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Contents

Experts Speak

WORK FROM HOME: COPING WITH THE 'NEW NORMAL'

Lipika Verma

New Normal of People Practices: Today and Future 7

Amrita Chakraborty

'New Normal' Brought New Concept of Living 17

Niyati Shah, Abhinay Banker

Performing Artists in the Time of COVID-19 27

Articles

Pradeep Kumar Gautam

Men of the Word and Men of the Sword 35

Bhavna Singh

*China's Dream as an Anathema to the American Dream and the Parabola of
Transferring Hegemony* 45

A.V. Chandrasekaran

Turkey's Imperial Fantasies 61

Ankita Raj, Shantesh Kumar Singh

Empowering Women to Increase Workforce Participation 75

Lagdhir Rabari, Sandip J. Pathak

*Koha in Centrally Funded Institute Libraries in India: Excursion, Experience
and Expectations* 87

Book Reviews**Somanand Saraswati**

Doab Dil by *Sarnath Banerjee* 105

Aasi Ansari

Defence Beyond Design: *Contours of India's Nuclear Safety and Security*,
by *Sitakanta Mishra* 109

Experts Speak

WORK FROM HOME: COPING WITH THE 'NEW NORMAL'

Concept Note

The impact of Corona Virus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic is all pervasive. This has caused long-term disruptions in economies, businesses, supply chains, beside many other miseries; its impact is severe on the lives of individuals, both psychologically and physically. To cope with the situation, work from home (WFH) has been the most rational option adopted by organisations adhering to the mandate of social distancing to curb the spread of the virus. WFH – normally considered as an ad-hoc measure – has now become the new work culture. With the pandemic continuing to rage, and the prolonged lockdown within which the world has to learn to live, WFH seems to be the 'new normal' for foreseeable future. However, there is least attention and debate on the condition of 'home' which has accommodated the 'office'.



This issue of the *Liberal Studies* journal carries a discussion on the imperatives and various dimensions of 'work from home' as the way forward. **Lipika Verma**, the Vice President of Rewards & Performance Innovation & Thought Leadership (India) views that, we are seeing a truly unprecedented situation and both personal and professional life has changed drastically. She asserts that it is not always easy for everyone to work from home seamlessly: due to lack of infrastructure, lack of space and proper facility, employees have really found it difficult to work from home, especially in the beginning, when it was sudden. With online classes going on for kids, household chores also have paved its way simultaneously, has proved to be extremely draining for majority of employees, irrespective of gender. However, with the

passage of time, employees have managed to work it out, and WFH is becoming the new normal. The key takeaway is to learn how to balance personal and family's health and well-being, along with challenging working condition.

Amrita Chakraborty brings out multi-layered implications of WFH where she argues that the concept of working from home has brought new challenges as well as possibilities. Although, there were initial hiccups, some organizations realized that this set-up could be continued as a permanent system of working. It definitely provided a golden opportunity to the companies to continue their operations without spending much on infrastructure that included expenditures on office rent, stable electricity connection, internet connection, maintenance and many more. On the other hand, even though the provision of WFH was welcomed, employees started facing challenges in keeping a balance between their professional lives and personal lives. There were no stipulated working hours for most of the employees. In fact, the flexible working pattern has blurred the difference between working hours and non working hours. However, in the positive side, remote working and working from home has opened opportunities for the recruiters to hire talents sans geographical boundaries. Thus, Covid-19 and the idea of 'New Normal' brought a new concept of living for the people of this generation to cope with.

Niyati Shah and **Abhinay Banker** have attempted to explore the concept of 'space' in the context of performing artists while enquiring upon how the performing artists worked away from the physical performance spaces during the lockdown and restricted physical movements; how did they negotiate with the conventional understanding of space while working from 'home'; and how technology that appropriated and re-appropriated the concept of space. Based on the personal accounts of representative theatre and dance practitioners from Maharashtra and Gujarat (India), they bring to fore the uniquely challenging time for the performing artists as the possibility to perform on stage and experience the presence of the audience was completely ceased.

New Normal of People Practices: Today and Future

Lipika Verma*

I have been doing a global role for the last three years and often had this conversation with others, as to how I work from home on majority of days and how can I be so effective while working from home? The myth about not being able to perform to fullest capacity has been totally broken, since majority of organizations have been forced to let their employees work from home during this challenging pandemic situation. Not only employees have worked well, in fact the productivity has remained the same and, in many cases, even got better.



We have seen a truly unprecedented situation this year and both personal and professional life has changed drastically. The thought of an organization wherein all employees would just start working from home overnight, was something that nobody would have ever fathomed. However, to prevent the spread of coronavirus, companies had to switch to a remote work model at a rate and scale that they had never experienced. Face to face collaboration shifted and got replaced with video conferencing, telephone calls and along with such conditions, employees still had to continue delivering and performing.

The “mantra” for being effective in terms of working from home is to have an extremely disciplined schedule which is a replica of work from office. While

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there can be flexibility used from a timing perspective, work from home gives few more additional hours every day and that enhances productivity in some ways. The time lost due to regular commute (especially for those who need to commute for long distances) can be effectively used for managing some additional pieces of work. Work from home also is a boon in some ways from a family perspective because one can spend a little more time with the family as he/she is avoiding the commute time to office every day. Apart from that, there needs to be discipline in terms of broad number of hours dedicated to work so that it does not cross the boundaries of personal time for an employee. On the other hand, less commute results in less traffic on the roads, leading to lesser pollution and therefore is a favourable element even from an environmental perspective at a larger level.

However, it is not always easy for everyone to work from home seamlessly and we have seen it quite prevalent during this pandemic. Due to lack of infrastructure at home, lack of space and proper facility at home, employees have really found it difficult to work from home, especially in the beginning, when it was sudden. With online classes going on for kids, household chores also have paved its way simultaneously, has proved to be extremely draining for majority of employees, irrespective of gender. However, with the passage of time, employees managed to work it out. Over a period of few weeks, people got comfortable and were able to identify their workspace in their homes to be able to manage their work in a seamless way.

Human Resources team members have been listening to multiple comments from employees with regards to work from home facilities, and we know for a fact that a lot of companies have come up with many policies related with making ‘work from home’ much more convenient and easier. Some of the companies have been giving broadband connections, allowances for ergonomic chairs and tables, data card facility, UPS facility etc. in order to help employees to work from home in a comfortable way. Flexibility from a timing perspective has been a given for all organizations at large and has been acknowledged positively by employees.

Changes in the Role of HR

HR, from the very beginning has always been focused in managing the life cycle of an employee, right from their hiring till their exit. However, this time the focus has totally shifted to experiences. The reality is, how do you give that experience to the employee; how does HR attract, retain and motivate its talents in such challenging times. On top of that, how do we truly “Care” for our employees, remains an important question for all HR Leaders.

The pandemic has debunked the theory of predictability and pushed us into a zone of unawareness, wherein things are changing continuously. The outbreak of Coronavirus has disrupted organizations and caused human resources managers to think differently about their role. There are 3 elements which are of utmost importance from HR standpoint-

1. Work
2. Workplace
3. Workforce

When it comes to “work”, digital is the key. Remote support by IT teams, IT infrastructure and cyber security is of utmost importance. Moreover, people must enhance their skill set with respect to technology, cyber security, tools, processes, net etiquette and work from home solutions. There are massive changes and the focus is on experience for employees. The role of the leaders is to keep the team motivated and make sure they are agile to get this work done in a meaningful manner. The digital transformation initiatives that businesses have embarked on will continue for years. There’s no time frame to be known for the cure of this virus, organizations are trying hard to make the most of this uncertainty as we step into 2021.

In terms of “workplace”, at current safety is the most important and would continue in the coming future. The first thing which has been extremely important during this time has been looking at everything through the employees’ lens, and first and foremost is the health and well-being of the employees and their families. In this context, how does the design of workplace be changed in order to provide a sense of complete health safety as well as security to employees when the offices are being reopened, albeit at a slow pace? How does this move in context to reduced workforce in office, hybrid workplace models and has an impact on office space and reduction of offices as well. In today’s context, this remains a top priority for all leaders worldwide. Workplace for manufacturing blue collared employees remained a priority across manufacturing organizations. So many plants and their structures had to be changed in order to maintain social distancing and proper sanitization. This has been a challenge, however it got managed by teams across the globe in a meaningful way and hence the operations continued seamlessly across multiple organisations.

From a “workforce” perspective, we have been considering an exponential rise in gig workforce through the last few years, this year has further enhanced the gig economy [based on flexible, temporary, or freelance jobs]. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported in 2017 that 55 million people in the U.S. are “gig workers”. This accounts for approximately 34 percent of the U.S. workforce,

projected to increase to 43 percent in 2020. The reality has been that it has reached much higher than 43% in 2020 due to Covid19 situation.

The trend is no different for other geographies and the gig economy is going to pick up steam for multiple countries going forward. With such numbers, organizations would need to think differently on planning the contracts for gig workers along with alternative workforce. How would the benefits and compensation of such workers be managed? How would their performance management be planned when they are working on different projects and only for specific amount of time? All of this remains to be planned out by the HR teams as we move forward to a new generation with a new workforce as a part of Gig economy.

Impact on Talent Management

On the talent management side, important focus area for organizations this year will be about creating capabilities in the workforce so that they could embrace the future. As per the survey conducted through Executives of Josh Bersin Academy, the top three talent investments that they called out in order to make the most sizable difference to business performance, has been the following:

1. Redefine jobs to better deliver value — 30%
2. Simplify talent processes — 29%
3. Enhance the employee experience — 27%

Hence there has been a major focus on the above mentioned three areas which have been planned for 2021 as well as going forward.

Talent function is increasingly considering sophisticated modelling and dependence on data-driven technologies for performance and potential assessment, identification of critical talent, niche skills, risk assessment and mitigation, forecasting, and planning as well as leadership development and succession planning. These trends will continue, and data-driven approaches will gain more ground with greater sophistication.

Impact of Pandemic on Performance Management

The way the performance management needs to be done for the year 2020 is also seeing major changes. It depends on how different the situation has been for each employee – for some this change has been minimal while for others there has been either moderate or severe disruptions. It is imperative that the line manager understands the situation for the team members deeply and accordingly assesses and gives the rating at the end of the year. The conversations would also need to be accordingly managed by the managers and HR.

This year is going to be a year wherein the face-to-face discussions would totally be replaced with virtual discussions and hence, virtual conversations must be managed extremely delicately. Remote work environment brings the every-day challenges of combining home and work. Also, during the discussions, body language and other non-verbal clues can be difficult to read. Moreover, potentially increased stress and social isolation may cause different reactions by employees, and hence, managers must gear up to manage these tricky situations.

The best leaders take personal ownership in a crisis, even though many challenges and factors lie outside their control. They align team focus, establish new metrics to monitor performance, and create a culture of responsibility and accountability in the teams. It is often helpful to create a simple, documented plan of what the deliverables are and who will own them during the crisis. Have seen many managers doing this well during this tough period.

Key Attributes Demonstrated by HR during Pandemic

There are three attributes of agility, creativity and flexibility which have been demonstrated by HR in the lockdown scenario. HR along with IT teams have stepped up to transform a real office into virtual office almost overnight along with challenging tasks, wherein employees had to be supported with laptops, data cards, and business continuity had to be maintained. Alongside, the emphasis on “Human Connect” has been key for HR teams across the world. HR had to quickly gear up to cater to rapid needs related with unfolding health crisis, critical communication on safety protocols, hygiene practices, emergency numbers, list of hospitals, guidelines for quarantining and isolating, wellbeing, Employee Assistance plans etc. Beyond this, Communication across levels right from global CEO to the last mile manager level was extremely important during this tough time.

One of the strengths of the HR professionals is building relationships, and I think the challenge is how to continue to build those relationships as the nature of work as well as the nature of the role of HR changes.

Depending on how HR managers handle the crisis, workers are going to publicize companies’ actions and reactions on various social media sites and also in open forums. Employees are going to talk about whether they felt trusted, supported and had the right technology to do their jobs. Companies that did not have the things to support their workers will have negative reviews written about them, and they will struggle to survive and attract talent moving forward, so this time has been tricky to manage for entire set of organizations.

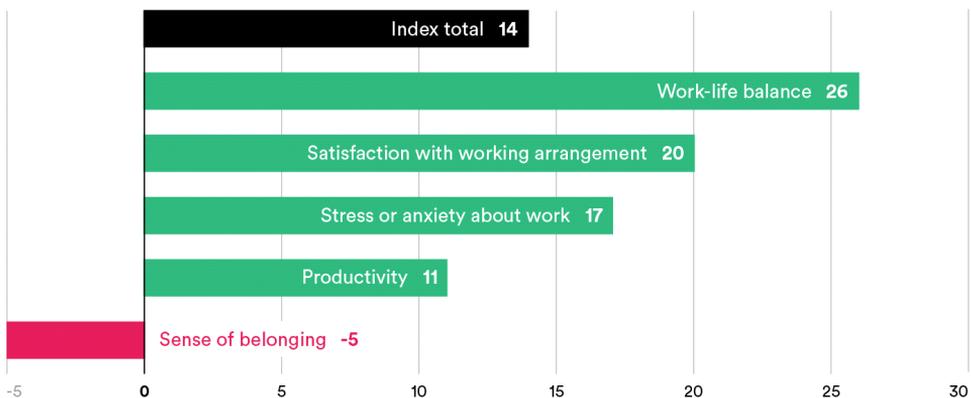
Moreover, mental health and well-being has been an important aspect which is of extreme importance for every organization. Many organizations went the extra mile to help employees handle stress by setting up online classes for employee well-being and motivation. EAP services have gained traction over the last few months. Employee health will remain the top priority for companies in times to come too. Implications of prolonged remote working, as well as the impact on health and wellness, will become more evident, and preventive steps will have to be taken. Overlapping work-life issues will need to be factored in and managed better at both organizational and individual levels.

Slack Survey by World Economic Forum

A survey conducted by Slack – the California-based collaboration tool which covered about 9,000 knowledge workers in the US, UK, France, Germany, Japan and Australia found that most of the workers were happier working remotely than they were in the office. Only 11.6% say they want to return to full-time office work, while 72.2% want a hybrid remote-office model. The data varies by regions and the preference to work from Home is higher in North America and Europe as compared to Asia. This seems to be impacted by culture and lifestyle as well.

Remote Employees Experience Index

The Remote Employee Experience Index measures perceptions of key elements of working life, such as productivity, sense of belonging and work-life balance.



The highest possible score of +100 would indicate that all employees feel working from home is much better than working in the office. A neutral score of 0 would indicate on balance, working from home is the same as working in the office. The lowest possible score of -100 would indicate that all employees feel working from home is worse.

The Remote Employee Experience Index is based on data from a survey of 9,032 knowledge workers who identify as “skilled office workers” in the U.S., the U.K., France, Germany, Japan and Australia. It analyzes the key perceptual elements of the working experience for 4,700 of the workers surveyed who are primarily working remotely. The survey was fielded between June 30 and August 11, 2020, via GlobalWebIndex, a third-party online panel provider, and commissioned by Slack. Results were weighted based on sector and population.

Source: Slack Survey by World Economic Forum

So, What's the Future of Work?

As Alan Kay said, *"The best way to predict the future is to invent it"*, so here's an opportunity of a lifetime for all of us to make an indelible mark on the future!

The most unpredictable 2020 has been the year of empowerment and opportunity at the same time. Along with sustainable business & talent priorities, organizations will need to safeguard its employees by institutionalizing the immunization program and planning the return to work strategy, albeit in the hybrid workplace mode.

After a challenging 2020, 3 core fundamentals that organizations will have to embrace to counter the unpredictability of the future – Adaptability, Agility & Resilience. Also, some of the key priorities for HR for 2021 and going forward in terms of the future workplace would be as follows:

1. Agile Learning – Having skills is extremely important for any organization and hence the HR team needs to ensure that the organizations are clearly redefining their capability building approach to manage their growth well. The transition towards building a new-age skill would be a key differentiator.
2. Well—being – Organizations need to focus on the four elements of Physical, Emotional, Mental and Social Well-being. Mental Well-being is gaining so much importance in these turbulent times that it needs to be the priority of any organization. While the organizations have been focusing on wellbeing even earlier, the focus needs to enhance going forward. The traction of Employee Assistance Programs has increased and its evident that people need counselling services in times of stress.
3. Culture - An extremely important part of any organization which really differentiates best from the rest. Relationship between management and employees, managers and their subordinates play an important role or any company and leads to employees having an emotional and rational connect with the organization. Communities are an important catalyst in driving culture as they will come together for work, for a meaningful purpose, for recreation etc. Leaders & managers are going to play a significant role in driving social capital. The new-gen leaders create a sense of meaningful purpose, share a vision, empower individuals to achieve those, help to streamline things thereby leading communities to flourish. People managers are an extremely important part of the communities that exists and needs to be involved fully to build the culture and have camaraderie within teams.

4. Digital Experience – Organizations must work together to bring a seamless and delightful experience to their employees which is the need for today and for the future organization. Collaborative platforms and their usage are of key importance in times to come.

New Ways of Working

Flexible work schedules had to be given to a lot of employees and therefore many organizations have worked towards bringing in new ways of working and elements of hybrid workforce. While children were studying from home and other family members also working from home, it is imperative that companies are giving that flexibility from a timing standpoint and therefore the elements of flexible ways of working is something which has been brought forward by a lot of companies. Companies are embracing agile, flexible and smart ways of working for people to support high performance, greater inclusion, well-being and stronger resiliency.

Organizations have started to believe that the future of work is a hybrid model where flexibility on grounds of where and when work happens is the norm underpinned by trust and empowerment and accountability. New Ways of Working reinforces the employer value proposition and reputation as a great company for people, which is the core for such organizations.

We are considering a rise in Hybrid ways of work with WFH and WFO to meet the needs of employees. Alongside, fit for purpose offices are being planned out to support health and collaboration. Tools and technology to support teams regardless of location and leading with trust and empowering employees to do the right thing is gaining extreme importance.

HR and managers need to actively help remote workers keep healthy boundaries between their professional and personal lives in order to prevent burn out conditions. Flexible scheduling can dramatically reduce burnout, since rigid work schedules can magnify conflicting demands between work and family.

There is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to remote work. Many workers and organizations will thrive in a hybrid situation, where time is split between home and office. But the leaders need to take a careful and thoughtful approach which can craft a viable and sustainable remote-work program that fits the company's needs for the long term. So, the solution is really going to depend on the company, the industry and other elements which needs to be looked at carefully.

Emerging Rewards Trends to Manage in the 2021 & Beyond

There is going to be a major shift in the rewards policies of organizations in 2021 and beyond. There are a few elements which are of extreme importance.

1. Differentiation for key Talents & Critical Skills

Skill-based pay that focuses on rewarding critical skill levels is something which is going to become more prevalent. 2021 will see higher compensation for higher risk roles. Also, critical talent force which will be instrumental for managing the uncertain times would have differentiated pay, for example, talent who have specialized knowledge of specific products / services etc. As more organizations start focusing on upskilling their talent on different niche skills, they would also need to differentially compensate them.

2. Customized rewards for New Ways of working

There can't be a single solution for all in the upcoming times. Aon came up with its 4Ws to redefine the compensation structure

(a) **WHEN:** Flexible scheduling and compressed weeks and some of the organizations are already announcing reduced work weeks.

(b) **WHAT:** What gets automated and what cannot. There is an increasing trend in automating transactional processes

(c) **WHO:** Increased consideration for engaging with gig workers, project-based work plans for managing their performance and also their compensation which would have a higher emphasis on performance-based pay.

(d) **WHERE:** Rewards can be based on the place of work too.

Companies are already implementing or have plans to introduce more monthly allowances towards work from home expenses.

3. Higher focus on Well-being & Health

Health benefits will be hygiene as well as a differentiator for employers and is fast developing as a tool for retention. There would be a lot of weightage on Leave policy, Inclusion of vaccinations and complimentary leave and packages for Covid19 impacted employees and their dependents etc. With an increased focus on cost, we would also see more structured reviews and tracking of benefits utilization in order to customize the benefits plan, make it much more effective, communications of plan to be made much better and at the same time creating the right value for money invested.

4. Changes to Fixed Pay Structures

Overall industry performance will play a pivotal role in fixed pay increases. 2020 saw salary freezes or deferred payments and pay cuts in certain organizations. It is expected that 2021 would see a lesser increase in the fixed pay due to the overall performance of the organization. There would be a lot of focus on equal pay for similar jobs, pay equity will be of further importance as we move forward to future years.

Global rewards leaders would need to think to outline the pay philosophy based on the intended outcome, whether they would want to focus on a now-and-here or longer-term sustainable proposition.

Finally, I would like to say that as people champions, it is our fundamental responsibility to craft a future for ourselves and in my view, there are two key differentiators that will help us to move forward. Firstly, we need to have a deep understanding of business along with relevant market information, nuances of technology and world so that we become problem finders and partner with the business we are supporting. The second one which is again very important is Empathy, which lies at the center of all our actions. Empathy would help in understanding our people much better and would help us co-create the culture of the organization, great experiences of work along with workplace of the future! Some of my key learning for me this year has been to learn how to balance mine and family's health and well-being, work and learning. Each of these elements is an important constituent for internal happiness. Giving importance to one and missing on anyone at the expense of the other will lead to a lack of right balance. It's an extremely delicate balance and is like walking on a tight rope which requires a lot of practice and focus to keep pace. Well-being, work, family, and belonging - this perfectly summarizes what gives our lives deep meaning and purpose. I don't believe that we'll be able to pretend that these aren't the top priorities going forward.

To summarize, I got reminded of this quote by Charles Darwin, which I came across during my childhood days: "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent; it is the one most adaptable to change."

‘New Normal’ Brought New Concept of Living

Amrita Chakraborty*

The year 2020 witnessed humanity plunge to an abyss due to the unprecedented impact of the novel Coronavirus. Many of us lost our loved ones and the world practically came to a grinding halt. Covid-19 forced humanity to stay indoors and confine its movements. As the pandemic raged throughout the globe, the migrant workforce, who scamped to return to their homes, became the largest vector of the deadly virus.

The first case of Covid-19 in India was detected on 30 January 2020. Initially, the government organizations and private entities didn't have a clue as to how to tackle the pandemic. The working class had to continue commuting to their respective workplaces thus increasing the possibility of a rapid surge in infections.

In the month of February 2020, a number of private organizations asked their employees to start working from their homes and finally on 25 March 2020, the government of India called for a total lockdown. Similar lockdowns were imposed by a number of countries across the world to break the chain of the virus spread.

Thus, people whose work involved using a computer alongside a stable internet connection started working from their homes. It needs to be mentioned here that the concept of working from home (WFH) wasn't a novel concept for



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the workforce from the Information Technology (IT) sector. A large part of the IT employees were already conversant with the idea as IT work primarily demands online presence. However, the pandemic caused a problem that is much beyond the discussed realms. The pandemic caused a severe economic downturn that compelled companies to shed workers on a large scale. The ones who survived the onslaught had to continue working from their homes.

Even before the pandemic hit, many companies were hiring people as full-time employees without even providing them the office spaces. However, the pandemic extended the concept to a larger section of the workforce including teachers and trainers.

The concept of working from home brought new possibilities and challenges. Although, there were initial hiccups, some organizations realized that this set-up could be continued as a permanent system of working. It definitely provided a golden opportunity to the companies to continue their operations without spending much on infrastructure that included expenditures on office rent, stable electricity connection, internet connection, maintenance and many more.

With the onset of WFH on a large scale, multiple free meeting platforms sprang up including Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Cisco WebEx, Google Meet and the likes. Educational institutions too continued their classes via these online platforms. Organizations such as FICCI (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry) conducted virtual events by developing their own platforms. While on one side, a section of corporate trainers were losing their jobs, on the other side, a number of companies emerged with a plethora of online courses with certifications.

At this stage, the population with a secured job started getting used to the concept of the ‘New Normal’ – which primarily meant a modified way of living (Y.L.M., 2020). The idea was to adapt to a new lifestyle that included official works and interactions with other people. It is a given that the world will continue to live with this new set-up until everybody develops herd immunity automatically or through mass vaccinations. Some of the traits of this system include using face masks, avoiding face-to-face communications from a close distance, avoiding casual and unnecessary travels, quarantining infected people, working from home, attending virtual classes and many more.

In this article, we shall primarily delve on WFH and its multi-layered implications. From the onset of the pandemic, along with medical research studies, a number of social science research studies have been going on to understand the implications of the ‘New Normal’ in the society. The first phase

of WFH was well accepted by the people as it brought an alternate way of continuing with their jobs within the restrictions brought about by the pandemic. This brought about a drop in the net leasing of office space by 44 percent in 2020 according to a study by JLL India (JLL India, 2020). It means that the employers were not looking for renting new office spaces for their respective workforces.

Within a week, as the concept of working from home became streamlined, employees started training themselves to work from home and adjusting their mindsets in consonance with professional requirements.

In due course of time, some serious challenges started cropping up and a few important ones are discussed below:

Impact on Domestic Environment and the Absence of Acceptability by Family Members

A considerable number of employees faced this serious problem while working from home as their home environment was not supportive of the demands of their offices. Multiple employees, especially the woman employees, had to take care of their children while attending office meetings live. Additional background noise caused disturbances for online meetings. It was even more challenging for the women employees living in joint families. Most of them didn't receive acceptance of their extended working hours by their spouses and other senior members of the family.

No Defined Working Hours

As the concept of working from home was welcomed, employees started facing challenges in keeping a balance between their professional lives and personal lives. There were no stipulated working hours for most of the employees. Meetings were called outside office hours and even on weekends. Harvard Business School (HBS) conducted a study across 16 global cities involving 3.1 million people in 2020 and found out that the average number of working hours per day increased by 8.2 percent or 48.5 minutes during the early weeks of pandemic in the year 2020 (Kost, 2020). The study further revealed that 8.3 percent of emails are sent after the business hours. Moreover, the situation also demanded employees to check emails during midnight hours in case of sudden updates for the next day.

Too Many Online Meetings

With the advent of free online platforms, the percentage of meetings also increased exponentially within a few months. The mobile versions of the meeting platforms were available and hence a number of meetings were conducted in

informal set-ups. The study by HBS further revealed that people attended 13 percent more meetings than their usual schedules. Also, a significant number of the meetings were extended beyond their stipulated duration – all thanks to the WFH concept, when people don't have to log out of their office premises at the end of their working hours.

Disconnection from the Outside World

Working from home developed monotony among people. The travel time for every individual reduced substantially, which had an impact on people's psychology. Travel impacts human psychology (Nanduri, 2020). Travel has a positive impact on health, helps to know more people and places, develops imagination and last but not the least, helps one to imagine. A sudden disconnection from the outside world coupled with the challenging necessity of work added to mental frustration for a large number of employees working from home.

Effect on Personal Life

The new mode of work considerably impacted people's personal lives as well. The complicacy of being with a limited number of family members and being confined within the four walls developed a claustrophobic situation for a lot of people. Thus, such an environment instigated misunderstanding among family members and especially between couples. A viewpoint expressed by Maryon, the wife of the ex-Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson, was, "I married him for better or worse. I didn't marry him for lunch", at the time when Lester was retiring to work from home. It was found out that the employers didn't understand the impact of the new way of working. In most of the cases, no psychological assistance was given to the employees from the employer's side during this period (Hodson & Hodson, 2020).

Unemployment and Job Insecurity

The pandemic seriously threatened the livelihood of a significant number of people as a large section of the service sector had to shut their businesses. In India, the worst blow was on the Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector. In India, 12.2 crore people lost their jobs during the pandemic, which included sectors like tourism, retail, food services, real estate, door-to-door services and the likes. India's unemployment rate reached the sky with the rate being 27.1 percent (Desk, 2020).

Moreover, those with stable jobs had to face salary cuts from their employers. Single earning members of families with financial commitments of paying EMIs

along with the cost of their children's education had to face serious mental trauma. A research study with 237 cross sectional studies and 87 longitudinal studies by Karsten Paul, Ph.D., and Klaus Moser, Ph.D., reveals that unemployed people are more likely to face psychological issues as they are least satisfied with their lives. They further found out that the mental distress among the working class is higher in countries with weak economies, unequal distribution of wealth and weak or no unemployment protection from the government (Karsten & Moser, 2009). Connie Wanberg, Ph.D., an organizational psychologist from the University of Minnesota says, "Work provides us time structure, it provides us identity, it provides us purpose and it also provides us social interactions with others. When you lose all that, it creates a lot of difficulties for people" (Pappas, 2020). Thus, the loss of job during the pandemic caused a serious negative impact on the mental health of people.

Excessive Job-Related Pressure

According to a study by Microsoft Work Trend Index of September 2020, 30 percent of firstline (front-line) and information workers felt burnouts during the pandemic while working from home. The study further found out that there was an overall 48 percent increase in team chats per person through various platforms and 69 percent more chats per person after working hours. Further, there was 55 percent increase in the number of meetings and calls per week (Spataro, 2020). This study is based on a survey among 6,000 firstline and information workers from eight countries which includes the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, India, Brazil, Australia and Singapore. The same research further found out that meditation can help address the stress level as per the responses received from 70 percent of the samples.

Impact on Working Parents

According to a study by LinkedIn Workforce Confidence Index's 'mental health' edition, the pandemic had a serious impact on working parents and especially on mothers. The report says that in India, one out of three working mothers, that is 28 percent of the working mothers, was doing full-time child care. Thus, 36 percent of working mothers said that they were unable to focus on their work as compared to 25 percent of working fathers (Sheth, 2020). Moreover, due to unavailability of domestic helpers, women workforce faced additional pressure to manage their professional commitments vis-à-vis the commitment towards their family. When it comes to the well-being of the employees, only 23 percent of the Indian working professionals said that they were offered more time-off for well-being during the initial months of the lockdown, which includes emotional well-being initiatives and flexible working hours.

Blurred Line between Professional and Personal Lives

The flexible working pattern blurred the difference between working hours and non working hours. Forty-one percent of workforce in India faced blurred lines between personal and professional lives. This is primarily because of the increased communication with colleagues. An individual needs personal space for self care, which also includes caring for their bodies and minds. Quality times with family members also matter a lot for personal well-being. Within a few months of the pandemic, it became a trend not to differentiate between a working day and a non-working day. Communication out of office hours became a regular phenomenon. Meetings started getting scheduled on weekends, which also included Sunday. Thus, it became difficult for a lot of people to schedule a leisure time for personal or family purposes. A research study says that working long hours at home caused family problems as the partners or spouses of the respondents complained for working too much (Crosbie & Moore, 2004).

Impact on Health

Working from home invited some serious health hazards, especially those associated with back muscles and spine. First of all, most of the home set-up didn't have desired office furniture, which includes an ergonomic chair and a standard working table. As a result, improper sitting posture caused serious orthopedic problems. Satish Mundada, a Senior Orthopedic Surgeon from Pune in India, in an interview, said that earlier, a large portion of his patients with spine related issues were beyond the age of 40 years. But now, the problem is very common among the younger crowd, primarily because of working from home. Dr. Mundada said that people are working from home in an unergonomic atmosphere, which includes uncomfortable positions of working with inadequate distance of the computer screen from the eyes. Any change in the desired position would lead to neck pain, which further flows to the upper back and then fingers. While working from home, people tend to sit on the couch or bed, which are additional reasons for causing such problems. Stressful work environment adds to muscular pain, adds Dr. Mundada (Balachandra, 2021). It is also important to work under proper lighting. Too much exposure to the screen adds stress to the eyes, which may lead to issues related to vision, headache or watery eyes. It is required to take 15 minutes of break at regular intervals.

Higher Focus on Quantity of Work then Quality

The top management from a number of organizations were under the notion that people working from home are not bringing any productive output to the organizations. Thus, they invented work for their subordinates. In many cases,

such tasks were also given with impossible targets or deadlines. In the challenging environment of infection all around coupled with scarcity of resources for a day-to-day living added huge pressure on the people working from home, which finally deteriorated the quality of work. It would be important for the top management of any organization to focus on the quality of work and not on the quantity of work. Working on a huge task with a short deadline is never a solution. On the other hand, it was found out that a number of employees posted photos of themselves on short trips to the outskirts of the city. Further studies may reveal the actual cause of posting such photos – whether it's a sign of rebellion from their office pressure or just a message to the world about their private fun time.

With a completely different lifestyle, the 'New Normal' has created a new form of work across the globe.

By adopting a hybrid model of working, corporates are also hiring more workers as the crunch of office space is not a concern for job profiles associated with a computer. Much before the pandemic, many IT companies had already recruited people, who would solely work from home. Those employees have to go to their offices just for one or two days a week in order to attend meetings. But with the 'New Normal', multiple platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, Cisco WebEx, Microsoft Teams and the likes have emerged.

Humans are resistant to change and there were stiff resistances adapting to a new method of working as well. An article published by Harvard Business Review says that employees are not resistant to technical changes but social changes and particularly the changes in human relationships (Lawrence, 1969). A part of our brain known as amygdala resists us from any change as it interprets change as a threat and releases hormones. Thus, employees who get recognitions for new initiatives are capable of beating such mental barriers (Pennington, 2018).

A number of smart employers identified such resistances at the very beginning and addressed those by digging into the real causes of the resistance. They also readied the employees to the imminent change through small steps and not by rushing through dictatorial orders.

While on one hand, the concept of work from home for the corporates became the 'New Normal', on the other hand, the idea of digital learning took new shape. Deval Singh, the Business Head of TeamLease Services, said that the intent of hiring increased from 11 percent to 18 percent within the half year of the lockdown in India. Another survey conducted by ManpowerGroup

Employment Outlook among 1,518 employers across the India said in December 2020 that in the corporate sector, there is going to be a healthy sign of recovery and the rate of hiring will be high in the first three months of lockdown compared to the last quarter of the period, which ended in December 2020.

The concept of hybrid working model has been introduced across all sectors. According to some experts, there will be no looking back to pre Covid-19 working system. The development of digital infrastructure is further helping to set up the hybrid model in India and across the globe. Remote working and working from home also opened opportunities for the recruiters to hire talents sans geographical boundaries.

All said and done, is the 'New Normal', work from home and remote work desirable for the employees? A survey conducted in India by News18 in association with a market research company YouGov among 1,015 respondents from urban India from December 29, 2020 to January 3, 2021 revealed that a substantial number of employees are interested to come back to their offices like the pre-Covid-19 time (Desk, 2021). The respondents of the survey also said that they would like to be back to their offices once the entire country gets vaccinated.

Thus, Covid-19 and the idea of 'New Normal' brought a new concept of living for the people of this generation. While we all know the devastating impact of the Coronavirus, at the same time, people may also not deny the acceptance of a new form of work across the globe. While the idea of social distancing was a priority, the barrier of geographical distance is slowly and gradually getting diluted.

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Performing Artists in the Time of COVID-19

Niyati Shah*, Abhinay Banker**

Introduction

In the year 2020, we experienced sudden shifts that enormously implicated our understanding of life and living. Involuntarily, we acknowledged the need to re-adjust ourselves in the face of fear, anxiety, and crisis caused by COVID-19. Restricted and regulated geographical movements forced most of us to shrink into our homes and the same four walls of home expected us to continue living in nearly the same way. ‘Home’ surfaced as a contested space in different contexts than to perceive it as an “object of happiness” (Ahmed, 2010). This negotiation with the continuity of living as demanded is the preliminary point of unease, a space of disconnectivity that argues to re-look at the idea of ‘home’ and the concept of space.

As Michel Foucault observes,

The space in which we live, which draws us out of ourselves, in which the erosion of our lives, our time and our history occurs, ..., is also, in itself, a heterogeneous space. In other words, we do not live in a kind of void, inside of which we could place individuals and things. We do not live inside a void that could be colored with diverse



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shades of light, we live inside a set of relations that delineates sites which are irreducible to one another and absolutely not superimposable on one another. (Foucault, Spring, 1986, p. 23)

This paper attempts at exploring the concept of space, especially in the wake of pandemic, in the context of performing artists. If the role of the art is to bring about a change in the world where an artist is the agent of the change, it requires our care to deliberate upon the silent naturalization of art and the artists. The attempt here is to examine the relational idea of space, the tropes of performance space, audience, inclusion, and virtual presence based on the personal accounts of representative theatre and dance practitioners from the states of Maharashtra and Gujarat in India.

The imposition to ‘work from home’ breaks down the believed dichotomous relation of public and private spaces, open and closed spaces, spaces of work and ‘home’ as a space of leisure on the one hand and demands attention to the nature of artistic creativity on the other.

Space in Performing Arts and Space of Performing Artists

Space in performing arts holds a crucial presence with its constitutive materiality. The discussion of space is largely dominated by the idea of physical location. This physical space has a movement of its own in the manner in which it is constructed and performed. Both, the performers and spectators experience the space in a relational manner within the context of performing arts. The constructed space is deeply engaged and also encourages its audience to engage with the idea of “abstracted space”. Spectators participate in the ‘seeing’ or ‘imagined’ space as part of the staged performance. Physical theatre space, thus, designs another space in the theatre of the audience’s mind. These parallel performances share dynamic triangular relational experience among the audience, artists and the space they are present in. Arnold Aronson foregrounds this significance of spatiality:

We are spatial creatures; we respond instinctively to space. Our arrival into the world, the moment of birth, is a spatial experience as we emerge from a safe, enclosed environment into the vastness of an unknown expanse.... The stage, regardless of its configuration, functions as an optical focal point and created the impression that we are looking through this lens into a boundless space beyond. (Aronson, 2005, p.1)

How, then, performing artists during the period of lockdown and restricted physical movements worked away from the physical performance spaces; how did they negotiate with the conventional understanding of space while working

from 'home'; and how technology that appropriated and re-appropriated the concept of space are the questions this paper deliberates upon.

It has been a uniquely challenging year, especially for the performing artists as the possibility to perform on stage and experience the presence of the audience was completely ceased. Unbelievable number of theatre and dance performances, musical concerts, conclaves and workshops, festivals and launch of new artistic productions were either postponed till uncertain time or were cancelled worldwide considering COVID-19 conditions. The cultural and economic consequences of the same were devastating to bear by performing artists whose loss has a negligible presence against the other business industries. August, 2020 issue of Forbes quotes devastating numbers "with estimated losses of nearly 1.4 million jobs" (Gural) in the creative industries in US. In India, the numbers are beyond quantification. The artists who were solely dependent on stage shows are left with no resources to survive and were forced to switch their jobs during the scarcity of employment.

There are a few examples of independent artists like dancers, musicians, film makers, actors and backstage artists in theatre are still struggling to make their ends meet for basic survival. They now engage in odd jobs such as working in grocery stores, domestic help and in the selling of products in commonplaces. A few struggle to launch themselves with small business start-ups or getting employed at bare minimum wages.

The other challenge that artistes faced within the realm of performing arts was to uphold the various performing traditions and art forms. The teachers and facilitators encountered a different nature of challenge to pass on the learnings to younger generation. This situation demands us to consider the limited understanding of infrastructure and resources to the level of physicality. It requires careful thinking to move beyond the conventional understanding of the space and materiality to impart knowledge of art. Spaces can be produced as result of our actions which has the potential to constrain as well as enable our actions and the contrariwise.

According to Martina Low, "space is socially produced, but brings about its own effects in the context of human use" (2016, p. 113). What is the space of performing artists who are one of the crucial change makers in the "matrix space" (ibid) on the axis of inclusive society?

Performance Space and Technology

In the age that is dominated by the technology and artificial intelligence, the medium of theatre everyday encounters a new challenge in the form of

constructing alternative spaces. With the advent of new media, the medium of theatre has undergone massive transformations where performances are driven by technology. The creation of virtual spatiality has added a new dimension in re-defining the conventional concept of theatre spaces. “The effect of theatricality presuppose, some sort of real, immediate, physical presence” (Weber, 2004. P. 1) but this effect has been inverted in the face of pandemic where the only stage/space available to the performing arts practitioner is a rectangular frame of the electronic device.

The transferral occurred at two levels. First, the shift from the open spaces to limited home spaces. Second, from a physical theatre space to an online transition via electronic devices. The art practitioners experimented with the medium to continue working. During these challenging times, the artists who had the access to technological requirements, kept up with their artistic work to cope with the critical times.

Rupanshi Kashyap, an Ahmedabad based Kathak dancer and trainer at Kadamb Centre for Dance shared that “it was surprisingly and undoubtedly an active year, despite having worked from home regularly every single day since the end of March. It has been the constant guidance and encouragement of my Guruji Padmabhushan Kumudini ji Lakhia who, with all the trust and faith gave the liberty to go ahead and figure out how, an institution like Kadamb Centre for Dance that never experienced a halt would find its way in what we call the *New Normal!*” Kashyap, R. (2020, December 26). [Personal interview].

Ahmedabad based playwright and a theatre director Ankit Gor mentions, “Lockdown was blessings in disguise for me. I wrote more than 42 short stories and three new stage plays, I am just waiting for thing to get normal so we can announce performance venue and public show dates. Though Government has opened theatre venues and allowed performing artists to organize shows with Covid-19 guidelines, but we don’t want to any risk.” Gor, A. (2020, December 29). [Personal interview]. Ankit also experimented with digital theatre performances titled ‘*Lockdown Monologues*’. Talking further about working from home he adds, “Nothing really disturbed me while I was writing and working from home. I successfully conducted few online writing and theatre workshops, sometimes it is difficult to engage students when they are disturbed by their family members on regular intervals” (idid).

There are narratives where performing art teachers and practitioners engaged themselves in both synchronous and asynchronous pedagogical delivery and explored the ways to reach out to their students in their best possible ways. Bharatnatyam dance tutor and performer, Sonal Solanki foregrounds her

excitement to be able to connect with her students of variant age groups through recorded audio-video modules and live online sessions. However, after a point she shares the challenge of creating alternative learning environments, flexible space and re-orienting the self with the nature of learning performing art forms with a re-humanizing approach. Solanki, S. (2020, November 29) [personal interaction].

Soo Ryon Yoon as part of the webinar organized by the ArtEZ University of the Arts, Netherlands, comments in her session that while engaging with her students online, the “process [emerged] as a form of collective improvisation” (Yoon, 2020).

We have accounts of few artists who were comfortable in ‘work from home’ system on the one hand and on the other, we have accounts of artists who sought for creative spaces to get inspired and produce artistic creations or simply be in a quiet place, away from ‘home’.

The collective accounts examine the layers of mediations, artistic and social transactions, negotiations that artists made while engaging with the notion of not only work from home environment but also about the nuanced and subtle ways of functioning with the idea of wider virtual spatiality, distanced interactions and in a constant endeavour to locate the selves with enormous digital transformation. The questions constantly haunts the artists that “[h]ow might the gaze be returned in contemporary performance where its spatial reach is multiplied and/or fragmented with the introduction of multimedia technologies, specifically video and virtual reality? (Tompkins, 2014, p. 140)

Digital Performances during COVID-19

‘Where there is a will theatre is a way’. Theatre also emerged during these critical times as an education mode to cope with the crisis. Many aspiring students and theatre enthusiasts explored innovative ways to survive and produced possibilities to earn. Unlike theatre artists, stand-up comedians like Zakir Khan, Rahul Dua, Gaurav Kapoor, Vipul Goyal and a few others started performing online on various digital platforms. The wider reach of the audience located in different continents and time zones could access the live and recorded performances. The world transformed into a virtual stage with dispersed and distributed audiences. Performances migrated to various social media platforms with a sense of disappointment to not experience the zeal and verve of the audience, wave of laughter and applause in the auditorium.

Mohit Takalkar, a Pune based theatre director came up with an interesting experiment with the form of theatre and concept of space. He launched his first

digital performance *The Colour of Loss*, an adaptation of *The White Book* (2016) by Han Kang. The performance has the author and the sibling recalling things of white colour starting from sugar cubes to breast milk. The play looks at the objects such as tube lights, whipped cream, toothpaste, radish and paper as portals to memories and experiences. The digital frame allows mostly for close-ups, and hence the performance almost felt like a deep, intimate conversation with the characters from the story.

“The presence of new media alters how we understand space in theatre and performance” (2014, p. 139) comments Joanne Tompkin while discussing heterotopia and multimedia. The space created within/beyond the physical and virtual space of theatre creates infinite possibilities for creative production. Peter Eckersall, Helena Grehan, and Ed Scheer calls this ‘new media dramaturgy’ which “maps in art the movement of social space into mediated environments, but it also engages in a complex dramaturgy of response” (2014, p. 379).

Mohit Thkalkar further mentions in an interview with Avantika Bhuyan,

People have so many options today—Netflix, Amazon. What is it they are going to see in a theatre, sitting in a dark space, next to a stranger, risking their safety? (If we do not change) then it won’t be the pandemic but theatre practitioners who would have killed theatre. We need to experiment and tell new stories differently. (2020, December 19)

The critical times during pandemic have encouraged many art practitioners to expand their creative horizons adopting various digital innovations in their artistic productions. “Haiku in a Bun” is a digital performance directed by Lakshvir Singh Saran. It narrates a story of three siblings, separated by continents and time-zones, log on to a video-conferencing app to steady each other through a common bereavement. The performance opens with a computer screen with one of the characters logging into video conference. The performance is an act of twenty eight minutes that engages audience with the relatable space. The act is woven around intense subject matters which captures the nuanced spaces of our conversation with an element of humour. Joanne Tompkins argues for the effectiveness of “heterotopia as a means of rendering more palpable both the spatial and the socio-political possibilities that theatre presents” (Tompkins, 2014, p. 15).

A Kathak dancer, Rupanshi Kashyap mentioned in the same interview as mentioned above that “Online workshops are blessings to many distance learners who always wanted to explore dance as a form of expression. Kadamb offered online workshops with affordable fees; many international and local participants revived their interest in dance. I am comfortable with work from home pattern

now but I have to accept that I couldn't really create a new performance. Images come to my mind and I choreograph a dance piece while I am travelling from home to work space.”

Theatre at Home

It started on 02 April 2020 with live streaming of Richard Bean's *One Man, Two Guvnors* from National Theatre archives. National Theatre (London) announced a fund raiser project called 'National Theatre At Home', filmed live productions streamed for free on YouTube every Thursday for two months. More than twenty-five theatre productions including 20th Century Classics and Modern Plays, Shakespeare Plays, Greek Classics and World Historical Drama, Literary Adaptations and Inspirations have been premiered.

National School of Drama, Delhi and many other theatre companies/organizations in India followed the trend and made their recorded theatre productions available on digital platforms. Indian theatre had never witnessed a success and accessibility of this kind. Mumbai-based theatre director Sunil Shanbag says, “Most of our plays are recorded in single camera for documentation purposes, and are not meant to be showcased” (2020, December 20) [Personal Interaction].

The trending “Digital live performances”, are now adopted by most of the performing artists for audiences at home, who are most likely watching a show alone on a six inches cell phone screen or on the screen of the laptop. Regardless of immense competition faced with giant OTT (over-the-top) platforms in the process of transforming live theatre/dance performances on digital platforms, the artists are engaged in the appropriation of the theatre performances. As Richard Schechner put it, “[o]ne of the reasons performance is such a powerful paradigm in the social sciences is that it is a model of an experimental mode” (1990, p. 98).

For centuries, performing arts have observed and encompassed many transformations of different nature and in different contexts. It still undergoes incredible transformations and would continue to do so. This phenomenon is not new for the performing arts but for the artists as the shift happens on a rapid pace. The history of theatre narrates how theatre transforms with the change in socio-political, economic and cultural contexts of that time.

Conclusion

As we enter into the ‘new normal’, the hope to re-orient our relation with the understanding of space and re-appropriate the idea of infrastructure/resources in an empathetic, humanizing way. The artists have crafted their voices,

performed resilience in the face of crisis created by the globalization of space and tensions created among the communities of performing artists.

The spectrum of contemporary theatre creates new grammar and vocabulary for the art of dramaturgy. The dislocation of the space in consequence of complete digital transformation necessitates designing a framework enabled to transact with the chaos of everyday life; to create a network of care and compassion, to engage with the messiness than to merely insist on a specific kind of structure/order. The crucial times have driven artists to think about the impossibilities of thinking and choreographing.

Not as a point of departure but more as an opening on a dramatic note that the act one of COVID-19 hopefully ends soon imagining audience waiting for the live performances and artists standing under spotlight ready to greet and entertain the spectators.

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Pradeep Kumar Gautam*

Men of the Word and Men of the Sword

Abstract

In statecraft and war over the ages, two categories of policy shapers and makers exist. Those who give counsel or advise to the king known as the men of the word. The others are the kings as agents and men of the sword who wield as executives, the coercive power and who may or may not listen to what advice is given by men of the word. In ancient and medieval India and elsewhere the king and most of his family members and commanders-in-chief led and participated in war. This is no longer the case in present when modern nation-states go to war. Today men of the word and the men of the sword survive in different forms. The paper will focus on some examples from ancient China. It examines the role of the kings in ancient and medieval India who performed both the functions of the sword and word. Europe also had a similar practice of kings actively participating in the war until eighteenth century which later changed with even generals leading no more from the front. In the end, the paper engages with contemporary world populated by a vibrant strategic community, what is most vital is the need for professionalism, moral fibre and integrity. The need for these qualities has existed in Indic traditions for upright policy maker or shaper-both for those wielding the pen/word and those the sword. The paper concludes to demonstrate these enduring values as given in Kautilya's Arthashastra which are applicable across the spectrum of the men/women of the pen /word and the sword.

Key words: *Kautilya, Arthashastra, strategic community, ancient and medieval India, Indic traditions, statecraft*

Introduction

In history of statecraft, two types of advisors to the king or top leadership can be found. The men of the word and the men of the sword. For example, during the Delhi Sultanate, Men of the Word (*ahl I qalam*) and Men of the Sword (*ahl I saif*)¹ was a popular way to understand the difference between academics (or those who wield the pen as policy advisers) and those who ruled by the argument of power or force (policy makers cum executives). In any society, these two

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types would co-exist. But what mutual influence they have over time? Differences in types of men of word are known to exist and evolve. This paper will focus on a few examples from the concept of wandering intellectuals of ancient China. It will examine the singularity of the king for both the functions of the sword and word or pen during ancient India and its continuation till medieval India in some form. The example of Europe will also be included as it also had similar practice till near eighteenth century and the transformation of kings and generals leading no more from the front. In the end the paper engages with contemporary world populated by a vibrant community of advisors, academics, intellectuals and researchers under the rubric of strategic community. It will conclude to demonstrate that enduring value of integrity and moral fibre as given in Kautilya's *Arthashastra* are applicable across the men/women of the pen /word and the sword.

Ancient China

In the case of ancient China in the Warring States period, from 475-221 BCE or the earlier Spring and Autumn Period, 770-476BCE (which includes the famous Confucius and Laozi²) “witnessed a notable rise in prominence of the *Shi* or ‘wandering intellectuals’, a group of thinkers who were committed to government service as their vocation and who travelled from one state to another to seek opportunities to offer their ideas for practical statecraft in the service of a prince.”³ Some of these philosopher-advisors were for ethics, harmony and peace like Confucius and his disciples of Confucianism. Others were Daoists and Mohists. Some were hawkish and for rule by hard power and coercion like the Legalists Lord Shang and Hanfeizi. All of them however sought government service except one unique type who shied away from power centres. They preferred to live and think in their own peaceful ways like the detached hermit- philosophers Zhuangzi⁴ and Yang Zhu.⁵ Overall, all these types are best categorised as men of the pen. It is interesting to know that the first unification of China at the end of warring state period in 221 BCE was accomplished by the emperor of the Qin dynasty⁶ who followed Lord Shang's disciple Han Feizi's dictums: “If a wise ruler masters wealth and power, he can have whatever he desires.”⁷

Ancient and Medieval India

The *Mahabharata* has a key verse: “Brahmins measure victory and defeat by subtle debate, Kshatriyas by brute force (8.12.24)”.⁸ More often force has been the chosen option. And the combatants included both Kshatriyas and Brahmins. In ancient India there was an overlap between both the word or pen and sword. In the era of the epic, the *Mahabharata*, the kings were both men of word and sword. Even their policy advisers, who suggested war as an option took up

arms and engaged in close combat, and with them participated their sons as well. Rather, the males in the whole family of the king took to arms. Although, some counsel and advice (as word or pen) was forthcoming to negotiate peace from elders such as Vidhura, it was ignored. Vidhura, the common uncle, to the belligerents, we know from the epic, was not keen to fight so he did not participate in the war.

In general, it may be safe to say that in ancient Indian military history, this overlap between sword and word was the norm. We know that both Alexander and Porus fought each other by leading and fighting from the front. This practice continued for over millennium. What is relevant in these valorous traditions of kings in the battles is that there was practically no difference between Men of the Word (*ahl I qalam*) and Men of the Sword (*ahl I saif*). In contrast, in today's environment, those who declare war or make noise about it like some media TV anchors and commentators do not do the fighting.

In the long run we then notice that in India the fighting was led by the kings, princess and the commanders-in-chief. Researches of B.N.S. Yadav show that in the early medieval times, post-Gupta period with the rise of various Rajput clans witnessed the revival, supported by bardic traditions of "high chivalry" mirroring the ancient era of the epics. This was something similar to advent of chivalry in Europe.⁹

The reason for leading from the front or the commander being visible from the howdah of the elephant was the preferred chivalrous choice. Many Indian kings did pay a price by leading from the front mounted on conspicuous and easy targets such as war elephants. It was obviously the prime target of sharpshooters. Jos Gommans in his chapter on elephants explains:

...the position of the elephant declined during the seventeenth century. Much earlier, from the eleven to thirteenth centuries onwards, the horse-archers of Islam had already driven the elephant from its pre-eminent military position... there also seems a remarkable revival of war-elephant during the sixteenth century... it was only under Akbar's successors that their numbers fell off again and they almost disappeared from the front line of battle. At this stage, they mainly served as high platforms from where the commanding generals could watch, and be watched from the battle scene. Obviously, the visibility of the commander was of the utmost importance for his troops. If he was killed or, more frequently, just disappeared, the army lost its employer and, in no time, all fighting men left the battle scene and the battle was lost, the more so because India armies were often held together by a precarious network of temporary alliances, often culminating in just one man. Exactly this happened to Rana Sanga at Khanua (1527), Hemu at Panipat (1556), Dar Shukoh at Samugarh (1658), Prince Shuja at Khajwa (1659) and Prince Azam Shah and his son Bidar Bakht at Jajau.¹⁰

What is intriguing is that the ancient Kautilya had plans for redundancy in command if the commander gets knocked out and gets injured or killed. Why his counsel was not followed has no ready answer. In Book VIII of Kautilyan sutra 8.5.18, does have this problem envisaged: “As between an (army) with head broken and a blind (army), the one with head broken would fight under the command of another (commandant), not the blind one, being without a guide.” At 8.5.21, Kautilya summaries this idea in the planning stage itself to say: “The (king), ever diligent, should take steps right beforehand against that cause because of which he might suffer a calamity of the constituents.”¹¹ This sutra is an enough warning to ensure the command being taken over by the second-in-command in case the commander gets killed or wounded. But may be kings and general being visible and leading from the front had acquired a halo by itself, ignoring in this case the counsel (word or pen) of Kautilya.

In the case of Europe till mid-eighteenth century: “The military commanders then took over, and the dispute was resolved by force of arms. The ultimately military commanders were in any case frequently the monarchs themselves. Frederick the Great is the most notable example, but George II was also the last British king to command his troops in battle.”¹²

Kings and Generals No More Leading from the Front

Ultimately, in world history of war on land, kings in the lead did not survive as a permanent feature any longer as technology of weapons and firepower slowly changed the character of war on land. Combat also was no longer between two professional militaries alone. The age of total war had dawned. Kings and generals as former men of the sword faded away from the field of battle as those who engaged in close combat. Those who wielded the pen and political power did not directly relate to the sword but had political control over the sword arm to prosecute combat indirectly. The only exception today with ‘kings’ is the command and control of nuclear weapons which are political weapons of deterrence and not for warfighting. In other words, the era when kings led in combat is gone.

The Division of Labour

When and why did this division of labour occur as we note above in the case of George II? Lawrence Freedman in his book *Strategy: A History* basing it on Martin van Crevald’s work shows that “Before 1800, intelligence-gathering and communication systems were slow and unreliable. For that reason, generals had to be on the front line-or at least not too far behind – in order to adjust quickly to changing fortunes of battle”.¹³ The transformation had a number of implications of planning, command and control procedures. Thus:

Until the mid-eighteenth century, the king himself, with his fellow marshals and generals, planned and conducted wars. Two hundred years later, thousands of individuals were involved in planning and decision-making process. War had acquired its bureaucracy.¹⁴

This need of the headquarters to coordinate and manage the vast and widely dispersed industrial age army had its consequences as it led to the need of ‘staff’ or a crutch. But it also had a fundamental problem of perception of reality. Take the example of Western Europe during World War I. The Great War metamorphosed areas of open and rolling country in France and Belgium to quagmire due to stalemated entrenchment of troops and continued artillery shelling. Massed artillery firepower changed the landscape to moonscape. “Chateau” generals and staff officers who were not even aware of the ground conditions had ordered troops to certain death based on map study. After the Third Battle of Ypres in 1917 at Passchendaele a British staff officer had burst into tears and said “you mean we sent men to fight in this?”¹⁵ This is no surprise as historians note that “no senior officers of the British forces ever set foot (or eyes) on the actual battlefield in Belgium during the period the battle was in progress.”¹⁶ It is difficult to discount a similar situation manifest in some other form even today.

The Strategic Community: Variations in the Men and Women of the Word and Pen Today

Today, scholars and analysts who suggest policies on use of force as intellectuals and researchers assume an important role as policy shapers; but they never do the fighting as in the past. We now refer to them as the so-called “strategic community” or the wielders of the pen -Men or Women of the Word (*ahl I qalam*). Within them, there have been in history two categories of policy shapers within this community. Today it is easy to notice that the two ideal-types endure. The two are: those who seek proximity to power, and those who give their independent views and opinions or speak truth to power. In an essay in *The Dawn*, 10 December 1995 reproduced as a chapter, Eqbal Ahmad explains this with a historical example:

Creativity suffers when intellectuals and artists seek proximity to power. Medieval Muslims saw poets as belonging to two categories: the *sha'ir-ul-khilifa*, poet of power, who lived in the capital – *darul-khilafa*, enjoyed the Caliph's favours or those of his courtiers and viziers, and basked self-importantly in the privileges of patronage. Artistically he tended to slide backwards becoming adept only in passing skills of *hijv*¹⁷ and *qasida*.¹⁸ The *sha'ir-ul-imama*, poet who led, lived in the provinces often in modest circumstances, close to the heartbeats of society, and spoke truth to power. They are the ones we know still.¹⁹

In an oblique way, these two categories can be found even in the world of devotional Carnatic music. For example, “Tyagaraja shied away from material possessions and refused to sing in praise of the King. He was determined to remain poor and independent.”²⁰

Theoretically, it can be then said that in any human organization or group, the traces and tendencies of both the courtier, *sha'ir-ul-khilafa*, and the one who speaks truth to power, *sha'ir-ul-imama* can exist in Men or Women of the Word who wield the pen (*ahl I qalam*) or policy shapers.

Further, in this typology, there are a few more branches of tendencies. One tendency that mostly exists within the government is group think. In group think, conforming for the sake of harmony rather than giving alternatives is preferred and there is lack of critical thinking or giving different views. Yet another tendency is to satisfy or impress the boss. This is to say that the policy advice may be the one what the leader wants to hear and fits into his or her preconceived ideas – the characteristic inputs of a modern *sha'ir-ul-khilafa* to be sure. To communicate with the king with deference and dexterity which in Sanskrit is *sabha-chaturya* (tactful in court) in another variation from the Indic tradition as: “The foundation of this skill is that people are uncomfortable with truth ...when it shows them in bad light.”²¹

Another tendency of advisors and agencies is being competitive and to be the first and thus the best in the eyes of the political leadership. Here the issue is that multiple agencies do not share information with each other but only provide it to their political masters for the sake of one-upmanship. In 1999, for instance, Lt. Gen. Mohinder Puri, the then General Officer Commanding 8th Infantry Division, stabilized the situation in the Kargil sector of Ladakh and facilitated the eviction of the Pakistani intruders. He writes on similar problem of multiple agencies not sharing intelligence amongst themselves:

(T)he urge of intelligence agencies to pass the information first to the political bosses rather than to the executive agencies is perhaps the biggest flaw in our system.²²

Of course, this problem or flaw is being overcome theoretically by having a structural central agency coordinating the intelligence. But intelligence feeds are ongoing processes and it is likely that this human tendency will manifest in different forms. It is too early to write-off this human flaw.

Revisiting Kautilya's *Arthashastra*

We can now also bring in the 4th century BCE manual of statecraft from India – the Kautilya's *Arthashastra* which has a vocabulary and concepts to differentiate what a leader perceives or sees or gets to know from direct or indirect sources

by way of inputs. Kautilya divides perception into three categories: directly perceived, unperceived and inferred. In Book One (1.9.4-7), it is stated: “For, the affairs of a king are (of three kinds, viz.,) directly perceived, unperceived and inferred. What is seen by (the king) himself is directly perceived. What is communicated by others is unperceived (by him). Forming an idea of what has not been done from what is done in respect of undertakings is inferred.”²³ Today the second type or “What is communicated by others is unperceived (by him)” is similar to what the inputs are given by the wielders of the pen.

Integrity and Moral Fibre

There is also an underlying moral side to this story. The integrity and moral fibre of the advisor(s) is the key. The jurist, and intellectual, Nani Palkhivala was often invited to give lectures in elite military training institutes such as the staff college. He admired the military for its virtues of uprightness. In one of his selected essays, he touched upon an issue which has an enduring relevance and that is about the treason of the intellectual. Palkhivala wrote:

Today an ‘intellectual’ means a man who is intelligent enough to know which side his bread is buttered... In India today, there are shortages of many commodities, but nothing is so scarce as intellectual integrity... intellectual integrity is much rarer quality than financial integrity.²⁴

As noted by Palkhivala, Kautilya has a similar advice. Kautilya lists a number of qualities of councillors of which three stand out for this discussion: “possessed of the eye (of science)”, “upright”, and “endowed with character.”²⁵ The first (possessed of the eye (of science)) is professional competence and the next two (upright and endowed with character) is what we understand today is a person who has moral courage and intellectual honesty.

It is worthwhile to see the courage of his convictions in his *Arthashastra*. At a number of places in the *Arthashastra*, Kautilya disagrees with the old teachings or the general received wisdom by challenging it. He then suggests what he thinks is the right policy with his explanation. This is a good example of moral courage and intellectual honesty.

Perhaps the sound advice by Kautilya is on the issue of intelligence assessments. There is always a tendency in the governments to expect intelligence to support their policies rather than inform policies. Policy-makers expect ‘supportive’ intelligence, rather than accepting whatever objective intelligence is provided to them. Inversely, the intelligence provider ought to entirely avoid any tendentiousness and do his very best to neutralize subjective views and attitudes in intelligence production.²⁶ The thrust in Kautilya’s

Arthashastra is that intellectual honesty is rooted and thus derived from unbiased scientific thinking. It is remarkable that this issue has been deliberated in detail in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. The advice is unambiguous. It has the following key points as given in Book V which deals with the subject of intelligence for the intelligence chief:

If he is questioned about matters requiring intelligence, he should act like an expert, without being afraid of the assembly.... He should declare without loss of time what is in the king's [state's] interest...in case of deprival of emoluments and honour, leaving the service of the king is recommended.²⁷

Conclusion

The tracing of various variations on the men of word and sword over the ages has one important factor – the need for unbiased thinking. It is self-evident that many policy suggestions have to come through the pen of primary policy makers and indirectly through research by autonomous institutes, think tanks and the strategic community. The process of data gathering, facts, synthesis, and policy suggestions must then be done scientifically without any biases. This demands unbiased critical thinking or the quality of “possessed of the eye (of science)” as was suggested by Kautilya 2,500 years ago crucial to any upright policy maker or shaper or both for those wielding the pen/word and those the sword.

Notes

1. Ayan Shome, *Dialogue and Dagger: Notion of Authority and Legitimacy in the Early Delhi Sultanate* (1192 CE-1316 CE) (Quills Ink Publishing, 2014), 88-89. In an *Ahl* means people, who belong to a certain group. *Qalam* means the pen. *Saif* stands for sword.
2. Xu Jin, Appendix 1 “The Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods and Pre-Qin Masters” in Yan Xuetong, *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), pp. 223-228.
3. Yongjin Zhang, “The idea of order in ancient Chinese political thought: A Wightian exploration”, *International Affairs* 90: 1 (2014), 167-183. Quote from 174.
4. Wen Haiming, *Chinese Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 48 and Youngmin Kim, *A History of Chinese Political Thought* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), pp. 69-70.
5. Youngmin Kim, *A History of Chinese Political Thought* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018), p. 61.
6. Xu Jin, Appendix 1 “The Spring and Autumn and Warring States Periods and Pre-Qin Masters” in Yan Xuetong, *Ancient Chinese Thought, Modern Chinese Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), p. 225.
7. Orville Schell and John Delury, *Wealth and Power: China's Long March to the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Random House, 2013), p. 21.
8. As quoted by Bhikhu Parekh, *Debating India: Essays on Indian Political Discourse* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 3.

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11. R.P. Kangle, *The Kautiliya Arthashastra*, Part II: Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2010), p. 404.
12. Philip Windsor, *Strategic Thinking: An Introduction and Farewell*, eds. Mats Berdal and Spyros Economides (New Delhi: Viva Books, First Indian edition, 2006), p. 23.
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14. Jan Angstrom and J.J. Widen, *Contemporary Military Theory: The Dynamics of War* (London and New York: Routledge, 2015), p. 50.
15. John Weidner, "Random Jottings, The United States in World War One # 4" <http://jottings.blogspot.com/2002-03-24-jottings-archive.htm#75047256> (accessed on 14 June 2016).
16. Joseph Soeters, Paul C. van Fenema and Robert Beeres, "Introducing Military Organizations", in *Manging Military Organizations: Theory and Practice*, eds., Joseph Soeters, Paul C. van Fenema and Robert Beeres, Cass Military Studies, Special Indian edition (Oxon: Routledge, 2010), p. 5.
17. A satirical poem written to condemn or abuse a person. This type of poetry is considered inferior and generally avoided by reputed poets. <http://www.urdupoetry.com/poetryforms.html>
18. Poem written in praise of a king or a nobleman. <http://www.urdupoetry.com/poetryforms.html>
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22. Mohinder Puri, *Kargil: Turning the Tide* (New Delhi: Lancers Publishers, 2016), p. 177.
23. R.P. Kangle, *The Kautiliya Arthashastra*, Part II: Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2010), pp. 5-7.
24. Nani Palkhivala, *Selected Writings*, eds, L.M. Singvi, MR Pai and S. Ramakrishnan (Viking/Penguin India, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, 1999) p. 192, 194-95.
25. R.P. Kangle, *The Kautiliya Arthashastra*, Part II: Translation with Critical and Explanatory Notes (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2010), 17, sutra 1.9.8.
26. Dany Shoham & Michael Liebig, "The intelligence dimensions of Kautilyan statecraft and its implication for the present", *Journal of Intelligence History* (2016), pp. 14-15.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 15. The sutras from the text in support of this quote are 5.4.5-6, 5.4.11 and 5.5.12

Bhavna Singh*

China's Dream as an Anathema to the American Dream and the Parabola of Transferring Hegemony

Abstract

Nation-building remains one of the most crucial facets of the US and Chinese administration under their respective leaders – Donald Trump and Xi Jinping. From the 'America First Policy' to the 'faith in the China Dream' both leaderships have envisioned their respective paths to hegemony and world dominance manifest in their foreign policies. Hence, this article attempts to look at the intricacies of the bilateral relationship shaping their interactions and future visions. While the US continues to harp on the liberal status quo amongst strategic powers, China remains extremely committed to its authoritarian qualities. Yet at the same time, both countries have reiterated their commitment to international law and continuity of dialogue through diplomatic and security means, Law enforcement and economic dialogues, as well as social and cultural Dialogues. Hence the paper assesses their roles and privileges in the current global order under the National Dream paradigm. (Joe Biden continues to endorse the policy of the previous administration under his "build back better" framework, but that remains beyond the scope of the current study.)

Key words: *China-USA relations, global order, Trump administration, great power competition.*

Ever since the implications of the rise of China became clear to the government in Washington, a grand strategy to contain China's rise has been on the anvil. Trump's ascendance to the presidency itself remained deeply steeped in rhetoric of media propaganda that promoted the 'America First Policy'. In December 2017, the Trump administration unveiled its National Security Strategy report, which proposed that the United States is entering a new era of major power competition. The report labelled China as a 'revisionist power' and 'strategic competitor' that wants 'to shape a world antithetical to US values and interests.'¹

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Earlier, even Senior Colonel Liu Mingfu asserted that *zhonggomeng* (The China Dream) and the American Dream are largely incompatible and a US-China conflict in the near future is inevitable, no matter how committed China is to a peaceful rise.²

On the contrary, combined with the resurgence of the Chinese rejuvenation discourse under the neoclassical realist approach, some scholars have made a case for compatible nationalisms as far as the Sino-American relations are concerned. They argue that as the interaction between nationalism and power trajectory produces entirely different foreign policy orientations in rising and declining powers, the former tends to embrace an outward-looking, extroverted foreign policy of expansion; while the latter adopts an inward-looking, extroverted foreign policy of restraint and retrenchment. The approach further argues that in this sense the resurgent nationalism of the rising challenger and the declining hegemon are entirely compatible with a future relationship characterized by peace and harmony.³

Yet many believe that America's grand strategy has proven over all to be dangerous, costly and counterproductive and therefore a need for restraint or selective engagement⁴ is impending. The US economy is particularly in a double bind after the COVID-19 impact that has revealed the necessity of reducing the US dependence on China's economy. This paper looks at the various dimensions of China-US relationship to decipher either the compatibility or non-compatibility of the respective visions of China and America under the Nationalist paradigm. It also focuses on how the case for restraint has been overtaken by a more patriotic fervour under the current leadership in the US. For this purpose, it looks at the economic, strategic and diplomatic exchanges between the two countries under the proposal for a 'new type of great power relations.'⁵

Ideological Undercurrents to the American and Chinese Dreams

The US has maintained a global security architecture providing leadership as well as vision for the maintenance of "the global order" under the overriding paradigm of liberal hegemony. Hegemonic stability centres on the claim that the global order is a public good which needs to be controlled by a hegemon that compels other states to protect it. Based on the Wilsonian conceptions that United States should use force not just to secure its citizens and interest but also to redeem humanity by giving it liberal government, the US sought a solution in forceful reordering and democratization.⁶ It largely provided leadership through its military commitments and deployments which protected the trade routes of its allies decreasing their vulnerability to potential rivals and arming in response, thereby giving stability to the global economic system.

Its hegemony had been then essentially based on the assumption that without the strategic balancing of the United States, aggression would go unchecked as smaller states would capitulate to stronger ones resulting in anarchic dispensation in the global order. Under the prism of the American dream, the American values were seen as perpetuating individual creativity, proactivity, and positivity shared by thousands of immigrants from all over the world who hoped to improve their lives or even the world through the uncompromising pursuit of their individual dreams.

However, this hegemony is now being challenged by China which as a rising power seeks to assert its claims and grievances from the standpoint of a civilizational power that aims to restore its traditional glory and re-emerge as the reigning supreme. Consistent with the classical realist principle that – nations expand their political interests abroad when their relative power increases, the perceived decline in US power has encouraged the Chinese leaders to be more confident and challenge the US in pursuit of its own interests.⁷ Perceiving a dramatic shift in the global balance of power in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, Chinese leaders have exhibited a strident turn calling for a muscular foreign policy. Analysts suggest that the goal of global dominance lies at the core of China's journey from humiliation to rejuvenation- which not only conjures up a 'psychological power' associated with China's rise to its former world status but also articulates its dream to be the number one nation in the world as also pointed out by Chinese analyst Yan Xuetong.⁸

While Trump's tone has been unmistakably that of global retreat or retreat from globalism, China's ambitions are aimed at filling the gap that the US pull-back leaves in the Asia-Pacific as well as ultimately leaving a global footprint. Right after his taking over of the presidency Trump has shown an inclination towards retrenchment believing that "no country has ever prospered that failed to put its own interests first. We will no longer surrender this country or its people to the fake song of globalism." His administration has therefore, endorsed the call for a diverse global order anchored more to a narrow definition of the national interest, an accurate assessment of power realities and above all prudence. This is reflected in his call to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, a 12-nation trade deal designed by the US as a counterweight to a rising China and its pull back from the Paris Agreement on climate change. His intention to withdraw the US from the UNESCO and abandon the UN talks on migration as well as reduce US contributions to the UN by 40 percent have shown signs of America's abdication of its global leadership. Trump has further pressured the General Assembly to cut six hundred million dollars from its peacekeeping budget. His 2018 budget proposes a 42 percent cut in foreign

assistance or \$ 11.5 billion and reduces American funding for development projects financed by the World Bank. He not only intends to fix up the free-trade agreement with South Korea and NAFTA but also withdraw US from its long-standing NATO security alliance terming it as obsolete and costing the US a fortune.

Trump's strategy is overall a continuation from his predecessor's attempts to arrest the fall of the US in face a rising China. The Obama administration had tried to reconcile its desire to preserve American hegemony by developing a low-cost model for US global management. In practice this manifest itself in a reliance on economic sanctions to punish enemies, targeting terrorists with drones, fighting wars with robots and smart computerized weapons, avoiding unilateralism in favour of 'leading from behind' and pivoting to Asia with an overall grand strategy of 'selective engagement' and an indigenous policy of embracing economic nationalism. Under this vision the American dream that once epitomised US hegemony and control over the unipolar world order becomes subservient to its relative decline as a result of uncontrollable forces associated with globalization. For the first time in recorded history Americans are rejecting hard power and high politics believing that their country has declining influence over the global events.⁹ Overall, Washington's response to China's new assertiveness has been so far articulated under the strategy of offshore rebalancing with a renewed focus on domestic nationalism hoping to benefit its own citizens.

The Chinese ascent on the other hand has been guided by a grand strategy that seeks ascendance through peaceful means and yet appeals to the expansionist notions of internationally assertive nationalism. The Chinese dream incorporates a dream that has been cherished by the Chinese people to do better and break out of the protracted state of poverty and weakness and represents a desire to be free of suffering and misfortune.¹⁰ The kind of clinging to state and traditions that Xi extols is sometimes seen as more likely to prevent rather than aid US dreamers. The collective embodiment of the Chinese dream enhances its national strength and makes it bolder and clearer in diplomatic and military fields. Xi Jinping presents the state as a natural ally and a crucial facilitator in the process something that is reinforced whenever reference is made to the CCP lifting millions of people out of poverty rather than emphasising the poor who worked to pull themselves out of it. In contrast for the Americans to pursue their dream the government may need to stay out of their way.¹¹ The melting pot aspect of the American dream that pulled foreigners to become a part of their intrinsic culture is missing in the Chinese case which promotes *Xiao*, the Confucian

virtue of filial piety as an essential element and reverential study of Chinese classics.

The Chinese have often tried to allay the fears of the US government against a possibly aggressive rise in terms of its aspirations of global dominance, yet the American government has remained concerned over the means and structures that the Chinese have been using in their pursuit of speedy path to rejuvenation. In an “Open letter to the President and Congress on China policy: China is Not an enemy” published in the Washington post on 03 July 2019, almost 130 China specialists in the US propositioned seven collective views¹² to arrest the momentum of deterioration in China-US relationship. They objected to Trump’s portrayal of simply seeking reciprocity which seemed at odds with a US policy of promoting arms sales to Taiwan and stoking trade and investment wars.¹³ Does this then imply that the Chinese dream is increasingly undermining the American dream; a comprehensive understanding of the bilateral relationship between the two countries would showcase how the prospects of their engagements or disengagement would unravel in the future.

Economic Reality Shaping the Chinese and American Dreams

China and the US have enjoyed stable economic relations ever since trade was normalised by Bill Clinton under the US-China Relations Act in 2000. Trade increased from US\$ 5 billion to US\$ 231 billion between 1980 and 2004. In 2006, China became US’s second biggest trading partner after Canada. In 2008 China became the largest holder of US debt with a worth of US \$ 600 billion in treasuries. A high level economic and strategic dialogue was established in 2009 by US President Barack Obama and Chinese president Hu Jintao whereby high-level representatives of both countries and their delegations would meet annually at capitals alternating between the two countries. Eight strategic dialogues took place by 2016 which emerged as the face of their economic relationship; this has been reconfigured into four separate talks under the Trump administration: the Diplomatic and security Dialogue, the Comprehensive economic dialogue, the Law enforcement and Cyber-security Dialogue and the Social and Cultural Dialogue.

The economic track had been aimed at achieving strong, sustainable, and balanced growth, strengthening financial systems, improving financial supervision, enhancing trade and investment cooperation between the two countries and also the need for structural reforms to achieve more sustainable patterns of growth in future years. Though some restructuring has been witnessed through reductions in external imbalances, a detailed examination of economic developments within each country would offer less basis for optimism. Barry

Bosworth notes that China's exceptional growth in the early 2000s was propelled by its oversized external trade surpluses that fuelled charges of mercantilist behaviour as China accumulated large financial reserves, while the US was perceived as being on a consumption binge with a low saving rate and large trade deficit that were symptomatic of a country living well beyond its means.¹⁴ As a country suffering from deteriorating physical infrastructure, the US lacked a coherent strategy for reform.

However, increasingly American economists accused the Chinese of 'raping their country economically' through its extractionary methods which took advantage of the US free-trade policies and the lack of protection for domestic industries to steal jobs and manufacturing businesses. In addition, the US has accused China of undervaluing the RMB (Renminbi) from time to time and carrying out a double negative survey of Chinese products – measures considered as the implementation of trade protectionism by China. These are discussed in detail by Peter Navarro in his book 'Death by China' where he shows how since China joined the WTO in 2001, America's apparel, textile and wood furniture industries have shrunk to half their size – with textile jobs alone cut down by 70 per cent. Other critical industries like chemicals, paper steel and tires are under similar siege, while employment in high-tech computer and electronics manufacturing industries have plummeted by 40 per cent. Navarro credits this take over by China to its steady march up the value-chain on the wings of massive government support¹⁵ and its unfair trade practices that he calls as the 'eight weapons of job destruction'.¹⁶

In 2014, the US even indicted five Chinese nationals with ties to the PLA on charges of stealing trade technology from US companies. The US authorities held that they had evidence that Chinese hackers were behind the major online breach of the office of personnel management and the theft of data from twenty-two million current and former federal employees. In response, the Chinese suspended their cooperation in the US-China Cyber Security working group. There was some effort to arrest the fall in the bilateral relationship when the two leaders met at the Mar-a-Lago summit in Florida, where Trump claimed tremendous progress on trade issues resulting in a ten-part agreement between Beijing and Washington to expand trade of products and services like the beef, poultry and electronic payments describing the bilateral relationship as "hitting a new high" though they chose not to respond to contentious trade issues including aluminium, car parts and steel.

Few observers in the American strategic community have realised and argued that the US manufacturing output has actually doubled over the last 30 years

and is still the biggest sector in the US economy. The problem lies with the fact that it has done so while employing only 75 percent of the workforce that it used to, which implies automation has been at the core of loss of jobs and not the Chinese as the political establishment would like to argue. The American dream has hit an antithesis where the youth today is stuck in jobs with fewer opportunities of advancement and little hope for their future. It harks back to the old feudal order where one is born in privilege and hopes that things don't get any worse from there. Economic mobility is lower than almost every other developed country and the US dream which was based on a sense of a just order where people got what they deserved is almost on the verge of a collapse. Over 25 percent of Americans have no savings, the labour market is at an all-time low, real wages have been stagnating for 50 years straight.¹⁷ China's actions are believed to have contributed to a trade deficit with the US that amounted to US\$ 375 billion in 2017; plaintive on US naiveté in Trump's words- "we rebuilt China" over the last 25 years.

Sino-US economic relations have also remained tepid due to the fact that the US has not been supportive of the idea of other Asian countries joining the Asian Development Bank. US has openly vocalised its disdain towards China's "debt-diplomacy" which it uses to expand its influence. China, today has offered hundreds of billions of dollars in infrastructure loans to governments from Asia to Europe and even Latin America, but the problem lies in the opacity of these loans whose benefits flow overwhelmingly to Beijing. The matters came to a deep divergence starting in 2017 when American soybean farmers who had exported over US\$12 billion of the soybeans to China and the Iowan farmers were making preparations to deliver even larger shipments of soybeans to China in the upcoming year, but as soon as Trump started to increase tariffs on Chinese imports in March 2018, Beijing retaliated by having China's customs block the delivery of US soybeans.¹⁸ Terry Branstad felt insulted by Beijing's reactions and refused to reconcile as the matter reflected a loss of face. While the US trade representative was authorised to investigate into certain policies, acts and practices related to technology-transfers, intellectual property and innovations in 2017, in early 2018, Trump signed Presidential memo to file a WTO case against China for discriminatory licensing practices, restrictive investments in key technology sectors and imposed tariffs on Chinese products. In April 2018, the US banned Chinese firm ZTE from conducting business for seven years, putting a definite nail in the cupboard of US-China dank relationship and the trade war that ensued has not yet come to still.

Ironically, these very practices that the US today holds China in poor light for were once the backbone for US' meteoric rise. The US narrative on

exceptionalism highlights how a confluence of factors that included unlimited land, unlimited cheap labour, unlimited innovation and its geographic isolation and creative ingenuity gave birth to the idea of the American dream. These are no longer necessarily a part of the reality today. As a country the Americans are beginning to realise that their young idealism has hit its worldly limits and the youth in the country is attempting to adapt to the new reality and accordingly modifying its ethos to adapt to the 21st century. However, what the Chinese power grab has successfully achieved is to elicit similar warnings from various political set up across the American political institutions who argue that China is a growing threat to America's workers economy, technology and national security. Though most political analysts believe that Trump's mindset of hitting China back with tariffs may not lend itself to a comprehensive targeted and strategic response that is required, the younger power's new found influence will impact the US role on the international stage.

Strategic and Diplomatic Dynamics Affecting the Bilateral Relationship

Frictions have been visible in the Sino-US defence and strategic ties over the last few years coming to fore when Trump broke the established tradition by speaking to the Taiwanese President on telephone thereby raising questions to the US commitment to the One China policy. US has been sceptical of China's military proximity to Russia and has tried to counter China's influence in North Korea by placing the THAAD systems in South Korea. US incursions or 'snooping' just outside China's seas and borders have regularly incurred China's disfavour creating inevitable friction. In December 2013, the US military immediately conducted a comprehensive monitoring operation on China's first aircraft carrier *Liaoning* as soon as it was inducted. China accused the US of military provocation as the *USS Cowpens* had entered the defence zone of the *Liaoning*.¹⁹ On 18 August 2014 a US Navy P-8 Poseidon anti-submarine patrol aircraft flew in international airspace near China's Hainan Island and was intercepted by a China J-11 B fighter jet.

Understandably then, the US China military relationship has been a victim of the ups and downs in their broader relationship. It was defined as an on-off partnership by the then Secretary of Defence - Robert Gates, given the hiccups and suspensions experienced in the Diplomatic and Security Dialogue which has also been one of the main pillars of China-US talks under the Trump administration. The fact that the Diplomatic and Security Dialogue which brings the US secretaries of state and defense together with high-level diplomatic and military officials from China has been cancelled for this year indicates the

spiralling down of the ties between the two countries in view of the recent Trade war that was started by Trump's tariffs on Chinese goods. As of 2020, there are no fewer than 62 bills pending in Congress to alter one aspect or another of their economic relationship with China.²⁰

Divergences continue to remain over issues like democracy, Taiwan and China's reclamation efforts in the South China Sea which the US Pacific Fleet commander Admiral Harry Harris compared to a "Sand Great Wall". America recently condemned China's insistence on Latin American nations to sever their ties with Taiwan as actions that threaten the stability of the Taiwan Strait. China, on the other hand, cut short a visit to the US by the PLA Navy chief Shen Jinlong and postponed a late September meeting between the joint staff departments of the two countries' militaries after the US imposed tariffs on China's equipment Development Department over the purchase of Russian military technology and rejected a request of port call by the US after Washington approved its arms sales to Taiwan.²¹

Overall, there is a perceptible shift in how the two powers visualise their respective roles in the changing world order. Identifying a new era of "great power competition" Trump highlighted in the 'National security Strategy', that "foreign nations have begun to reassert their influence regionally and globally and are contesting America's geopolitical advantages and trying to change the international order in their favour." Trump also lamented the fact that China's entry to the WTO which was based on the hope that China's authoritarian expansionism would be replaced by new found respect for classical liberal principles, private property and religious freedom and the entire family of human rights has largely gone unfulfilled.

In addition, the US is apprehensive of China's attempt to modernise militarily which erode America's military advantages on land, air, sea, and in space, whereby the Chinese attempts are seen as nothing less than an attempt to push the US from the western Pacific and preventing it from coming to the aid of its allies. Moreover, the US is watching with much unease the build-up of an unparallel surveillance state in China with its "great firewall" which drastically restricts the free flow of information to the Chinese people. The US administration fears that by 2020, China's rulers aim to implement an Orwellian system premised on controlling virtually every facet of human life – the so-called social credit score which would allow "the trust worthy to roam everywhere under heaven while making it difficult for the discredited to take a single step".²² These are seen as actions that have opposed the goals and actions of the American government.

Of more concern to the US has been China's extension of support to corrupt and incompetent regimes in countries like Venezuela pledging US\$5 billion in questionable loans that can be repaid with oil. It has been observed that the Chinese are directly intervening in some nation's politics by providing direct support to parties and candidates who promise to accommodate China's strategic objectives. This is seen in direct contravention of the democratic ideals espoused by America; forcing the American administration to further strengthen its military components perceptible in the largest increase in national defence of US\$ 716 billion since the days of Ronald Reagan to extend America's military dominance in every domain.²³

However, there is now a rising lobby of China watchers in the US who believe that China threat is exaggerated. This can be ascertained by the way the Chinese maritime policy has worked over the past several years. While Xi Jinping has declared three notable elements to his maritime policy: the first is the goal of building China into a "maritime great power" at the 18th and the 19th Party Congress in 2012 and 2017 respectively; second, to address the tensions between advancing China's claims and avoiding military escalation or the "unity of rights defence and stability maintenance"; and third, the indignant "no-acceptance, no participation, no recognition, no-implementation" response to the arbitration case brought on by the Philippines under the UN convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), much of these elements have been carried over the last few decades and not necessarily a major discontinuum from previous policies. Only a new pattern of patrolling has been initiated since September 2012 in response to Japan's transfer of the three islands to central government control.

There are signs that the Trump administration may be using increasing frequency of Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) to pressure the PRC on other issues but Chinese maritime policy has followed a largely path-dependent logic that is less susceptible to carrots and sticks than foreign policy makers may believe.²⁴

Sabotage and Slander: Underbelly of the Chinese Propaganda Machine

Not only has China been vocal about its disappointment with US support to Chinese dissidents; China's attempts at subversion to the US state machinery are also becoming perceptible through its attempts to reach out to the non-state actors. Attempts have been seen by the Chinese Communist Party to reward or coerce American businesses, movie studios, universities, think tanks, scholars and journalists and local, state and federal officials; even initiated unprecedented efforts to shape American public opinion. American Intelligence reports have

suggested that China is making use of internal divisions between the federal and local level government officials to exploit any divisions between federal and local policies. This was also perceptible through a sensitive document entitled 'Propaganda and censorship Notice' circulated in June by the CCP which identified that China must strike accurately and carefully, splitting apart different domestic groups in the United States.²⁵

The CCP is also spending billions of dollars on propaganda outlets in the US as well as other countries. China Radio International now broadcasts Beijing friendly programming over 30 US outlets while the China Global Television Network reaches more than 75 million Americans. The Communist Party has threatened and detained the Chinese family members of American journalists who pry too deep and blocked the websites of US media organisations. The Confucius Institutes that serve as a vehicle for cultural diplomacy represent another institution that is being used by the Chinese to promote their set of values. Though ostensibly aimed at building goodwill, these institutes end up subverting American higher education as the Chinese insist on placing these in already existing colleges and universities thereby restricting the teachers from spreading western idea and distorting what the students learn as well as pressuring the American professors to censor themselves. Of the 513 institutes that China has worldwide, 39 percent are situated in the US itself; so far two universities- the University of Chicago and the University of Penn state have closed down their Confucius institutes.²⁶

Besides propaganda, Chinese companies have been found to be involved in technical espionage through use of microchips in companies like the Elemental in 2015. These attacks were graver than the software-based incidents, since they are essentially more difficult to pull off and potentially more devastating, promising the kind of long-term access that spy agencies are willing to invest millions of dollars and many years to get.²⁷ The Chinese have also been actively pursuing the military talent pool from the US. For instance, Beijing's Internationals Security Defense College, which boasts of becoming "the largest private security training school in China" is overseen by Frontier Services Group, a Hong Kong based company founded by Erik Prince, a former Navy seal who created Blackwater, a security firm that played major and controversial role in the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. In November, Frontier graduated its first class of overseas security specialists who were given "strict, strenuous and systematic" training to manage security in "high risk environments, warzones and operations across the globe."²⁸ These specialists are trained to protect China's economic interests across the globe over and above the reach of its traditional military establishment.

Transferring Hegemony?

Discerning from Trump's America first approach, China's attempts to promote its vision of an authoritarian dream have met with severe resistance from the American establishment. The American establishment is determined to advance its own vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific, build stronger ties with nations that share democratic values. And even streamline international development and finance programs giving foreign nations a just and transparent alternative to China's debt-trap diplomacy. Towards this end the BUILD Act is being sought to be enacted in the near future. The US administration has also strengthened the CFIUS – the committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to protect its domestic interests from Beijing's 'predatory actions'. Despite being a free market economy, US is devoid of the kind of control and authority the Chinese enjoy over their domestic enterprises. Therefore, it still remains to be seen whether companies like Google will comply with the US administration's emphasis on ending the development of the "Dragonfly app" that would strengthen Communist Party censorship.

At the same time, conceding that competition does not necessarily mean hostility. The American administration has spelled out its desire to have a constructive relationship with China, one based on mutual trust, reciprocity, respect for sovereignty and return to the spirit of "reform and opening up". *Reciprocity* has increasingly become a stronger paradigm under which the US has sought to transfer hegemony of power, that too reluctantly. Added to the fact that China's bargaining power as a trusted and influential player on the global stage remains weak, it still gives some semblance of halt to the US decline. However, China's attempts to bring about the rise of authoritarian regimes worldwide poses a remarkable challenge to the US dream built on democratic principles. Nonetheless, requesting reciprocity in trade is never easy as it looks since a number of variables are at play. Sovereign governments have to take numerous factors into account, including how to address supply chain networks. For reciprocity to succeed, trust is required and often times nations take shortcuts or exploit the generosity of their trade partners. It is the best solution when both countries have agreed to abolish tariffs on each other. President Trump's call for reciprocity in trade with China thus has much scope and can be viewed as a strategic manoeuvre. It not only shows an intention to delegate some amount of hegemony to China but also demonstrates US resolve to treat China as an equal partner in trade, though highly improbable in near future.

China has stuck with dual strategy of either matching tariff rates with US import duties, or retaliating with the hope that tough measures would cause

enough pressure on Trump and the US economy to let them in. They do not seem to be honouring the obligation to provide a level playing-field as necessitated by the international organisations and Law. China's intellectual property theft costs United States innovators billions of dollars a year and China accounts for 87 percent of counterfeit goods seized coming into the US, more recently, the US has accused Chinese drug companies of stealing data to manufacture the COVID-19 vaccine.²⁹

As China's comprehensive power grows, its sense of self-importance becomes more apparent.³⁰ The fact that China's infrastructure and state machinery is relatively new and its growth story more sustainable in the long-term, enhances the appeal of the China dream. And despite the fact that the emerging consensus places the Chinese dream as an Asian dream, China's infrastructure diplomacy and its ability to intervene much beyond its borders will to a large extent determine the fate of the American dream. Much of Xi Jinping's assertiveness has been dubbed as an overdrive by most Sinologists across the globe but since saving face is a crucial matter in Chinese culture and Xi had pledged to fight bloody battles to the bitter end if national interest required, his stand has been rendered clear. Hegemony however, is a matter of perception and the US does not want to let go so easily. Trump's attempts to hold on to hegemonic footprints are visible from the antics of calling Xi Jinping as a "world-class poker player" and going to the extent of closing China's consulate general in Houston which has been seen as a grave provocation by the Chinese state.³¹ A sort of cold war has been brewing between the two for some time now, but will this evolve into a full-fledged confrontation? So far it can only be said with some amount of certainty that global hegemony still remains a distant dream for China as a reluctant US remains deeply etched to its heuristic behaviour.

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Turkey's Imperial Fantasies

Abstract

Turkey gave a clarion call of its new foreign policy of no problems with neighbours in the 2000s which was received with joy world over. But soon it fell back on its promises and under the authoritarian rule of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan it managed to antagonize almost all the nations in the region due to its misadventures in Syria, ruffling the feathers of NATO over purchases of arms from Russia, and supporting Pakistan in its terror war against India. Turkey with a mighty military machine went around flexing its muscles in regions where its presence was unwarranted. The sole aim of Turkey is to dethrone Saudi Arabia and other gulf nations as the guardians of Islam and be the beacon for the Islamic world. In the bargain it has been left with fewer friends and a larger number of enemies. The threat Turkey could pose to India in collusion with Pakistan cannot be discounted and it requires a careful scrutiny. The world needs to stand up and take notice of this belligerence before Turkey goes out of control and endangering both regional and world peace.

Key words: *Turkey, Erdogan, NATO, EU, Russia, Hagia Sophia, Pakistan.*

Introduction

Turkey's soft power skills and clarion calls of no problems with neighbours policy was widely welcomed world over. It was in the 2000s, when Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan spent time and energy for over a decade building and projecting Istanbul as a global nexus point of travel, trade and influence, and aimed further to project the country as a unifying force on the international stage. Simultaneously at the home front, Turkey started investing in energy infrastructure to position itself as a vital transit hub linking hydrocarbon-rich areas in the Middle East with Europe. The aim was to alleviate poverty that Turkey was languishing from and he was largely successful in his endeavour. The honeymoon couldn't last long and Erdogan bet on the wrong horse during the Arab spring in 2010 and then found himself isolated after the Muslim Brotherhood which was spearheading the need for change was crushed in Egypt and elsewhere. This geopolitical isolation was further compounded by Erdogan's increasing aggressiveness.¹

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It is still bewildering to understand Turkey's foreign policy assumptions on date. They have intervened militarily in Syria to facilitate a regime overthrow and are in cahoots with one of the most brutal terrorist organizations like the ISIS to achieve a pipedream. Through this act they managed to antagonise Iran, one of the most powerful players in the region. To further compound the problems Turkey as a member state of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) went ahead to seal a purchase of a sophisticated Air Defence system manufactured by the Russians. In Libya they are pitted against the Russians and both are supporting opposing parties who are sworn to destroy each other. A foray into the recent Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict which witnessed the advent of Turkish weapons and trained manpower saw the war becoming a contest between two Abrahmical nations.

The way the Saudi Arabian journalist Kashogi's murder case was handled by Turkey left many wondering whether it was a personal vendetta that Turkey was indulging against Saudi Arabia who also happens to be an important voice in the Islamic world. To add to its cup of woes it directly attacked India's stance on Kashmir on multiple occasions, including the abrogation of article 370 a purely internal matter. It did not amuse the Indians who have started launching a diplomatic tirade against these baseless allegations. The latest act of aggression involving Turkey's foray into East Mediterranean Sea into the territorial waters of Cyprus and Greece ruffled many feathers. The re-encounter between Turkey and Greece, both being the members of the NATO does not augur well for the world order as it amplifies that two signatories to the same treaty are not able to iron out their differences. What makes Turkey behave like a bull in a China shop? Why is it systematically antagonising all powers to be? It is essential to study the mind-set of the Turkish foreign policy mandarins to arrive at a conclusion as to how Turkey practices its politics.

From Empire to Republic

The Republic of Turkey was forged in the cauldron of conflict. The Ottoman Empire was one of the mightiest and long-lasting dynasty to have ruled the world for over six centuries from the 14th to the 20th millennium AD. This Islamic-run superpower ruled large areas of the Middle East, Eastern Europe and North Africa for more than 600 years, but collapsed at the end of the First World War. The Ottoman army entered the war in 1914 on the side of the Central Powers (including Germany and Austria-Hungary) and were defeated in October 1918 by the allies. Following the Armistice of Mudros, most Ottoman territories were divided between Britain, France, Greece and Russia.² The Ottoman Empire officially ended in 1922 when the title of Ottoman Sultan was eliminated. Turkey

was declared a republic on 29 October 1923, when Mustafa Kemal Atatürk (1881-1938), an army officer, founded the independent Republic of Turkey.³

The 10 August 1920 Treaty of Sèvres imposed harsh terms on the Ottoman Empire and thus reduced the newly formed Turkey to a rump state, in possession of merely a third of its territory under the Ottomans. It is believed that many Turks experience what is called the Sèvres Syndrome and hallucinate that the world is conspiring to diminish Turkey and divide the country thus developing a siege mentality. They feel threatened by the threats, both real and perceived. While post World War 1 modernization propelled the West, Turkey was left lagging behind. Mustafa Kemal Ataturk emerged during this moment of self-doubt and launched the War of Independence, alluring to the wounded pride of Turks. The Great Powers were weary of fighting and did not oppose Ataturk's ambitions. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne nullified Sèvres, restoring control of many Ottoman lands to Turkey secular rule.⁴

Turkey joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1952 and emerged as an indispensable ally of the United States during the Cold War. It is history that Turkey was indirectly responsible for the Cuban missile crisis. The Americans began deploying, beginning in 1961, intermediate-range "Jupiter" nuclear missiles in Italy and Turkey adjacent to the Soviet Union. From there, the missiles with extended ranges could reach all of the western U.S.S.R., including Moscow and Leningrad (and that doesn't count the nuclear-armed "Thor" missiles that the U.S. already had aimed at the Soviet Union from bases in Britain. The historian Philip Nash's 1997 study, *The Other Missiles of October*, brought out that Kennedy's deployment of the Jupiter missiles "was a key reason for Khrushchev's decision to send nuclear missiles to Cuba."⁵ Turkey was fully aware of the consequences of allowing the USA to position nuclear missiles in its soil. Turkey would have been subject to a punitive first strike by the erstwhile Soviet Union a fearful scenario. This only reinforces risk taking decisions by Turkey as a national character. It effectively portrayed itself as a secular, forward looking pro-Western democracy, and hence had a positive influence on Muslims in Europe and served as a foot bridge to Muslim majority countries.

Turkeys Martial Rhetoric

Turkeys President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Justice and Development Party (AKP) won the national elections in 2002. Erdogan exploited the populace through skilful manipulations of feelings of inadequacy, alienation, and frustration. He appealed to the pride of Turks, promising assertive Turkish nationalism. He then went on to skilfully present himself as a man of the masses and a pro-Western modern Muslim. He reaffirmed his countries commitment to

joining the European Union (EU) and pledged cooperation with international mediators on Cyprus a European Union member plagued with a lingering issue: an unrecognised Turkish-Cypriot North.⁶ It is an accepted fact that Erdogan rescued Turkey's flailing economy, which was reeling from rampant unemployment and a double-digit inflation. He built infrastructure, raised living standards, and expanded the delivery of basic services, such as water and electricity.⁷

He cited Turkey's EU candidacy and justified reforms, bringing the country's powerful military and bureaucratic establishment to heel. It is an undisputed fact that under Erdogan, Turkey became a recognisable power and one among the leading countries in the G-20. He pursued an independent path, seeking international recognition. Erdogan and his AKP party tightened their grip on power through a mixture of sound economic policy, infrastructure development and a soft power foreign policy. On the quiet he injected a good deal of religious conservatism attached to this platform, but since the economy and Turkey's standing in the world remained unaffected the majority of Turks didn't seem to mind.

Turkey witnessed massive protests in 2011 and 2013 against Erdogan's authoritarian style of functioning. The protests were massively put down using overwhelming force. This caused concern among the European nations and the USA. It became clear that Erdogan had ambitions of creating a "new Ottoman empire," and he changed the political system to grant himself almost absolute authority. The deadly coup attempt in July 2016 marked a monumental turning point in Turkey's political history. The Turkish government blames the failed coup attempt on Fethullah Gulen, a Turkish preacher and businessman who has lived in self-imposed exile in the United States since 1999. The massive post-coup purge led to an open rift in Turkey's relations with the European Union, which accused Erdogan of using the coup attempt as an excuse to eliminate the opposition. Turkey's relations with the USA also rapidly deteriorated as Washington refused to extradite Gulen.⁸ Erdogan has started to feel that the West are conspiring to effect a regime change and has radically shifted positions taking the USA and the western nations head on. Turkey has refashioned itself as a revisionist power openly challenging not just its regional neighbours but also treaty allies like France and the United States.

Currently, Turkey's standing military numbering about 635,000 is NATO's largest after the U.S.A and is actively involved in multiple theatres, including Syria, Iraq, the South Caucasus, Libya and the Eastern Mediterranean, purely with the intention to either steer the outcome of a dispute in its favour or alter

the existing order. Turkey possesses one of the most powerful armed forces in Europe or Asia with an air force consisting of nearly 300 formidable F-16 Fighting Falcons and a navy which is one of the largest in the eastern Mediterranean, with more than a dozen submarines and a marine infantry brigade.⁹ Though much of the Turkish military's equipment is not indigenous and is imported, the country is currently making an effort to shore up its military industrial base. Turkish companies were the original subcontractors for the programme to build F-35 stealth fighters until the Pentagon suspended Turkey's participation to the programme in July 2019 after Ankara started receiving Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile defence systems.¹⁰ In addition Turkey has a huge Tank force and is pioneering on the technology of cruise missiles. This behaviour stems from its military prowess and thus represents a radical change from Turkey's earlier predilection for a foreign policy that embraced the status quo and that mostly eschewed foreign adventures.

Multiple Strategic Earthquakes

Turkey shot down a Russian SU-24 Fighter Jet on 24 November 2015 near the border with Syria alleging it entered Turkish air space. What is ironical is the plane was only 17 seconds in Turkish air space and was making no hostile moves towards the Turks before it was shot down. Airspace incursions are invariably dealt by firing warning shots and attempts to force the intruder to land or leave.¹¹

Russia's ambassador to Turkey, Andrey Karlov was assassinated at an Ankara art exhibit on 19 December 2016 by a lone gunman ostensibly to take revenge over Russia's involvement in Syria.¹² The incident precipitated a major crisis in bilateral relations between Turkey and Russia. Turkey's role in Syria's civil war was a lightning rod for controversy thus angering multiple countries including Russia, Iran, and the United States. Turkey provided weapons, money and sanctuary to radical Islamist groups fighting to overthrow the regime of Syria's President Bashar al-Assad. The illegally drilled ISIS oil was exported via Turkey, providing a lifeline to the Islamic State.¹³ Turkish journalists who reported on collusion between MIT and ISIS were thrown in jail.

In recent years, Turkey has intervened militarily in Syria, Libya as well as Northern Iraq and has pursued a more aggressive approach in a dispute with Greece and Cyprus over energy rights and maritime borders in the eastern Mediterranean. Greece from its many islands was preparing to exploit the deep-sea gas fields in the eastern Mediterranean basin to reap benefits from the oil resources before being confronted by Turkey. The ambitions of the Republic of

Cyprus have also drawn Turkish anger, as it surmises that Turkish-dominated Northern Cyprus will not be able to share in the energy benefits. The biggest problem lies in Ankara's attempts to exploit oil and gas reserves located beneath Greek territorial waters. Turkey already deployed drills and exploration vessels accompanied by warships inside the exclusive economic zone of Cyprus, even in places where Eni of Italy and Total of France was licensed to perform oil exploration. The foreign ministers of the UAE, Egypt, France, Greece, and Cyprus released a statement condemning 'the ongoing illicit activities of Turkey in the Cypriot Exclusive Economic Zone and its territorial waters.'¹⁴

Turkey has had several protracted conflicts with one of its neighbours Armenia, over so-called Armenian genocide, not to mention its military intervention in the Armenian-Azerbaijan military conflict. Turkey and Azerbaijan enjoy strong economic, military, cultural and linguistic ties. Erdogan has invoked the saying that the countries are "one nation, two states".¹⁵ Azerbaijan and Turkey held joint military exercises in July and August 2020, and Turkey left two of its F-16 fighter jets in the Azeri city of Ganja, possibly for taking part in the conflict. Meanwhile, Turkey's arms sales to Azerbaijan have increased six-fold in 2020. The sales include sophisticated Turkish-made Bayraktar TB2 armed drones.¹⁶ The second reason why Nagorno-Karabakh is an exceptionally dangerous conflict is religion. The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan pits a "Muslim Azeri-Turkish" bloc against a "Christian Armenia". The risk of military escalation at this point is not a Turco-Russian faceoff, but an all-out war between a heavily-armed Azerbaijan and a determined Armenia, both targeting urban areas and civilians. A frustrated Azerbaijan already is waging a military campaign targeting the Armenian regional capital of Stepanakert.¹⁷

Further adding fuel to fire, Turkey has taken a greater political role in southern Yemen through the country's local branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, which is helping Turkish charities gain influence and wants to increase its sphere of influence in Yemen and acknowledged Ankara's geostrategic interests in the Red Sea and Bab Al-Mandeb Strait, as well as Turkey's potential to be a key player in Yemen's future.¹⁸

Turkey has intervened in more than one place and has invited condemnation by multiple countries. It has also annoyed France, a powerful NATO partner and a military heavyweight. It is just that Ergodan is trying to bite more than he can chew and may lead the country to a war that it would find it difficult to sustain. Turkey's coercive diplomacy and its sloppily calculated risk-taking across the Middle East posed a different kind of challenge to strategic stability in the eastern Mediterranean.¹⁹

Strategic Vacuum

Turkey is a centrally positioned international player and is a country at the epicentre of the Balkans, the Middle East, and the Caucasus, the centre of Eurasia in general and is in the middle of the Rimland belt cutting across the Mediterranean to the Pacific. Once known for its soft power and neighbourly ties, Turkey features in many debates for its hard power display on multiple fronts. Ergodan is trying to exploit the vacuum created by the Americans who are withdrawing from all involved theatres starting from Iraq, Syria to Afghanistan. The withdrawal of American forces is a huge setback for the region as they had a formidable presence in the area and especially in Syria as the Americans were the bulwark against a Turkish invasion.²⁰ The Saudis led by the maverick crown prince Mohamed Bin Salman who have a major stake in the region have their hands full trying to quell the disgruntled members of the royal family, untangle themselves from the unnecessary mess in Yemen, and trying to shield the royalty from the fallout of Khashogi's murder. Iran is reeling from the economic sanctions imposed by Trump and the Iranian government is trying its best to keep its head out of water. The European Union is distracted by the effects of COVID and are all making concerted efforts to arrest their sagging economies and hence have no time for any forays in Middle East. The Russians are tacitly encouraging Turkey to don the lead role in the region to exploit the strategic vacuum created by the absence of so many important players. Both the Saudis and the Israelis are coming to realise that Mr Trump's robust rhetoric is rarely matched by actions and with the ouster of Trump and the entry of newly elected American president Joe Biden the dispute dynamics is likely to change in the Middle East.

Earlier this year, Russia sent mercenaries, weapons, and air support to forces in Libya loyal to the warlord Khalifa Haftar to drive on the capital of Tripoli and fight the country's government. But Turkey, too, saw an opportunity for a role of its own, and sent forces to back the Tripoli government which ultimately stopped the Russian advance, and forced ceasefire and negotiations. Turkey's unprincipled success in Libya and Syria have only made it easier for it to intervene on behalf of Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh now.²¹

Geopolitical Storm

Turkey singlehandedly has been able to create a geo political storm on multiple fronts through acts of military interventions, displaying bullying tendencies and intervening at places where it has no business. Turkey achieved a rare strategic success in breaking the year-long siege on the Libyan capital, Tripoli imposed upon by the renegade General Haftar. It is largely due to the Turkish support,

the internationally-recognised Government of National Accord (GNA) pushed back the forces of renegade Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar and regained full control of the city in June 2020. Further a determined military campaign is currently underway to take the city of Sirte from Haftar, who is supported by the UAE, Egypt, France and Russia. Ankara's dangerous involvement in the Libyan war was a gamble which appears to have paid off handsomely. It seeks and serves to justify the so-called Blue Homeland policy of Turkey, aimed at establishing Turkish hegemony in the eastern Mediterranean through exploiting the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) agreed between Ankara and Tripoli. Egypt has been taking part lately in an emerging anti-Turkish alliance in the Eastern Mediterranean with Israel, Cyprus and Greece to design and to undermine Ankara's ambition as a regional energy hub, counter its growing hard power, and keep it away from utilising the hydrocarbon resources in the area.

While Ankara has failed to trigger meaningful breakthroughs in view of its limited leverage, the transformation of Turkey's role in the Middle East has positioned it to be a mediator in the region, and its efforts at mediation have been persistent. Turkey, now has used its migration policy to supplement its foreign policy goals by threatening the European Union that he would push the asylum seekers into Europe in case they decide to harden their stance against Turkey. Erdogan has now come to the position of officially converting again mosques that were temples in the past and are now not formally recognized as such. He formalized the conversion of the ancient basilica of Hagia Sophia, until now a museum, into a mosque in July 2020. He has also promised to liberate 'Al-Aqsa Mosque' in Israel after Hagia Sophia is resurrected' as a mosque again. Such unilateral actions have led to fierce criticism even from Muslim nations like the UAE.

India-Turkey-Arm's Length Affiliation

The two countries despite being middle class economies have failed to develop a close partnership as Turkey-India relations experienced spasmodic tension, primarily over two issues. The first source of tension was Turkey's pro-Pakistan position on the Kashmir issue which infringes upon India's sensitivities. The second though an occurrence of the past still carries the historical baggage which was the differing Cold War strategic orientations, exemplified by Turkey's membership in NATO and the Baghdad Pact, which contrasted sharply with India's non-aligned posture refusing to bow to the dictums of both the super powers then. The rise of hardline Islamist parties under the leadership of popular politician Necmettin Erbakan in the 1970s reinforced the role of Islam in Turkish politics moving away from the secular credentials it had been practising.

He was one of the leading Turkish politicians who propagated an ideology called the Milli Gorus or simply referred to as national view.²² Erbakan was the leader of a number of Islamic political parties that he helped found or motivated. These political escapades largely influenced Turkish foreign policy leaning towards Islam and obviously explain the country's proximity to Pakistan. But the unabated support for Pakistan, despite Pakistan sponsoring terrorist activities in Kashmir terrorist movement, continues to remain a vexing issue shaping India relations with Turkey.

Despite the recent gains on the commerce and trade sectors, Turkey-India relations have continued to have their share of differences. Besides the widening trade imbalance in India's favour, political issues threaten to hamper the development of the relationship. The political divergences between Ankara and New Delhi include the issue of the Gülen Movement, which Ankara declared as a terrorist organization in May 2016.²³ The Turkish government put undue pressure on the Indian government to close the Gülen schools in Delhi and elsewhere; however, the Indian authorities were reluctant and have demurred, demanding evidence from Ankara that would hold up in court.

However, what might have worked as a trigger for Erdogan's anti-India stance in recent times is India's refusal to share nuclear technology with Turkey. Erdogan has been pushing for nuclear technology cooperation aggressively for the past five years. He has paid two visits to India in 2017 and 2018. India has always been conservative in sharing its nuclear technology. Pakistan, on the other hand, is known to share its nuclear secrets for political, economic or religious reasons.²⁴

India's exclusion from the Turkey-led dialogue on Afghanistan in 2010 and Ankara's attempts to block India's membership to the Nuclear Supplier's Group (NSG), both allegedly due to Pakistan's pressure, has further strained the relationship. Erdogan's effort to expand Turkey's influence among South Asian Muslims comes against the backdrop of his pitch to challenge Saudi Arabia's dominance in the Islamic world and offering a conservative Turkey with Ottoman traditions as a model for Islamic nations to follow. This ploy is also being tried out in India to woo the liberal Muslims.

Meanwhile, there are increasing concerns among the Indian authorities that the Turkish government clandestinely intends to permeate the India's large Muslim minority and direct this religious network to help Pakistan achieve its goal of fermenting trouble in India. The concealed role played by various fronts for the Turkish government has made unfettered efforts to radicalise Indian Muslims and recruit fundamentalists.²⁵ Unfortunately, Turkey is rapidly emerging as one of the hubs of anti-India activities close on the heels of Pakistan.

Turkey has not only been providing liberal scholarships but also running exchange programmes for Indian Kashmiri and Muslim students to study in Turkey through state-sponsored NGOs. The list of those NGOs that patronises such educational initiative includes Turkey Youth Foundation (TUGVA), Presidency of Turks Abroad and Related Communities (YTB), Turkish Airlines, Yunnus Emre Institute (YEI), Turkey's Diyanet Foundation (TDF) and Turkist Cooperation and Coordination Agency (TIKA).²⁶

Axis of the Excluded

Pakistan is a repeat offender and a terror underwriter, is the sole owner of the Jihadi supermarket and exports terrorists to all its neighbouring countries. India, Iran and Afghanistan have all been victims of this radical export and Pakistan has been rapped on the knuckles by many countries and remains isolated in the international arena. Turkey with its multifaceted interventions mostly illegally has managed to unite many countries against it and stands cornered. It is, but natural that these two nations come together to create more problems for nations in the neighbourhood. Pakistan was placed on the grey list of the FATF list in 2020 for its unabated support to listed terrorist organizations, but escaped being blacklisted due to the favourable votes cast by Turkey, Malaysia and China. With the souring of Ankara's relations with New Delhi, Turkey's ties with Pakistan have been upgraded to a strategic partnership. What perhaps is of greater significance now, is the growing defence ties between the two nations.

Since India abrogated Article 370 of its constitution, which had given Jammu and Kashmir special status, in August 2019, Ankara has been raising the Kashmir issue in various forums. President Erdoğan first broached the issue at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in September 2019. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi countered by holding meetings with the President of the Republic of Cyprus and Prime Ministers of Armenia and Greece on the sidelines of the UNGA. Modi later cancelled his planned visit to Turkey in October 2019 and a lucrative \$2.3 billion naval deal with a Turkish defence company was also shelved. In view of the burgeoning defence ties between Turkey and Pakistan, India cut its defence exports including dual use items like explosives and detonators to Turkey while signing a \$40 million defence deal with Armenia. India also condemned Turkey's military operation to Northern Syria in October 2019.

Pakistan-Turkey: Ill-Timed Infidelity

The nexus between Turkey and Pakistan may have repercussions for India as Turkey is an expert in transporting hard core Islamic fighters across countries as was witnessed in Syria, and with the Islamic State Khorasan Province (ISKP)

deeply entrenched in the AF-Pak region unleashing a reign of terror the area is likely to emerge as the epicentre of global jihadism. It has been confirmed with a degree of authenticity that Indians from Kerala have already joined ISKP in Afghanistan. It may not be far flung to assume that Turkey can facilitate the movement of displaced ISKP fighters including ones of Indian origin to the Kashmir theatre to brew more problems for India. Pakistan will play a willing partner to this unholy act and India may have to heighten its guard to ensure its safety.

Further the strengthening of the defence ties between the Pakistan and Turkey may see the advent of Turkish Bayraktar TB-2 drones in Pakistan's arsenal. The TB-2, as it has been proven, is known to completely blind all air defences, having blinded the coveted Russian Pantsir and S-300 air defence systems. It is pertinent to note that both India and Pakistan do not have armed drones till date and the drones in possession by Pakistan may not be a game changer but can pose serious problems for India. Pakistan could use such systems to inflict significant damage to the Indian artillery guns deployed at the border, even the tanks and air defence systems.

India to counter the game of drones has employed its Israel-imported Searcher and Harop drones only for surveillance and reconnaissance purposes. It is pertinent to mention that Harop is a suicide drone, employed for surpassing the enemy air defence systems and is yet to be made fully operational.²⁷ The drone is small and carries 23 kg onboard explosives and is tasked to search, identify and loiters above targets before attacking and destroying them. If a target is not engaged, the drone will return and land itself back at its base. Turkey trying to arm Pakistan with armed drones may trigger yet another arms race in the region.

Turkey is surreptitiously trying to raise awareness among Indian Muslims to motivate them to participate in the mainstream political and electoral process actively. To achieve such an objective, the mainstream hardline leaders, sidelined political parties and communal politicians offer the most desirable leadership model to carry out their clandestine agenda. In addition, an essential constituent of politics that Turkey is adopting to in India, is an artificially fabricated sense of threat from the majority community. To this end, Turkey significantly focuses on creating false narratives of Hindu extremism in India by blowing issues like beef-lynching cases, Babri-mosque demolition, triple talaq, and Article 370 out of proportion on global platforms.²⁸ There is also a strong likelihood of Turkey helping Kashmir-centric terrorist groups with drone technology and training in advanced guerrilla terror techniques on the lines of the operations run by Turkey's

Sadat commandos in Syria with terrorist groups like Jahbat-Al Nusra and Tahrir Al Sham. Quite expectedly, Pakistan is majorly using drones lately to drop weapons and narcotics in Kashmir and Punjab border.

Further Turkey's role can prove problematic for India as they can try to be a mediator between India and Pakistan and can portray itself as a genuinely concerned nation over Kashmir and the scholarships awarded to many Kashmiris to pursue higher studies are all a prelude to increasing its goodwill. If it can convince the OIC or even the UN for a deployment of a multi nation force to oversee the security of the region it can pose a serious embarrassment to India. India may have to take note of Turkey's long-term interests and plan counter moves accordingly.

Concluding Thoughts

While the attention of the entire world was focussed on China as a unique State which can violate laid down norms of international law and can single-handedly upset the rules-based world order, the world nations failed to pay adequate attention to the Turkish delinquencies across its borders. Turkey despite being smaller in size is as pernicious as China.

It may not be right to compare a Red China with an Islamist Turkey, but there are some alarming traits common to the nations that stand out. Both Xi Jinping and Erdogan try to manipulate the international law to suit their requirements with scant disregard to affected nations interest. There are a number of nations that have a different set of reasons to feel upset by Turkey's rise. The Turkish deep involvement in Syria, its stubborn refusal to offer unequivocal apologies to the neighbouring countries over its aggressions, and a military alliance with Libya have all been irksome to the nations in the Western Asia North Africa (WANA) region.

In addition to the ideological threat, many other neighbouring countries have more stakes in Turkey's new move. Unfortunately, no government in the WANA region has adopted a clear anti-Turkey policy; but sporadic anti-Turkish riots have occurred in Syria, Egypt, and even in France. The combination of stunning military successes in Libya, Syria, an unpredictable and irrational political governance causes deep concerns about Turkey among the nations in the world. The Turkish leadership has failed to realize the urgency to calm down these concerns and to build a supportive international environment for its ascendancy. If such reckless adventures continue unhindered, Turkey would prove a grave threat to the peace in the region. India especially should not be naive to assume that Turkey would pose no threat and may have to take actions to dissipate the Turkish threat.

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Ankita Raj*
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***Empowering Women to Increase
Workforce Participation***

Abstract

Women constitute almost half of India's population. There is a belief in Indian culture that a house is a home because of a woman's warmth. Yet, there is obnoxious belief in certain homes that woman is a materialistic object. This makes them a victim of personal crimes. Numerous efforts are being implemented in favour of women but the ideal results at grassroot level are short from the expected figure. This study identifies current policy gaps instrengthening womanhood to increase participation in workforce. This study has undertaken issues involving grassroot level in eastern Uttar Pradesh and attempts to answer as to why the dignity of women is neglected in rural households. Adoption of constructive methods of income generation, employment and education for women will bringthem respect and power to unshackle themselves from economic dependency.

Keywords: *Womanempowerment, income generation, employment, education, rural India.*

Introduction

History teaches us about the hard-won feminist movements highlighting the struggle for dignity of women. There were manystruggles in the past tosecurevoting rights, against domestic violence, equal pay, maternity leave, abortion right, healthsecurity, so on and so forth. In several countries, multiple waves of feminism have in fact brought victories to women and improvement in their status. For example, Saudi women got access to travel without male consent in the year 2019.

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The Greek mythology says that a phoenix bird is reborn from the ashes of its predecessor. Similarly, every generation is responsible for inculcating societal patterns and culture in the succeeding generation. Parents are responsible for shaping a nation's future. Therefore, empowerment of mothers/women is critical in shaping of the future generation. Women education in turn will facilitate better education to the future generation.

India is home to 497 million females and 472 million girlchild. The legal framework in India operates under the socio-psychological foundations of a feudal yet evolving society. Crime against women often go unreported and even when the legal system comes to the rescue, there is tremendous pressure on the victim and her family. For instance, rape incidents go unreported in lieu of the character assassination of the victim by society. Even when the charges are filed, families feel that it will only ruin their societal status. On the other hand, a false rape case may be filed for money extortion, safe embezzlement, familial enmities, relationship revenge and many more. Notwithstanding the amount of time consumed during the trial is yet another challenge for the victim and a threat to her physical and mental health.

Public policies and welfare schemes related to women are dynamic, they attempt at improving the socio-economic status of women as well as increase social acceptance of women equality as a phenomenon. Laws on inheritance, marriage, equality at workplace, sexual harassment, health and education have been substantial but they could not reach the optimal level because of the lack of social awareness.

Social acceptance, on-ground support and executing best practices are critical to the success of any social policy. The successful results are widely dependent upon the thought process, awareness and need of its targeted beneficiaries. For example, under the government scheme named *Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana*, it is a mandate to open a bank account by every Indian. But, is it feasible for a poor woman to travel till the bank keeping in mind the geographical distance from their home? Formation of new districts (now 727 in India) by carving out from bigger ones has the advantage of better policy implementation, easy governance by local administration, easier access by public to district headquarters and hike in land rates. Even if the stretch is reduced, a woman may be happy to transact in cash and avoid going to the bank.

The abysmal share of women in immovable assets of the family and non recognition of their unpaid labour constitutes of the next major challenge to the government's attempts to empower women. This challenge is amplified when work force participation of women is taken into account. There is a dire need to

enhance women participation in the workforce. Women may not be able to visit an office for work. Sensitization about geographical barriers for work opportunities, work life balance, dignity of labour and financial independence is of epitome concern right now in India.

The prevailing literature on women issues in India has been grouped in a lexical ordering as follows.

Table 1: Contributions by Scholars

| <i>Authors and years</i> | <i>Contributions</i> |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Raj & Agrawal (2019) | 'The Human-rural-women-Resource is vital for the success of India'. B2B business model has been suggested for rural women made handicrafts (work-from-home opportunity) and corporate gifting. An amendment is suggested in the corporate social responsibility law. |
| Dixon (2018) | Skill India programs are being catered to the needs of the people like child care support and flexible work timings. It is suggested to reform the policies. Issue of underpayment should be enacted upon. Gender based development is desired. The work environment should be safe for a woman. Rural jobs are decreasing and the rural women are unable to make it for jobs in the urban areas. |
| Mohiuddin & Ganaie (2018) | Women are victims of prolonged depression, sparse accessibility to education and health, limited land rights and neglected in family. It is stated that the status of women would go up if they are able to participate in decision making. Empowerment is the key to an individual's well-being as well as a major contributor towards economic productivity. |
| P & J (2018) | Country's growth is widely dependent on the usage of kin (men and women). Women development is critical to achieve advancements. Rigvedic culture was monogamic with equal status of men and women. The Upanishad give both men and women, an equivalent learning member status. During the British rule, significant social reform took place. In the twenty-first century, Indian women are leading the race in every field. In-spite of the developments, the crimes against women are not coming to an end. |
| R & N (2016) | Benefits of SHG are: the saving power of women increase, they are socially more aware, gain social recognition and accompanied with a rise in income level. |
| Sharma (2015) | Women have patriarchal families face oppressions and Indian families are hierarchical. The first wave of feminism in India brought talked of individual rights and equality. The second phase witnessed the fights against the British rule. The third phase began post-independence and laws were passed with constitution coming into force. |
| Chadda & Deb (2013) | In certain families a woman is the bread earner but poor in making decisions, there the family has a poor structure and role resentment. |
| Khan & Amir (2013) | Due to the low education and poverty level, the handcraft artisans depend on middlemen for raw material and marketing. The success of handcraft is dependent on the consumer taste adaptation by the artisans. |

(Contd...)

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Turner (2012) | Workers enjoy freedom. Yet there remains conflict between individualism and social/ familial practices. |
| Chaudhuri (2000) | 'national legacy' is where men fight alongside women for their rights. There is a higher amount of vocal opposition for the women movement. |
| Medel-Anonuevo (1995) | Household chores may restrict women from actively participating in educational programmes. The concept of empowerment needs completion. It is necessary to carry out women-training at all the levels. Revision of the teaching materials is deemed mandatory. There should be a diligent focus on parents as role models. |

Objectives of the Study

Following are the main objectives of the study:

- (a) To understand the problems which are being faced by the rural women in India.
- (b) Identification of the loopholes which hold women back from being beneficiaries.
- (c) To recommend policy modifications on the basis of the need of poor women.

Problems in the Lives of Rural Women

The rural Indian society is driven by parochial belief systems sustained by patriarchy. The very existence of women is dependent on the will of male head of family. Women are not consulted even in matters of their own life, such as marriage and childbirth. The gender bias is so intricately interwoven in the Indian families that such practices are considered 'normal'. For a new normal to take place, a holistic social movement is needed, which the government cannot accomplish on its own.

The lack of awareness about contraception and the inability of women to make decisions in this regard has led to the population explosion and resultant reduced per capita income. Additionally, districts are being divided in India thus making transition from a big geographical space to a small one. The issue is that the average number of population per district has risen by nearly twelve percent even though land area has been reduced by forty-four percent since the year 1981. The rural households have more mouths to feed, low disposable income per-child along with degrading status of a woman's health after each childbirth.

Moreover, the importance of cleanliness in the villages and the purpose to use a toilet is something the rural residents fail to understand. The situation is not much different when it comes to taking up a commercial low wage menial

job. In some households, the wife would coax the husband and the consequences would be domestic violence, may be due to the obstinacy of the spouse, habit or inferiority complex. The woman may not be able to speak up in front of the vociferous objections by the family members. Thus, the desire is suppressed which may lead to a burst of piled-up feelings and self-induced ailments for frustrations. This may be ugly when witnessed by the children which would result in shoddy upbringing.

There are women who are not members of any group or non-governmental organisation because they are not comfortable with the assemblies. They are confined within households due to family responsibilities. Circumstantially, hefty responsibilities of extended families, degrading situations by members, inappropriate house facilities (half-fed lifestyle) may become ad nauseam and kill the self-esteem of a woman.

The root cause of problems faced by rural women can be summed up by three prevailing phenomena. Namely: patriarchy, unjust land reforms ignoring women's right to property and feudal social attitude.

The Realms of Women Livelihood

The sections that follow discuss some inspiring real-life incidents. These examples are reflections of parent-child influence, zeal to study, presence of good teachers, gender-biasness, woman's economic empowerment, meromeliawin and confidence, basis personal choice.

In an eastern district of Uttar Pradesh state (Rae Bareilly), a fifteen-year-old girl is the youngest to qualify for the Engineering course in the Indian Institute of Technology (ranked one) in July 2019. The girl comes from a rural background where the parents focussed on educating her since the young age of two years even when they did not have the funds for a school uniform (Ashutosh et. al., 2019).¹

There was another incident in eastern district (Amethi) of Uttar Pradesh where a sixty-five-year-old retired male-guard wears his school uniform every morning in November 2018 to attend the school classes in order to complete his education (Mullick, 2018).²

In the same month in an eastern district of the state (Barabanki) a government school teacher who replicates the game *Kaun Banega Crorepati* (Indian version of Who Wants to be a Millionaire?), weekly in class just to make learning interesting and create interest in students. The incident indicates transformation of procedures and techniques at the ground level where the young as well as the

older generation is willing to learn. The teachers are exploring novel pathways to impart knowledge (Mullick, 2018).³

In the same year, district Padrauna (Kushinagar) of same state witnesses two sisters who disguised as barbers to work in the makeshiftshop to extend financial support to their family. They opted to pretend as men because hair-cutting is seen as a job which men do. They wanted to make their customers comfortable. As time passed, the locals got to know that ‘girls’ were styling their hair and they eventually became comfortable with the fact. The sister-dyad father is proud of the daughters (Jadid, 2019).⁴ This incident showcases gender-biasness that exists in rural India when it comes to employment.

A positive case study in this regard is the wafer brand *Lijjat Papad*. It started as a cooperative by seven sisters in Mumbai, India in the year 1959. They were left with no work at home after their respective husband’s stepped out of home for work. The workforce has now grown to over forty thousand number of women. The video on YouTube,⁵ where this information is gathered from, shows a lady narrating the real-life story about association and, benefits from the brand. The woman boasts of extending financial help to the husband (NDTV, 2019).⁶

A lady named Kamini Srivastava, residing in the capital city of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow, lost arms and, fingers of left leg at the age of four, in a train accident. The lady neither gave up, nor complained and went off the extra mile with each passing day. She is a gazetted officer at a government department named Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), and, a national level poet of India. The woman writes with her right leg and, applauds the Father who aided tremendously in teaching to overcome the disability (Srivastava, 2018).⁷

The famous Usha’s Pickle Digest was created by Usha Prabhakaran. The author of various recipes hails from the state of Tamil Nadu. A lawyer by profession she realised that cooking is her passion to live for (Doctor, 2019).⁸ This suggests that, if given opportunities, the women can do wonders.

Women Centric Government Schemes and Policies

The rural class generally views the local politicians and officers as panacea for their troubles. It is evident via the decentralised election process in the democratic India. The said individuals work as per the government schemes and provide feedback as to what the real situation is at the grass-root level. The marketing (framing schemes) and sales (district implementation) model would ensure maximum gain to consumers if the middlemen/ institutional dependency is reduced.

The administration puts in numerous efforts to ensure that the monetary benefits are passed on to a woman of a household who is a prime benefactor of a scheme. Schemes like the *Saakshar Bharat* focused on educating adult women (launched in 2009), the *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, Mid-Day Meal Scheme, etc. are changing the mindset of rural people with regard to education. Now the scenario is changing and people are getting aware of benefits of educating females.

The Uttar Pradesh Skill Development Mission was launched in the year 2014. It aims to impart skill to Indian population (even those who have never been to school) and prepare them for jobs. The scheme also puts forth guidelines for placements after completion of the course. The families now feel that the members should be skilled to work. This is evident as per the enrolment in the skill development centres in the eastern Uttar Pradesh district named *Kaushambi*. This may be due to dysfunctionality of certain centres. In spite of the drop, the enrolment of pupils in the centres rose by twelve percent in the same year as per the information that was gathered from the Skill Development Mission Office of the district.

The government e-marketplace (GeM) is an online platform provided to rural artisans. To name a few, the painting artforms of native places, Gujarat based terracotta products and *Zardozi* fabric arts are sold. Pictures and description make the items lucrative. The sellers are given tax exemption of sales worth two million. Exhibition centres are provided for display of products that are handcrafted by the artisans, namely Bombay Exhibition Centre (Mumbai), Pragati Maidan (New Delhi), Avadh Shilp Gram (Uttar Pradesh), Chennai Trade Centre (Tamil Nadu), and so on. Khadi and Village Industries Commission takes care of products from traditional fabrics, beauty items to food items via small scale local village industries. The products are available for sale at leading private portals. The industries may include self-help groups which are small clusters of women who come together for mutual benefits. Their work is being promoted by Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises due to novel skills in fabric weaving, food processing, natural herbal items, etc. As of 2018, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises' contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) of India is ten percent lower than that of US and, twenty-three percent lower than that of China. Start-up Village Entrepreneurship Programme (SVEP) aids women in establishing enterprises from the year 2017.⁹

Indian women are predominantly good in making crafts. As per the Provisional Results of Sixth Economic Census¹⁰ (released in July 2014), the

total number of commercial handloom establishments was nearly fifty-eight million across the nation. Out of this almost fifty-nine percent belonged to rural areas. Women make up nearly twenty-five percent of the total hired workforce of one hundred and twenty-eight million in Indian handloom/ handicraft industry. There is tremendous possibility of improvement in this figure. The state of Maharashtra topped the employment chart alongside with the highest growth rate being reported in Manipur.

The Government has launched credit schemes for small and medium enterprises like Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana, Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme, etc. These microcredits have not been able to deliver as was expected. This observation was found by Reserve Bank of India panel and it suggested to setup of distressed asset fund of nearly fifty billion, suggested support to crowd-funding and directed banks to extend loans with collateral exemption of up-to two million. The rural women may take micro-loans to set up a small business. Clearly, expenses are more than income. Also, according to the Sixth Economic Census (2016), almost eighty-five percent handloom/ handicraft establishments were self-financed and, not dependent on any credit support. Report titled 'Status of Microfinance in India 2017-18' mentions that the associations of self-help groups with the banks is the largest microfinance programme worldwide. The loan outstanding of self-help groups is over seven hundred and fifty billion.

The government is committed for the upliftment of women and children. This is evident not only from the government schemes but also from the budget allocations for the year 2019-20. There is 17 percent increase of fund allocation to Women and Child Development Ministry. The budget for *Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana* has been doubled since last year. The budget for Child Protection Services Programme under Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) has been increased by five thousand seven hundred fifty million. The budget of *Mahila Shakti Kendra* has been increased by three hundred fifty million. The budget of National Creche Scheme has gone up by two-hundred million. The budget for working women's hotel has been tripled since a year before. In the several extents concerning the safety of women, (*Ujjawala* scheme) the provision has shot up by one-hundred million. The allocation for widow's homes has been increased by seventy million. The Mission for Protection and Empowerment of Women has seen a rise of one thousand six hundred and seventy million. The Bihar and Uttar Pradesh governments have tied up with Bill and Gates Melinda Foundation¹¹. The focus is on improving the maternal and child health.¹²

A number of families believe that their wife and children are healthy. Hence, there is no need to visit the hospital, take nutritional supplements or iron-folic

acid tablets for expecting wives. Some husbands do not use contraceptives, maybe due to their 'manhood-belief' or shyness. Some husbands are too busy to take ailing members to the hospital. Despite the government having provided the treatment and medicines free of cost, certain people feel that they might as well pay some money to a private healthcare professional and get better treatment. In spite of all odds, the government has hired Auxillary Nurse (Midwife) and *Aanganwadi* workers who visit door to door only to explain the benefits of having a healthy family.

Dire Need for Policy Amendments

Variety of products and ideas come in with diverse educational, cultural, lifestyles and demographic variables. The unemployed citizens have to be motivated to take up commercial activities. Also, there should be a comfortable environment. Poor people have novel concepts and art forms which remain untested as they have never been given an opportunity for implementation. The necessity is to upscale their existing talent in line with the need of the consumer taste. Virtual classrooms could be setup using WhatsApp technology for education. Survival of the Techie-Fittest is very meaningful in the twenty-first century (Raj & Agrawal, 2019)¹³ because people may not feel the need of using a toilet but need to use a mobile phone. Although it is a matter of personal choice, it is seldom a women's call. Policies focusing on the same shall be based on positive reinforcement and educative in nature.

Income Protection: Financial protection should be extended to the women in distress. This will empower women of today as well as the generations to come. There should be income protection for the dependent housewives where one-third (may be) of husband's salary can be transferred to the wife's bank account. The government may make the necessary amendments in the salary laws. As of 2019, there is no private insurance policy. The income protection insurances are done in Australia, United Kingdom to name few countries

Employment in the Handicraft Industry: Government of India has focused on exhibition centres, e-marketplaces, credit subsidies for women SHGs and NGOs for increasing the top-line and bottom-line of their small-scale village industries. As far as sales of handicrafts, exhibitions may result in a large amount of unsold inventory. Who buys the products? Creation of a customer base for this inventory, will be helpful. Online sales may have low customer traction owing to the fast-paced competition. The tax exemption bracket should be extended to customers for traction towards rural-originated items. The business model suggested by Raj & Agrawal (2019)¹⁴ of linking women-made handicrafts to corporate gifting may be replicated using the traditional art forms of India,

i.e., crochet, embroidery, knitting and stitching. Labelling, customisation, packaging, transporting could be achieved by leveraging the established foothold of a brand.

The government may intervene to make this obligatory. The corporate social responsibility (CSR) law directs the companies to spend two percent of their average net profit in three years towards societal benefits. There should be an amendment to CSR laws to make it mandatory for purchasing hand-craft items produced by women. Tax benefits should be provided to individuals who purchase the items in bulk.

Education-at-Home: The government schemes named National Health Mission (NHM) and ICDS hire para-professionals called Auxillary Nurse Midwife (ANM) and *Aanganwadi* workers who visit door-to-door and assist women on nutrition and health. This decentralised model could be replicated for imparting education. The women who are confined within house walls should be taught by a team in village itself. Provision of a certificate in the end would boost their self-confidence.

Vocational, skill and technical training shall transform a woman with an uncluttered mindset to be an economic contributor. The despondency traits of a poor woman shall vanish. And, when nearly half of the population adds to the economy, the livelihoods would surely improve thereby ensuring a substantial rise in the nation's gross domestic product. The recommendations are summarised in figure 1.

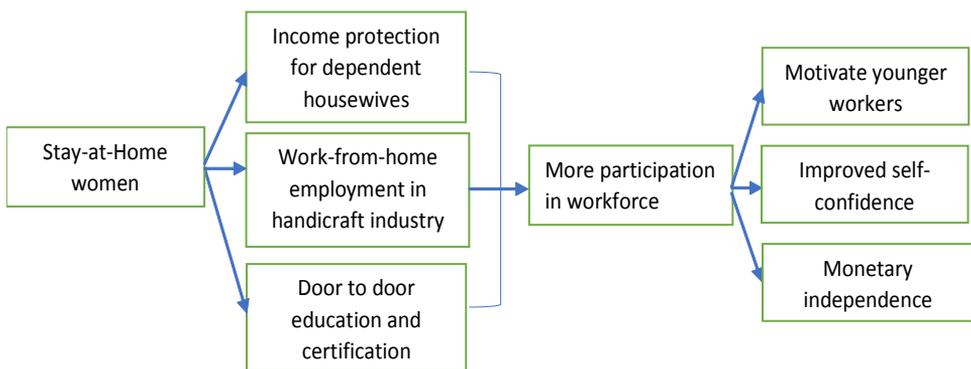


Figure 1: Representation of the Recommendations for Women Empowerment.

Conclusion

Women in India are caught in a dual trap. On the one hand they have to fight for their own liberation from the society, and, on the the other they have to change the socio-physiological and economic fortunes of this nation. However, in doing

so an enabling environment is the first prerequisite. This enablement of women will need a stakeholder approach where all units of society come together to agree on reformative and educative steps for social awareness and economic wellbeing of women.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, “Be the change that you want to see in the world”. It is now time to amend the working systems and even ourselves. There is a dire need to open the doors for these rural lanterns of India.

Notes

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Koha in Centrally Funded Institute Libraries in India: Excursion, Experience and Expectations

Abstract

Integrated Library System (ILS) has undergone dramatic changes. Libraries are witnessed to all those changes through CDS ISIS, SOUL, LIBSYS and now Koha. Users were bored with old LIS system which played around bibliography data only. Users were waiting for smart system in libraries especially for use by today's corporate world. It is not easy but not impossible too. Koha may be one such system which will fulfil users' expectations. This study investigates Koha and Koha-RFID integration-excursion, experiences and expectations in Centrally Funded Institute libraries of India. Around 123 libraries across the India are taken into consideration in this study. The findings reveal that majority of libraries are fully stratified with Koha and Koha RFID integration. They also agree that RFID integration work well with Koha. There are some challenges involving technicality, budget and maintenance but overall libraries are satisfied with Koha LMS.

Key words: *Library software, Koha, open-source integrated library system, data migration.*

Introduction

Owing to the contribution of eminent scholars including S.R. Ranganatha, Melveil Dewey, etc., the library science has become an independent discipline and well-defined profession. During the last few decades, scholars have developed useful systems, techniques for systematic organisation, classification, cataloguing, indexing and retrieval methods. In contrast, during old days library system was relying heavily on manual methods. With the advent of information

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and communication technology, (ICT) revolutionary changes have been brought into library management. Speed, accuracy, and demand were the main benefits that libraries have accrued with the use of computer technology. Currently the software which most libraries world over preferring is KOHA which is an open access software. In India, especially in Gujarat, many libraries have already migrated to this software.

The objective of this paper is to identify the reason why many libraries have moved to KOHA LMS software. Besides, the paper explores the silent features, applications, usage experiences with this software. The research relies on the survey conducted on the Gujarat-based libraries which are familiar with KOHA software.

Literature Review

While enquiring about Staffordshire University's Koha journey, L. Londhe Nagesh observes that the decision to choose library management software is a challenging task. Some universities have decided to move away from onsite hosted proprietary software to open-source library management software.¹ The study by Nagesh delves into the history of Koha, post implementation changes with respect to culture and organisation at Staffordshire university library including vendors, Koha community, library system and particular role of system librarians. At the end, the author says that the implementation of Koha has been a positive experience overall. The author also highlights that the whole processes and functionalities could not be completely mapped to Koha as some further adjustments were needed. Initially this process was looked challenging, but subsequently this integrated approach of Koha software developed confidence.²

Uzomba did a case study on Koha in 2015 on open-source integrated library system in academic libraries in Nigeria which highlights the capabilities and potentiality of Koha open-source software.³ This study was based on the samples of 25 staff from 25 higher institutes, 19 universities (federal, state and private, 4 polytechnics and 2 colleges). Questionnaire as a data generation tool was used. It was found that many libraries in Nigeria turned to free and open-source software owing to inadequate funding, inadequate managerial support and inadequate power supply.⁴ The study brings to fore the justifications for adoption of Koha which is user friendly, flexible, low cost to purchase, low cost to maintain, stable, reliable and OPAC based. Major setback found "with no vendor responsible for software, technical support which relies on someone is limitations".

Knowledge on Koha is gradually gaining momentum in India.⁵ Within short span of time, it has become popular among library professional community.

A study by V. Vimal Kumar and S. Jasimudeen reveals that Koha is very popular among southern states and the number of libraries using the system is growing. However, “adoption of Koha in India is comparatively slow due to variety of reasons like lack of awareness, low computer literacy among library professionals”. Only a handful of libraries are known to have adopted Koha. For example, Delhi public library adopted Koha in 2007, CUSAT in 2009, Mysore university in 2010. Kerala government had declared Koha as official software for automation of government administrated libraries.

V. Kumar has conducted a web-based survey to find all uses listed on Koha web portal and found 83 users in total in India.⁶ The survey analysis show majority Koha users were from Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Technical feasibility was the main reasons for Koha adoption (51.22 per cent). Installation and maintenance were found as main difficulties in addition to migrations, network problems, protest from staff and management approval. Overall, 61.76 percent users were satisfied with Koha. Circulation was most favourite module but 51.72 percent users were not satisfied with serial management module.

Madhusudhan Margam and Vikas Singh have undertaken a comparative study to evaluate four major LMS software, namely Koha, Libsys, NeGenLib, and Virtua on their features and functions. The study shows Virtua scored highest (77.86 per cent), followed by Koha (72.86 per cent), and NeGenLib (58.21 per cent). Besides, the authors suggest to add more Web OPAC and cloud computing Web 2.0/3.0 features.⁷

Library Automation Software

Library applications software are many. The first library software which most libraries were using was CDS/ISIS, developed by UNESCO. This DOS based system was working simply on the database creation mode. It was very useful and through the software Liberians have learned a lot on design of bibliographic database, index generation, etc. After some time, UNESCO had developed window-based software, the upgrade version of CDS/ISIS called WINSYS.⁸

Subsequently, more than 34 commercial software were available in market; a few of them are Autolib, DELPlus, LIBRIS, Sanjay, Libsys, Soft Link, VTLS, SOUL, etc. Beside this commercial software, free open-source software also entered the library domain. Bellow given the comparison chart of free Library management software.

Table 1: Comparison Chart of Free/ Open-Source Software⁹

| Sl. No. | Software name/ Release date | Features | | | | | | |
|---------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------|------|-------------|-------------|
| | | Cataloguing | Circulation | Reporting | Digital asset Mgmt | OPAC | Acquisition | Serial Mgmt |
| 1. | KOHA / 2000 | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 2. | Evergreen/ 2006 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 3. | Biblioteq/ 2007 | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No | No | Yes |
| 4. | Openbiblio/ 2002 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| 5. | Invenio/ 2018 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 6. | PMB/ 2003 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 7. | OPALS/ 2002 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No | No |
| 8. | NewGenLib/ 2005 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

Next Generation Library Management System

Since mid-1950, L.J. Haravu has categorized the evolution of library management systems into the following five phases in 2009.¹⁰

First Generation Systems (1950s–1960s): The first-generation systems started with circulation only and without standards metadata.

Middle Generation Systems (1960s–1970s): During this phase, systems metadata standard for bibliographic records (MARC) are made available. These systems have exclusive backend design, targeted for single libraries, mostly mini-computer based and have command line interfaces.

Pre-Internet Generation (1970s–up to 1990s): In this phase, systems were with richer interface like GUI and had client-server or LAN based architecture. The z39.50 protocol, RDBMS based back end and SQL based search was implemented in this generation.

Internet Generation (Web 1.0) (1900–2000): The development of internet technology led to emergence of web based OPAC. The other functional modules, such as acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, serial control, etc. were still locally administered. Open-source operating system platforms like Linux made an entry, Java and .net become option for development of web applications.

Post-2000 – the Web 2.0 Era: In this phase complete web-based systems, different web services like RSS, mashup, interoperability, information reuse, and enhanced user experience are made available through protocol and API.

However, during this phase, due to advanced development in technology and their impact on libraries and publishing industry, the library professionals stated showing their dissatisfaction with the monolithic nature of the present generation of library management systems and there is increase in demand for better integration facilities.¹¹

Major Development/Changes (Evaluation of Library Software)

The first phase was just with bibliographic database creation. Then database followed the international standard like MARC, UNIMARC, Z56, etc. After that the software which support barcode-based circulation system.

Library software are not just one-sided information provider as is generally understood. It works with interaction mode: provides information, takes input from the users, generates report, gives result, do analysis and many more functions. This is the latest trend of library software. Mainly the software works on cloud-based system and integrated with all library catalogue, discovery services and many more retrieval system modes.¹²

The main functions of LMS software are:

- Acquisitions
- Cataloguing
- Circulations
- Management
- OPAC
- Serials
- Background, history and current status, current access report.

Research Methodology

In order to understand the pulse of the problem the survey was conducted and, researcher has selected total 123 Centrally Funded Institutes (CFI) as per the Table 2, respond to an online survey through personal and official email IDs, forums, and groups for this survey. For the survey, the criteria was that the respondents should be library professionals. Only one response was chosen if more than one from the same institute attempted the questionnaire. The choice of selection was made based on primary evaluation of the responses received and also by considering the designation of the respondents. The survey was conducted among 123 Institute out of which 115 Institute responses accurate and complete results were considered for the research. The data analysis for the research is conducted on MS excel and discussion based on pie chart and bar graph.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the study is to look into the Koha migrations and usages among Centrally Funded Institutes/Universities (CFI) in India. Besides, this study attempts:

- To know the number of institutions, which are using the Koha software
- To see the reasons for Koha migrations/adoption
- To find out the major benefits of Koha adoption
- To find out the problems encounter by them during Koha migrations/adoptions
- To find out overall trends of Koha migration

Government of India-MHRD Funded Technical Institutions

The technical education system in the country can be broadly classified into three categories – Central Government funded institutions, State Government/State-funded institutions, and self-financed institutions. The Centrally funded institutions of technical and science education are:¹³

Table 2: The Centrally Funded Institution¹⁴

| <i>Sl. No.</i> | <i>Institutes</i> | <i>Numbers</i> |
|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. | Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) | 16 |
| 2. | Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) | 13 |
| 3. | Indian Institute of Science (IISc) | 1 |
| 4. | Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISERs) | 5 |
| 5. | National Institute of Technology (NITs) | 31 |
| 6. | Indian Institute of Information Technology and Management (IIITMs) | 4 |
| 7. | National Institute of Technical Teacher's Training & Research (NITTTRs) | 4 |
| 8. | Others (SPA, ISMU, NERIST, SLIET, NITIE & NIFFT, CIT) | 9 |
| 9. | Central Universities | 40 |
| | Total | 123 |

Results and Discussion

Now-a-days library automation is not only the usage of software but LIS system with RFID technology as a complete automation solution. For smooth conduct of the survey, the questionnaire was, therefore, divided into two parts: the first part relates to Koha LMS and second part is about RFID technology use. The following are the response.

How many books do you have in your library?

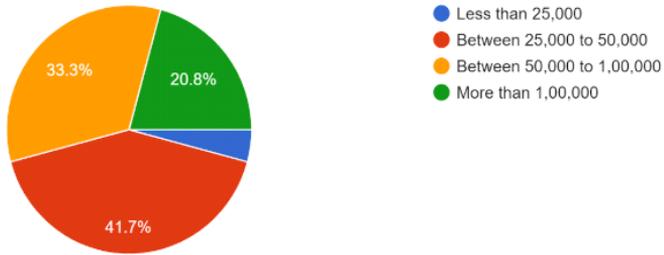


Figure – 1: Books Collection in Library

This survey has selected CFI libraries, old and new. So, the number of book collection differs. 41.7 percent of the total libraries have collection in the range of 25,000 to 50,000 whereas 33.3 percent library collection is in the range of 50,000 to 1,00,000. Only 20.8 percent libraries have more than 1 lakh collection.

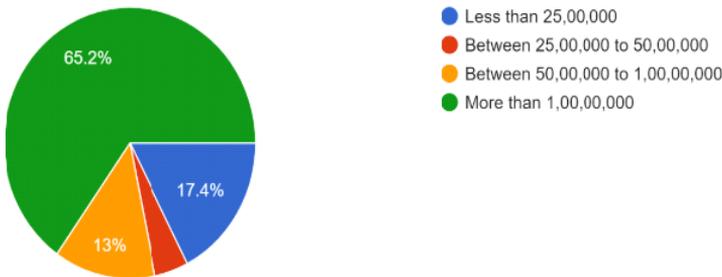


Figure – 2: Budget of Libraries

Generally, CFI libraries have good budget. The survey found that more than 65 percent (65.2) libraries have more than 1 cr. budget which is good for the library development. 17.4 percent libraries have less than 25 lakh budget, and only 13 percent libraries have budget in between 50 to 1 cr. There is obvious correlation between the amount of budget and library collection.

Are your Library using Koha software?

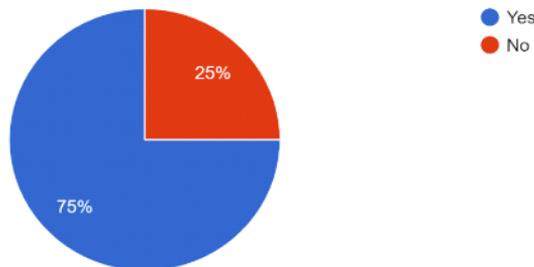


Figure – 3: Koha Used in Libraries

It is found that 75 percent of the total libraries surveyed are using Koha Open-source software instead of other free open-source or commercial software. Only 25 percent are using other LMS in their library.

In which year Koha was installed in your Library?

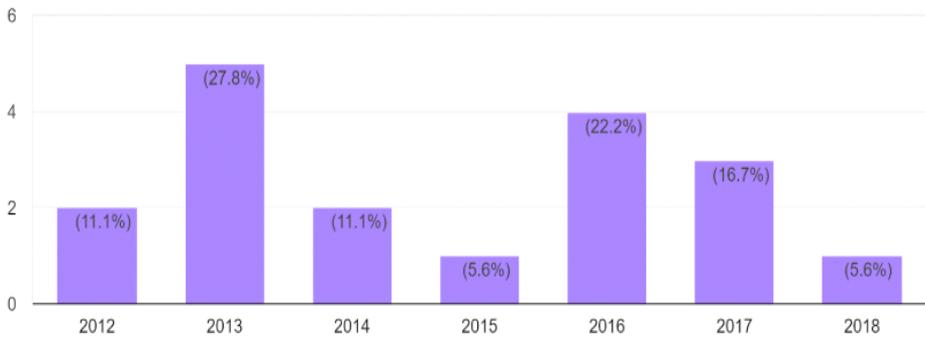


Figure – 4: Installation Year of Koha

Koha was developed in the year 2000 but it took almost decade to get popularity. It is found from the survey that majority of libraries (27.8) have installed Koha in 2013, 22.2 percent in 2016 and 16.7 percent in 2017. As per the bar graph, majority of libraries have migrated to Koha during 2012-2018.

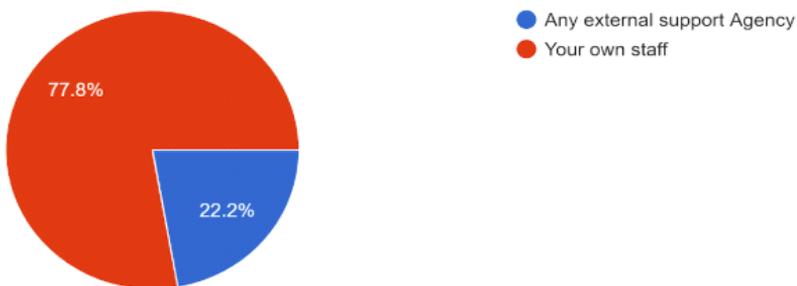


Figure – 5: Koha Installation

On the question of Koha installation process, majority of respondents said they have installed Koha by their own staff; only 22.2 percent got this work done through external agency. This indicates that 77.8 percent libraries have technical staff and they have undergone training on Koha implementation. As this is open-source software, many local or regional vendor come to market and provide the service of installation and migration of data from other software to Koha, for that they are charge huge amount from the libraries. As far as the cost of installation is concerned, around 80 percent of the respondents have

told it costs less than 2 lakhs. But 13.3 percent libraries have spent between 5 to 10 lakhs. Probably the increased cost is due to bigger library collection.

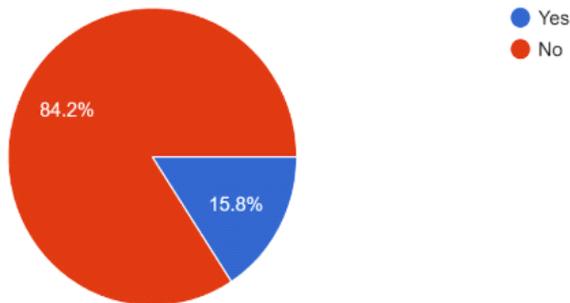


Figure – 6: AMC for Koha

Though Koha is open-source software, it requires periodical maintenance. In the process, some technical knowledge is required for client-server integration and installation, and integration of other similar server-based software like APCHE, etc. Therefore, majority of (84.2%) libraries have opted for AMC for Koha maintenance, whereas only 15.8 percent have not opted for AMC.

What are the main reasons for shifting to Koha (Migration from previous LMS to Koha)?

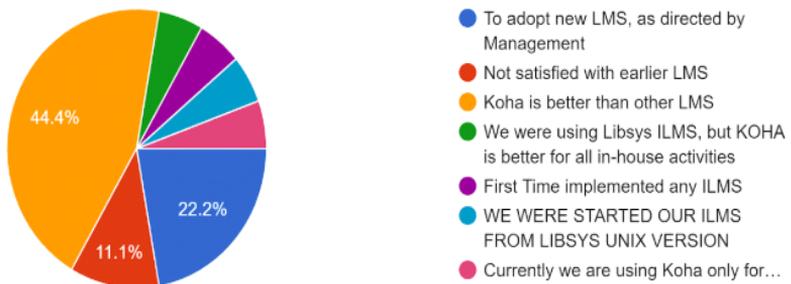


Figure – 7: Various Reasons for Shifting to Koha

Regarding the reason for migration to Koha, all respondents reveal that dissatisfaction with other software is not the main reason. Majority (44.4%) view that Koha is better than other LMS therefore they have migrated to Koha. 22.2 percent respondents says that they got direction from management to move to other LMS probably they might not be satisfied with existing one. Only 11.1 percent libraries say that they were dissatisfied with existing software so they shifted to Koha. Very small number of respondents agree that Koha is better LMS (as compared to Libsys or other software) but they are yet to implement it in their library.

Are you satisfied with Koha?

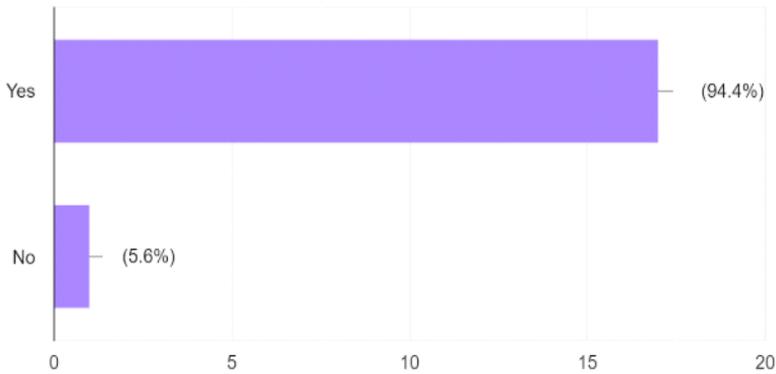


Figure – 8: Satisfaction with Koha

About the satisfaction level, the survey reveals that 94.45 percent libraries are stratified with the KOHA LMS in their libraries.

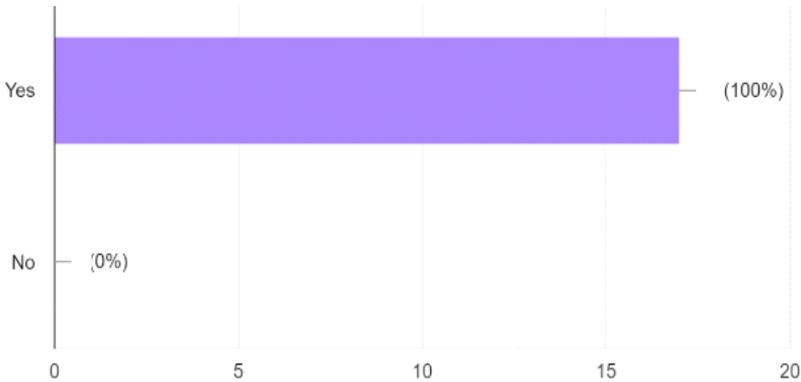


Figure – 9: Satisfaction with Generation of Statistical Reports

Do you agree that "Koha is very easy to operate and User friendly?"

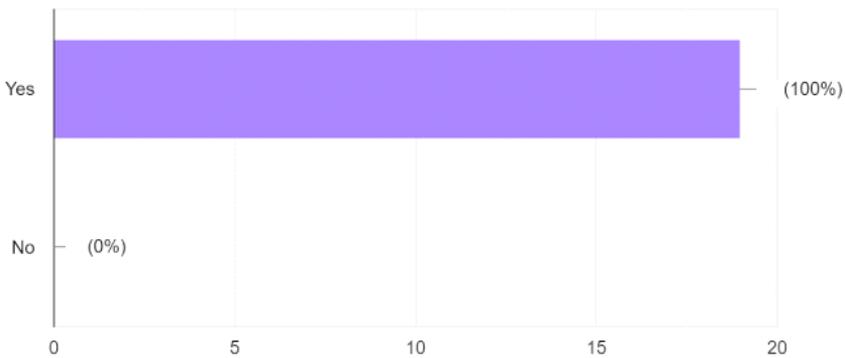


Figure – 10: Koha as User Friendly LMS

Beside usual library work, report creation is one of the important expectations from the library professional. Sometime the top management ask for various types of reports to aid budget preparation, and other requirements. In response to the question if Koha is useful to generate good reports, all respondents agreed that Koha is efficient to generate good reports.

LIS system access is done by entire library team on different levels. This system is not only for librarians or for circulation work. It is expected that the system should operate in simple way to help libraries manage all departments on automation platform. On this question of user-friendliness, the survey highlight that Koha is very easy to operate and user-friendly software as all respondents have agreed.

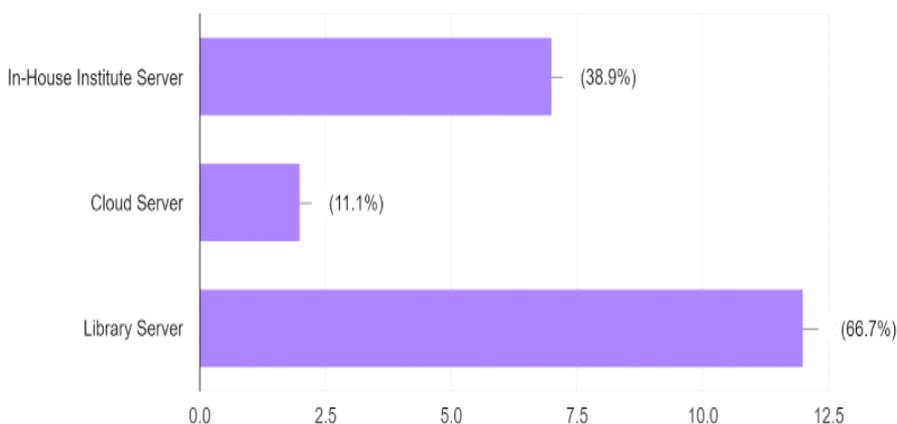


Figure – 11: Koha Installation in Various Server

Koha software can run through LAN based local server. Other option to run Koha is through cloud which one can access wherever one requires. Also, nothing much to worry about server requirements and server maintenance. As the system works on live internet only, one needs to have good internet connectivity in library. Koha on cloud is the new trend and still many libraries are worried about privacy some others do not have better internet connectivity. So, majority (66.7%) have preferred Koha on local level, on their library server, and 38.9 percent respondents told Koha is installed on their intuition server only; whereas only 11.1 percent libraries run Koha on cloud. Meanwhile, 84.2 percent libraries have technical or qualified (ICT) staff who help adopt new software and technology in their library to improve service and resource.

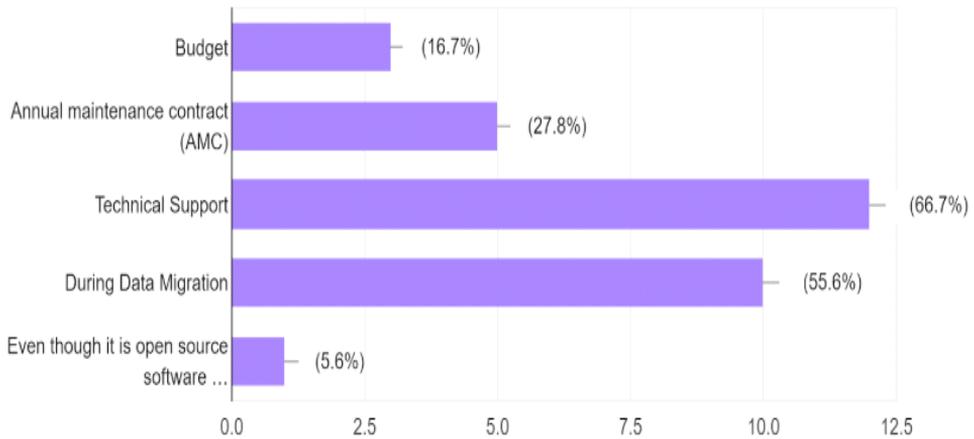


Figure – 12: Challenges in Koha

On the question of challenges faced by libraries during Koha adoption, majority (66.7 per cent) of the libraries have faced technical challenges. Especially data migration is a big challenge and 55.6 percent respondents have raised this issue. Moreover, the AMC service necessitates payment to third party, so additional budget is another challenge for Koha implementation. However, as Koha is open-source software its implantation cost is not huge as compared to other commercial LIS software; so, libraires find budget is not a big challenge. Only 16.7 percent have found it as a challenge.

As per your experience which modules need improvements ?

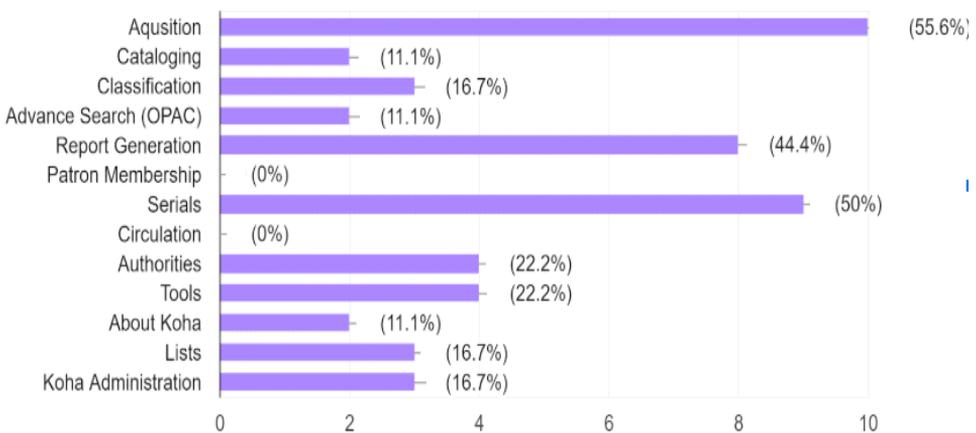


Figure – 13: Need for Improvements in Koha

Libraries were asked to give their views on the necessity of any improvement in Koha modules; majority (55 per cent) suggest reforms required in acquisition, 50 percent suggest reforms needed in Serials, and 44.4 percent have said that Report generation modules need improvement. Only in respect to circulation module libraries are fully satisfied; no suggestion for improvement in this module was received. In any case, Koha comes with updates and changes in exiting modules every year to make it more user friendly.

Are you using RFID system in your library?

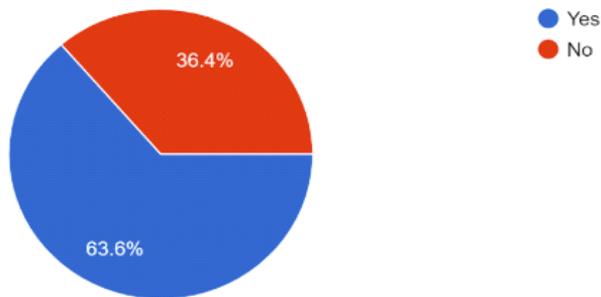


Figure – 14: Availability of RFID

RFID is the latest trends in library automation system. Fast circulation, stringent security of library materials and tracing of the books from giant stack are the sealant features of RFID technology usage in library. And that is the reason why majority (63.6 per cent) of the libraries have implemented RFID technology along with Koha. In fact, RFID is not needed to use only with Koha but the technology can be implanted thorough any LMS software. There are a few libraries which runs RFID with Libys, RFID with SOUL, etc.

Are you satisfied with your RFID system?

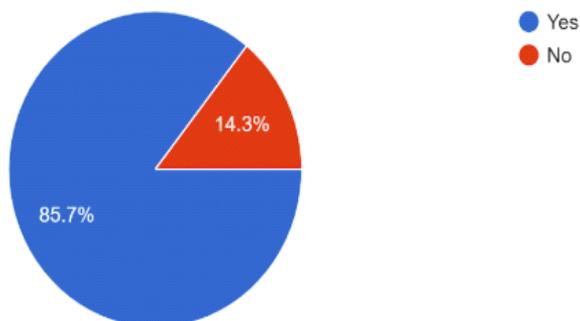


Figure – 15: Satisfaction with RFID

The survey shows that majority of the librarians (85.7%) are satisfied with RFID system, and only 14.3 percent are not. RFID is the tag which help to perform various automation functions faster and in bulk: automatic and multiple check-in and check-out of the library materials, and detection of materials at the gate if it is not checked-out in the system. But some time, these RFID enabled gates and many other systems associated with RFID do not work.

Which equipment from the following list does your Library have?

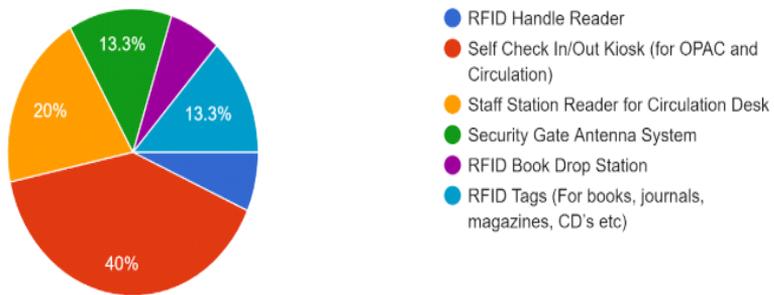


Figure – 16: Tools Availability of RFID Systems

This analysis shows that majority of the libraries have self-check in and check-out kiosks. 20 percent libraries have staff station reader for circulation desk. Security gate and RFID tags users are equal in percentage (13.3) because those who use RFID tag, they must install security gate. There are less number of libraries who rely on RFID books drops and RFID handle reader applicable libraries.

Have your Library faced any problems during RFID integration with Koha?

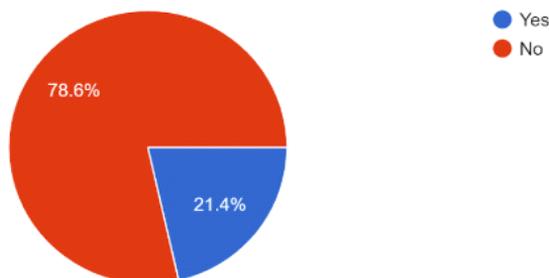


Figure – 17: RFID and Koha integration

Many libraries want to sift their LIS software to Koha but they are doubtful whether their present LIS system with RFID will work properly on Koha platform. But this analysis found that 78.6 percent libraries do not have any problem with Koha RFID integration.

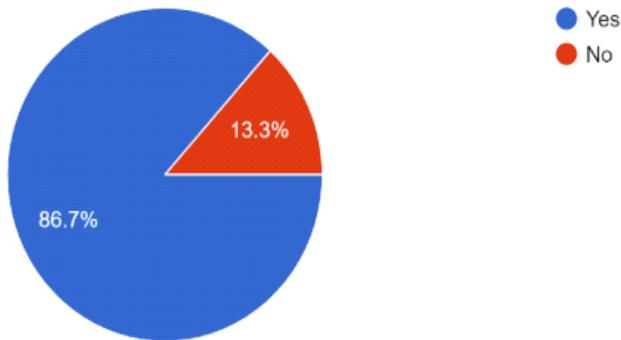


Figure – 18: AMC for RFID System

Library automation is not just one time investment; even after implementing the system one needs to spend continuously on the AMC cost. Many libraries do not have IT team to maintain the system after installation. They take help of AMC. Around 86 percent have confirmed that they take AMC for RFID system while only 13.3 percent respondents do not.

In which year RFID system was installed in your Library?

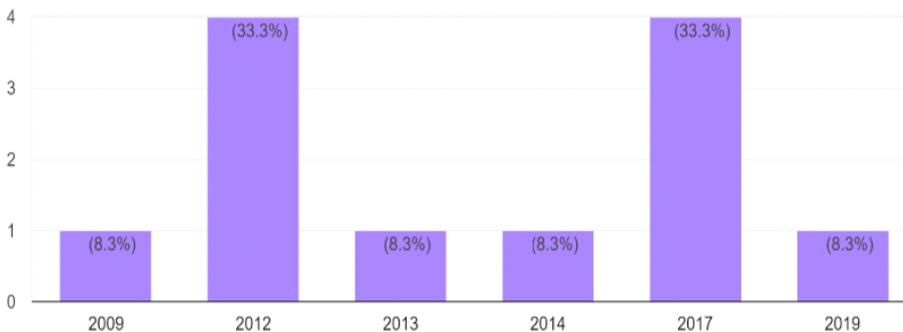


Figure – 19: Installation Year of RFID

Above analysis shows that the RFID is a recent trend. Before 2012 there were very few libraries which had implemented RFID technology but during 2012-2017, around 33 percent libraries have adopted RFID technology. But in 2019 only 8.3 percent libraries have implemented RFID system.

Conclusion

- Majority of the libraries surveyed are very satisfied with Koha and not facing difficulties in integration with RFID.
- Koha also support the Urdu language and displayed the title and author details in Urdu script which is user-friendly.
- Koha has still a few limitations, for example, it cannot issue multiple books at a time in user account.
- Koha is very easy to handle, if it creates self-classification module it will be useful for the library professionals to assign the standard classified number to books.
- Koha does not have the option of report generations; library officials have to generate manually as per their demand.
- Koha with strong developers' community should undertake initiatives to incorporate E-resource management module and related features at earliest.

More number of libraries are still willing to shift to Koha – one of the best library management system software now-a-days. But before shifting to Koha and data migration, the library professionals required to check with vendor or technical persons about the quality and data loss during migration. The libraries will not face any kind of problems who are first time user of library management system but the real issues will be faced by libraries who are already dealing their data in LMS and now shifting to Koha. For that they require a technical person who should be an expert in data migration. To conclude, this study highlights that Koha is a fully successful software for implementation and integration with RFID.

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Book Reviews

Sarnath Banerjee, *Doab Dil*. (New Delhi: Penguin Random House, 2019), Price: Rs. 799, Pages: 184.

Reviewed by:

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When an artist looks at the world, with a mind of a philosopher and writes a book, the reader gets a rare opportunity to live and experience the author's inner universe. This is the seventh book of Sarnath Banerjee who is a celebrated author known for his graphic novels. However, *Doab Dil* stands different from his past works as it provides a different lens to look at the world and its usual daily activities like walking, gardening, sleeping, and going to work.

Doab Dil is an experimentation in storytelling. This book attempts to amalgamate the fiction with philosophy and present it with the juxtaposition of words and pictures. As the author himself writes the following in the introduction of the book:

“Doab Dil brings together drawings and text like two converging rivers. The fertile track of land lying between two converging rivers is called a doab (do ab means two rivers in Persian). It is a rich, draught-free populous tract where civilizations are born.”

It is a book, which captures different eras, philosophers, cultures and lives through its eleven chapters. Each chapter takes a central theme and brings together different thoughts, poetry and philosophical approach based on that theme. There is not a strong thread or a storyline which would connect them all, and that is where the visuals play a crucial role in engaging the reader. There is an urge to find one's existence and purpose of life by questioning the constructs of various cultures and different societies. The work of art overpowers the text, especially in chapters like 'The Daily Decathlon', which has no text

but, beautifully captures people's daily life and struggles at home and work through pictures.

'The Daily Decathlon' is an exciting chapter, not only because it just has pictures and no texts, but also because it represents the life stuck between household chores, travelling to work and workplace in an ironical and humorous way. It mocks the human life and the rat race; and makes you think about what exactly is the purpose of life, and are we getting lost in the pointless pursuit of the modern idea of success.

As we start reading the chapter titled 'Garden: A Place of Inquiry', we get introduced to the biography of Thomas Browne. Through the landscapes, the chapter examines the idea of nature vis-à-vis human. It argues that garden symbolizes the control of man over nature, whereas nature is an entity which cannot be controlled. Browne isn't the only one, as author explores Richard Jefferies, Rebecca Solnit, J.A. Baker, Walter Benjamin along with various other writers. However, interestingly Banerjee blurs the line between non-fiction and fiction, which is why we find Samuel Taylor Coleridge wandering around and Charles Baudelaire, who is talking about it. The author here appears to make the reader question the idea of blurred lines in truth and history.

As the book progresses, it becomes a serious examination of the idea of history and how civilizations develop. By questioning the existing perceptions, it projects history as a space, where identities are constructed. It investigates how we as a human race evolve, grow and function in society. Our inherent aim to create goals of life and struggle of achieving them. Interestingly, the author mentions a book by J.A. Baker, to argue that we need to understand the mindset of an individual, instead of just admiring and idolizing them.

At the beginning of chapter nine, Sarnath Banerjee writes that:

"According to historian Richard Evans, the most important reason for learning history is to study past societies. People removed from us through time, space, and context. It takes a tremendous effort of the imagination to understand people of the past, their values and thoughts. Only by constantly visiting these societies can we learn what it is to be a human, to understand the human condition and the inner workings of human behaviour."

The book is an abstracted, deep and shattered postmodern narrative exploring life, culture and history. It is not a dry exercise, but a strong examination of a postmodern being, seeking truth. If we dig deeper, we find intellectualism hidden in anonymity, and somewhat hedonistic individuals who are chained to the rhythm. If we do not get lost or bored in its multilayer meanings, it drives us to

question, the absurdity of life. The narrative does not seek to establish anything but is happy with its temporary existence.

The book stands out because of its unique choice of subject and its unique execution. It is like a collection of different dreams, where one is on a voyage of different cultures, societies and school of thoughts. The author is unforgiving of the universe he has created, imbued with a sense of pride. *Doab Dil* is undoubtedly a gem for Indian writing in English and added treasure to the oeuvre of Banerjee.

Sitakanta Mishra, *Defence Beyond Design: Contours of India's Nuclear Safety and Security*, London: Routledge, 2017, Price: £96.00, Pages: 307.

Reviewed by:

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The book under review examines all the possible and postulated risks to nuclear installations and suggest a paradigm of 'Defence Beyond Design' for the Indian nuclear safety-security discourse. Conventionally, nuclear safety-security architecture is based on the 'Design Based Threat' assessment, but to ensure utmost safety and security keeping in mind the unimaginable risks. It is imperative to think beyond the standard operating procedures. Certainly, there is nothing called absolute safety or security; and there can be no perfect parameter to judge how much safety is safe enough. But no one should be blamed if designers and risk modellers cannot envision all possible ways as threats are dynamic. However, with proper management techniques to look beyond and think out of the box, risks can be minimised, as the author concludes.

The book starts with the public perception on the destructive as well as constructive potential of nuclear technology. Unfortunately, the destructive image coloured by the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki is often emphasized in public discourse leading to wide-spread apprehension on nuclear technology in public imagination. The nuclear disasters like the Three Mile Island, Chernobyl, and Fukushima have further fuelled their apprehensions. Meanwhile, there are vested interest groups who demonize nuclear technology.

The author says, "nuclear technology or nuclear energy cannot be ignored as it has an edge over other forms of energy, especially for India". Given the limited choices for our energy security, nuclear source is potential, therefore; a better management paradigm must be practiced to address inherent loopholes

in the nuclear safety-security discourse. Nuclear energy should not be seen negatively: it provides carbon free electricity, helps fight against climate change and is capable of addressing entire world's energy requirement.

The author, keeping in mind India's pressing energy security concerns and nuclear as a viable source, examines all aspects of safety-security involving Indian nuclear energy drive. He starts with a survey of India's nuclear energy networking especially post-Indo-US nuclear deal. With the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards agreement and Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) waiver, "India has embarked on a nuclear energy expansion programme seeking cooperation from two dozen countries and a similar number of industrial houses." India has set its new goal post for nuclear energy production with the help from international partners and it will be able to contribute more constructively if included in the NSG as a member.

Given wide spread of sizable nuclear infrastructure across the country, nuclear safety security is a pertinent issue in India. Siting of reactors, waste disposal, public support and international cooperation are some of the intriguing issue areas the author has ventured into and elaborated comprehensively as well as lucidly. The author succinctly highlights that despite much difficulty, there is no major nuclear disaster that has happened in India. Rather, India has earned the status of a 'responsible state with advanced nuclear technology'. Nevertheless, given India's location in a volatile region, threats to critical infrastructures like nuclear facilities is not unimaginable. India has to struggle hard to maintain its impeccable nuclear record while keeping good relation with its international partners as well as take along its domestic public. Many countries such as Taiwan, India, China, Japan, Sweden, the USA, etc. confront social acceptance as the key issue when they try to expand or restart their nuclear plant operations. However, the anti-nuclear activists have succeeded only in a few countries—and not in America, France, Britain, South Africa, Brazil, Russia, South Korea, Sweden, China or Canada. Germany is "a dramatic exception". The author raises a pertinent question if India will join this list? He says, there is no 'anti-nuclear movement' per say in India. What we rather find is sporadic pockets of resistance to new facilities that involves in displacement of population. There is no green movement in India yet unlike in Europe. Mostly, the opposition to nuclear projects in India is purely based on the idea of 'Not in My Back Yard (NIMBY).' Even no Indian political party also subscribe to anti-nuclear ideology yet.

In the author's argument, India doesn't face an acute problem of nuclear waste as it follows the closed fuel cycle based on 'reprocess to reuse.' But

siting of reactors and public acceptance of new nuclear projects has been a tricky issue which India has to deal with utmost caution. India already follows stringent *modus operandi* for siting of nuclear reactors and their safe-keep. With strict personnel reliability programme, safety-security architecture in place, with elaborate material protection control and accounting system in practice, specific security arrangement for nuclear material in transit, and well-defined cyber security arrangement, India ensures that its nuclear energy activities do not cause any harm to public and environment.

The nuclear safety-security culture that India practices gives one the impression that India is fully aware of the threats and also is preparing to defend against those threats. The author also brings to fore the folly of critics who pull India's leg in the name of clandestine proliferation and non-transparency. The fact is, despite multilateral sanctions, India maintained its impeccable record and did not divert from its indigenous path. While staying outside of the non-proliferation regime it nevertheless remained committed to all non-proliferation standards.

As far as nuclear security regime is concerned, India has been an active participant and has complied with all international treaties and conventions. Meanwhile, it has aligned its domestic legal framework with international standards. While the world remained confused about in the wake of Fukushima disaster, India promptly went for a review of safety-security in place around its nuclear installations and marched ahead.

In the concluding chapter, the author proposes a new paradigm 'defence beyond design' – a more robust defence system (safety-security) to enhance the capability to deal with all risks and to remain prepared to effectively deal with unforeseen hazards. The new paradigm as the author suggests consist of ten overlapping but open-ended conceptual aspects such as: understanding nuclear technology drive beyond ideological inclination; information beyond facts; responsibility beyond rules, apprehension beyond postulation; preparedness beyond routine; governance beyond regime; upgradation beyond intervals; nuclear beyond politics; curiosity beyond apprehension; innovation beyond system in vogue.

As concluding thoughts, the author warns that it would be erroneous to vouch that there is nothing wrong with, and nothing to worry about, India's nuclear programme. Given the fast changing domestic, strategic, regional, as well as global environment, India to reorient its nuclear discourse addressing the technological, legal, and governance issues. Firstly, India has to demonstrate more confidence and clarity in the essential elements of the country's nuclear

security practice. Besides, effective management of nuclear information should be the priority to greater public support – the most important lesson Indian nuclear establishment has learnt from the Kudankulam protest. Lastly, the author leaves the readers with an optimistic note by saying that “India’s nuclear energy programme is destined to grow but there is a need to introspect as to how swiftly.”

Overall, the volume is undoubtedly a painstaking exercise to analyse and amalgamate all aspects of India’s nuclear energy programme from the safety-security point of view. It is a unique contribution to the nuclear safety-security discourse and valuable for policy makers, scientists, researchers and anybody interested in the nuclear discourse at large.

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