways to make mental health services more deliverable

The **methodology** adopted herein, through a qualitative approach, uses open ended, in-depth interviews to evaluate the responses of 40 corporate employees and 4 managers between the ages 18-30. The **findings** obtained in this ongoing study highlight an inability to disclose mental health issues at the workplace fearing loss of job, an absence of awareness and belittling the need for mental health assistance.

This study shall focus on how to eradicate barriers in mental aid deliverability for the future. The student researcher of this study being a psychology student and a call center employee attempts to voice the mental health distress evident in her work environment whilst encouraging a halt on stigma.

Keywords: Accessibility, Stigma, Abuse, Deliverability

Moving fast and breaking things in the mental health landscape: a feasibility study of mental health apps in India.

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Technology has taken over innumerable aspects of our lives and its growing involvement in the field of mental health is unsurprising. Slowly but surely the AI fever has spread to our brains. In the West, Mental Health Apps (MHApps) have reported a significant impact on the market and society. Recently, MHApps have started cropping up in the Indian mental health landscape but their accessibility, scope and feasibility have scarcely been investigated. Although these apps have been considerably successful in the West, delivering mental health services faces additional challenges in an economically disparate and multifaceted cultural milieu such as India.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the new MHApps in terms of their accessibility, user interface, acceptability, and effectiveness. The study aims to briefly form an understanding of the deliverables and evaluate them in the current mental health environment.

A mixed method approach is employed to facilitate this study. Key informant interviews from psychiatrists, clinical psychologists and counsellors from NGOs will be taken. Their expert opinions will be recorded. Additionally, surveys will be conducted on people (age range: 18 – 45) to receive data on the awareness of MHApps, their acceptability and use. The survey participants will be chosen at random.

The results will help us understand the popularity of the service and its status in the market. The effectiveness of the apps will also be clear from the results. From the results we will be able to reasonably conclude to a certain extent the future of such services and the challenges they will have to overcome in order to be more effective and relevant to the masses.

छप्पन इंच छाती

ATTITUDE TOWARDS HEGEMONIC MASCULINITY ACROSS CASTE IN THE INDIAN MIDDLE CLASS

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The Man has a छप्पन इंच छाती, saves the people single-handedly, destroys the 'villains' and has thus shown that he is a 'Real Man', deserving power as well as the adoration of the masses.

Various conceptions of hyper-masculinity have paved the way for toxicity and hegemony in the attitudes regarding male dominant behavior over other genders as well as other men of marginalized castes and class.

Pradhan and Ram (2010) asked young males in India, what a “real” man is like and received answers such as “[being able to] earn and maintain a family, to take decisions, to physically satisfy spouse/partner, and to procreate besides having a well-built body”. Interestingly the article also notes that the young men see aggressiveness and sexual domination as a form of masculinity, not just to prove their masculinity but to also stamp their superiority over the other gender.

Dasgupta & Gokulsing (2013) further observed that masculinity is in a period of flux, with the definition of what a man is and how he is to behave being uncertain. What is more certainly true is that masculinity as it was played out in the last few hundred years is being challenged. Primary self-defined characteristics such as maintaining a family and earning wages are now

being taken over by many women and this has led to confusion over the nature of masculine performance itself.

Kavita Daiya (2006, 2008) proposes that while violence by men against women has gained ascendancy in recent academic discussions, there needs to be a more deliberate focus on the violence suffered by male bodies in the public sphere.

The above studies, as well as many others, press upon the need to include intersectional variables such as class, caste identity, etc. in future masculinity studies.

The current paper aims to study attitudes towards Masculinity through the Definitions (Cognition), Perception (Affect) and Treatment (Behaviour) that people have observed, developed, and received over time.

How do men internalize and project this attitude in their daily lives and socio-political interactions? How do marginalized men perceive their own gender role in contrast? Is there a difference in perceptions of masculinity between men and women? These will be investigated through the dimensions of Personality, Love/Relationships, Education/Workspace, and Domestic Environment.

Mixed methodology will be carried out. Semi-Structured Interviews and rating scales will be used to collect Primary data (n=10) and will include respondents across various marginalized castes. Secondary data analysis will also be conducted.

The results of the study will add to the body of knowledge from Feminist Psychology that is interrogating masculinity with specificities from our region.

Fabrication of Fallacy: An Analytical Study of the False Memory Depiction in Popular Movies.

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Abstract

Perception can be influenced by media concerning different groups of people. As a result of the importance of media in how an individual obtains information and formulate opinions, how different concepts are presented is important. (Erika Hanley, 2015) cinema is one of the powerful mediums which influence a huge part of society. Many psychological concepts have been used for the experimentation in movies for decades.

Objectives of this research are to study the depiction of false memory and memory manipulation in Bollywood and Hollywood movies and to analyze how realistically these concepts have been portrayed in these movies. Perception of the society about various psychological concepts is often built by the stereotypes spread by the movies. Hence movies need to be made more responsibly. In the name of fiction, filmmakers often present various scientific and psychological concepts irrationally which leads the audience to perceive these concepts in a faulty way.

This research aims to study the factuality of the depiction of memory manipulation and false memories in three specific movies which are Drishyam, Memento and Inception.

This paper uses secondary data analysis to analyze the above -mentioned movies.

This research paper uniquely contributes to further research by its attempt to connect complex psychological concepts and films.

Keywords - False memory, memory manipulation, depiction, perception

Psychology for Everyone- An analytical study of Psychology Representation in the Academic syllabi

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What students learn in classrooms is applied in their personal and professional lives. The purpose of the study is to investigate whether schools have included psychology in every course syllabus as a required compulsory subject. Primary data includes semi structured interviews of teachers and students. Secondary data includes analysis of different school boards like Secondary School Certificate (SSC), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) and International Baccalaureate (IB). A workable blueprint is hoped to be provided through this paper. The study will make data available for future reference. It will contribute to introducing psychology as a compulsory subject in syllabi like environmental science/ physical education. This will help towards making psychology deliverable to each individual as they have received exposure to psychology since school.

Keywords: Compulsory, Education, Psychology, Individual, Exposure, Deliverable

Don't Underestimate the Power of a Common...Woman: Studying the Work-life Balance Challenges for Women

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Career is an important aspect of life today, for men as well as women. But the traditional gender roles based on several unspoken assumptions have not changed yet. And hence a woman is 1st expected to be a good wife, daughter-in-law, mother, and daughter, then a good employee and entrepreneur.

Thus, it becomes difficult to juggle between multiple roles. Options such as work-from-home, flexi-time and maternity leave are provided by the workplaces. But the ultimate result of this is that women may lose their position at workplaces. But even after all these barriers women are going places and doing wonders in their careers with a healthy family life. But how? The objectives of this paper are to study the struggles faced by women to maintain the work-life balance and how do they overcome it. Hence four urban middle-class women from different careers and between the ages of 35-50 were interviewed and two urban middle class men from the same age group were also interviewed to know their perspectives about this matter. The results of this study will help us understand this matter in depth and this study will benefit other women to overcome the barriers and will help the men understand the women around them better.

Gender in dance!
Does it really matter?

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Masculinity is a set of attributes, behaviors and roles associated with boys and men. Although masculinity is socially constructed some research indicates that some behaviors considered masculine are biologically influenced. (Shehan, Constance L. 2018) To what extent masculinity is biologically or socially influenced is yet subject to debate. (Martin, Hale; Finn Stephen E. 2010)

Femininity is a set of attributes, behaviors and roles generally associated with women and girls. (Shehan, Constance L. 2018)

Traits that are considered masculine – dominant, strong, independent, assertive, brave, innovative etc.

Traits that are considered feminine – emotional, collaborative, nurturing, vulnerable, caring, humble etc.

In dance and other physical activities men and women are often thought to move differently due to innate differences in body structure. For instance, men generally have more upper body strength than women (Jensen e/ a/ 2000) and women often have more hip flexibility than men. These differences along with cultural tendency to highlight stylistic elements perceived as either masculine or feminine, have produced some distinctly gendered styles of dance with masculine style often emphasizing leaps, jumps, power, and upper-body strength and feminine styles focused upon flexibility, fluidity, and emotion.

Although the professional dance world is often more tolerant than mainstream society when it comes to gender or sexual identities that fall outside of strict binary (Polasek and Roper), that does not preclude daily negotiations to maintain one's gender status, whatever that may be.

And in cases where dance roles are strictly defined as masculine or feminine, such as in dance competitions (Broomfield 2011; Picart 2006; Schupp) or in a classical dance ballet, dance must literally “perform gender” onstage, in a heightened form of the performance of gender that scholar Judith Butler discusses in her book *Gender Trouble* (1990/1999). Violations of these roles can lead to censure and affect the outcome of competitions. (Broomfield 2011)

While women continue to dominate the scene, several male kathak dancers have been blurring gender lines in the art form since its inception.

Most of the kathak exponents were male, who proved that gender is no barrier in the world of kathak. Our purpose of this paper is to explore the transition of dance form via it being a male-centric to female-centric.

The aim of our paper is to:

1. Trace the history of dance forms.
2. Explore the depiction of gender stereotypical roles in media.
3. Document case study of artists who have faced gender discrimination in their dance career.

The methodology will be secondary data analysis using books, articles, and other media.

This paper will help shed some light on discrimination faced by dancers in society and create awareness among people. Taking a path towards a more gender-neutral environment.

It is time that society realizes that masculinity and femininity are not traits we associate with depending on gender, but instead depending on the character. To be balanced and better people, we believe that we need to have both masculine and feminine traits.

Social Psychology and intergroup harmony: Does harmony really exist?

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India is known for its diversity where caste is the basic structural feature of our society. It is a complex societal structure wherein social roles like one's profession became hereditary resulting in restricted social mobility and fixed status hierarchies.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the consequences of the caste discrimination taking place in our country. The objectives of this study are:

- Understanding discrimination within castes and sub castes and the impact it has and has had on people.
- Determining whether the discrimination is visible or not especially in the urban setting.

Semi structured interviews will be conducted on middle-aged men and women. This examination might help us in acknowledging the inter caste dynamics. The data collected will shed light on how an individual's status is represented in the society.

The effects of social categorizations are not only seen in the dynamics of social standing but also this discrimination affects the person's importance at his/her school, college, workplace.

The outcomes of this paper may help us understand the 'black sheep effect' in the context of moral norms and status representation.

Keywords: social roles, hierarchies, discrimination, urban setting, dynamics, black sheep effect

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Release of Mind Scape Volume IV by Principal Dr. Sanjay Kharat, Chief Guest Mrs Megha Bhojkar and Dr. Sadhana Natu, Head Department of Psychology.

Dr Sachin Shinde, alumnus of the college being Felicitated by the Department of Psychology for obtaining a Post Doctoral Fellowship at Department of Public Health, Harvard, USA.



Students with Dr. Sadhana Natu at the National Academy of Psychology Conference held in Pondicherry University in December 2019.