



*Nawang Tashi, Sajan Thakur,  
Jyoti Sudan &  
Harish Chander Dutt*

*Yash Paul Khajuria &  
Sanjana Kaul*

*Mool Raj*

*Hema Gandotra & Usha Sharma*

*Lalit Kumar*

*Gulam Murtaza*

*Payal Gandotra*

*Sahil Koul*

ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ

# RESEARCHER

A Multidisciplinary Journal

Vol. XV No.2, 2019  
ISSN 2278-9022

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

Genomewide characterization and analysis of rapid alkalization factor (RALF) gene family in apple

## SOCIAL SCIENCES

Contextualizing the Working of Federalism in the Success of India's Democracy: An Analysis

Third Gender and Identity: A Study of Hijras in Jammu Region

Indicators of the Emergence of Single-Party Majority Rule in India: 2014 to 2018

The Unfolding of India's Democracy: A Study of Ethno-Linguistic and Ethno-Religious Identities of Darjeeling and Ladakh

## BUSINESS STUDIES

The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

Perceived Service Determinants: A Chaos between Value & Satisfaction determinant in Psychology of a Consumer

## ARTS AND HUMANITIES

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ (ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸੰਦਰਭ ਵਿਚ)

**The Journal of University of Jammu**

# Editorial Board

## Patron

**Prof. Manoj Kumar Dhar**  
**Vice-Chancellor, University of Jammu, Jammu, J&K, India**

## Editor

Anupama Vohra      English DDE, University of Jammu

## Editorial Board

Bijender Kumar Bajaj	School of Biotechnology, University of Jammu
Garima Gupta	Department of English, University of Jammu
Jaspal Singh Warwal	Directorate of Distance Education, University of Jammu
Komal Nagar	The Business School, University of Jammu
Raj Kumar Sandhu	Department of Law, University of Jammu

## Advisory Board

### Arts and Humanities

Amritjit Singh	Department of English, Ohio University Langston Hughes, USA
G.D. Sumanapala	Institute of Pali & Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka
Kuldeep Agnihotri	Vice-Chancellor, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, HP
Sadashiv K. Dwivedi	Department of Sanskrit, Faculty of Arts, BHU, Varanasi
Sunil Kumar	School of Performing and Visual Arts, IGNOU, New Delhi

### Business Studies

Gurmeet Singh	School of Management, University of the South Pacific, Fiji
Mohinder Chand	Department of Tourism & Hotel Management, Kurukshetra University
S.P. Bansal	Vice-Chancellor, Indira Gandhi University, Meerpur, Haryana
Nimit Choudhary	Department of THHHS, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
Vertica Bhardwaj	School of Family & Consumer Sciences, Texas State University, USA

### Science and Technology

John Bothwell	School of Biological & Biomedical Sciences, Durham University, UK
Ramesh C. Sharma	Department of Environmental Sciences, HNB Gharwal University
S.K. Matoo	Department of Computer Science, University of Delhi
Vijender K. Yadav	Department of Chemistry, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur
Vinay Gupta	Sr. Scientist, National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi

### Social Sciences

Dhian Kaur	Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh
Pritam Singh	Department of Economics, Oxford Brooks University, UK
R.C. Thakran	Department of History, University of Delhi
Rekha Saxena	Department of Political Science, University of Delhi
S.P. Singh	Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT, Roorkee
Yubaraj Sangroula	Kathmandu School of Law & Former Attorney General (Nepal)

# RESEARCHER

A Multidisciplinary Journal

Vol. XV No. 2, 2019  
ISSN 2278-9022

## CONTENTS

### SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- |   |   |       |
|---|---|-------|
| 1 | Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya<br><i>Nawang Tashi, Sajan Thakur, Jyoti Sudan and Harish Chander Dutt</i> | 1-20  |
| 2 | Genomewide characterization and analysis of rapid alkalization factor (RALF) gene family in apple<br><i>Yash Paul Khajuria and Sanjana Kaul</i>   | 21-37 |

### SOCIAL SCIENCES

- |   |   |       |
|---|---|-------|
| 3 | Contextualizing the Working of Federalism in the Success of India's Democracy: An Analysis<br><i>Mool Raj</i>                                   | 38-50 |
| 4 | Third Gender and Identity: A Study of Hijras in Jammu Region<br><i>Hema Gandotra and Usha Sharma</i>  | 51-60 |
| 5 | Indicators of the Emergence of Single-Party Majority Rule in India: 2014 to 2018<br><i>Lalit Kumar</i>  | 61-72 |
| 6 | The Unfolding of India's Democracy: A Study of Ethno-Linguistic and Ethno-Religious Identities of Darjeeling and Ladakh<br><i>Gulam Murtaza</i> | 73-81 |

### BUSINESS STUDIES

- |   |   |        |
|---|---|--------|
| 7 | The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers<br><i>Payal Gandotra</i>                       | 82-97  |
| 8 | Perceived Service Determinants: A Chaos between Value & Satisfaction determinant in Psychology of a Consumer<br><i>Sahil Koul</i> | 98-104 |

### ARTS AND HUMANITIES

- |   |  |         |
|---|--|---------|
| 9 | ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ (ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸੰਦਰਭ ਵਿਚ)<br><i>ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ</i> | 105-112 |
|---|--|---------|





**SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**



# Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

Nawang Tashi\*, Sajan Thakur\*\*, Jyoti Sudan\*\*\* and Harish Chander Dutt\*\*\*\*

## ABSTRACT

*The herbal treatment system is considered as one of the ancient health care system which is inherited from one generation to another through oral dialogue or written scripts. The aim of the current study was to know the extent of impact of modern medicine facilities on Traditional Knowledge (TK). Mahamaya forest falls in Jammu Shivaliks which drains into the northern fertile plains in Northwestern (NW) Himalaya. A thick scrub forests in the region makes the catchment a choice habitat for people who domesticate animals for the production of milk and meat. Such communities (local residents) in Mahamaya forest in Jammu Shivaliks had a wide experience of using plant species as therapeutic agents. Data collected from 188 informants through direct interviews were quantitatively analyzed for use-value (UV) and factor informant consensus (Fic). The extent of available TK was correlated with the modern system of medicine available at the doorstep of the informants. A total of 72 plant species are used to cure 112 different ailments in the study area. Among these plant species, most of them were trees (38%) and among the plant parts used for curing ailments maximum were leaves (25%). As many as 46 species were used to cure various gastrointestinal and liver related ailments. The study also brings out an alarming note that the informants who were in proximity of modern medicine facilities have the lower level of TK as compared to those distant from modern medicine facilities. During the current study, modern medical facilities substantiated with the education and urbanization is identified as key threat to the TK. The diminishing of TK is an excessive and non-replenishable threat to the scientific community.*

**Key Words:** Ethno medicine, Mahamaya forest, Gujjar, Traditional knowledge.

## Introduction

The traditional medicine is the sum total of knowledge, skills and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences indigenous to different cultures that are used to maintain health, as well as to prevent, diagnose, improve or treat physical and mental illnesses (WHO, 2002). Traditional healers use plants as herbal medicine since Vedic era. The earliest evidence of the use of plants as medicine is reported in Sanskrit text "Rig-Veda" around 4500 BC. Also two famous scripts called as Charak Samhita (1000-800 B.C) and Sushrut Samhita (800-700 B.C) of Vedic period have a complete account on drug preparations and their uses (Saheb, 2014). Now-a-days, more than 50000 plant

---

\* Research Scholar, Ecological Engineering Laboratory, Department of Botany, University of Jammu, Jammu, India

\*\* Research Scholar, Ecological Engineering Laboratory, Department of Botany, University of Jammu, Jammu, India

\*\*\* Lecturer, Department of Biosciences, Govt. Higher Secondary School Lamberi, Nowshara, Rajouri, Jammu, India

\*\*\*\* Assistant Professor, Ecological Engineering Laboratory, Department of Botany, University of Jammu, Jammu, India (corresponding author)

## Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

species are used as healing agent across the globe for various ailments (Schippmann et al., 2002).

Herbal remedies formulated from the traditional knowledge (TK) have played an important role in healthcare system. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 80% of the global populations in developing countries and 60% of world population rely mainly on traditional systems of medicine for their primary healthcare (Shrestha and Dhillon, 2003). This may be because of the belief and effectiveness of TK among the healers and sufferer (without side effects), or easily accessibility and cost effectiveness of TK (Bhatia et al., 2014). About 550 (over 53.8 million tribal people) ethnic groups inhabit mainly in less explored forest areas and cover about 15% of total landmass of India (Shukla et al., 2014). Such a big population makes India as one of the richest nations with respect to TK, wherein more than 40% (7000 to 8000) of the flowering plants are used as a source of medicine (Pushpangadan, 2013). Indigenous people have developed this strong and unique TK through hit and trial method. To date this TK is being transmitted mainly through verbal dialogue (Chhetri, 1994).

Being second largest country in tribal population, India has a rich history of using plant species in traditional medicines from time immemorial (Rao and Shanpru, 1981; Borthakur, 1993; Chhetri, 1994; Sinha, 2002; Dubey et al., 2004; Gosh et al., 2008; Rawat and Kharwal, 2011; Ghorband and Biradar, 2011; Kumar et al., 2012; Panda, 2014; Manjula and Reddi, 2015). Indian Himalaya Region (IHR) encompasses more than 8000 vascular plant species of which 1748 species are of medicinal importance (Singh et al., 1996; Samant et al., 1998; Bhatia et al., 2014). Jammu and Kashmir (JK) in western Himalaya under IHR supports a rich and unparallel floristic diversity. About 948 plant taxa are recorded as ethnomedicine for the native people in JK (erstwhile), but most of them are restricted to the temperate region (Dhar, 1980; Buth and Navchoo, 1988; Navchoo and Buth, 1992; Kaul et al., 1997; Chaurasia and Gurmet, 2003; Ballabh and Chaurasia, 2007; Tantray et al., 2009; Gairola et al., 2014; Bhatia et al., 2014, 2015; Dutt et al., 2015). Scanty of such reports from the subtropical part of JK (Mahmud and Shah, 2009; Bhellum and Singh, 2012; Sharma et al., 2015) may be because of progressive urbanization in the area. Therefore, the study was devised for Mahamaya forest which is just adjacent to an urban area at the foothills of Himalaya that is, Shivaliks. The aim of the study was to understand the extent of TK among the populace of subtropical area where progressive urbanization has introduced modern system of medicine by establishing many health centers.

## Materials and method

### Study area

The Mahamaya forest (ca. 17000 hectares), located in the Shivalik range between 32°46'09"N; 74°58'38"E to 32°40'15"N; 74°54'03"E and 32°43'11"N; 74°52'30"E to 32°43'47"N; 74°59'49"E has an altitudinal range from 320 to 560 meters above msl (Sudan, 2007) (Fig. 1). In the outer fold of IHR just above the northern alluvial plains it has a significant impact of westerlies on its vegetation. The area experiences a temperature gradient between +7°C (winter) to +40.3°C (summer), wherein the average rainfall ca. 1048 mm per annum is a regular feature (Sudan, 2007). The forest area is composed of boulder, conglomerate, clay and sandy soils. Small hillocks in the forest are rich with shrubby floral elements and few broad-leaved trees. The study area is characterized with mixed deciduous and Himalayan subtropical dry scrub forests (Champion and Seth, 1968). In between the forests, few patches of grasslands, barren land, agriculture areas and water bodies are some man-made ecosystems (Sudan, 2007). About 34 small groups of Gujjar tribe settled in 34 small villages in the forest area perform agriculture and livestock rearing as the major source of income.

### Data collection

A total of 188 informants (26 females and 162 males) were interviewed for TK on medicinal plant usage through a semi structured questionnaire. Diseases and disorders were identified by the health practitioners in the study area. The specimens spelled out by informants were photographed from the study area and identified using detailed taxonomic keys published in various floras (Hooker, 1872-97; Sharma and Kachroo, 1983; Swami and Gupta, 1998). The photographs of specimens were compared with the already deposited herbarium specimens at Herbarium of Department of Botany, University of Jammu (HBJU) and Janaki Ammal Herbarium (RRLH) of Institute of Integrative Medicine (RRLH), Jammu.

**Data analysis:** Primary data collected through interviews were subjected to quantitative analysis using use value (UV) and factor informant consensus (Fic).

**Use value (UV):** Use Value represents the relative importance of the species and is calculated through UV index as per the below given formula (Philips et al., 1994):

Use Value for each species (s) for each informant (i), is calculated as:

$$UV_{is} = \sum U_{is} / n_{is} \quad [\text{Where; } U_{is} \text{ equals the number of uses mentioned in each event by informant } i, \text{ and } n_{is} \text{ equals the number of events for species } s \text{ with informant } i]$$

Whereas overall use value for each species (s),  $UV_s$  is calculated through:

$$UV_s = \sum UV_{is} / n_s \quad [\text{Where; } UV_s = \text{Use Value, } UV_{is} = \text{is the number of use reports cited by each informant for a given species and } n_s \text{ refers to the total number of informants}]$$

High UV designate high importance whereas, UV approaching to zero (0) indicate the less importance of the species among the informants. Use Value does not distinguish whether a plant is used for single or multiple purposes (Musa et al., 2011; Dutt et al., 2015).

### Factor informant consensus (Fic)

The homogeneity of traditional knowledge about the medicinal plants among respondents was determined through Factor Informant Consensus (Fic) (Heinrich et al., 1998). Ailments treated by informants were broadly classified into various categories as proposed by Heinrich et al. (1998). Few modifications in the list of categories were made as per the gathered data. The below given formula was used to calculate Fic:

$$Fic = (n_{ur} - n_t) / (n_{ur} - 1) \quad [\text{Where; } Fic = \text{Factor information consensus, } n_{ur} = \text{number of use reports for a particular use category and } n_t \text{ refers to the number of the taxa used for a particular use category by respondents}].$$

Low Fic values around zero (0), indicate that plants used to treat the ailment category are chosen randomly and/or the information about their usage among informants is not being transmitted from generation to generation. It approaches one (01), when there is a defined selection criterion in

Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

the community and/or information is exchanged between informants or generations (Gazzaneo et al., 2005).

## Results

### Informant's demography

Respondents of the study sites were confined inhabitants of the Mahamaya forest area. A total of 188 informants were interviewed during the period of more than a year of study. Out of the total informants, 86% were males and most of them were literate (71.27%). Females were comparatively poor in education as 11.17% had attended school of which only 7.6% obtained higher qualifications. The number of known medicinal plants among informants significantly correlates with their age. The education level of the informants was negatively correlated with the number of plants known for traditional uses (Table 1, Fig.2). Informants take help of the health practitioners and doctors for diagnosing the degenerative disorders.

### Medicinal plants

A total of 72 species (Dicots 69, monocots 02 and gymnosperm 01) belonging to 69 genera and 45 families are used as medicinal plants in the study area (Table 2). Maximum number of the species belongs to Fabaceae (06) and Euphorbiaceae (05) followed by Lamiaceae (04) and three species each from the families of Apocynaceae, Rutaceae, Moraceae and Meliaceae. Seven families were represented by 02 species and as many as 32 families were represented by only 01 species of medicinal importance (Table 2). Although the area is dominated by scrub forest but the medicinal plant species were mainly tree (38.9%) and herbs (30.6%) (Table2). In terms of percentage usage of individual plant parts, leaves were observed to be the most preferred plant part (30.9%) followed by roots (17.8%), bark (15%), fruit (11.21%), seed (8.41%), flower (7.47%), latex (3.8%), gum (2.8%), others (2.8) (Table 2).

### Use value (UV)

On the basis of the calculated use value (UV), the most relatively important species in the study area are *Azadiracta indica* A. Juss. (UV=0.537) and *Mentha longifolia* (L.) L. (UV=0.372). About forty species are used rarely by the people of the study area for treating different ailments wherein UV=0.013 for *Verbascum thapsus* L. indicates its rarest usage (Table 2).

### Factor informant consensus (Fic)

A total of 112 ailments were grouped into 14 categories which were observed to be cured by 72 medicinal plant species in the study area (Table 3). The maximum 46 (63%) plant species, were reported to cure various gastrointestinal and liver ailments; followed by 40 (55%) species for treating dermatological diseases; 18 (25%) species to cure other unclassified disorders like hydrophobia, insecticidal, general weakness, repellent, tumor, earache, inflammation, tetanus; 16 (22%) species to cure respiratory and lung problems; 14 (19%) species for urological problems and 13 (18%) species to cure muscular and skeletal disorders. Through Fic, it is determined that the informants have a strong consensus in the treatment of stings and bites (Fic=0.92) followed by gastrointestinal and liver disorder (Fic=0.88) and diabetes (Fic=0.83) using the medicinal plants. Further, informants had weak consensus on the treatment of nose and throat ailment (Fic=0.50) in the study area (Table 3). High Fic value for stings and bites confirm that these ailments occur frequently in the study area and the

informants had explored so many plant species to treat these ailments. The study area is a warm and dry region in the Shivaliks and has rich diversity of reptiles and arthropods like snakes, lizards, ticks, mites and scorpions. The locals may frequently come across the stings and bites issues in the subtropical conditions. High FIC values also indicate the existence of better communication skill among the informants for treating various ailments using plant species.

### Modern medicine

In the Mahamaya forest area effortless modern medicine facility is available along the boulevard sides. Modern system of medicine is recently established facility in the study area. This practice of medication is highly favored by educated informants as compared to those who are less qualified. The probable reason for this shift is the advancement, urban exposure and the fast relief by the modern medicine than traditional medicines. The study area has hospital and other medical facilities of modern medicine which is taking care of health of large populace of the area. These facilities are developed in the region because of the progressive urbanization in the nearby Jammu City in JK (Fig.1; Table 4).

### Discussion

Traditional system of medication includes diverse approaches to prevent, diagnose and treat various ailments of both human and livestock. Broadly, the traditional practices were classified into four different systems (a) traditional medicine with a systematic codified system of medicine like pharmacopoeias, or ancient scriptures; (b) non-codified system of traditional medicine or folk medicine; (c) spiritual or shamanistic medicine and (d) allied forms of health knowledge (Dutt et al., 2015). Out of these four different systems the non-codified system varies with culture, flora and geography of the area (Upadhyaya et al., 2014). Beside other villagers, Gujjar tribe is a dominating group in the Mahamaya forest area. This tribe also has some migratory groups in Rajouri, Poonch, Kishtwar, Kathua, Ramban, Doda, Srinagar, Anantnag, Badgam, Pulwama, Baramula and Ganderbal areas of Jammu and Kashmir, India. The state harbors 24 lakh Gujjar population mostly in remote areas who are associated with dairy sector (Anonymous, 2016). During current study, 188 informants were interviewed for non-codified system of traditional knowledge. Informants in the study area use as many as 72 medicinal plants to cure 112 different ailments. Investigation reveals that no or little information on traditional knowledge is being transferred from one generation to the next generation because FIC values for all the ailments are less than 01 (Table 3). Hence, younger informants had lesser ethno-medicinal knowledge than older informants (Table 1). The reason for knowledge drain may be the improving educational status and lack of interest towards old age traditional knowledge among the younger generation (Apema et al., 2010; Emmanuel and Didier, 2011). In addition to the aforesaid reason, we have also found that the easy availability of modern medicine has also resulted into the eradication of the TK from the study area. This study revealed that the presence of 10 medical outlets, 02 health sub-centers and 01 hospital-cum-medical college is making easy availability of modern medicine to the populace of the area. Further, a 90 days free health camp in a year is another additional modern medical facility started by Acharya Shri Chander College of Medical Sciences and Hospital (ASCOMS) in the study area (Table 4). ASCOMS was started in the year 1996 to promote the quality of medical education in Jammu and Kashmir, but soon after its establishment the hospital was engaged in catering the immediate medical requirement of the people of JK. Therefore, in such conditions TK is at great verge of extinction either because of loss of knowledgeable persons or minimum transmittance of knowledge (Yineger et al., 2008). Loss of traditional knowledge by any



## Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

means may generate an irreparable vacuum in health care systems of developing countries because more than 70% world population relies mainly on traditional herbal medications (Pei, 2001; Quinlan and Quinlan, 2007). Current investigations also reveal that literacy rate is also an important factor for draining of TK, because uneducated or less educated informants were having more TK as compare to the literate ones. This can be manifested from the negative correlation between the education level and number of medicinal plants reported (Table 1; Fig. 2). Dutt et al, (2015) also found that exposure of literate respondents towards modern health care facilities is the reason for eradication of TK among the Gaddi nomads in JK, India.

Fabaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Apocynaceae and Lamiaceae are the dominant families with respect to ethno-medicinal species in the study area which is in consonance with the findings of Sudan (2007). The high UVs were observed in *Azadirachta indica* A. Juss, *Mentha longifolia* (L.) Huds., *Syzygium cumini* (L.) Skeels and *Rauvolfia serpentina* (L.) Benth. ex Kurz which also find their mention in other studies conducted in different parts of JK (Dutt et al., 2015; Bhatia et al., 2015). The Fic value for the medicinal plant in the study area ranges from 0.50 to 0.90 (Table 3) wherein the highest number of plant species were recorded against gastrointestinal, liver ailments and dermatological diseases, which is in line with the earlier studies (Bhatia et al. 2014). The reason behind the higher cases of gastrointestinal and liver ailments and dermatological disorders may be attributed to the poor sanitation facilities in the study area. Out of total plant parts used for treatment, 17.75% are collected through destructive method by harvesting roots which kill the plant and pose a high sustainability threat particularly to the slow propagating medicinal plants. Therefore, to achieve sustainability goals, conservation programs are required to be implemented in the area. These programs can be in the form of *in-situ/ex-situ* approaches, workshops, conferences, awareness camps and domestication of medicinal plants in their home gardens and other public places (Njoroge et al., 2010; Kumar et al., 2015).

## Conclusion

The present study was undertaken to understand role of availability of modern medicine, education, technical jobs and urbanization on the Traditional Knowledge (TK) among the Gujjar tribe residing in the 34 villages of Mahamaya forest in Jammu Shivaliks, India. TK is an old age tried and tested knowledge among local residents regarding usage of medicinal plants. This knowledge has been accumulated by them over the period of time by experimentation and modifications according to the need of the individual. Such knowledge is an essential component of sustainable development (Samant et al., 2010). From last few decades the TK among ethnic groups is diminishing down at an alarming rate and in many cases the system is at the verge of extinction. Attributed threats can be enumerated as extension of urbanization, modern medicine, modern education, employment leading to migration, lack of belief on the system among the modern cohort, sense of barbaric age system. During current investigation it was concluded that people in the Jammu Shivaliks are using 72 plant species to treat 112 different ailments, which is a very poor figure. Most of the people are illiterate but the available modern medicine facility in the area has diverted their practices to treat ailments. Jammu Shivaliks are sub-urban area where progressive urbanization is in full swing. Calculated UV indicates that out of 72 species people use 30 species very often, however, about 40 species (UV below 0.095) are used rarely. Is the modern medicine system responsible for this eradication of the TK practices? Or is the progressive urbanization responsible for this decline of the TK? Therefore, current study is an attempt to understand the shifting behavior of the health care system among the tribe in the subtropical region of Himalaya, that is, Jammu Shivaliks, which is near to the urban area in Jammu



city. The people in Mahamaya forest (Jammu Shivaliks) show homogeneity in the TK (Table 3) but the young people have less information as compared to old people (Table 1). This study has also engrossed to document and preserve the treasure of TK lying among the Gujjar tribe in the study sites.

## References

- Anonymous (2016). Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir <http://www.dailyexcelsior.com> [Executive Editor Neeraj Rohmetra]. Excelsior House, Janipura, Jammu.
- Apema R., Mozouloua R., Madiapevo S.N. (2010). Inventaire preliminarie des fruits sauvages comestibles vendus sur les marches de Bangui. In: Burgt, X van der, Maesen, J van der. Onana, J.M. (Eds.), *Systematique et Conservation des Plantes Africaines*, pp. 313-319.
- Ballabh B., Chaurasia O.P. (2007). Traditional Medicinal Plants of Cold Desert Ladakh-Used in treatment of Cold, Cough and Fever. *J. Ethnopharmacol.* 112(2), 341-349.
- Bhatia H., Sharma Y.P., Manhas R.K., Kumar K. (2014). Ethnomedicinal plants used by the villagers of district Udhampur, J&K, India. *J. Ethnopharmacol.* 151, 10051018.
- Bhatia H., Sharma Y.P., Manhas R.K., Kumar K., (2015). Traditional phyto-remedies for the treatment of menstrual disorders in district Udhampur, J&K, India. *J. Ethnopharmacol.* 160, 202210.
- Bhellum B.L., Singh S. (2012). Ethnomedicinal Plants of District Samba of Jammu and Kashmir State (List-II). *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications.* 2(9), 1-8.
- Borthakur S.K. (1993). Native phytotherapy for child and women diseases from Assam. *J. Ethnobotany.* 5, 87-91.
- Buth G.M., Navchoo I.A. (1988). Ethnobotany of Ladakh (India) plants used in health care. *J. Ethnobiol.* 8(2), 185-194.
- Champion H. G., Seth S. K. (1968). *A Revised Survey of Forest Types of India*, Govt. of India Press, New Delhi, p. 404.
- Chaurasia O.P., Gurmet P. (2003). *A Checklist on Medicinal and Aromatic Plants of Trans-Himalayan cold desert (Ladakh and Lahaul-Spiti)*. Field Research Laboratory and Amchi Medicine Research Unit, Leh-Ladakh, India.
- Chhetri R.B. (1994). Further observations on ethno-medicobotany of Khasi Hills in Meghalaya, India. *J. Ethnobotany.* 6, 33-38.
- Dhar U. (1980). Plants of Kargil-Zaskar. In: Kachroo, P. (Ed.), *An Integrated Survey*. Kashmir University, Srinagar, India, pp. 4851.
- Dubey N.K., Kumar R., Tripathi P. (2004). Global promotion of herbal medicine: India's opportunity. *Curr. Sci.* 86(1), 37-41.
- Dutt H.C., Bhagata N., Pandita S. (2015). Oral traditional knowledge on medicinal plants in jeopardy among Gaddi shepherds in hills of northwestern Himalaya, J&K, India. *J. Ethnopharmacol.* 168, 337-348.
- Emmanuel M.M., Didier D.S. (2011). Medicinal plant knowledge of ethnic groups in Douala town, Cameroon. *Am. J. Food. Nutr.* 1(4), 178-184.
- Gairola S., Sharma J., Bedi Y.S. (2014). A cross-culture analysis of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh (India) medicinal plant use. *J. Ethnopharmacol.* 155, 925-986.
- Gazzaneo L.R.S., Lucena R.F.P., Albuquerque U.P. (2005). Knowledge and use of medicinal

Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

plants by local specialists in a region of Atlantic Forest in the state of Pernambuco (Northeastern Brazil). *J. Ethnobiol. Ethnomed.* 1:9

Ghorband D.P., Biradar S.D. (2011). Traditional medicines knowledge in Dharmabad taluka of Nanded district, Maharashtra, India. *Indian Journal of Natural Products and Resources.* 2(4), 498-503.

Gosh A., Das B.K., Roy A., Mandal B., Chandra G. (2008). Antibacterial activity of some medicinal plant extracts. *J. Natural Medicines.* 62(2), 259-262.

Heinrich M., Ankli A., Frei B., Weimann C., Sticher O. (1998). Medicinal plants in Mexico: healers' consensus and cultural importance. *Soc. Sci. Med.* 47, 1863-1875.

Hooker J.D. (1872-97). *The flora of British India*, vol. IVII. L. Reeve, London.

Kaul M.K. (1997). *Medicinal Plants of Kashmir and Ladakh (Temperate and Cold Arid Himalaya)*. Indus Publishing Company, New Delhi.

Kumar A.O., Rao M.K., Rao T.V.R. (2012). Ethnomedicinal plants used by the tribals of Sudi Konda forest, East Godavari, district Andhara Pradesh to cure women problems. *J. Phytology.* 4(1), 10-12.

Kumar K., Sharma Y. P., Manhas, R.K., Bhatia H. (2015). Ethnomedicinal plants of Shankaracharya Hill, Srinagar, J&K, India. *J. Ethnopharmacol.* 170, 255- 274.

Mahmud S., Shah N.Z. (2009). Use of aquatic and marshy plants in ethno-veterinary practices by tribals and rural people of Jammu province, (J&K), India. *International Journal of Plant Sciences.* 4(2), 471-474.

Manjula R.R., Reddi T.V.V.S. (2015). Ethnomedicine for bites by the tribals of Khammam district, Andhra Pradesh. *J. Ethnobotany.* 27, 53-58.

Musa M.S., Abdelrasool F.E., Elsheikh E.A., Ahmed L.A.M.N., Mahmoud A.L.E., Yagi S.M. (2011). Ethnobotanical study of medicinal plants in the Blue Nile State, South-eastern Sudan. *J. Med. Plants Res.* 5 (17), 4287-4297.

Navchoo I.A., Butth G. M. (1992). Ethnobotany of Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir State. *Journal of Econ. and Tax. Bot.-Additional Series.* 10, 251-258.

Njoroge G.N., Kaibui I.M., Njenga P.K., Odhiambo P.O. (2010). Utilization of priority traditional medicinal plants and local people's knowledge on their conservation status in arid lands of Kenya (Mwingi District). *J. Ethnobiol. Ethnomed.* 6, 22.

Panda T. (2014). Traditional knowledge on wild edible plants as livelihood food in Odisha, India. *J. Biology and Earth Sciences.* 4(2), B144-B159.

Pei S.J. (2001). Ethnobotanical approaches of traditional medicine studies: some experiences from Asia. *Pharm. Bot.* 39, 74-79.

Phillips O., Gentry A.H., Reynel C., Wilki P., Gávez-Durand C.B. (1994). Quantitative ethnobotany and Amazonian conservation. *Conserv. Biol.* 8, 225-248.

Pushpangadan P., Ijinu T.P., George V. (2013). Opportunities for ethnobotanical studies on medicinal and aromatic plants in India. *J. Ethnobotany.* 25, 22-32.

Quinlan M.B., Quinlan R.J. (2007). Modernization and Medicinal Plant Knowledge in a Caribbean Horticultural Village. *Med. Anthropol. Q.* 21 (2), 169-192.

Rao M.V.K., Shanpru, R. (1981). Some plants in the life of Garos of Meghalaya. In: Jain, S

K.(Ed.), *Glimpse of Indian Ethnobotany*. Oxford and IBH Publishing Company, New Delhi, pp. 153-160.

Rawat D.S., Kharwal, A.D. (2011). Traditional phyto-remedies for gynecological complaints in (Balh valley), district Mandi (Himachal Pradesh), India. *Life Science Leaflets*. 16, 546-550.

Saheb T.S. (2014). *Ethnobotany: Study of medicinal climbers of Nallamalais, Andhra Pradesh*. pp. 16-21.

Samant P.K., Dhyani P.P., Dollo M. (2010). Indigenous medicinal practices of Bhotia tribal community in Indian Central Himalaya. *Indian J. Trad. Knowl*. 9, 140144.

Samant S.S., Dhar U., Palni L.M.S. (1998) *Medicinal Plants of Indian Himalaya: Diversity Distribution Potential Values*. G.B. Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment and Development; Almora, India

Schippmann U., Leaman, D.J., Cunningham, A.B. (2002). *Impact of Cultivation and Gathering of Medicinal Plants on Biodiversity: Global Trends and Issues*. Inter-Department Working Group on Biology Diversity for Food and Agriculture, FAO, Rome, Italy.

Sharma B.M., Kachroo P. (1983). *Flora of Jammu and Plants of Neighbourhood*. Bishen Singh, Mahendra Pal Singh, Dehradun, India.

Sharma N., Sharma A., Singh D. (2015). Ethno-medicinal uses of floristic diversity of Sub tropical forest of Jammu, Jammu and Kashmir, India. *International Journal of Development Research*. 5(3), 3945-3954.

Shrestha P.M., Dhillon S.S. (2003). Traditional medicinal plants used and diversity in the highlands of Dolakha District, Nepal. *J. Ethnopharmacol*, 86: 81-96.

Shukla A.C., Chinlapianga M., Lalsangluai F., Gupta, R., Verma, A., Lalramnghinglova, H., 2014. *Ethnobotany: Traditional use of medicinal plants among the tribal communities in Mizoram, North-Eastern India*. pp. 1-9.

Singh D.K., Hajra P.K. (1996). Floristic diversity. In: Gujral G.S., Sharma V., editors. *Changing Perspective of Biodiversity Status in the Himalaya*. British Council Division, British High Commission Publication, Wildlife Youth Services; New Delhi, India: pp. 2338.

Sinha P. (2002). Overview of diseases of medicinal plants and their management. In: Govil, I.N., Singh, V.K. (Eds.), *Recent Progress in Medicinal plants- Diseases and their management*. Sci. Tech Publishing LLC, USA, pp. 1-212

Sudan J. (2007). *Phytodiversity and socio-economic studies of Mahamaya Catchment, Jammu, J&K*. Ph.D. Thesis. University of Jammu, Jammu, J&K, India.

Swami A., Gupta B.K. (1998). *Flora of Udhampur*. Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, Dehradun, India.

Tantray M.A., Tariq K.A., Mir M.M., Bhat M.A., Shawl A.S. (2009). Ethnomedicinal survey of Shopian, Kashmir, India. *Asian J. Trad. Med*. 4 (1), 16.

Upadhy V., Hegde H.V., Bhat S., Kholkute S.D. (2014). Noncodified traditional medicine practices from Belgaum region in southern India; present scenario. *J. Ethnobiol. Ethnomed*. 10, 49.

WHO. (2002). *WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2002-2005*. World Health Organization, Geneva.

Yineger H., Yewhalaw D., Teketay D. (2008). *Ethnomedicinal plant knowledge and practices of*

Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

the Oromo ethnic group in southwestern Ethiopia. J. Ethnobiol. Ethnomed. 4, 1-10.

**Table1: Demographic description of the respondent with spearman rank of correlation**

<b>Respondents number</b>				
Female	26(13.89%)			
Male	162(86.17%)			
<b>Age group</b>	<b>Mutually</b>	<b>Uses</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Male</b>
15-25 yrs.	08(4.25%)	12	02(7.69%)	06(3.70%)
26-35 yrs.	35(18.61%)	68	04(15.38%)	31(19.13%)
36-45 yrs.	52(27.65%)	276	09(34.61%)	43(26.54%)
46-55 yrs.	45(23.93%)	362	05(19.23%)	40(24.69%)
Above 56 yrs.	48(25.53%)	391	06(23.07%)	42(25.92%)
<b>Qualification status</b>				
Never attended school	33(17.55%)	302	05(19.23%)	28(17.28%)
Attended Primary school (1-5 classes)	41(21.18%)	289	06(23.07%)	35(21.60%)
Attended Middle school (6-8 classes)	40(21.27%)	231	05(19.23%)	35(21.60%)
Attended High school (9-10 classes)	32(17.02%)	142	04(15.38%)	28(17.28%)
Attended Higher Secondary school (11-12 classes)	27(14.36%)	108	04(15.38%)	23(14.19%)
Attended Higher studies or Technical studies	15(7.97%)	37	02(7.69%)	13(8.02%)
<b>Spearman correlation coefficient (n= 188; <math>\alpha</math>= 0.005)</b>				
	<b>r</b>	<b>P</b>		
Age of informant vs no. of plants	0.929***	< 0.001		
Age of informant vs sharing of information about plants	0.848***	< 0.001		
Education level vs no. of plants	-0.639***	< 0.001		
Education level vs sharing of information about plants	-0.477***	< 0.001		

Values given in the table are number (% contribution), r- correlation coefficient, P- probability,  $\alpha$  – level of significance.

\*\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level.

Table 2: Ethnomedicinal plant species used for different ailments along with their use-value.

S. No.	Name of the species/Family/ Accession No.	Local name	Threat status	Part used	Habit	Ethnomedicinal knowledge (citations)	$\Sigma U$	UV <sub>s</sub>
1.	<i>Abrus precatorius</i> L.Fam.: Fabaceae Acc. No. 9725	Ratti, Rakat	S	Root, seeds	Climber	Root extract (aqueous) is taken as analgesic (3). Oral intake of seed poultice induces abortion (1). Small doses of seed powder are given as purgative (2) and aphrodisiac (1).	7	0.055
2.	<i>Abutilon indicum</i> (L.) Sweet Fam.: Malvaceae Acc. No. 9710	Son-patru	S	Leaves	Shrub	Leaf decoction is used as mouthwash in toothache (7), and gum infection (4). Leaf juices are taken orally to check impotency (2), paralysis (2), urethritis (3), bladder ulcer (3) and gonorrhoea (2) respectively.	23	0.138
3.	<i>Acacia catechu</i> (L.f.) Willd. Fam.: Fabaceae Acc. No. 9773	Khair	C/PS	Flower, bark	Tree	Mixture of flower tops and cumin is recommended in gonorrhoea (4). Bark decoction is taken orally to cure piles (6) and leprosy (3) respectively.	13	0.09
4.	<i>Acacia nilotica</i> (L.) Delile Fam.: Mimosaceae Acc. No. 6352	Kikar	PS	Bark, leaves, gum	Tree	Paste prepared from dried and finely powdered bark is applied for healing wounds (9), strengthening teeth (4) and treating stomach troubles (6). Leaf extract is administered against eye troubles (2), throat infection (2), liver complaints (3) and hair fall (1). Gum along with latex of Aak is used to cure asthma (2) and diabetes (1).	30	0.199
5.	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> L. Fam.: Amaranthaceae Acc. No. 8460	Puthkanda	S/PS	Leaves, root	Herb	Oral intake of Leaf extract cures renal dropsy (1), bronchitis (3), leukoderma (1), piles (1), whooping cough (2), hydrophobia (1) and rheumatism (2). External application of leaf extract improves eye complaints (1) and insect bite (2). Root paste is administered externally to stop bleeding (4).	18	0.122
6.	<i>Aegle marmelos</i> (L.) Correa Fam.: Rutaceae Acc. No. 9790	Bel	PS	Fruit, leaves	Tree	Crushed fruits are used in chronic diarrhoea (3) and dysentery (3). Leaf juice effective against jaundice (2), cholera (2), constipation (4), diabetes (2), fever (5) and nausea (3). Drinks prepared from fruit pulp are effective against bacillary dysentery (4).	28	0.191
7.	<i>Albizia lebbek</i> (L.) Benth. Fam.: Mimosaceae Acc. No. 8458	Sareen	PS	Leaves, flower, bark	Tree	Leaf decoction taken orally cures night blindness (2). Flowers paste are used on boils (3), eruptions (3) and swellings (3). Bark decoction is useful in bronchitis (2), leprosy (1), paralysis (2) and helminth infections (3).	19	0.164

Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

8.	<i>Anagallis arvensis</i> L. Fam.: Primulaceae Acc. No. 9724	Dhari	S/AS	Leaves	Herb	Oral intake of leaf decoction improves cerebral disorders (2), gout (2), hydrophobia (2) and leprosy (1).	7	0.061
9.	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> A. Juss Fam.: Meliaceae Acc. No. 9428	Neem	PS/C	Leaves, bark	Tree	Leaf juice employed to cure cough (15), anthelmintic (8), diuretic (11) and insecticidal (22). Bark is a bitter tonic (16) and its paste is effective against skin ailments like leprosy (9) and piles (13).	94	0.537
10.	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i> L. Fam.: Asparagusaceae Acc. No. 9726	Sahns pour	S	Root	Shrub	Root decoction is used as tonic (5), demulcent (3) and aphrodisiac (2). Also recommended in diarrhoea (5) and dysentery (5).	20	0.109
11.	<i>Bauhinia variegata</i> L. Fam.: Fabaceae Acc. No. 9771	Kachnr	C/PS	Root, buds	Tree	Decoction of roots is used to cure dyspepsia (2). Powdered dried buds are used in diarrhoea (2).	4	0.045
12.	<i>Bombax ceiba</i> L. Fam.: Bombacaceae Acc. No. 5775	Simbal	C/PS	Bark, stem, fruit	Tree	Bark and stem infusion is given in tooth troubles (6), spleen disorders (2) and rheumatism (1). Oral intake of Fruit juice cures ulcer of kidney (1) and bladder (1).	11	0.079
13.	<i>Butea monosperma</i> (Lam.) Taub. Fam.: Fabaceae Acc. No. 9704	Palah	S	Seeds, gum	Tree	Seed decoction are anthelmintic (4). Gum is used in diarrhoea (3), dysentery (3) and general weakness (2).	12	0.090
14.	<i>Boerhavia diffusa</i> L. Fam.: Nyctaginaceae Acc. No. 9707	It-sit	S	Root, leaves	Herb	Root decoction used as eye drop to cure eye diseases (3). Powdered root and leaves are orally taken with water to treat asthma (2), dropsy (2), jaundice (3) and gonorrhoea (1).	11	0.119
15.	<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Aiton) W.T. Aiton Fam.: Asclepiadaceae Acc. No. 7065	Akk/ Madaar	S/PS	Flower, Latex	Shrub	A pinch of dried and powdered flowers is taken in cough (3), cold (2), asthma (2) and indigestion (5). Latex is applied against skin diseases (3).	15	0.114
16.	<i>Cassia fistula</i> L. Fam.: Caesalpinaceae Acc. No. 7147	Amaltas	PS	Fruit	Tree	Decoction made from fruit pods is used against constipation (1), cough (2) and urinary troubles (1).	4	0.043
17.	<i>Centella asiatica</i> (L.) Urban Fam.: Apiaceae Acc. No. 9501	Brahmi	PS	Whole plant	Herb	Plant decoction is useful in the treatment of leprosy (1). Also useful in epilepsy (1) and as brain tonic (1).	3	0.026
18.	<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i> Roxb. Fam.: Convolvulaceae Acc. No. 9808	Andal- Kaandal	NA	Stem	Parasite	Plant extract is purgative (4), astringent (3) and anthelmintic (3). Infusion given against diarrhoea (1). Plant paste applied topically on sores (2) and itches (3).	16	0.074

20.	<i>Datura metel</i> L. Fam.: Solanaceae Acc. No. 3000	Datoora	PS	Leaves	Herb	Leaf juice is applied on scalp to check hair fall (2). Grounded leaves are smoked in asthma (2), whooping cough (1) and bronchitis (1).	6	0.034
21.	<i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i> L. Fam.: Dioscoreaceae Acc. No. 9732	Tarad, Taradel	S	Tubers	Climber	Powdered tubers are used in gastric complaints (11), swellings (5) and sprains (6).	22	0.140
22.	<i>Dodonaea viscosa</i> (L.) Jacq. Fam.: Sapindaceae Acc. No. 8554	Santh	S	Leaves	Shrub	Leaf extract is taken orally as abortifacient (1), and febrifuge (2). Leaf paste is applied on wounds (5), burns (3) and swellings (3).	14	0.109
23.	<i>Euphorbia indica</i> Lam. Fam.: Euphorbiaceae Acc. No. 7173	Thor	S	Latex	Shrub	Latex is cathartic (2), laxative (4) and anthelmintic (1). It is used to cure tooth infection (2).	9	0.061
24.	<i>Euphorbia hirta</i> L. Fam.: Euphorbiaceae Acc. No. 8570	Jar Dudli	C/PS	Leaves	Herb	Decoction of dry herbs used in bronchial ailments (3), Skin diseases (2) and piles (1). Leaf juice is applied on burns (2).	8	0.053
25.	<i>Ficus religiosa</i> L. Fam.: Moraceae Acc. No. 9772	Pipal	PS	Bark, leaves	Tree	Bark decoction act as astringent (5). Young tender shoots and leaves are purgative (7). Infusion of bark is given internally in scabies (4).	16	0.127
26.	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L. Fam.: Moraceae Acc. No. 9751	Borh	PS	Latex, bark	Tree	Milky latex applied in rheumatism (2) and lumbago (1). Infusion of bark is considered astringent (6) and tonic (1). Bark decoction is prescribed in diabetes (1), diarrhoea (3) and dysentery (3).	17	0.117
27.	<i>Fumaria indica</i> (Hausskn.) Pugsley Fam.: Papaveraceae Acc. No. 8546	Pitpapra	PS	Leaves, stem	Herb	Decoction of leaves and stem is used as diuretic (2), and diaphoretic (1). Also administered against fever (5) and liver complaints (2).	10	0.101
28.	<i>Geranium himalayense</i> Klotzsch Fam.: Geraniaceae Acc. No. 9720	Holi boti	S	Leaves	Herb	Leaf extract act as astringent (5) and also used in toothache (2). Leaf juice applied externally as eye drop to cure conjunctivitis (1).	8	0.071
29.	<i>Indigofera tinctoria</i> L. Fam.: Fabaceae Acc. No. 9663	Neel	PS	Leaves	Shrub	Decoction of Leaves given in epilepsy (2), nervous disorders (1) and bronchitis (2). Leaf extract act as ointment for boils (3) and ulcer (3).	11	0.079



Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

30.	<i>Jasminum auriculatum</i> Vahl Fam.: Oleaceae Acc. No. 6348	Jangli chameli	PS	Root, leaves, & Flower	Shrub	Root extract is given as antidote to snake bite (3). Leaves soaked in water and applied as poultice on ulcers (2). Flowers are emetic (3).	8	0.156
31.	<i>Justicia adhatoda</i> L. Fam.: Acanthaceae Acc. No. 9679	Barenkar	PS	Leaves	Shrub	Leaves are used as expectorant (4) and antispasmodic in chest diseases (3). Febrifuge in malarial fevers (2).	9	0.074
32.	<i>Kydia calycina</i> Roxb. Fam.: Malvaceae Acc. No. 6472	Pulla	C/PS	Leaves	Tree	Leaf paste is applied topically to cure body pains (2).	2	0.053
33.	<i>Lannea coromandelica</i> (Houtt.) Merr. Fam.: Anacardiaceae Acc. No. 7113	Kembla	PS	Bark	Tree	Bark act as astringent (2). Bark paste used as lotion in eruption of skin (3) and ulcers (2), decoction of bark is used in toothache (1).	8	0.058
34.	<i>Lantana camara</i> L. Fam.: Verbenaceae Acc. No. 8066	Panjfullija rri	S	Leaves	Shrub	Decoction of plant is effective in tetanus (2), rheumatism (4) and malarial fever (3). Infusion of leaves given in eczema (1).	10	0.087
35.	<i>Luffa acutangula</i> (L.) Roxb. Fam.: Cucurbitaceae Acc. No. 1698	Junglikand oli	S	Fruit, seeds	Climber	Plant laxative (3), purgative (1), useful for skin diseases (4) and asthma (2). Dried fruits used in jaundice (1). Seeds emetic (1) and expectorant (2).	14	0.074
36.	<i>Melia azedarach</i> L. Fam.: Meliaceae Acc. No. 8625	Dherank	PS	Leaves, bark, flower, gum	Tree	Leaves, bark and fruits act as insect repellent (2). Leaf juice effective against anthelmintic (3), diuretic (1) and emmenagogue (1). Gum used for spleen enlargement (1). Bark infusion given in ascariasis (1).	9	0.082
37.	<i>Mentha longifolia</i> (L.) L. Fam.: Lamiaceae Acc. No. 9715	Junglipoot na	S	Leaves	Herb	Leaf extract used as antiseptic (11), carminative (16), refrigerant (12), stimulant (12) and diuretic (8). Used to treat liver (5) and spleen diseases (5), asthma (6) and jaundice (4).	79	0.372
38.	<i>Micromeria biflora</i> (Buch. Ham. ex D. Don) Benth. Fam.: Lamiaceae Acc. No. 9675	Jar juain	NA	Leaves	Herb	Paste of aromatic herb applied on worm infected wounds (4) and stomachache (5). Leaves decoction used to cure diabetes (3).	12	0.101
39.	<i>Mimosa rubicaulis</i> Lam. Fam.: Fabaceae Acc. No. 7222	Chui-Mui, Lajbanti, Raal	PS	Leaves	Shrub	Leaf juice used in dressing sinus (2), sores (2) and piles (3).	7	0.066
40.	<i>Momordica charantia</i> L. Fam.: Cucurbitaceae Acc. No. 1707	Ban karela	S	Fruit, leaves, root	Climber	Fruit regarded as stomachic (3) and carminative (2). Leaves having purgative (1), emetic properties (2). Fruit used to cure leprosy (1), piles (3) and jaundice (6). Roots act as abortifacient (1).	19	0.122



41.	<i>Moringa oleifera</i> Lam. Fam.: Moringaceae Acc. No. 975	Sohanja	C/PS	Root, seeds	Tree	Roots act as rubefacient (2). Powdered seeds are recommended in antipyretic (3).	5	0.034
42.	<i>Morus alba</i> L. Fam.: Moraceae Acc. No. 6444	Toot	S	Leaves, root, bark, fruit	Tree	Leaves consumed for diaphoretic properties (2). Root powder is administered as anthelmintic (4). Bark act as purgative (3). Root tea is used in diarrhoea (2). Fruits mild laxative (2) and are edible.	13	0.132
43.	<i>Murraya koenigii</i> (L.) Spreng Fam.: Rutaceae Acc. No. 9687	Kari patta	C/PS	Leaves	Shrub	Tender leaves are eaten in diarrhoea (3) and dysentery (2). Effective against kidney (1) and heart troubles (1).	7	0.061
44.	<i>Nerium indicum</i> Mill. Fam.: Apocynaceae Acc. No. 9730	Lal gandeela	S	Root, bark, leaves	Shrub	Oil extracted from root and bark applied in skin diseases of scaly nature (3). Leaf juice used as heart tonic (1) and on cutaneous eruptions (4). Paste of root for haemorrhoids (2).	10	0.085
45.	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i> (L.) Kurz Fam.: Bignoniaceae Acc. No. 6418	Tattar, Tat Palng	PS/S	Seeds, root	Tree	Seeds are purgative (1). Powdered root bark given as astringent (2), stomachic (4), in diarrhoea (2) and dysentery (3). Root used as diaphoretic (1) and also cure rheumatism (2).	15	0.106
46.	<i>Oxalis corniculata</i> L. Fam.: Oxalidaceae Acc. No. 9741	Ami khati	S	Stem, leaves,	Herb	Stem and leaves used to treat scurvy (6). Leaf juice is good appetizer (4) and used in removing warts (3). Paste of top shoots with black pepper is applied to boils (3), abscesses (3), wounds (5) and weeping eczema (4).	28	0.186
47.	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i> (L.) Roxb. Fam.: Arecaceae Acc. No. 9775	JungliKhajoor	PS	Root	Tree	Root paste used for toothache (5).	5	0.042
48.	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> L. Fam.: Euphorbiaceae Acc. No. 9777	Amla	S	Fruit	Tree	Fruits powder used in treatment of piles (8), liver (12) and stomach complaints (12).	32	0.207
49.	<i>Phyllanthus niruri</i> L. Fam.: Euphorbiaceae Acc. No. 7176	Jangliamla	S	Leaves	Herb	Oral intake of powdered leaf formulation in treatment of jaundice (5), intermittent fever (4) and urinogenital diseases (5).	14	0.109
50.	<i>Pinus roxburghii</i> Sarg. Fam.: Pinaceae Acc. No. 8654	Chir	PS/S	Resin	Tree	Plant resin act as expectorant (2) used in chronic bronchitis (1) and gangrene of lungs (1). Given as carminative (2) to arrest minor hemorrhage in tooth sockets and nose (1).	7	0.058

Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

51.	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i> L. Fam.: Plantaginaceae Acc. No. 8656	Gobba, Bhummu gha	PS	Seeds	Herb	Seed paste used for affording soothing effect to mucus membrane of the intestine (5).	5	0.045
52.	<i>Plumbago zeylanica</i> L. Fam.: Plumbaginaceae Acc. No. 7001	Chitra	NA	Root	Herb	Root powder act as stimulant (2) and vesicant (3) used against dyspepsia (1), rheumatism (3), paralysis (1) and tumors (1). Root paste prepared with milk or vinegar, salt and water used in leprosy (1).	12	0.087
53.	<i>Prenna bai bala</i> wall. Fam.: Lamiaceae Acc. No. 9651	Kaseer	S	Leaves	Tree	Leaf extract are diuretic (3) and used in dropsy (2).	5	0.055
54.	<i>Punica granatum</i> L. Fam.: Lythraceae Acc. No. 9792	Darooni	S	Bark, fruit	Shrub	Decoction of bark used as anthelmintic (6), against diarrhea (8) and dysentery (5). Fruit pulp is recommended as cardiac tonic (12). Fruit juice given to treat leprosy (2).	33	0.223
55.	<i>Rauvolfia serpentina</i> (L.) Benth. ex Kurz Fam.: Apocynaceae Acc. No. 2656	Sapgandhi	T	Root	Herb	Root powder is administered for treatment of high blood pressure (9) and nervous ailments (6). Root paste is used to neutralize the venom of snake (21)	36	0.231
56.	<i>Ricinus communis</i> L. Fam.: Euphorbiaceae Acc. No. 7177	Aran, Areni	PS	Root, seeds	Shrub	Roots useful in rheumatism (4). Castor oil is used in eye problems (2).	6	0.047
57.	<i>Sesamum indicum</i> L. Fam.: Pedaliaceae Acc. No. 9731	Til	S	Seeds	Herb	Seed oil used as antioxidant (2), also used as emollient (5) and demulcent (7).	14	0.095
58.	<i>Syzygium cumini</i> (L.) Skeels Fam.: Myrtaceae Acc. No. 8718	Jamoon	C/PS	Seeds, bark	Tree	Dried and powdered seeds are used against diabetes (17). Bark is recommended in diarrhoea (15) and dysentery (19).	51	0.247
59.	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> Web. G.E. Haglund Fam.: Asteraceae Acc. No. 9768	Phuldudi, Dulal	S	Root	Herb	Root act as diuretic (6), tonic (4) and employed in the treatment of chronic disorders of kidney (3) and liver (2).	15	0.109
60.	<i>Terminalia chebula</i> Retz. Fam.: Combretaceae Acc. No. 8070	Hard, Hareer	S	Fruit	Tree	Powdered fruit cover if taken with hot milk relieves headache (7).	7	0.031
61.	<i>Tinospora sinensis</i> (Lour.) Merr. Fam.: Menispermaceae Acc. No. 164	Gloe	NA	Stem	Climber	Stem powder is used against acidity (3), fever (6) and liver troubles (5).	14	0.093

62.	<i>Toona ciliata</i> M. Roem. Fam.: Meliaceae Acc. No. 8553	Tooni, Tun, Tunu	C/PS	Bark	Tree	Oral intake of powdered bark used for chronic dysentery of infants (4) and in ulcer related ailments (2).	6	0.055
63.	<i>Veltheimia thapsus</i> L. Fam.: Scrophulariaceae Acc. No. 9729	Giddar Tambaku	C/PS	Flower	Herb	Oil obtained from flowers is useful in the treatment of earache (3).	3	0.013
64.	<i>Verbena cinicalis</i> L. Fam.: Verbenaceae Acc. No. 8731	Verbain	NA	Leaves, flower	Herb	Dry leaves and flower powder are effective as stomachic (4), antispasmodic (3), astringent (5), also used to cure cellular effusion (2), jaundice (3), stomach ulcer (4), conjunctivitis (1) and pleurisy (1), prevents miscarriage (2).	25	0.234
65.	<i>Viola canescens</i> Wall. Fam.: Violaceae Acc. No. 8413	Baneksha	T	Whole plant	Herb	Whole plant act as laxative (3), poultice applied to skin abrasions (5).	8	0.050
66.	<i>Vicexnegundo</i> L. Fam.: Lamiaceae Acc. No. 8732	Bana	PS	Leaves, flower	Shrub	Leaves are used as febrifuge (2), diuretic (3) and expectorant (2). Flowers extract are astringent (4) and cardiac tonic (3).	14	0.103
67.	<i>Wibania sonniëra</i> (L.) Dunal Fam.: Solanaceae Acc. No. 9647	Sagunn	C/PS	Root	Herb	Root paste applied on the site of ulcers (6) and inflammation (5). Root powder is effective against headache (7) and recommended in pregnancy care (5).	23	0.143
68.	<i>Woodfordia fruticosa</i> (L.) Kurz Fam.: Lythraceae Acc. No. 8741	Dhai, Dhoe	PS	Flower	Shrub	Dried flowers are astringent (2), given in leucorrhoea (3), piles (2) and liver complaints (4).	11	0.090
69.	<i>Wigandia arborea</i> (Dennst.) Mabbb. Fam.: Apocynaceae Acc. No. 6509	Dudhat, Khlawa	PS	Stem, root	Tree	Powdered stem and root bark act as antidote to snake and scorpion bite (14).	14	0.170
70.	<i>Xanthium strumarium</i> L. Fam.: Asteraceae Acc. No. 2466	Jejora	S	Fruit	Herb	Fruit powder is recommended in malaria fever (3), urinary complaints (4), ulcers (3) and boils (2).	12	0.079
71.	<i>Zanthoxylum armatum</i> Roxb. Fam.: Rutaceae Acc. No. 8667	Timbru, Tirmira	S	Leaves, fruit	Shrub	Leaves and fruits are chewed in teeth enamel disease (2).	2	0.042
72.	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i> Lamk. Fam.: Rhamnaceae Acc. No. 6460	Berri	C/PS	Seeds, leaves	Tree	Seed kernel is sedative (5). It is used to treat insomnia (3). Roasted leaves are effective against cough (6) and asthma (5).	19	0.127

Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya

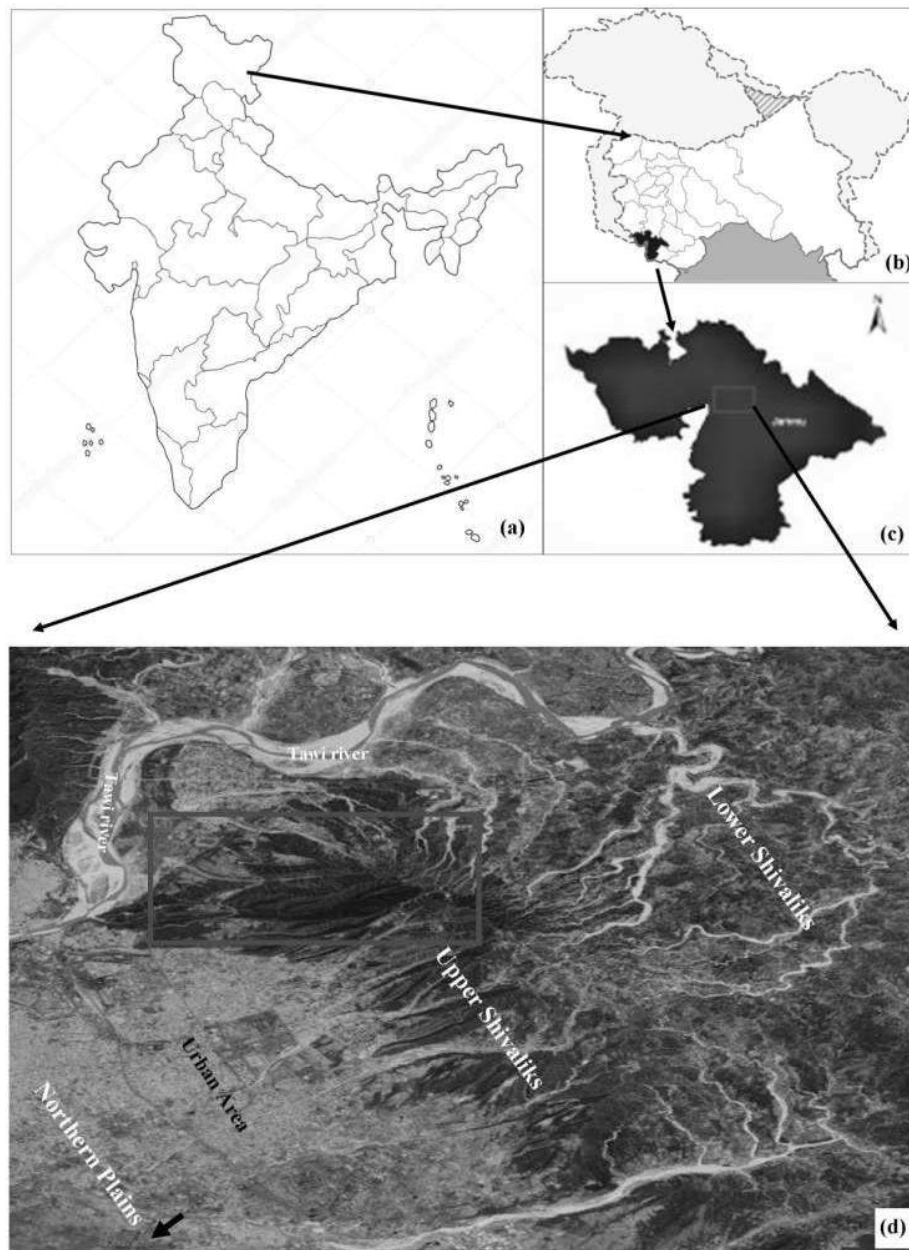
**Table 3: Ailment categories (Heinrich et al, 1998) and their factor informant consensus ( *Fic*).**

Ailment category (Diseases)	Number of species used (n <sub>s</sub> )	Use reports (n <sub>ur</sub> )	Factor information consensus (Fic)
<b>Andrological/ gynaecological/ birth problems</b> (Aphrodisiac, impotency, abortion, syphilis, miscarriage, gonorrhoea, menstrual disorder, venereal, pregnancy, leucorrhoea)	12	27	0.57
<b>Cardiovascular and blood related diseases</b> (Blood pressure*, gangrene, spleen disorders*, heart/cardio tonic*, heart diseases*)	10	39	0.76
<b>Dental</b> (Toothache, tooth haemorrhage, gum infection, tooth strengthening, tooth infection, enamel diseases, scurvy)	10	44	0.79
<b>Dermatological diseases/ Injuries</b> (Abscess, boils, skin injury, oedema, scabies, warts, antiseptic, leukoderma, leprosy, burns, hair fall, vesicant, eruptions, sores, itches, eczema, abrasions, astringent)	40	194	0.80
<b>Diabetes</b>	05	24	0.83
<b>Fever</b> (Fever, malarial fever, intermittent fever)	10	35	0.76
<b>Gastrointestinal and liver diseases</b> (Acidity, anthelmintic, appetizer, constipation, diarrhoea, dysentery, dyspepsia, indigestion, nausea, jaundice, cholera, abdominal spasm, gastric, constipation, emetic, ascariasis, stomach-ache, stomach ulcer, antispasmodic, haemorrhoids, liver disorder, flatulence)	46	382	0.88
<b>Skeleto- muscular problems</b> (Gout, rheumatism, muscle spasm, sprain, lumbago, body pain)	13	31	0.60
<b>Neurological</b> (Headache, paralysis, cerebral disorders, mental fatigue, cathartic, epilepsy, stimulant, insomnia, nervous disorder, sedative)	12	56	0.80
<b>Ophthalmological problems</b> (Conjunctivitis, redness and inflammation, night blindness)	07	14	0.54
<b>Respiratory/ lung problems</b> (Cough, cold, asthma, nose bleeding, sinus, whooping cough, bronchitis, pleurisy, throat infection)	19	80	0.77
<b>Stings and bites</b>	04	40	0.92
<b>Urological problems</b> (Diuretic, urethritis, kidney disorders, urinary disorders, renal dropsy)	14	57	0.77
<b>Others</b> (Hydrophobia, insecticidal, general weakness, repellent, tumours*, earache, inflammation, tetanus*)	18	86	0.78

**Table 4: Modern medicine source in the Mahamaya forest area of Jammu Shiwaliks**

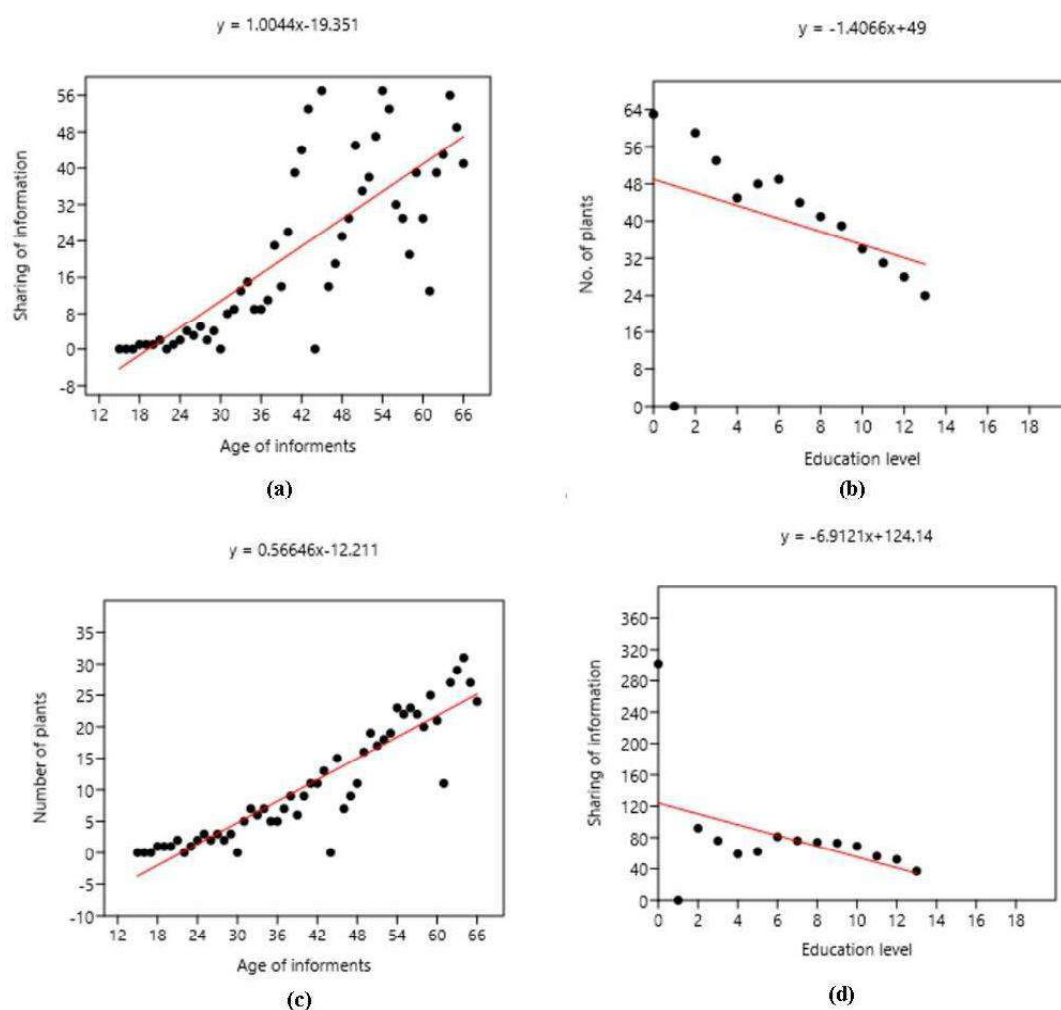
S.No	Modern medicine centres	No. of particulars
1.	Medical outlets	10
2.	Health sub-centres	02
3.	Hospitals (ASCOMS)	01
4.	Free health check-up camp per year by ASCOMS	90 days

ASCOMS= Acharya Shri Chander College of Medical Sciences and Hospital



**Figure 1:** Geographical map of study area: (a) India, (b) Jammu and Kashmir, (c) Jammu district and (d) study area Mahamya Forest in red boundary

Impact of modern medicine on traditional knowledge among remote populace in Jammu Shivaliks, North-western Himalaya



**Figure 2:** Statistical analysis through regression line (Correlation scatter diagrams) between education level/age of the informants and sharing of information as well as number of plant species (a) a positive correlation between age of the informants and sharing of information (b) negative correlation between education level and knowledge about number of plants (c) a strong correlation between age of the informants and knowledge about number of plants and (d) a negative correlation between education level and sharing of information.

# Genomewide characterization and analysis of rapid alkalization factor (RALF) gene family in apple

Yash Paul Khajuria\* and Sanjana Kaul\*\*

## ABSTRACT

*Apple (Malus domestica) is one of the most important fruit crops of the temperate region. Draft genome sequence of apple has been published and many gene families have been characterized. RALF peptide, a small signaling family has been found to play important role in several physiological and developmental processes in plants. They mainly show their effect by pH modulation, MAP kinase signaling and Ca<sup>2+</sup> signaling. In present study 36 RALF genes have been retrieved from the apple genome. Structural and functional analysis of all the members of RALF family has been performed and their location on different chromosomes has been mapped. Phylogenetic tree was generated and these genes were categorized into different groups. Characterization of RALF gene family will be further helpful in understanding various regulatory roles played by these members in the apple.*

**Key Words:** *Malus domestica*, RALF, genome wide

## Introduction

RALF have been identified from different plants and are considered as new type of peptide hormone which regulate different biological processes. They play important role in cell to cell communication and interactions (Chevalier et al., 2013). They participate in developmental processes and various biotic and abiotic stresses. RALF was first discovered in tobacco by having ability to cause rapid alkalization of tobacco cell lines (Wu et al., 2007). They were found to be arresting the growth of roots in tobacco and tomato, suggesting their role in the plant development (Pearce et al., 2001). Studies with RALF have suggested that RALF are also associated with plant defense (Negri et al., 2019). Change of pH has been extensively studied in plants in association with plant pathogens and PAMPs (Pathogen associated molecular patterns) (Lager et al., 2010). PAMP like bacterial flagellin induces alkalization in tomato plant cells within minutes and later generates active oxygen species (Felix et al., 1999). Resistance plants have more expression of RALF than in susceptible cultivars of chickpea (Gupta et al., 2010). RALF has been found to play different roles like activation of protein kinases, fruit maturation, tissue expansion, nodule formation, pollen development etc. (Germain et al., 2005; Combier et al., 2008; Covey et al., 2010). RALF peptide binds to the *Catharanthus roseus* Receptor like Kinases 1 - like family protein (CrRLK1L) (Galindo- trigo, 2016). This receptor family is known to play a role in cell development and reproduction in entire plant kingdom. Xiao et al., (2019) have reported that RALF induces a complex between the CrRLK1L FERONIA (FER) and LORELEI (LRE) like (GPI)-achored Protein 1 (LLG1), therefore, depicting the possible mechanism of action of RALF family genes. Cao and Shi, (2012) have revealed that tandem duplication has played important role in the evolution and expansion of the RALF family in plants. Thynne et al. (2017) have reported fungal homologs of RALF family gene family from the 26 phytopathogenic fungi. They may be used by the phytopathogen to suppress host defense system.

---

\* Lecturer, School of Bio-Technology, University of Jammu, Jammu, India (corresponding author)

\*\* Associate Professor, School of Bio Technology, University of Jammu, Jammu, India



## Genomewide characterization and analysis of rapid alkalization factor (RALF) gene family in apple

Apple is economically important fruit crop of the temperate region (Juniper et al., 1998). First draft genome of apple has been reported by Velasco et al. (2010). Later high quality de novo assembled apple genomes were also produced (Daccord et al. 2017). Many gene families of apple have been retrieved and characterized from the genome of the apple. RALF family is considered one of the important families and has been characterized from many plant species ranging from monocots to dicots to gymnosperms (Murphy and De Smet, 2014). Campbell and Turner, (2017) have reported RALF peptides from 51 different plant species including apple. In the present study detailed structural and functional aspects of different RALF family genes have been carried out. Phylogenetic analysis has also been performed. This thorough investigation will be helpful in understanding relationship among themselves and possible role played by them.

### Materials and methods

#### Retrieval of RALF family genes from the Apple genome

RALF were retrieved from NCBI databases and phytozome database (<https://phytozome.jgi.doe.gov/pz/portal.html>). These genes were searched manually to confirm the RALF motif from Pfam (<http://pfam.xfam.org/search>) and SMART (<http://smart.embl-heidelberg.de/>). Similarity searches were performed using CLUSTAL Omega (<https://www.ebi.ac.uk/Tools/msa/clustalo>).

#### Gene Structure Prediction and Genomic location Distribution

Chromosomal locations of different genes were determined from the Genome Database for Rosaceae (GDR) J browse (<https://www.rosaceae.org/>). Display of exon and intron determined using Gene structure display server (<http://gsds.cbi.pku.edu.cn/>). Molecular weight, isoelectric focusing, instability of RALF protein sequences were predicted using ExpASY tools (<http://www.expasy.org/tools/protparam.html>).

#### Phylogenetic analysis and Secondary structure prediction

Amino acid sequences of all 36 genes were used for ClustalW analysis in MEGA 6.0 (<https://www.megasoftware.net/>) with gap open penalty of 10 and gap extension penalty of 0.1. Phylogenetic tree was generated by neighbour-joining method with 1000 bootstrap value (Tamura et al., 2013). Secondary structure prediction of representative member of RALF family was carried out using Protein Homology/analogy Recognition Engine V2.0 (PHYRE2) (<http://www.sbg.bio.ic.ac.uk/~phyre2/html/page.cgi?id=index>).

### Results and discussion

RALF families have been characterized in many plant species like *Arabidopsis*, rice, poplar and maize (Cao and Shi, 2012; Sharma et al., 2016). Campbell and Turner, (2017) have identified 795 RALF peptides from 51 plant species including 33 from the apple. We have retrieved all 36 RALF genes containing RALF domain from the apple genome.

#### Chromosomal locations and Structural analysis of RALF family

Apple has 17 chromosomes and many genes have been anchored on these chromosomes (Peace et al., 2019). Chromosomal distributions of 36 RALF family genes have been investigated in detail in apple (table 1, Fig. 1). No RALF gene was mapped on chromosome number 1, 6, 7 and 8. It



means five apple chromosomes are devoid of any RALF family member. Chromosomes 2, 3, 12, 15 and 17 contain only one RALF family member. Similar study has also been carried out in *A. thaliana* and there was only one gene found to be located on chromosome number 5 (Cao and Shi, 2012). Chromosomes 5 and 9 of Apple have 2 RALF members each and chromosome no. 4 and 13 have 3 RALF members each. Chromosome 10 has 4 RALF members whereas chromosome 11 has 5 RALF members. Chromosomes 16 have 9 members clustered at two locations on the chromosomes. Similar type of clusters of RALF members have also been reported on chromosome 1, 2 and 4 of the *A. thaliana* (Cao and Shi, 2012). Cao and Shi, 2012 have also suggested that cluster of RALF members may be due to genome duplication events and associated with expansion of the RALF family. Three RALF members (MDP0000704235, MDP0000321762 and MDP0000350522) have not been assigned to any of the 17 chromosomes yet.

**Table no. 1: Structural characterization of the RALF family member genes**

S. No.	Accession no.	Length of genomic sequence	CDS length	No of exons	No of introns	Chromosomal locations
1.	MDP0000440839	3481	498	2	1	Chr16:1764825..1770126
2.	MDP0000317542	4524	444	2	1	Chr05:29587963..29592488
3.	MDP0000446534	348	348	1	0	Chr16:1769779..1770126
4.	MDP0000557646	6951	1206	4	3	Chr04:28727018..28733966
5.	MDP0000834499	249	249	1	0	Chr11:35662009..35662257
6.	MDP0000881502	366	366	1	0	Chr10:38116236..38116601
7.	MDP0000881503	369	369	1	0	Chr10:38118842..38119210
8.	MDP0000480281	342	342	1	0	Chr11:41944242..41944583
9.	MDP0000768108	249	249	1	0	Chr11:35662009..35662257
10.	MDP0000768504	381	381	1	0	Chr13:13663782..13664162
11.	MDP0000132548	384	384	1	0	Chr16:14066505..14066888
12.	MDP0000257999	1127	480	2	1	Chr11:35661133..35662257
13.	MDP0000227554	7626	2712	17	16	Chr09:8990523..8998148
14.	MDP0000608906	5985	1143	4	3	Chr12:29185927..29191909
15.	MDP0000229638	375	375	1	0	Chr17:28595976..28596350
16.	MDP0000239230	3774	486	3	2	Chr10:24529811..24533584
17.	MDP0000202451	348	348	1	0	Chr16:1811766..1812113
18.	MDP0000206050	689	378	2	1	Chr04:2045109..2045797
19.	MDP0000132549	480	480	1	0	Chr16:14122304..14122848
20.	MDP0000521965	405	405	1	0	Chr02:15231979..15232383
21.	MDP0000704235	372	372	1	0	Chr00:24576261..24576632

# Genomewide characterization and analysis of rapid alkalization factor (RALF) gene family in apple

22.	MDP0000132257	405	405	1	0	Chr15:25917121..25917525
23.	MDP0000321762	372	372	1	0	Chr00:24576261..24576632
24.	MDP0000286764	7246	1152	6	5	Chr16:1764711..1771952
25.	MDP0000120328	402	402	1	0	Chr16:14122304..14122705
26.	MDP0000801478	186	186	1	0	Chr16:14066505..14066690
27.	MDP0000281490	348	348	1	0	Chr16:1811766..1812113
28.	MDP0000316645	219	219	1	0	Chr05:29668602..29668820
29.	MDP0000145507	312	312	1	0	Chr09:31275621..31275932
30.	MDP0000350522	480	483	1	0	Chr00:24576150..24576630
31.	MDP0000613004	2516	642	2	1	Chr13:40977379..40979894
32.	MDP0000221966	381	381	1	0	Chr13:13663782..13664162
33.	MDP0000261734	3340	402	2	1	Chr11:35651027..35660002
34.	MDP0000242905	7563	957	5	4	Chr10:24522505..24530020
35.	MDP0000647167	339	399	1	0	Chr04:2085155..2085493
36.	MDP0000267637	342	342	1	0	Chr03:36495609..36495950

Genomic structures of the different gene families have been reported in apple and other plants (Tian et al., 2015; Wei et al., 2016). Genomic structural characterizations of RALF family members had been investigated in detail in present study. MDP0000227554 has genomic sequence length of 7626 bp which is highest in the apple RALF family (Table1). Other larger members are MDP0000557646 (6951bp) and MDP0000608906 (5985bp). MDP0000801478 has smallest length of only 186 bp. All other members have intermediate genomic sequence length (table 1). Exon and intron analysis of RALF family members has also been performed (Table no.1). MDP0000227554 has 17 exons which is maximum for any member of RALF family in apple. MDP0000286764 and MDP0000242905 are other members having 6 and 5 exons in their genes. 6 members are found to have only 2 exons and 1 intron in their genome. However, 24 members of the apple RALF family have only 1 exon and 1 intron. Similar results have also been reported in RALF gene family of Strawberry (Negrini et al., 2019). This type of information has not been reported in RALF family of apple. However, in other families of apple these types of studies have been reported (Tian et al., 2015; Wei et al., 2016).

## **Domains and motifs analysis**

Smart and Pfam based description of all the proteins of RALF family has been performed (Letunic and Bork P, 2018; El-Gebali et al., 2019). All the retrieved genes found to have the RALF domains in them, though there are variations in the sizes and location of the RALF domains (fig. 3).

Few members have other domains in them which indicate that they have very specific roles in apple. Members MDP0000440839 and MDP0000286764 (two domains) contains pathogenesis related protein Bet v I (PF00407) family domain along with the RALF domain. Pathogenesis related

protein Bet v I play role in plant defense during different types of the pathogenic attack (Sinha et al., 2014) and it has been reported from different plant species (Hoffmann-Sommergruber et al., 1997). Therefore, presence of Bet v I in MDP0000440839 gene indicate this RALF member participate in defense related responses. Bet v I also found to be associated with allergies in apple, signifying that this member may be linked with allergic effects in humans (Kinaciyan et al., 2018). However, no such information is available to further strengthen the results. Other member MDP0000557646 contain REF (rubber elongation factor) (PF05755) domain along with RALF domain. Another member MDP0000608906 also has this domain in their peptide. In rubber tree REF play a role in synthesis of Latex (Priya et al., 2006). However, no such report is available in apple. REF is also a allergen, therefore, need to be studied in details its effects in apple (Alenius et al., 1996). Member MDP0000227554 contains WLM domain (PF 08325), Pub domain (PF09409), and an uncharacterized protein family domain (UPF0041) along with RALF domain. WLM domain, Pub domain domains are parts of the ubiquitin proteasome which play a role in regulation of protein degradation and protein - protein interactions (Suzuki et al., 2001; Su and Hochstrasser, 2010). Therefore, this RALF member may participate in the protein - protein interactions in the apple. However, further analysis is needed in RALF members of different plant species for identification and further characterization of such types of domains.

Using the Clustal Omega, full length proteins sequences were aligned to identify the similarity among them (Fig. 4). Few conserved motifs like YISY site was detected in some of the members of the RALF gene family. Similar results have been found in other studies of RALF family genes (Pearce et al., 2010; Sharma et al., 2016; Campbell and Turner, 2017). Other motifs like GASYY and PYXRGCS have also been identified from few of apple RALF members. Clustal Omega of apple RALF family was also carried out with RALF members of the other plant species like *A. thaliana*, *rice*, maize and polar and conserved regions have identified.

#### **Physiochemical analysis of the RALF encoded proteins**

Detailed analysis of proteins encoded by these RALF carried out using various softwares (Table 2). RALF member MDP0000801478 encodes smallest protein having 61 amino acids only whereas MDP0000227554 encode for 903 amino acids (Table 2). Most of the other encoded proteins have a range of 80 to 150 amino acids. Theoretical isoelectric points (pI) of all the RALF members have been determined as it affects their net activity in the cell (Dickinson, 1998). Gene MDP0000145507 has lowest theoretical pI of 4.42 whereas MDP0000801478 has theoretical pI of 11.9. Most of other proteins have intermediate range. Controlling the stability of proteins is the fundamental way to regulate the different physiological processes of the cell (Gasteiger et al., 2005). Understanding of synthesis and degradation of the proteins is important to understand developmental aspects in plants (Nelson and Millar, 2015). In RALF family most of the proteins have a half life (turnover rate of a protein) of more than 20 hours (Yeast, in vivo). However, MDP0000350522 has a half life of about 10 minutes which indicates that this protein may play a regulatory role and degrades very fast as compared to other proteins. Most of the RALF proteins are unstable in nature. However, proteins of MDP0000440839, MDP0000608906, MDP0000239230, and MDP0000286764 are found to be stable. The diverse range of properties of these RALFs peptides indicates that they play very diverse role in the apple. These types of studies have not been performed in any of RALF family genes in plants.

**Table 2: Protein characterization of different apple RALF family members**

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>Accession no.</b>	<b>Number of amino acids</b>	<b>Molecular weight</b>	<b>Theoretical pI</b>	<b>Estimated half-life (yeast, in vivo)</b>	<b>Instability index</b>
1.	MDP0000440839	165	18016.70	5.42	>20 hours	stable
2.	MDP0000317542	147	16138.60	10.21	>20 hours	unstable
3.	MDP0000446534	115	12330.67	6.54	>20 hours	unstable
4.	MDP0000557646	401	43809.21	8.60	>20 hours	unstable
5.	MDP0000834499	82	8905.50	9.60	>20 hours	unstable
6.	MDP0000881502	121	13472.21	9.35	>20 hours	unstable
7.	MDP0000881503	122	13711.56	9.21	>20 hours	unstable
8.	MDP0000480281	113	12179.10	7.60	>20 hours	unstable
9.	MDP0000768108	82	8905.50	9.60	>20 hours	unstable
10.	MDP0000768504	126	13770.70	9.54	>20 hours	unstable
11.	MDP0000132548	127	13684.43	9.12	>20 hours	unstable
12.	MDP0000257999	159	18188.45	10.27	>20 hours	unstable
13.	MDP0000227554	903	102040.56	5.51	>20 hours	unstable
14.	MDP0000608906	380	41199.29	7.90	>20 hours	stable
15.	MDP0000229638	124	13687.18	4.43	>20 hours	unstable
16.	MDP0000239230	161	17228.19	8.59	>20 hours	stable
17.	MDP0000202451	115	12411.77	7.63	>20 hours	unstable
18.	MDP0000206050	125	13566.68	8.17	>20 hours	unstable
19.	MDP0000132549	159	17321.86	9.54	>20 hours	unstable

23.	MDP0000321762	123	14039.31	10.09	>20 hours	unstable
24.	MDP0000286764	383	42826.10	5.40	>20 hours	stable
25.	MDP0000120328	133	14197.97	9.26	>20 hours	unstable
26.	MDP0000801478	61	7045.07	11.09	>20 hours	unstable
27.	MDP0000281490	115	12411.77	7.63	>20 hours	unstable
28.	MDP0000316645	72	8204.80	10.17	>20 hours	unstable
29.	MDP0000145507	103	11476.39	4.42	>20 hours	unstable
30.	MDP0000350522	160	18312.24	10.25	10 min	unstable
31.	MDP0000613004	213	23846.05	9.66	>20 hours	unstable
32.	MDP0000221966	126	13751.09	9.75	>20 hours	unstable
33.	MDP0000261734	133	14443.93	9.86	>20 hours	unstable
34.	MDP0000242905	318	36069.50	7.10	>20 hours	unstable
35.	MDP0000647167	112	12190.87	8.83	>20 hours	unstable
36.	MDP0000267637	113	12163.71	7.62	>20 hours	unstable

### Phylogentic analysis

Phylogenetic analysis is helpful in characterization of members of a gene family into different groups and subgroups (Fan et al., 2017). Cao and Shi (2012) and Sharma et al., (2016) have generated phylogenetic trees of members of RALF families from different species of plants and shown relationship among them. In the present study full length protein sequences of RALF members were subjected for generation of the phylogentic tree using Mega 6.0. Based upon the tree, members of family can be divided into four major groups (Fig. 5). Group I has 8 genes, Group II has 7 genes, group III has 12 genes, and group IV has 9 genes. Further analysis showed that there is very less difference between the group 1 and group II members and they have high similarity. Campbell and Turner, (2017) have also grouped RALF family members into four major clades in different plant species. Analyzing Clustal omega and phylogenetic tree indicates that the group IV members are different from the other members of RALF family. Campbell and Turner, (2017) have also proposed that the Group IV genes are not true RALF members and regarded them as the RALF related peptides.

### Secondary structure prediction

Using Phyre 2.0 server, secondary structural characterization of representative member of

## Genomewide characterization and analysis of rapid alkalization factor (RALF) gene family in apple

different gene families has been reported (Kelley et al., 2015; Zheng et al., 2018). In the present study full length protein sequence of each one member of all the four groups, that is, group I (MDP0000557646), Group II (MDP0000281490), Group III (MDP0000704235) and Group IV (MDP0000768108) has been carried out and all of them found to be closely related to RALF peptides from *A. thaliana* (Fig. 6). Most of the apple RALF representative structures are highly disordered in nature. Frederick et al., (2019) have also reported similar results in *A. thaliana* RALF 8 peptide. Group I representative has 69 %  $\alpha$ -helix and no  $\beta$ -sheet whereas group II representative has about 52%  $\alpha$ -helix, transmembrane helix about 14% and no  $\beta$ -sheet. Group III representative has 46%  $\alpha$ -helix and 2%  $\beta$ -sheet. In case of group IV 50 %  $\alpha$ -helix and no  $\beta$ -sheet found. Further analysis indicates that RALF members have more of  $\alpha$ -helix and least of  $\beta$ -sheets in their secondary structure.

### Acknowledgment

Authors are thankful to SERB and DBT for financial assistance. Thanks are due to Coordinator, Bioinformatics Centre, Jammu University for providing the necessary facilities.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

### References

- Alenius H, Kalkkinen N, Yip E, Hasmin H, Turjanmaa K, Mäkinen-Kiljunen S, Reunala T, Palosuo T (1996) Significance of rubber elongation factor as a latex allergen. *Int Arch Allergy Immunol*, 109:362-368.
- Campbell L, Turner SR (2017) A comprehensive analysis of RALF proteins in green plants suggests there are two distinct functional groups. *Front Plant Sci*, 8: 37.
- Cao J, Shi F (2012) Evolution of the RALF gene family in plants: gene duplication and selection patterns. *Evol Bioinform Online*, 8: 271292.
- Chevalier E, Loubert-Hudon A, Matton DP (2013) ScRALF3, a secreted RALF-like peptide involved in cell-cell communication between the sporophyte and the female gametophyte in a solanaceous species. *Plant J*, 73:1019-1033.
- Combiér JP, Kuster H, Journet EP, Hohnjec N, Gamas P, Niebel A (2008) Evidence for the involvement in nodulation of the two small putative regulatory peptide-encoding genes MtRALFL1 and MtDVL1. *Mol Plant Microbe Interact*, 21:1118-27.
- Covey PA, Subbaiah CC, Parsons RL, Pearce G, Lay FT, Anderson MA, Ryan CA, Bedinger PA (2010) A pollen-specific RALF from tomato that regulates pollen tube elongation. *Plant Physiol*, 153:703-715.
- Daccord N, Celton JM, Linsmith G, Becker C, Choisne N, Schijlen E, Geest HVD, Bianco L, Micheletti D, Velasco R (2017) High-quality de novo assembly of the apple genome and methylome dynamics of early fruit development. *Nat Genet*, 49:10991106.
- Dickinson E (1998) Stability and rheological implications of electrostatic milk protein-polysaccharide interactions. *Trends in Food Sci Tech*, 347-354.
- El-Gebali S, Mistry J, Bateman A, Eddy S R, Luciani A, Potter SC, Qureshi M, Richardson LJ, Science and Technology



Salazar GA, Smart A, Sonnhammer ELL, Hirsh L, Paladin L, Piovesan D, Tosatto SCE (2019) The Pfam protein families database in 2019. *Nucleic Acids Res*, 47:427-432.

Fan S, Zhang D, Xing L, Qi S, Du L, Wu H, Shao H, Li Y, Ma J, Han M (2017) Phylogenetic analysis of IDD gene family and characterization of its expression in response to flower induction in *Malus*. *Mol Genet Genomics*, 292:755-771.

Frederick RO, Haruta M, Tonelli M, Lee W, Cornilescu G, Cornilescu CC, Sussman MR, Markley JL (2019) Function and solution structure of the *Arabidopsis thaliana* RALF8 peptide. *Protein Sci*, 28:1115-1126.

Galindo-Trigo S, Gray JE, Smith LM (2016) Conserved roles of CrRLK1L receptor-like kinases in cell expansion and reproduction from algae to angiosperms. *Front Plant Sci*, 7:1269.

Gasteiger E, Hoogland C, Gattiker A, Duvaud S, Wilkins MR, Appel RD, Bairoch A (2005) Protein identification and analysis tools on the ExPASy server, (In) John M. Walker (ed): *The Proteomics Protocols Handbook*, Humana Press: 571-607.

Germain H, Chevalier E, Caron S, Matton DP (2005) Characterization of five RALF-like genes from *Solanum chacoense* provides support for a developmental role in plants. *Planta*, 220:447-54.

Goodstein DM, Shu S, Howson R, Neupane R, Hayes RD, Fazo J, Mitros T, Dirks W, Hellsten U, Putnam N, Rokhsar DS (2012) Phytozome: a comparative platform for green plant genomics. *Nucleic Acids Res*, 40: 11781186.

Gupta S, Chakraborti D, Sengupta A, Basu D, Das S (2010) Primary metabolism of chickpea is the initial target of wound inducing early sensed *Fusarium oxysporum* f. sp. ciceri race I. *PloS One*, 5 p. e9030.

Hoffmann-Sommergruber K, Vanek-Krebitz M, Radauer C, Wen J, Ferreira F, Scheiner O, Breiteneder H (1997) Genomic characterization of members of the Bet v 1 family: genes coding for allergens and pathogenesis related proteins share intron positions. *Gene*, 197:91-100.

Juniper BE, Watkins R, Harris SA (1998). The origin of the Apple. *Acta Hort*, 484,27-34.

Kelley LA, Mezulis S, Yates CM, Wass MN, Sternberg MJ (2015) The Phyre2 web portal for protein modeling, prediction and analysis. *Nat Protoc*, 10:845-858.

Kinaciyan T, Nagl B, Faustmann S, Frommlet F, Kopp S, Wolkersdorfer M, Wöhl S, Bastl K, Huber H, Berger U, Bohle B (2018) Efficacy and safety of 4 months of sublingual immunotherapy with recombinant Mal d 1 and Bet v 1 in patients with birch pollen-related apple allergy. *J Allergy Clin Immunol*, 141: 1002-1008.

Lager I, Andréasson O, Dunbar TL, Andreasson E, Escobar MA, Rasmusson AG (2010) Changes in external pH rapidly alter plant gene expression and modulate auxin and elicitor responses. *Plant Cell Environ*, 33:1513-1528.

Letunic I, Bork P (2018) 20 years of the SMART protein domain annotation resource. *Nucleic Acids Res*, 46: 493-496.

Murphy E, De Smet I (2014) Understanding the RALF family: a tale of many species. *Trends Plant Sci*, 19: 664-671.

## Genomewide characterization and analysis of rapid alkalization factor (RALF) gene family in apple

- Nelson CJ, Millar AH (2015) Protein turnover in plant biology. *Nat Plants*, 1:15017.
- Negrini F, O'Grady K, Hyvönen M, Folta KM, Baraldi E (2019) Rapid Alkalinization Factor (RALF) gene family genomic structure and transcriptional regulation during host-pathogen crosstalk in *Fragaria vesca* and *Fragaria x ananassa* strawberry. *Biorxiv*, 858928.
- Peace CP, Bianco L, Troggio M, van de Weg E, Howard NP, Cornille A, Durel CE, Myles S, Migicovsky Z, Schaffer RJ, Costes E, Fazio G, Yamane H, van Nocker S, Gottschalk C, Costa F, Chagné D, Zhang X, Patocchi A, Gardiner SE, Hardner C, Kumar S, Laurens F, Bucher E, Main D, Jung S, Vanderzande S (2019) Apple whole genome sequences: recent advances and new prospects. *Hortic Res*, 6:59.
- Pearce G, Moura DS, Stratmann J, Ryan CA (2001) RALF, a 5-kDa ubiquitous polypeptide in plants, arrests root growth and development. *Proc Natl Acad Sci USA*, 98: 12843-12847.
- Pearce G, Yamaguchi Y, Munske G, Ryan CA (2010) Structure-activity studies of RALF, Rapid Alkalinization Factor, reveal an essential--YISY--motif. *Peptides*, 31:1973-1977.
- Priya P, Venkatachalam P, Thulaseedharan A (2006) Molecular cloning and characterization of the rubber elongation factor gene and its promoter sequence from rubber tree (*Hevea brasiliensis*): A gene involved in rubber biosynthesis. *Plant Sci*, 171:470-180.
- Sharma A, Hussain A, Mun BG, Imran QM, Falak N, Lee SU, Kim JY, Hong JK, Loake GJ, Ali A, Yun BW (2016) Comprehensive analysis of plant rapid alkalization factor (RALF) genes. *Plant Physiol Biochem*, 106:82-90.
- Sinha M, Singh RP, Kushwaha GS, Iqbal N, Singh A, Kaushik S, Kaur P, Sharma S, Singh TP (2014) Current overview of allergens of plant pathogenesis related protein families. *Scientific World J*, 2014:543195.
- Su D, Hochstrasser M (2010) A WLM protein with SUMO-directed protease activity. *Mol Cell Biol*, 30:3734-3736.
- Suzuki T, Park H, Till EA, Lennarz WJ (2001) The PUB domain: a putative protein-protein interaction domain implicated in the ubiquitin-proteasome pathway. *Biochem Biophys Res Commun*, 287:1083-1087.
- Tamura K, Stecher G, Peterson D, Filipowski A, Kumar S (2013) MEGA6: molecular evolutionary genetics analysis version 6.0. *Mol Biol Evol*, 30:2725-2729.
- Thynne E, Saur IML, Simbaqueba J, Ogilvie HA, Gonzalez-Cendales Y, Mead O, Taranto A, Catanzariti AM, McDonald MC, Schwessinger B, Jones DA, Rathjen JP, Solomon PS (2017) Fungal phytopathogens encode functional homologues of plant rapid alkalization factor (RALF) peptides. *Mol Plant Pathol*, 18:811-824.
- Tian Y, Dong Q, Ji Z, Chi F, Cong P, Zhou Z (2015) Genome-wide identification and analysis of the MADS-box gene family in apple. *Gene*, 555:277-290.
- Velasco, R. et al. (2010) The genome of the domesticated apple (*Malus × domestica* Borkh.). *Nat Genet*, 42: 833-839.
- Wei M, Wang S, Dong H, Cai B, Tao J (2016) Characterization and comparison of the CPK



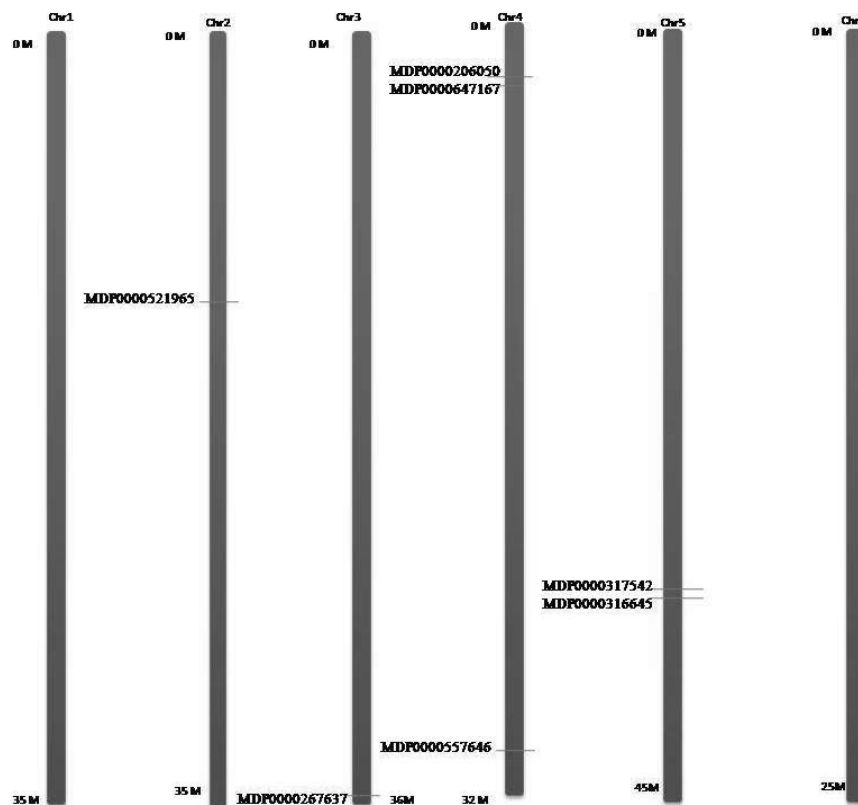
gene family in the Apple (*Malus × domestica*) and other Rosaceae species and its response to *Alternaria alternata* infection. PLoS One, 11(5):e0155590.

Wu J, Kurten EL, Monshausen G, Hummel GM, Gilroy S, Baldwin IT (2007) NaRALF, a peptide signal essential for the regulation of root hair tip apoplastic pH in *Nicotiana attenuata*, is required for root hair development and plant growth in native soils. Plant J, 52(5):877-890.

Xiao Y, Stegmann M, Han Z, DeFalco TA, Parys K, Xu L, Belkhadir Y, Zipfel C, Chai J (2019) Mechanisms of RALF peptide perception by a heterotypic receptor complex. Nature, 572:270-274.

Zheng L, Ma J, Mao J, Fan S, Zhang D, Zhao C, An N, Han M (2018) Genome-wide identification of SERK genes in apple and analyses of their role in stress responses and growth. BMC Genomics, 19:962.

**Fig No. 1: Location of different RALF family genes on the apple chromosomes**



Genomewide characterization and analysis of rapid  
alkalization factor (RALF) gene family in apple

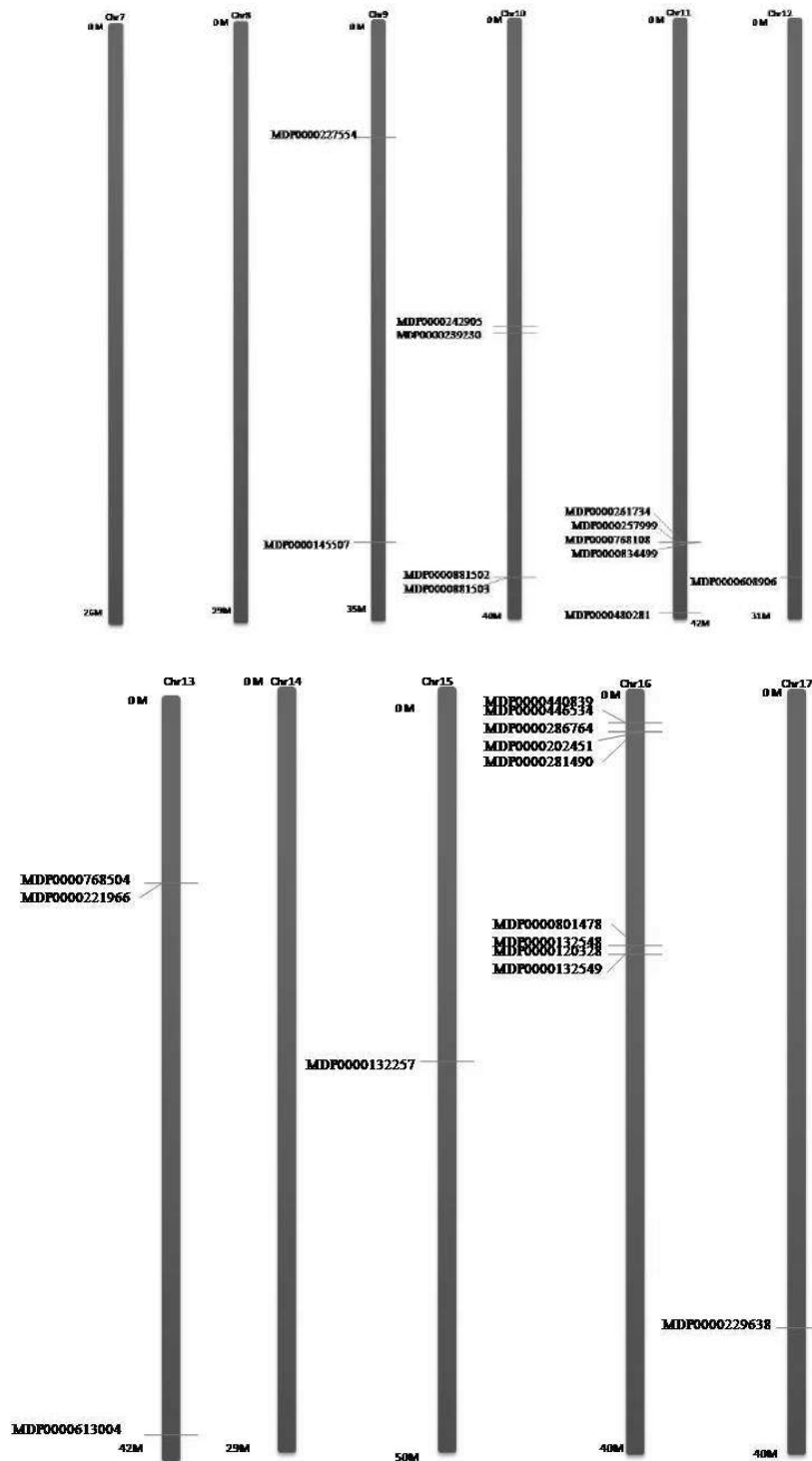


Fig.2: Exon intron structure of different members of RALF gene family from Apple

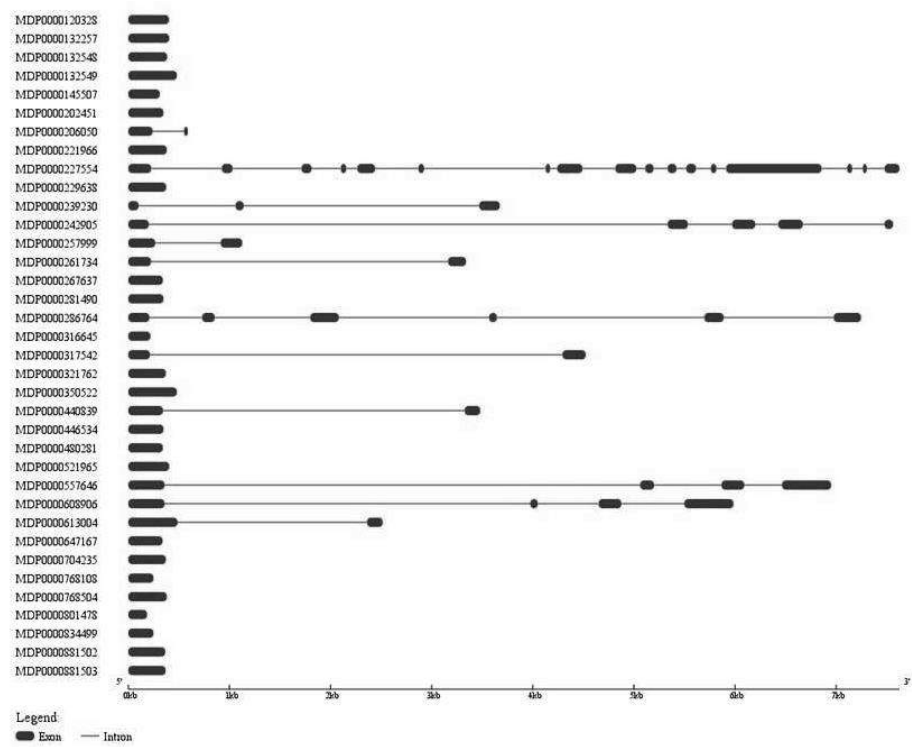
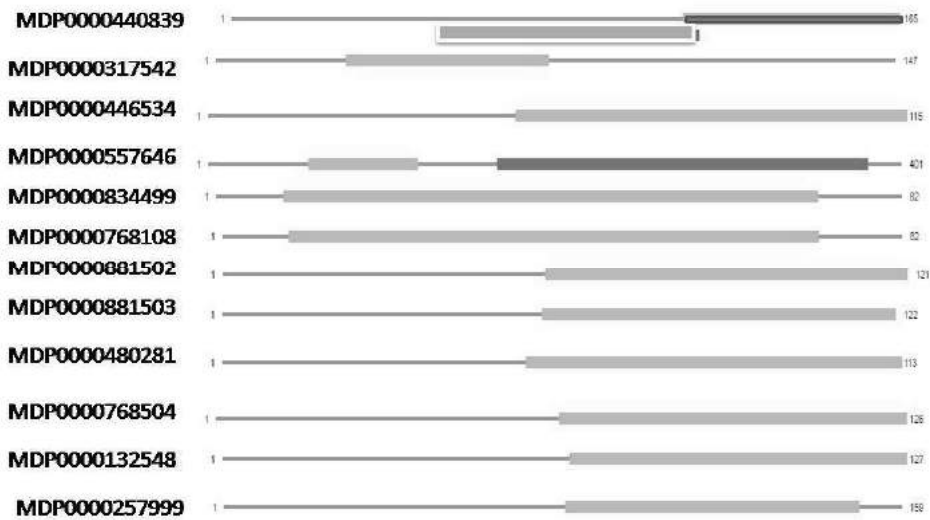
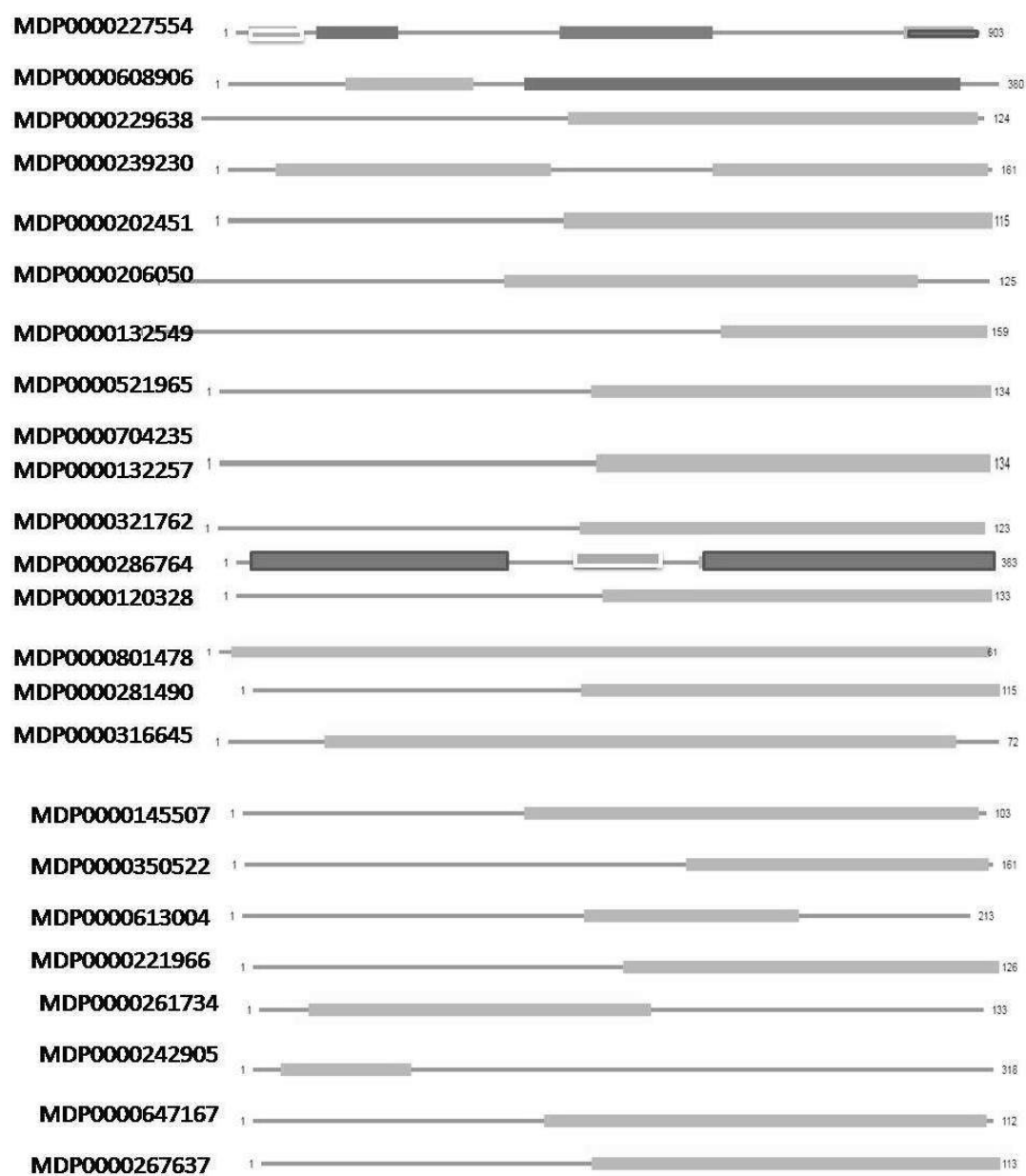
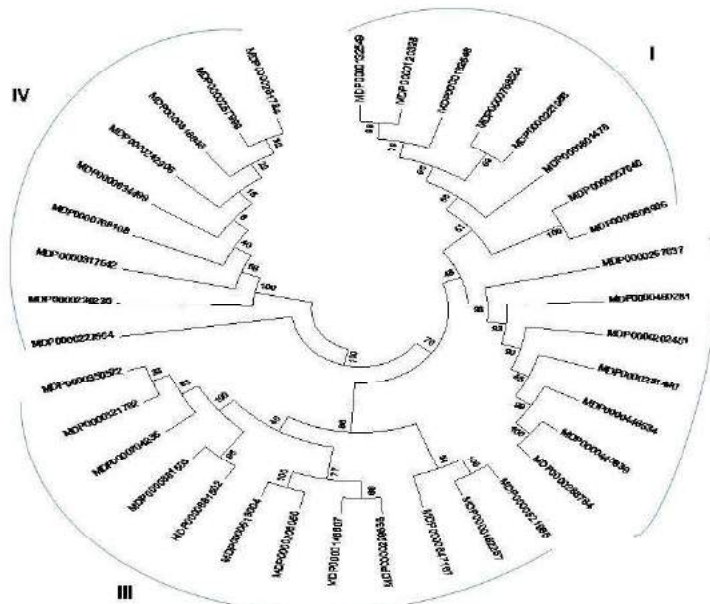
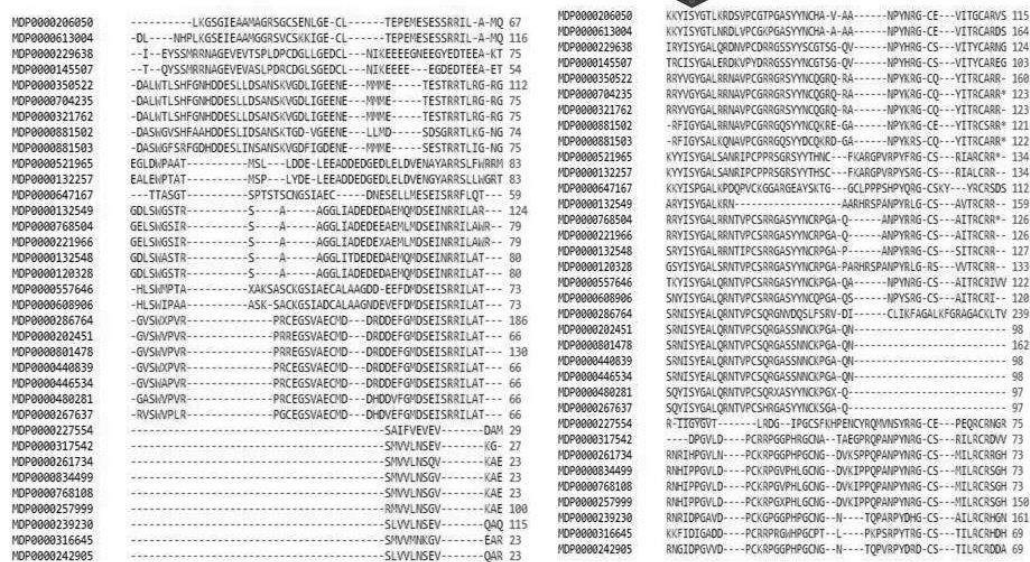


Fig. 3: Domain organization of the RALF gene family members; Yellow shade indicates RALF domain(s); other domains are indicated by blue shade

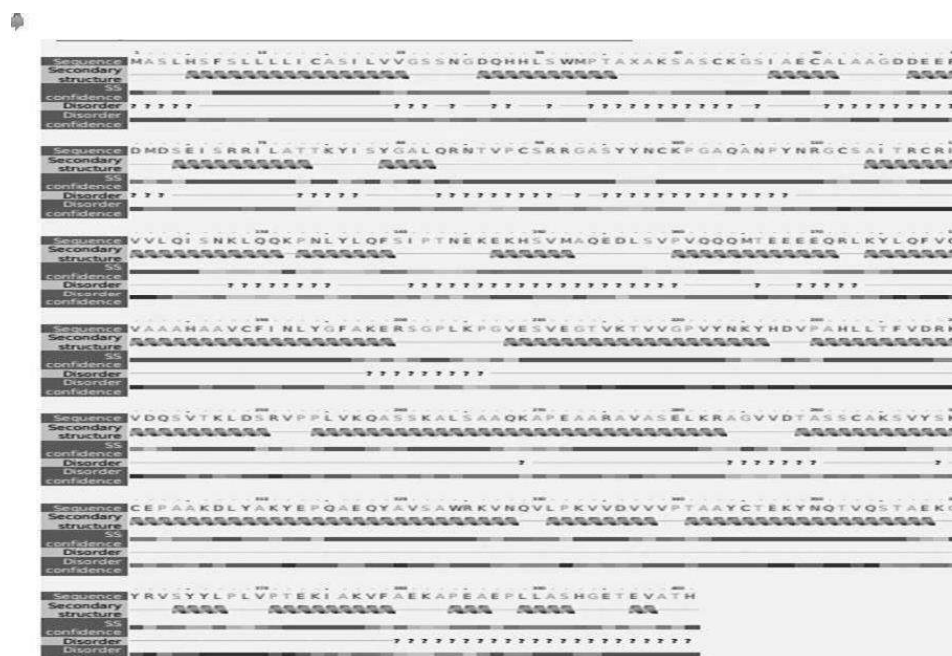


Genomewide characterization and analysis of rapid  
alkalization factor (RALF) gene family in apple

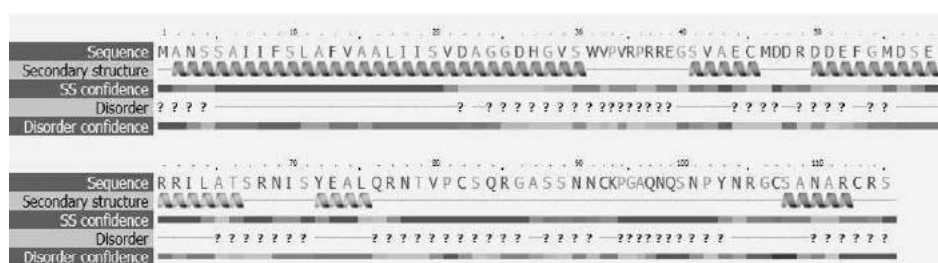




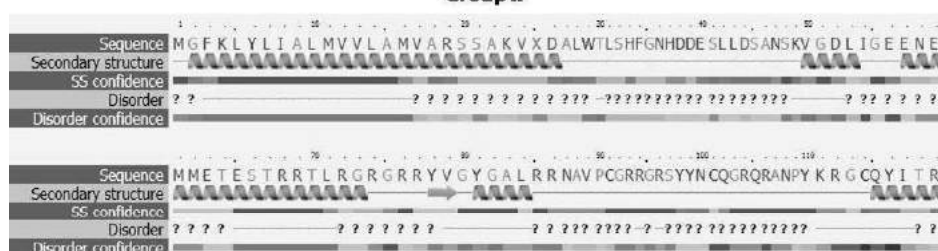
**Fig. 6 : Secondary structure of the RALF representative members depicting  $\alpha$ -helix and  $\beta$ -sheets characteristics**



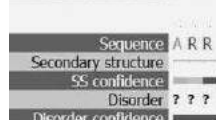
### Group I



## Group II



### Group III







#### Group IV





**SOCIAL SCIENCES**



# Contextualizing the Working of Federalism in the Success of India's Democracy: An Analysis

Mool Raj\*

## ABSTRACT

*Federalism is a significant model for balancing unity and diversity by distributing powers between the centre and the states. India has different identities that form a complex nature of society, so for accommodating complexity of Indian society, Constitution makers elaborately discussed in the Constituent Assembly and shown a pragmatic and flexible approach while designing and adopting the structure of India and finally adopted a model which is an amalgamation of both unitary as well as federal features. It confers special provisions under Part XXI, Fifth and Sixth Schedules for the effective governance and management of diversity. In the post-independence period, its working can be analyzed on the basis of functions performed by various bodies for making democracy more inclusive and successful. With the establishment of the inter-state council, federalism becomes more cooperative. Further, the 73rd amendment Act also brought the success of democracy at the grassroots level with decentralization of powers. Therefore, in this paper, an attempt has been made to make an analysis by contextualizing the working of federalism in the success of India's democracy.*

**Key Words:** Federalism, Democracy, Asymmetry, Decentralization, Constituent Assembly, Special Provisions, Institutional Design

## Introduction

Federalism is a feasible process of promoting the idea of self-rule and shared rule and of synchronizing the interest of a nation with that of its units for a dual purpose- that of restraining the risk of tyranny of the majority and of generating strength through the union (Mitra, and Pehl, 2011: 43). It is a mechanism by which pluralities of society are articulated and protected. It is a device constructed to secure both regional autonomy and national unity. It is an outcome of historical forces in plural societies. If the forces of national unity are very strong in such a society, the central government shall have more powers. The strength of these regional and national forces changes from time to time in view of changing social, economic and political conditions and compulsions. Thus, federalism has been reflecting these changing historical conditions and compulsions (Patil, 1995: 13).

Federalism is the only viable system of governance in India because of its large size and diversity. The framers of the Indian constitution included a large part of the Government of India Act of 1935 in the Constitution. B. R. Ambedkar mentioned in his book *Federation versus Freedom* the three grounds which are claimed by the protagonists of the federal scheme in favour of the acceptance of the federal scheme for Independent India. The first ground in favour of federalism is that it would help to unite India's diversity into a single central level of governance. This ground accommodates British India and Indian India into a single political community. Secondly, Ambedkar mentioned that the advantage of this scheme is that it would democratize the autocracies in the Indian states by enabling

---

Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, University of Jammu, Jammu, India

British India to influence Indian states to transform the autocracy into a democracy that exists in British India. Thirdly, the federal scheme embodies responsible government (Ambedkar, 2017: 71-86). Indian Constitution defines a kind of political structure of independent India which is impossible to describe in brief. The Constituent Assembly of India had adopted a unique model of federalism by analyzing the models of various great federations like the United States of America, Canada, Australia, and Switzerland, and adopted the policy of pick and choose by keeping in mind what would be suitable for the diversity and heterogeneity of India and for the betterment of nation. The framers of the Indian Constitution produced a unique model which was characterized by K. C. Wheare as 'quasi-federal' and by Granville Austin 'a new kind of federalism to meet India's peculiar needs' (Austin, 2017: 231). Indian federal system accommodated different features like language, cultural, regionalism, and diversity. It is based on the supremacy of the centre over the state. According to Ambedkar, "Indian federation has not resulted by virtue of instrumentality of agreement with the units, and that the union is indestructible; no unit can secede from it" (Raju, April June 1991: 153-164). Rajindra Prasad argued in the Constituent Assembly that we should adopt such a model in the Constitution that serves the purpose of India whether it may be federal or unitary.

### **Asymmetrical Federalism: Balancing Unity and Diversity**

For the functioning of democracy what is required is the representation, recognition of the interest of minorities and accommodation of diversities. Therefore, in the Indian Constitution, there are some provisions incorporated regarding various states for granting differential rights that have created an asymmetrical nature of Indian federalism. This asymmetry reflects in different provisions of the Constitution with regard to India's Northeastern region, J&K state, administration of tribal areas under the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Constitution and provisions incorporated to mitigate inequalities in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Goa.

The asymmetry in Indian federalism related to the Northeast of India particularly granted to Nagaland and Mizoram is considered as weighted or preferential equality where customary laws regulate the social, land and tribal relations that cannot be changed by the Parliament without the concurrence of the concerned state legislatures under Articles 371A and G of the Indian Constitution. The other clauses in the Articles 371, 371B, 371C, 371D, 371E, 371F, 371H, 371I, and 371J make special provisions for other states in Indian union like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Assam, Manipur, Andhra Pradesh, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, and Karnataka. These Articles of the Indian Constitution make special provisions in matters of administration of tribal areas, intra-states regional disparities, law and order situation, and fixation of a number of states in legislative assemblies (Bhatia, 1997: 40). Despite these provisions, the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Constitution make special provisions for most of the Northeast states for the administration and control of Scheduled Areas and Scheduled Tribes. The asymmetrical tendencies also reflect in Indian federation the creation of certain autonomous councils within states for their regional developments. These Councils include Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (1988), Bodoland Autonomous Council (1993), Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council (1994), Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (Leh 1995 and Kargil 2003). The creation of these new autonomous units in Indian federalism further developed decentralization which gave impetus to a multi-level operation and functioning of federalism and a boost to the spirit of multi-layered institutional arrangement within the federal framework of India. In the Indian federal system, there is another kind of asymmetry relating to small units which are governed by the union called Union Territories which are nine in numbers. These Union Territories are created for various reasons like these areas having small territories to be a state or having differences

in terms of culture and inter-state dispute to merge with the neighbouring state or their location is isolated from the coastal areas. These Union Territories were originally administered by the centre directly through administrators appointed by the centre. Only three Union Territories are having their own unicameral legislatures namely The National Capital Territory of Delhi, J&K and Puducherry and rest are governed by the centre. These Union Territories are represented in Lok Sabha by one seat each other than Delhi which has seven seats and J&K which has five seats. There are provisions under Article 241 (1) and (4) of the Constitution in which Parliament is empowered to extend the jurisdiction of the neighbouring state to these territories and to establish separate High Court for it (Saxena, 2006: 113).

Article 370 which was incorporated in Part XXI of the Indian Constitution provided special status to Jammu and Kashmir state. Under this Article, only two articles of Indian Constitution were to be directly applicable to the state of J&K viz., Article 1 and Article 370 (Chowdhary, 2019: 52). Article 370 was incorporated under abnormal circumstances that empower state with separate Constitution and separate state flag in the opinion of A. G. Noorani Article 370 of the Indian Constitution having six provisions for the state of J&K. First, it exempted the J&K State from the provisions of Indian Constitution that provide a structure of governance to all the states and allowed to have its own Constitution for the effective governance. Secondly, it restricted the legislative powers of Parliament over J&K state to three subjects, that is, defence, foreign affairs, and communications. Other provisions of the Constitution could extend to the State through Presidential Order only with the consultation of the State government. Thirdly, it restricted the Union for extending other constitutional provisions or other powers of the Union to the State, for this prior concurrence of the State government is required. Fourth, the concurrence was strictly provisional that had to be ratified by the Constituent Assembly of J&K State as mentioned in Article 370 (2). Fifth, the authority of the State government to give concurrence lasts only until the Constituent Assembly of the State is convened. It is also mentioned in the Article that State government could not give its own concurrence once the Constituent Assembly met and dispersed. The powers of the President to extend Indian Constitution to the state of J&K ended completely once the Constituent Assembly of State finalized the Constitution for the State and dispersed. Lastly, under Article 370 (3) President is empowered to abrogate or amend it by making an order, but for this process also the recommendation of the Constituent Assembly of the State is mandatory (Noorani, 2014: 6-7).

Subsequently, Presidential Order of 1954 incorporated Article 35A which became very controversial over a period of time. From 1954 onwards various Presidential Orders were promulgated that extended various Articles of Indian Constitution in J&K state. The asymmetry in Indian federalism has its own significance because it prevents nation from disintegration when different regions within federal system feel alienation and they assert their demand for separation and sometimes they also assert demand for secession. The exclusive rights granted to culturally differentiated groups ease sense of deprivation and bring different groups at par with the mainstream. Therefore, the nature of asymmetry which was granted by the constitution to different states, especially to J&K state became an obstacle for the union government in security perspective.

On August 5, 2019 the Union government introduced a bill in Rajya Sabha with the prior recommendation of the President and the bill was passed and was supported by various political parties like Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and other parties and even some of the Congress leaders also appreciated the Union decision over the abrogation of Article 370 which was a major asymmetry in Indian federalism. The bill bifurcates the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories, that is, Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory with legislature and Ladakh Union Territory without legislature.

## Contextualizing the Working of Federalism in the Success of India's Democracy: An Analysis

In Indian federalism asymmetry is an ever evolving phenomenon and with this initiative taken by the central government for expunging major asymmetry (Article 370) is sign of over centralization. Although asymmetry is significant in Indian federal system due to varied reasons but for a nation security is indispensable therefore, J&K is strategically remained concern for national security where Article 370 constantly obstructing presence of centre in various matters.

In Indian federalism asymmetry reveals that the purpose of its inclusion in the constitution was preserving certain way of life and identities. Despite giving special and differential rights to different states under the constitution these state have shown poor performance and the essence of asymmetric federalism which was envisioned is not realized yet due to socio-political problems.

### **Institutional Design and the Working of Federalism**

India's Constituent Assembly was perhaps the first constituent body to embrace the mechanism of what A. H. Birch called cooperative federalism that produced a strong central government (Pal, 1983: 74). In Indian federalism, there are certain unique provisions where the centre is empowered to make temporary adjustments like Article 249 of the Constitution provides lawful legislation by Parliament in subjects enumerated in state list if the Rajya Sabha declared by a resolution supported by not less than two-thirds members present and voting. In this article, Parliament should make laws for the interest of the nation in the subjects enumerated in the state list. Article 252 empowers Parliament to legislate on subjects listed in state list if the Legislatures of two or more states pass a resolution for this matter. The state legislatures after passing such resolution surrender their powers only on matters listed in the resolution. Article 253 empowers Parliament to make legislation for giving effect to international agreements and treaties. During the proclamation of emergency under various articles of the Constitution, Articles 352, 356 and 360, the centre assumes all the powers of legislation and in certain cases, the president can veto over state legislation. (Pal, 1983: 82-89). In Indian federalism at the administrative sphere, there are certain Union agencies operating at the state level in order to ensure greater centre-state and inter-state cooperation and implementation of policies formulated by the central government.

Firstly, the Governor act as a link between the centre and states is appointed by the President and hold office to and he/she is the representative of the centre in the states. As a representative of the centre, Governor must keep the centre informed about the functioning of the state and whenever things are going against the unity of the country he/she has to inform the centre. In Indian federalism office of the Governor has to perform and balance dual role viz as a constitutional head in the state and the representative of the centre that maintains a link between centre and state. He has to perform various legislative, executive, financial and judicial functions and in addition to these functions, the Governor of the state has discretionary powers also that has been the bone of contention in Indian federalism since independence. Among these are some most controversial powers like the appointment of Chief Minister under Article 164; the right to summon, prorogue and dissolve the Legislative Assembly under Article 174; and Article 356 in case of breakdown of the constitutional machinery the Governor recommends President's rule in the state (Anushree, 20 January 2019). The office of the Governor in Indian states is chosen and nominated one is thus acts as a powerful link between the centre and states to ensure and strengthen harmony and cooperative federalism. During congress dominance phase various states experienced the President's rule like East Punjab (1951) due to party instruction; In Patiala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU 1953) various cases of defections came out therefore, President's rule introduced; Andhra (1954) due to various cases of defections, Governor did not invite the second largest party to form the government and



recommended President's rule in the state; Travancore-Cochin (1956) defections and no party was able to form government; Kerala (1959) the Kerala government was dismissed by the centre; Orissa (1961) unsuccessful coalition; Kerala (1964) defections was the reason and no party was able to form the government; Kerala (1965) no party was able to form government; Punjab (1966) party instructed to impose the President's rule in the state; Rajasthan (1967) the Governor refused to call the largest alliance in the Assembly to form government and in Haryana (1967) the Governor of Haryana recommended dismissal on the ground that the Ministry was maintaining itself in power by encouraging defections (Pal, 1983: 107-108).

Secondly, integrated All India Services was attempted to reconcile with the idea of federalism that would manage significant sectors of Indian administration throughout the country. The recruitment of the IAS is on all India basis and one has to serve in different states and the state has no right to take serious disciplinary action against IAS without the concurrence and approval of the centre. All India Services serve and manage state as well as central administration with great responsibility that brings efficiency, cooperation and uniformity in administration. Initially after independence the intention of states towards All India Services (AIS) was reluctant, but with the passage of time and beginning of industrial and economic development the states felt necessity of technically trained manpower, therefore, in 1961 the Chief Ministers' Conference held in which acceptance was given to the decision for the creation of new All India Services. Despite the cooperation, All India Services appear to be a contradiction in the federal system where states' voice in opposition to All India Services is being suppressed by the centre (Pal, 1983: 113-115).

Thirdly, the provision for the institution of Joint Public Service Commission for two or more states manifests inter-state cooperation and this can be achieved by two or more states moving a resolution in their respective legislatures to this effect. For the sake of the interest of the states, the parliament may by law, establish Joint Public Service Commission for that group of states (Pal, 1983: 115-116).

Finally, the integrated judiciary is also a mechanism of cooperation in which appointment of every judge of High Court is done by the President in consultation with Chief Justice of India, the Governor of the state, and in case of appointment of other Judges the consultation of Chief Justice of High Court is also required. In judiciary like the Joint Public Service Commission, Constitution also provides for common High Court for two or more states. A High Court being part of the integrated judicial system administers both the central as well as state laws and by doing this, creates a sense of cooperation between centre and states in the field of administrative justice. Therefore, in addition to this, a Joint High Court also creates a sense of intergovernmental cooperation in Indian federalism (Pal, 1983: 116-117). In India states the functioning of governments on a cooperative basis depends mostly on the central government in terms of providing leadership to state governments, coordinate their activities and on certain occasions compel them to act in accordance with the directions of the centre in order to fulfil national interest.

The working of Indian federalism cannot be judged only by articulating the theoretical and legal framework of the Constitution. In actual practice, the powers and functions which are distributed in the constitution may vary from one another that operates like a machine which is lifeless and acquires life when it is operated and controlled by men. Therefore, apart from the constitutional provisions that established various institutions in India for obtaining cooperation in Indian federal system, there are various other mechanisms that work through different statutory and non-statutory bodies which also played a very significant role in uplifting the spirit of cooperative federalism. In case of statutory bodies, Zonal Councils are prominent that were established under State Reorganisation Act, 1956 as

## Contextualizing the Working of Federalism in the Success of India's Democracy: An Analysis

an instrument of inter-governmental consultation and cooperation particularly in the socio-economic field and to mitigate and resolve the controversies among the states. The Act originally established five Zonal Councils which are the Northern Zone, Central Zone, Eastern Zone, Western Zone, and Southern Zone. Presently, India is divided into six zones and the last zone, that is, North-Eastern Zone has been established by the Parliament by passing the North-Eastern Council Act, 1971. The body of each Zonal Council consists of various ministers from the union and from the state and has the advisers to assist in the performance of its duties. The councils perform their functions as deliberative and advisory bodies for common interest including socio-economic planning, border disputes, a matter concerning linguistic minorities, and inter-state transport and any matter related to the reorganization of states. The councils started functioning from 1957 onwards and mostly the councils met as per schedule and held discussions on various issues concerned with their mutual interest, but witnessed a shift in 1967 when Congress dominance got challenged in few states and the councils meetings became less frequent as a result the non-Congress states directly involved in asking questions from the centre rather than taking part in councils' meetings (Pal, 1983: 205-207).

The Zonal Councils have little role in the discharge of legislative and executive functions: they act as an inter-state forum that plays an advisory role in order to promote and facilitate cooperative efforts towards socio-economic development of every zone. The participation of central as well as state ministries in a common platform help in creating cooperation and coordination in Indian federal governance.

In the Indian federal system, there are some other non-statutory bodies which are created to make cooperative arrangements between the centre and states relations. Some of the prominent bodies are- the Planning Commission, National Development Council, National Integration Council, etc. The Planning Commission was set up by the Government of India in March 1950 which constitutes a core of the planning machinery in the country. It is a cooperative enterprise where the central government in discussion and consultation with the states set out developmental agendas for the whole of the country in which financial resources are provided by the centre and the administrative machinery are supplied by the states (Chandra, 2008: 227-228). Though the Planning Commission is a central agency created by the Union Government that depicts a significant growth in the paramountcy of the centre. After the adoption of the Planning Commission in the post-independence period, the Indian federal structure has suffered in the centralized planning and powerful directions issued by the centre. The Commission has assigned various functions to formulate plans for the most effective and balanced utilization of the country's resources for the development of the whole country.

The Planning Commission since its inception is chaired by the Prime Minister; a non-official person is appointed as Deputy Chairman, Union Finance Minister as a member, Cabinet Secretary as its secretary and few non-officials appointed for their expertise in the subjects with which the Commission has to deal. There is no states representation in the Commission which thus depicts as it purely a central body for the economic development of the nation. Though without representation of states, the Commission was regarded as a joint enterprise of both the centre and the states because the item 'Economic and Social Planning' was included in the Concurrent List which is the concern of both the centre as well as states. But there are certain significant items which are included in state list like public health, agriculture, land policy, animal husbandry, education, irrigation, roads, forests, and fisheries which are crucial for any plan of development and it is the primary responsibility of states to manage and look after these items. By contextualizing it the commission was unable to reflect or correspond to the requirements of the people at grassroots. In the opinion of K. Santhanam, the planning in India has been instituted for the purpose of economic development which has practically

superseded the federal structure so far as the states are concerned in the constitution (Santhanam, 1960: 56) Indian Parliament in December 1954 adopted a resolution which contained a significant clause like the objective of Indian economic policy should be to achieve a socialistic pattern of society and the elaborate proposal of the socialistic pattern of society was commenced in the Second Five Year Plan. The Planning Commission in India also recommended for the establishment of socio-economic democracy at the grassroots level with the setting up of Panchayati Raj Institutions and cooperatives. The PRIs are the agencies of government operating at the grassroots level enabled to participate in the formulations of policies and plans at the local level and make them responsible for implementing local schemes and programmes which form a significant part of planning development. In the Third Five Year Plan, it was stated that the economic activities must be organized in a way so that the equitable distribution of society can be achieved along with production and growth. In these Five Year Plans the effort was made to strengthen the economic and social development involving different states in the developmental project that was an important indicator of cooperative federalism.

Despite the fact that the Commission has faced various structural problems that have influenced in its working to a great extent. There has been expressed three views regarding the conception of the Commission. The first view regarding the Commission that its members should include a sizeable number of ministers who can legally and authoritatively define the planning and to make aware about the preferences and objectives of the government to the experts, and direct the central and states governments to accept and implement the plans framed by the Commission. Secondly, the Commission should be an advisory body that includes economists, technologists and management experts to make a plan for the Cabinet in order to strengthen economic development. Finally, the Planning Commission must include representatives of all the states and make it independent from the Union Cabinet where it is noted that it becomes the agency of the ruling party of the centre (Pal, 1983: 245). The working of the Commission since its inception has been upholding the constitutional position of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles of State Policy as well as the objectives declared by the government to promote a living standard of the people by effective utilization of country's resources for increasing productivity and providing employment opportunity.

Despite the central control on National Planning Commission has been apparent, the spirit of cooperative federalism in the working of Planning Commission is visible in the directions of laying down the broad policies and targets of development in the interest of uniform progress of the country. Moreover, during the one-party dominance, the central control on states was by and large on the basis of the consent of the states. At every stage of the planning, the working partnership between the centre and the states is a characteristic feature. The example of the planning process is first of all the Commission prepares a draft of five-year plan similarly the states also prepare their own plans by considering the broad targets suggested in the draft (Ray, 1966: 138). After drafting the plans, discussions take place between the Planning Commission and the states and in the light of these discussions the final state plan is formulated. In finalizing the plans the Commission makes required adjustments and modifications in the state's plans and also makes necessary adjustments in the broad framework of national policies and priorities. From this perspective, it becomes clear that the planning process in India is largely decentralized and in the context of opportunity for the initiative at the state level one is favourably impressed by the extent to which the state governments participate in the planning processes (Hoselitz, 1959: 63). The decision taken by the Planning Commission to further decentralize planning at the local level particularly at the Block level involve the participation of public and at the District level, the representatives of the elected institutions have been involved. Raj Krishna, the member of the Planning Commission advocated decentralization in planning in India to

find proper way of investment of funds at local levels.

In the post-independent period, there was cooperation of states with the centre at every stage of its implementation of the planning. The centre supplements the states resources in a very effective manner and provided financial assistance and cooperation for the implementation of schemes in the state sector of plans. Therefore after analyzing the whole process, it is found that planning in India is a device of centre-state cooperation. In 2015, the Planning Commission was replaced by NITI Aayog as a think tank of the Government of India established with the aim to enhance cooperative federalism by fostering the involvement of states in the economic policy process. The structure of NITI Aayog involves the Prime Minister as an ex-officio chairman and the Chief Ministers of the states and UTs and Lieutenant Governors of Andaman and Nicobar constitutes the permanent members. It works in close cooperation and coordination with the central and state governments and seeks to facilitate people-centric and participative policy.

Besides, Planning Commission, National Development Council is another non-statutory body that was formed immediately after independence in 1952 to serve as the highest reviewing and an advisory body in the field of planning with the aims and objectives to strengthen and mobilize the nation in support of the plans. The Council with the aim to promote common economic policies in all the spheres that are vital for the development of the country and also ensure the balanced and rapid development of each and every parts of the country. After independence, the working of the NDC reveals that every matter during Congress dominant system was elaborately discussed and it makes recommendations to the Commission for the overall development of the nation. The Council was in favour of introduction of Panchayati Raj Institutions with a three-tier system of governance which was recommended by Balwant Rai Mehta Committee in 1957. PRIs as the basis of development in Indian federalism would be suitable for the peculiar conditions of the Indian State. The working of the NDC clearly shows its favour towards developing tenets of cooperative federalism, incorporating the scheme of family planning and putting the distribution system under social control.

The NDC was responsible for the centralization of Indian federation which strengthens and mobilize the resources and efforts in order to ensure rapid development of the country. Since inception, its role was to consider all the basic questions related to Five Year Plans which was first considered by the Cabinet. The NDC has played a very significant role in bringing cooperative federalism during one-party dominance system like it has helped to finalize certain proposals like the replacement of the sales tax on certain commodities by additional union excise duties and in 1968 it has appointed a committee for examining the criteria of Union assistance and ambit of union-sponsored schemes. From the above analysis, it is observed that like Planning Commission, NDC is also trying to destruct the autonomy of states by increasing encroachment on the administrative spheres of states.

The *Hindustan Times* on October 12, 1959, reported that the central government did not want to create a situation of over-centralization but due to the socio-economic conditions a situation was created in which Central Government had to accept these compulsions and act accordingly. In a meeting of NDC in 1963, an economic expert exhorted that in the Indian federation states should play a vital role and reduce its dependency on the centre. During the period of Congress dominance, the centre has played overwhelming and a steamroller role and states' position was minimal. These trends appeared since the establishment of the institutions like the Planning Commission and the National Development Council which have created hindrances for the realization of the concept of federalism and allowed centralized policies (Rao, 1963: 27). In the post-independence period, the NDC also influenced by one party dominance where a single party was in the rule in both the centre as

well in the states. The working of NDC was influenced by Nehru which affected the centre-state relations. Both the Santhanam Committee and Administrative Reforms Commission pointed out that the autonomy of the states was affected under the NDC during the Nehru period.

In the working of federalism, National Integration Council also played a significant role which was established in 1962 involving the feeling of unity, solidarity, and cooperation among people, sense of common citizenship and feeling of loyalty to the nation. India is a diverse country having various political parties and the proliferation of regional parties in various states is a major threat to national integration. This Council provides a remedy for national integration by advocating the idea of cooperative federalism involving the participation of all the states and of the centre. The National Integration Council takes decisions which are advisory in nature for the centre and states and that are based on the consent of the centre as well as states and implementations also requires consensus and cooperation (Pal, 1983: 259-260). Since the inception of the Council, it has been proved a powerful mechanism in the development of cooperative federalism.

In the 1990s the neo-liberal policies foster market federalism in which the states are expected to compete for attracting capital and foreign direct investment and the centre retreating from certain economic functions that proved harmful for federal spirit because of centre impose neo-liberal policies in centre-state relations that resulted into hiking up the interest rates on the loans to state governments. Paradoxically, this led to the weakening of bargaining powers of the states and deterioration of its financial position due to same parties representing the states and the centre. The neo-liberal policies have adversely affected the working of federalism and weakened all the institutions which deal with centre-state and inter-governmental relations like Planning Commission, National Development Council, Inter-State Council, etc., and the Finance Commission has become an instrument to push neo-liberal policies.

### **Panchayati Raj System: Deepening of Democracy**

The Panchayati Raj System, a verticle expansion of Indian federal system, is recognized as the spine of development in rural India. In the post-independence period, various efforts were initiated for the establishment of Panchayati Raj Institutions in India and ultimately was given constitutional status through the 73rd Amendment Act in 1992 and was subsequently implemented in 1993. The Panchayati Raj System as already mentioned in Article 40 and Article 243 of the constitution, has now become an integral part of the Indian federal system that enhances social justice and democratic participation at the grassroots level. Since the enforcement of the 73rd Amendment, it yielded mixed results and have been subject to substantial criticism especially concerning widespread corruption, nepotism, partisan politics, and inefficiency (Mitra, 2014: 146-149). Despite that, it has relatively succeeded in enhancing the societal position and political representation of marginalized groups such as women, SCs and STs.

Panchayati Raj system has played an important role in strengthening village democracy by providing basic amenities to rural people in India. It has managed to spread political awareness among all sections including marginalized and socially excluded strata of society. It has built a platform for political participation and political mobilization of masses and promotes planning from below, that is, from micro-level and emphasis on transparency of its functioning. The 73rd Amendment Act of Indian Constitution enunciates India's largest experiment with grassroots democracy which is different from the past, by providing periodic, free and fair election and fixed tenure of five years for Panchayati Raj bodies. However, there are variations in Panchayati Raj bodies in their political structure arising out of special preference given to states which became clearly evident in J&K where

the concept of local self-governance was different from the rest of the country. But now 73rd Amendment Act is applicable. In J&K state, the local self-government is not function properly due to glaring deficiencies like irregular elections, corruption, lack of financial resources and influence of state-level political parties. The state-level leadership and bureaucracy are reluctant to share powers and responsibilities to local leaders. Therefore, lack of coordination and apathy of higher-level leadership and bureaucracy lead to failure of Panchayati Raj in the states.

### **Contemporary Developments in Indian Federalism**

William Riker equated the structure of political parties with the structure of federalism and one can measure federalism by measuring political parties rather than a party system. He argued that when parties are completely centralized, federalism also be centralized but when parties are somewhat decentralized, federalism is only partially centralized (Riker, 1975: 137). William Riker argued that if parties system and federalism have any sort of linkages then India should be considered as much decentralized federalism because of fragmentation of parties in the Indian political system. In the post-1990s period till 2014 regional parties played a significant role in the national politics in the form of a coalition partner. The presence of regional parties in the Parliament since 1996 facilitated political system to a multiparty coalition system. The nature of coalition governments from 1999-2014 was described by Prem Shankar Jha as 'bi-nodal system' which means the emergence of a stable coalition around two powerful national parties, that is, the BJP and the Congress (Sharma, 2015: 13).

Since 1990s India experienced a significant political change in which regional political parties has significantly played its role in national politics in the formation of a coalition government. In the 1990s India's reform policy was influenced by three major factors. The first factor as polycentric federalism propounded by Daniel Elazar in which he explained that federalism goes beyond mere decentralization but in fact is non-centralisation. It means in Indian federal structure there are multiple centres of power operating both horizontally as well as vertically. The horizontal centres of power in Indian federal system make federalism wider where power dispersal involves in terms of the autonomy of different all-India institutions like Election Commission of India, Reserve Bank of India and the Comptroller and Auditor General. The second factor is the emergence of information technology where civil society has played an effective role through the Right to Information Act. In the Indian federal system, this factor has not yet fully utilized because the technology is neither fully centralized or decentralized either, therefore, it could be a powerful mechanism in any direction. Finally, the centre-state interaction has changed with the changing role of a new set of independent regulators. The power to give directives to these regulatory bodies remains with the centre. Some of the other institutions like Central Bureau of Investigation and Central Vigilance Commission are managed by independent professionals but central interference and influence are also there (Arora et al, 2003: 102-103).

In the post-1990s India's reform policy has experienced a shift in federal relations. Both the central and the states are driven by the market economy and the centre has no exclusive right to take a decision over the industries and business locations after the abolition of the permit system. The reform policy has curtailed centre's discretionary powers over licensing resulting in the direct negotiation between the states and the entrepreneurs and as a result of this intense competition came out for attracting investment. Therefore, the centre witnessed a significant decline in the post reforms period (Ahluwalia, 2000: 1643-1648). With the growing investment in the private sector, the public sector faced a decline in their investment and subsequently, central control over states in matters of finance declined.



Post-2014 elections: the emergence of BJP as the largest party with the majority of seats talked about the underpinning of cooperative federalism but implicitly making central governmental authority as coordinating force. For making India a cooperative federal state the new government dismantled the Planning Commission and in its place constituted National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog in January 2015. The objective of the Aayog is to foster cooperative federalism on the basis of strong state strong nation principle (Tillin, 2019: 100). The Prime Minister of India who is the chairperson of the Aayog urged the states in its first meeting for enhancing the cooperative and competitive spirit of Indian federalism. In this process, the initiative has been taken for improving governance and the states work in collaboration with the centre to achieve sabka saath, sabka vikaas (everyone together, development for everyone). Under NDA-II regime there has been a profound shift in the federal relations where the centre has played a more assertive role by implementing President's rule in two Congress-ruled states in 2016 (Tillin, 2019: 100-101). The President's rule was imposed in Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand where ruling Congress Party faced intra-party conflicts which led to defections in the party that reduced required number of majority in the state legislatures resulting into the imposition of President's rule in the states.

Another significant instance of centralizing tendencies came up with the decision taken by the centre in the form of demonetization in November 2016 which was criticized by many states on the ground of violation of the cooperative spirit of Indian federalism. The demonetization of currency was a step to uproot corruption which was promised by BJP earlier. Since 2014 under Modi government the spirit of cooperative federalism is unswerving with a move to re-empower the centre to carry out its mission that encouraged competitive spirit among states.

## Conclusion

In the concluding observations, it is found that Indian federalism after independence accommodated diversity by incorporating asymmetrical provisions in the Constitution and that special provisions have succeeded in the strengthening and deepening of democracy. The asymmetric approach is justified because of socio-economic, politico-cultural, strategic, geographical, and ethnic basis. As far the success of democracy is concerned, the Constitution of India granted differential rights to different regions in order to make their presence in the mainstream. The asymmetrical approach is considered as an important mechanism for strengthening diversity, accommodating pluralities and act as tool for national integration. The major asymmetry in Indian federal system was Article 370 which was revoked by the union government by introducing bill in the parliament on August 2019. The abrogation of Article 370 of the constitution was in the agenda of BJP and after assuming power in 2019, BJP fulfilled its pre- electoral agenda. The abrogation of Article 370 of the constitution envisages more central benefits to the people of J&K besides the security of the nation.

In the working of federal system in Indian democracy certain statutory and non-statutory bodies created over a period of time within the framework of a constitution that proved to be relatively successful in the operationalization of federal cooperation. The Zonal Councils performed their functions for common interest including socio-economic planning, border disputes, matters concerned with linguistic minorities, inter-state transport and matters related to the reorganization of states. Since inception, the councils met as per schedule, but there witnessed a shift in 1967 when Congress faced challenges in few states, as a result, the non-Congress states directly involved in asking questions from the centre rather than taking part in the council's meetings. Despite the central control on Planning Commission was apparent, the spirit of cooperation was visible, for example, the Commission role was to prepare a draft of five-year plan similarly the states also prepare their own



## Contextualizing the Working of Federalism in the Success of India's Democracy: An Analysis

plans by considering the broad targets suggested in the draft. After drafting the plans discussions took place between the Planning Commission and the states and in the light of these discussions the final state plan formulated. In finalizing the plans the Commission makes essential modifications in the state's plans and in addition to this also make necessary adjustments in the broad framework of national policies and priorities. From this perspective, it becomes clear that the planning process in India is largely decentralized and in the context of opportunity for the initiative at the state level one is favourably impressed by the extent to which the state governments participate in the planning processes. In addition to this, democracy further deepened at grassroots levels through 73rd Amendment that empowered marginalized sections by providing reservation in Indian federalism. The amendment brought silent revolution at grassroots level and make democracy more people centric and vibrant. The democratic decentralization at grassroots level also empowered marginalized sections of society.

In 2014 elections for the first time single party gained majority after thirty years and formed government which worked in more cooperative and competitive manner and under NDA-II regime federal governance experienced shift in its functioning. In certain occasions role of centre remained dominant like in case of imposing President's rule in Arunachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand in 2016, demonization in 2016 and in 2019 central government abrogated Article 370 in a very innovative manner.

### References

- Ahluwalia, M. S., (2000), 'Economic Performance of States in the Post-Reforms Period', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 35(19), 1637-1648.
- Ambedkar, B. R., (2017), *Federation versus Freedom*. New Delhi: Kalpaz Publications.
- Anushree, (2019, January 20), 'Cooperative Federalism: Governing the Governors', Retrieved from Frontline: <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/article2444-0645.ece>,
- Arora, B. and Kailash, K. K., (2003), 'Indian Federalism', In K. C. Vanaik, *Political Science: Indian Democracy*, Vol. 2, (pp. 100-160), New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Austin, G., (2017), *The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Bhatia, K. L., (1997), *Jammu and Kashmir: Article 370 of the Constitution of India*. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications.
- Chandra, B., Mukherjee M., and Mukherjee A., (2008), *Indian since Independence*. New Delhi: Penguin Books.
- Chowdhary, R., (2019), *Jammu and Kashmir: Politics of Identity and Separatism*. New Delhi: Routledge.
- Hoselitz, B. F., (1959), 'Levels of Administrative Centralization in Economic Development', *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 56-69.
- Mitra, S. K., and Pehl M., (2011), 'Federalism', In Pratap Bhanu Mehta and Niraja Gopal Jayal, *The Oxford Companion to Politics in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, (pp. 43-60).
- Mitra, S. K., (2014), *Politics in India: Structure, Process, and Policy*. New Delhi: Oxford

University Press.

Noorani, A. G., (2014), Article 370: A Constitutional History of Jammu and Kashmir. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Pal, C., (1983), Centre-State Relations and Cooperative Federalism. New Delhi: Deep and Deep Publications.

Patil, S. H., (1995), Central Grants and State Autonomy. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers.

Raju, K. H. (April - June 1991), 'Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Making of the Constitution: A Case Study of Indian Federalism', Indian Journal of Political Science, 153-164.

Rao, V. K., (1963), Twentieth Meeting of National Development Council. New Delhi: Summary Record.

Ray, A., (1966), Intergovernmental Relations in India. Delhi: Asia Publishing House.

Riker, W. H., (1975), 'Federalism' In F. I. Polsby, The Handbook of Political Science, Volume 5, Governmental Institutions and Processes, (p. 137), Boston: Addison Wesley.

Santhanam, K., (1960), Union-State Relations in India. Bombay: Asia Publishers.

Saxena, R., (2006), Situating Federalism: Mechanisms of Intergovernmental Relations in Canada and India. New Delhi: Manohar.

Sharma, C. K., (2015), 'Re-imagining Federalism in India: Exploring the Frontiers of Collaborative Federal Architecture', Asia-Pacific Social Science Review, 15(1), 1-28.

Tillin, L., (2019), Indian Federalism. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.



# Third Gender and Identity: A Study of Hijras in Jammu Region

Hema Gandotra\* and Usha Sharma\*\*

## ABSTRACT

*In all societies some individuals do not identify with the gender that is otherwise associated with their biological sex. Thus, some societies have so-called third gender categories which can be used as a basis for a gender identity by persons who are uncomfortable with the gender that is usually associated with their sex. The present paper is an attempt to understand the issue of gender identity among the hijras in Jammu region. It looks into the social and cultural life of the said community and tries to focus on their traditions and socio-cultural aspects, specifically taking into account the issue of their identity, kinship, religion, religious deity, education, economy and occupation etc.*

**Key Words:** Gender Identity, Third Sex, Third Gender, Hijras, Stigma.

## Introduction

Human society is a complex organization of human role relationships. The implication of such a structural conception is that the human beings act and interact with each other in accordance with the role they play. Their role performance in relation to each other is further conditioned by the status they occupy. The most basic criterion of defining status and a corresponding role for any individual in any society has been sex (Sharma 2009).

The term "Sex" refers to the biological difference between males and females. Sex is closely related to reproduction, in which both males and females play a part. The female ovum and the male sperm, which joins to form a fertilized embryo, each contain twenty-three pairs of chromosomes (biological codes that guide physical development). One of these chromosome's pairs determines the child's sex. The mother always contributes an "X" chromosome; the father contributes either an "X" or a "Y" chromosome. A second "X" from the father produces a female (XX) embryo and 'Y' produces a male (XY) embryo. A child's sex then, is determined at conception. Within weeks, the sex of an embryo starts to guide its development. If the embryo is male, testicular tissues begin producing testosterone, a hormone that stimulates the development of the male genitals. Without testosterone, the embryo develops female genitals (Macdonis 1986). But sometimes there is difficulty in assigning sex to an individual from the appearance of external genitalia. For such kind of individuals, Rekha Ojha (2011) has used the term "Intersex", for a variety of conditions in which a person is born with a reproductive or sexual anomaly that does not seem to fit in the typical definition of female or male.

But sometimes in very rare cases many male children are born with underdeveloped, hidden and deformed genitals. In such cases it is assumed that the child born is a girl. On the other hand, a girl child may be born with an abnormally developed clitoris and may be assumed that she is a boy. Sometimes, owing to genetic defects, a child may be born with the characteristics of both sexes. In the science of genetics, persons having characteristics of both the sexes are described as

---

\* Sr. Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, University of Jammu, Jammu, India (corresponding author)

\*\* Assistant Professor in Sociology, GCW, Udhampur, Jammu, India

### Third Gender and Identity: A Study of Hijras in Jammu Region

'hermaphrodite', the name derived from a Greek God Hermes, (the messenger of God-a mischievous and essentially a masculine character) and the Goddess Aphrodite (a symbol of love). The hijras do exhibit the characteristics features of hermaphrodite especially mischievousness (Sharma 2009).

For ages it was believed that the different characteristics, roles and statuses accorded to women and men in society, are determined by biology (that is, sex), that they are natural, and therefore not changeable. Thus, social identity of an individual depends on his or her sex that is, on the biological identity. On the basis of sex, each society slowly transforms a male or female into a man or a woman, into masculine and feminine, with different qualities, behavior patterns, roles, responsibilities, rights and expectations. Unlike sex, which is biological, the gender identities of the individuals in the society are psychological and socio-culturally determined (Bhasin 2005). Hence gender identity refers specifically to social differences. In other words, one can say that gender identity is individuals own sense of maleness and femaleness (Giddens 1998). But in all societies some people do not identify with the gender that is otherwise associated with their biological sex. Thus, some societies have third gender categories which can be used as a basis for a gender identity by persons who are uncomfortable with the gender that is usually associated with their biological sex.

Today, some of them refer to themselves as belonging to the "third" gender. There exist differences amongst them, based on their experience and expression of femininity, their sexual orientation (they could be sexually active or remain chaste), their faith (several amongst them claim an Islamic identity) and their class status (Geetha 2009).

According to Sharma (2009), very often on the streets of Indian villages one sometimes comes across an unusual sight of a group of closely shaven persons in female attire, singing and dancing, making overtures to the onlookers, cracking sexually charged jokes at men and making loud clapping sounds with their hands. To non-Indians and also, to many Indians these individuals may look interesting and outlandish freaks of nature. Not because they sing and dance but because of their physical appearance which is combination of both male and female. They shave, smoke and talk like men but dress and behave in a more feminine way. To the onlooker's mind one question which immediately strike relates to who are these people, male or female? And if they are neither males nor females, then what? In the Indian society these peoples are popularly referred to as 'Hijras', 'Khusras', 'Asexuals', 'Neutrals', 'Eunuchs', etc. All the terms included in the nomenclature are used to describe the identity of these people who have one thing in common and perhaps the most decisive one that there is something wrong with their sexual organs. Put simply, for years we have looked at Hijras, but never seen or understood them.

Gender is a multifaceted construct, a complex phenomenon viewed differently in different societies. The word gender is now being used sociologically or as a conceptual category, and it has been given a very specific meaning. In its new incarnation gender refers to the socio-cultural definition of man and woman, the way societies distinguish men and woman, and assign them social roles. It is used as an analytical tool to understand social realities with regard to women and men (Bhasin 2005).

Therefore, a gender identity is the way in which an individual identifies himself with a gender category, for-example as being either female or male, or in some cases being neither. Basic gender identity is usually formed by age three and is extremely difficult to change after that. All societies have a set of gender categories that can serve as the basis of the formation of a social identity in relation to other members of society. In most societies there is a basic division between male and female genders, that are understood to be determined by biological sex but in all societies some individuals do not identify with the gender that is otherwise associated with their biological sex.

The term, third sex describe individuals who are categorized (by their will or by social consensus) as neither male nor female. It is a gender identity different from 'men' and 'women,' of people who are considered to be the intermediate sex; in-betweens (like the androgynes) or neutrals (like the agendered). The third sex is described as a natural mixing or combination of the male and female natures to the point in which they can no longer be categorized as male or female in the traditional sense of the word.

Sharma (2009), argues that the sense of stigma and its fear is so strong that it ultimately creates a situation of identity crisis and drives hijras to go out in search of some other place to which they can call their own. In other words, they move out in search of their own self, an identity which can instill in them a feeling of belonging to some group or society which can explain their consciousness about their existence. It was found that after leaving their immediate family environment; the hijras were managing the identity crisis and the burden of stigma.

The present paper has used the functionalistic approach to understand the whole process of stigma attached with the community. Merton's theory of functionalism has been made use of to look into the stigma attached with the community. His theory of functionalism makes a distinction between the functional and dysfunctional aspects. Functional analysis must recognize the inter-dependence of the elements of the social system as well as the limited range of variation in the items which can fulfill designated functions in the system. American Sociologist 'Robert K. Merton' defined "functions" as those observed consequences which makes for the adaptation or adjustment of a given system and "dysfunction" as those observed consequences which lessen the adaptation or adjustment of the system. Merton argues that seeking to identify function being fulfilled for the society as a whole can be misleading since items may be functional for some individuals and groups and dysfunctional for others (Merton 1957). As a part of the society the hijra community performs two significant roles in the contemporary Indian society. One by visiting people's homes on festive occasions to congratulate and bestow blessings on people and also take away the stigma from any family by taking away any individual with asexuality. At this point, two arguments come up for consideration. First, why are they considered outsiders, stigmatized and unfit to live within the family of their origin? Second, why are they accepted on certain festive occasions? It is understandable that hijras are accepted because of their functional utility. Basically it pertains to hijra's claim to take away any hermaphrodite child and, thus, taking away the source of stigma. At this point it is essential to argue that the acceptance of hijras at festive occasions is also governed by the cultural traditions and beliefs of people in terms of giving alms. Also by and large, people view them with fear of curse and hope of blessing. The basic contradiction in human behavior which comes into follows pragmatic approach in accepting and rejecting the same thing at two different points of time. Therefore, Merton's theory of functionalism has been useful in making the distinction between the functional and dysfunctional aspects of stigma and argues that what is functional for a particular group under certain circumstances may be dysfunctional for the same group under other circumstances (Sharma 2009).

The paper discusses in length the various social-cultural practices and living and working conditions of hijras in general as well as of hijras in Jammu region in particular.

Provisional data from the Census Office (2011), tells about the population of hijras of Jammu region and it was known that in total there were 98 hijras in the Jammu province. With the help of purposive and snowball sampling methods 26 hijra respondents were taken into consideration from different districts of Jammu region. Besides 26 hijra respondents, even the views of general public were also taken into account in order to analyze the whole notion of stigma attached with the hijra community. Therefore, the views of 24 respondents from the general public were also analyzed.

### Third Gender and Identity: A Study of Hijras in Jammu Region

Hence the sample size for the study was 50 respondents (26 Hijra respondents and 24 General public).

During the study, it was found that there was the presence of younger population among the hijras of Jammu region as maximum of the respondents belonged to the age group of 21-30 years. Further it was found that the maximum number of hijras of Jammu region were illiterate. Those who had studied got this opportunity while living with their parents. Once they were brought to the hijradera, they had to abandon their education and enter into the occupation of badhais (the donations given to hijras when they perform for the birth of a male child). This indicated that education was not an important factor for their economic life, they managed to have earning without having the formal education.

#### Identity of the Hijras

The concept of identity has been defined as 'A sense of self that develops as the child differentiates from parents and family and takes a place in society'. It refers to the sense that someone has of who they are, of what they are, of what is most important about them. Important sources of identity are likely to include nationality, ethnicity, sexuality (homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual), gender and class (Haralambos and Hollborn 2000).

The gender identity with which hijras of Jammu region usually identify themselves was the feminine identity. It was seen during interaction that the majority of hijra respondents dressed up and behaved like females. Even the names of the respondents also sounded like that of female for example Saira, Polli, Sonia, Geeta, Asha, Baby, Ranjeeta etc. Therefore, it was found that there was the existence of actual as well as virtual social identity among the hijras, but on certain occasions one of the identity would become manifest and the other would become latent and vice-versa. Thus, it was clear that the actual social identity (that is, identity of being a Hijra, Khusra or Kinnar) of the hijras was totally different from their virtual social identity that is, feminine identity which they tried to maintain in the society.

Language was another variable through which the researcher was able to probe a little into the identity of the respondents because it is generally believed that language is an attribute of the identity of an individual. It was found that they spoke Hindi, Dogri or Punjabi to interact among them and with the public. It was seen that the ones who spoke Punjabi and Hindi had migrated to Jammu region and learnt the local language for interaction and economic purpose. It was also found that they usually refer to themselves as female at the language level. It was also observed that the process of acculturation in terms of food habits had also taken place and the food was not consumed on the basis of the region and religion one belonged to.

The use of common terms (like khusras, kinnars, hijras, etc.,) for the hijras somewhere reflected their actual social identity, that is, an identity which was given to them because of their sexual deformity. Because of this deformity only, they were kept under 'female category' during 2001 census and are kept under 'others category' in 2011 census. This 'female' category and 'others' category, somewhere, reflect their actual social identity. During the study it was found that this actual social identity was functional for the respondents in terms of their economy and occupation, whereas the virtual social identity (feminine identity) helped them to lead a life according to their choice. It was further explored that the hijras living in the Jammu city preferred to be called as Mangla Mukhis, whereas those living in Kathua, Samba or Udhampur said that people usually use the term khusra or hijra or sometimes Kinnar also.



### **Religion of the Hijras**

Religion is the most important aspect of the socio-cultural life of a community. Religion is a cultural universal; it is not surprising that it fulfills several basic functions within human societies. Sociologists recognize that religion is central to virtually every culture on earth, and they seek to understand how religious beliefs and practices guide human societies. They offer no comment on the meaning and purpose of human existence, nor can they pass judgment on any religion as right or wrong. Rather, scientific sociology delves into the consequences of religious activity for larger social life (Macdonis 1986).

At the level of the religion it was found that the maximum number of hijra respondents followed Hindu religion, whereas some of them were Sikhs, and one among them was Muslim. But some respondents were secular. When asked about the religious diety of the community, maximum respondents said that there is a diety named, Bahuchara Mata (Murgawali Mata). According to them Bahuchara Mata is a Hindu goddess with two unrelated stories both associated with transgender behavior. The respondents further argued that the primary temple of this goddess is in Gujarat and it is a place of pilgrimage for hijras, who see Bahuchara Mata as a patroness. This clearly indicated that respondents were trying to retain their hijra identity (Third sex) by worshipping their patroness. Through this one therefore gets to see the existence of their actual social identity.

### **Festivals of the Hijras**

Review of literature of the works written by Nanda (1998), Ojha (2011), Reddy (2006) reveals that in some parts of India, the hijras were engaged in celebrating the festivals whether in the form of Jagratas or festivals during Navratras. In Tamil Nadu each year in April and May, hijras celebrate an eighteen-day religious festival. The Aravani temple is located in the Koovagam village in the Ulundurpet Taluk in Villupuram district, and is devoted to the deity Koothandavar, who is identified with Aravan. During the festival, the aravanis reenact a story of the wedding of Lord Krishna and Lord Aravan, followed by Aravan's subsequent sacrifice. They then mourn Aravan's death through ritualistic dances and by breaking their bangles. An annual beauty pageant is also held, as well as various health and HIV or AIDS seminars are also addressed. Hijras from all over the country travel to attend and participate in this festival.

During the interaction, the hijra respondents clarified that there is no specific hijra festival of the community. They said that they celebrated Holi, Diwali, and Eid according to their religion and participated in the festival of the other community members. Therefore, this indicates that hijras were somewhere trying to maintain their religious identity through the celebration of festivals. Further, it was seen that the ones who were well off and rich were also found engaged in various religious activities such as organizing Jagratas during Navratras, organizing feast in temples, giving donation for the religious purposes etc.

### **Economy and Occupation of the Hijras**

Economy as a social institution organizes the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services. The economy of the community depends directly on the type of occupation.

Like every caste in India, hijras are primarily associated with a few traditional occupations, foremost among them being ritualized performances at childbirth and marriage. The hijra's performance consists of dancing and singing, accompanied by a two-sided drum, and the blessing of the child or the married couple in the name of the mother goddess. In return for these blessings the

### Third Gender and Identity: A Study of Hijras in Jammu Region

hijras receive badhai, traditional gifts in cash and goods, always including some sweets, cloth, and grains. Hijras also beg in the streets for alms from passersby and from shops; these activities are regulated on a daily rotational basis by the elders of the hijra community. Although prostitution is considered deviant within the hijra community, as it is in India generally, many hijras earn a living from it. Prostitution is carried out within a hijra household, under the supervision of a house manager or "madam," who will collect part or all of the prostitute's earnings in return for shelter, food, a small allowance, and protection from the police and rowdy customers. Although many young hijra prostitutes feel that they are exploited by their "madams," few live or work on their own. Because of their historical role as performers, hijras sometimes dance in non ritual roles, such as at stag parties, for college functions, or in films. Hijras can also be found as household servants and cooks, and in some cities in India they run public bathhouses. Hijras complain that in contemporary India their opportunity to earn a living by respectable means of performing at marriages and births has declined, due to smaller families, less elaborate life-cycle ceremonies, and a general decline in the respect for traditional ritual ceremonies. Hijras have effectively maintained economic predominance, if not total monopoly, over their ritual role. Defined by the larger society as emasculated men, they have clearly seen that it is in their interest to preserve this definition of their role. They do this by making loud and public gestures to denounce the "frauds" and "fakes" who imitate them. They thus reinforce in the public mind their own sole right to their traditional occupations. When hijras find other female impersonators attempting to perform where it is their right to do so, they chase them away, using physical force if necessary (Nanda 1998).

Almost all the hijra respondents were into the occupation of collecting badhai during the marriage, mundan ceremonies, at the birth of a son etc., whereas two hijras were students and therefore, didn't go for badhai. They were not into the profession of begging like other hijras in different parts of India.

Thus, the economy of hijras living in Jammu region was based on badhai collection. They celebrated and endowed wishes on the birth of a male child and on the marriage ceremony of the son within the families. But now changes were also seen in the trend, as the hijras even go for badhai collection on the birth of a girl child also. People give them money in return for the dance they perform in their home. None of the hijras was found in the government profession or in any other business. One reason for their absence in Government institution can be attributed to their illiteracy.

The hijra community has developed effective mechanisms of social control over its members, mainly through the near monopoly hijra elders have over the opportunities for work. Any hijra who is thrown out of the community by her guru forfeits her right to work as part of the group. Nanda (1998) also argues that since all hijra performances are arranged by a guru, a hijra without a guru will not be invited to perform, nor can she beg for alms in any place already assigned to the hijra guru.

It was very difficult for the researcher to gather information from the respondents in terms of the amount they received from the badhais. Hijra receive on an average Rs. 2000-3000. However, they collected the amount according to the condition of the household. The amount, they got from a single badhai, varied from area to area. However, hijras didn't reveal the actual amount they got from the badhais, but their living style and household assets predicted that their earnings were good.

#### **Recruitment Ceremony among the Hijras**

It was found that the hijras didn't perform any recruitment ceremony and they simply recruit a new member in the dera. But some respondents perform a ceremony in which all the members of the

dera and the nearby deras were invited and the guru of the hijra was announced there. In this ceremony other hijras would bring some gifts like cloth and jewellery for the new member which clearly indicated that after this the socialization process for the new one would begin.

### **Death Rites among the Hijras**

Another occasion on which hijras of nearby towns come together is the time when any hijra dies. As per the rules of hijra organization no relative of the deceased is permitted to attend the funeral. Probably no one has ever seen the funeral of a hijra except for hijras themselves. The death of hijra is not taken lightly by the community. All the rituals and ceremonies are performed so that the dead does not have rebirth as hijra. There are two points of view regarding the death rituals among the hijras. One point of view comes from the hijra belonging to North India and another from the hijras belonging to the South. Those, who belong to Northern India, put forth the description of their death rituals which is similar to the death rituals observed by people belonging to different religions. Accordingly, the last rites of a hijra are performed according to the religion to which the hijra belongs. A Hindu will, therefore, be cremated and a Muslim will be buried. Since no relative of the deceased is allowed to attend the funeral at the time of death, it is therefore, the duty of the hijra community to dispose off the dead. Non-attendance by any near relation and the claim of the hijras that they alone are permitted to perform the last rites, however, is not explicit in the sense that whether this is a strictly regulated phenomenon or just a claim. But one explanation which seems quite plausible here is that it is perhaps due to property reasons that hijras do not allow the blood relations to attend the funerals. If a hijra dies at the age of eighty and above, his pyre is taken out at midnight with musicians playing music.

According to Sharma (2009), Hijras, who belong to the South India and particularly to Madras region, narrate about a different type of death ritual. According to them the dead is buried in his own home. If the home does not belong to the dead, then the dead is taken out of the home at mid-night when no one is there to watch. The dead is taken out in the standing position by three-four of his companions. They take the dead to the jungle and dig a deep ditch. They put two three quintals of salt into the ditch and bury the dead in a standing position. While taking to the jungle he is given beatings. After burying the dead they offer a prayer to the goddess to give salvation to the dead (Sharma 2009).

Some of the death rites in Jammu region are similar to the death rites performed by the hijras of other states. According to the respondents in Jammu region earlier the dead bodies of hijras were taken out of their home by dragging and beating through the back door so that the deceased is not born as hijra again; and after some days the function of 'Roti' was performed. But now -a-days, the trend has changed. The last rites are performed in the same manner as are performed for other individuals of the society whereas the function of 'Roti' still continues.

According to the hijra respondents, there is special type of function on the death of the hijra. The chelas of the deceased hijra organize a function called "Roti". This function is similar to the feast organized during the death of a normal human being. Hijras have extensive kin ties with each other and a nationwide network that gathers on occasion for special events, funerals that is, rotis and commemerations. Therefore, in this function also all the members of the khusra biradari are invited depending upon the contact of the dera members. Normally, they invite hijras from outside the state also as per their contact. Hijras of Jammu had organized the function called as Khusra Sammelan in December, 2010. The function was organized by "Haji Miyan Saira". In that function 'Roti' of the two gurus namely Haji MiyanJanki and Neelam was organized. During this function, all the members ate together and besides performing the last rites, they would also perform various other ceremonies associated with their community in this function of 'Roti'.

### **Family and Household among the Hijras**

There exists an institution like family in a hijra dera according to hijra respondents. However, the concept of family among hijras is similar to the concept of the household given by A. M. Shah. Respondents argued that they lived like a family in the dera, Guru along with the chelas is considered a family, where recruitment and socialization of the younger hijras takes place. However, a few hijra respondents argued that there was nothing like family in the dera. The reasons for such a negative response was that most of them were living alone in the dera whereas some of them were even disobeyed by their chelas.

The hijra respondents generally hide the information regarding their biological families because they were afraid that this would create problems for their biological family as well. Many times due to the stigma of asexuality, there is problem in fixing the marriage of their siblings. Thus, the stigma of asexuality doesn't spare any of the hijra or anyone among the family.

During the research it was found that the maximum number of the hijra respondents are from outside the Jammu region. The maximum number of hijras even didn't know about their immediate family, that is, parents, brothers, sisters, etc. They were brought to the hijra deras at very young age and hence considered dera as their family. Further, it was analyzed that family for hijras was defined primarily in terms of other hijras, especially one's guru lineage; relationships with other hijras (rather than natal family or "husbands" and their kin) constituted the most important relational bonds for hijras. "These are our people now. It is only hijras who will look after us if anything happens," was the most common stated hijra sentiment.

Within the hijra household, it was found that the first function which a Guru has to perform is to make recruitment and socialization which has many implications for hijra organization and hijra cult. The interviews held with hijras revealed that their organizations performed multiple functions having great influence upon the perpetuation of hijra cult. The Gurus who initiate recruitment and socialize the inmates claim that "the young recruits are our sons and daughters and they are the ones who are going to look after us when we get old". Hence one of the major function performed in a hijra household is recruitment and socialization and this is done to secure the future of hijras, both socially and economically.

The hijra respondents further argued that the socialization and training have manifold functions for the hijras as it makes them to learn the professional duties.

Further, it was found that the household chores in a hijra household were mostly done by servants. Many a time chelas also help in the household chores whereas the gurus never or very rarely do household work. Therefore, one can see the division of labor among the members of a hijra household. The economic condition of the hijras living in Jammu region was quite well as the household assets somewhere indicated that all the members were earning.

### **Kinship Ties among the Hijras**

Kinship is defined as "a social relationship based upon family relatedness" (Ahuja, 2002). The relationship which may be consanguinal (based on blood) or affinal (based on marriage) determines the rights and obligations of related persons. As such kinship system is referred to as "a structured system of statuses and roles and of relationship in which the kin (primary, secondary, tertiary and distant) are bound to one-another by complex interlocking ties" (Ahuja 2002).

Contrary to popular constructions of hijras as individuals without enduring kin ties, hijras themselves repeatedly articulate the importance of these relationships in constructing their sense of

identity. Their articulations also reveal the hierarchical arrangement of these relationships, wherein primary legitimacy is obtained through a rit in a hijra house and the guru-chela bond.

All the hijra respondents owe guru-chela relationship during their life time. Thus, like other states one can see the Guru-Chela relationship among the hijras in Jammu region also. No other kind of kinship terminology exists among the hijras. But there are kinship terminologies between hijras and other community members. The servants in the dera (household) usually use the term 'Ammaji' for elder hijras in the dera. Therefore, one gets to see the existence of mother-son relationship among them. There was also seen the existence of mother-daughter relationship during the ceremony of 'Roti'. During this function, the chela whose guru is dead would be adopted by some other guru, who would now act as mother and creating imagined mother-daughter relationship, instead of guru chela relationship. Further, the hijras argue that after this ceremony it is not necessary for new mother-daughter to live together. The ceremony of dudh-pelai is also performed in this function in which the mother feed from her breast feed the adopted chela. The relationship then becomes of dudh-beti. The dudh maa sits cross-legged and pulls up her blouse while holding her beti in her lap, as any nursing mother would. She then pours some milk, using a cup held over her breast, into the mouths of the prospective betis, thereby sealing this relationship with "her" milk. To further seal the bond thus forged, each of the prospective dudhbehans pricks her finger and lets a few drops of blood flow into the cup of milk, which is then shared by all of them, mother and sisters. However, hijras consider only the other hijras- or in wider social contexts, their community members- rather than consanguinal or affinal kin, as their "family." And within this hijra family, it is the Guru-chela bond, which serves as the primary axis of kinship and genealogical descent. Thus, although one finds the existence of Guru-chela, mother-son and mother-daughter kinship ties among the hijras in Jammu region but the kinship tie of the older hijra with other hijra is that of Guru-chela which speaks of the identity of the hijra respondents.

### **Marriage among the Hijras**

While the idea of marriage and marital relations circulates as an important symbolic referent for hijras- as the moment of procreative potential that occasions their auspicious presence in the public domain and as the instantiation of desire that is always in conflict with the hijra ideal- the institution is clearly not the fulcrum of the hijra kinship structure. Ideally, marriage- to a man or a woman- is proscribed among hijras, and affinal kin are not significant in their kinship alignments. In fact senior hijras explicitly invoke the rhetoric of asexuality and emphasize the renunciation of worldly ties, including, especially marital ties and procreative sexuality (Reddy 2006). On the death of a hijra member, they performed a ritual named "Roti". "Roti" is multifunctional in nature. Besides recruitment ritual and death rites, one even gets to see the function of marriage in this "Roti". In this ritual one member becomes the bride and other becomes the bridegroom. The other community members, bring gifts in the form of clothes, ornaments and utensils for the bride and bridegroom. This ceremony is generally performed to imitate the institution of marriage but it was observed that after this ceremony it was not necessary for those hijras to live together. Every hijra once in his/her life time becomes the bride or the bridegroom. Though the institution of marriage was absent among hijras, it was found that they enter into the ceremony during their life time thereby exhibiting their virtual social identity by becoming either bride or bridegroom. Therefore, Marriage is performed along with the reciprocal exchange of gifts, among the members of the biradari. This ritual of marriage is celebrated among them in a different form.

To conclude, from the above discussion it is clear that the present paper brings light the issue of gender identity among the hijras of Jammu region along with has brought into light the socio-cultural

### Third Gender and Identity: A Study of Hijras in Jammu Region

life and the living and working conditions of the hijras living in Jammu region. To underscore, hijras want society to know that they want to just be looked at as a group that is different and unique in their own way. The hijras feel that it is a freedom of choice and sacrifice to engage in something as extraordinary as becoming a hijra. It is an honor to the hijra to have achieved that great name. The hijras keep their head held high no matter what people in society have to say about their discussion to become this type of gender or group in society.

#### References

- Ahuja, Ram. 'Society in India'. New Delhi: Rawat Publication. 2002.
- Bhasin, Kamala. 'Understanding Gender'. New Delhi: Women Unlimited. 2005.
- Geetha, V. 'Patriarchy'. Kolkatta: Mandirasen for STREE. 2009.
- Giddens, Anthony. 'Sociology'. Cambridge; Blackwell Publishers. 1998.
- Goffman, Erving. 'Stigma'. New York: Simon and Schuster Inc. 1986.
- Haralambos, Michael and Hollborn, Martin. 'Sociology: Themes and Perspectives', New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 2000.
- Kvale, Steinar. 'Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research in Interviewing'. New Delhi: Sage publication. 1996.
- Macionis, John. J. 'Sociology'. New Jearsy: Prenticehall International, Inc. 1986.
- Merton, R. K. 'Social Theory and Social Structure'. Glenco; The Free Press. 1957.
- Moser, C. A. and Kalton, G. 'Survey Methods in Social Investigation'. London: the English book society. 1987.
- Nanda, Serena. 'Neither man nor women: The Hijras of India'. Belmont: CA; Wadsworth publications. 1998.
- Ojha, Rekha. 'Intersex Identity'. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House. 2011.
- Reddy, Gayatri. 'With Respect to Sex- Negotiating Hijra Identity in South India'. New Delhi: Yoda Press. 2006.
- Shah, A. M. 'The Family in India Critical Essays'. New Delhi: Orient Longman Limited. 1998.
- Sharma, S. K. 'Hijras- The Labelled Deviants'. New Delhi: Gain Publishing House. 2009.
- Srivastava, Vinay Kumar. 'Methodology and Field Work'. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 2005.
- Young, Pauline. V. 'Scientific Social Surveys and Research'. New York: Prentice Hall. 2004.

# Indicators of the Emergence of Single-Party Majority Rule in India: 2014 to 2018

Lalit Kumar\*

## ABSTRACT

*The country in the current phase of transition is moving from a coalition government to single-party majority rule under a strong leader. A peaceful transfer of power in terms of parties and structure in 2014 elections highlighted a notable degree of political maturity. The BJP became the first non-Congress Party to win a clear majority on its own by getting 282 Lok Sabha seats in the Lower House, and subsequently formed governments in eighteen out of twenty seven states. As a result, coalition governments were replaced by single party majority rule in this period.*

**Key Words:** BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party), Congress Party, General Elections, Modi Wave

## Introduction

The 2014 general election was regarded as the most important in Indian history since 1977. It saw the decimation of the ruling Congress Party, spectacular victory for BJP and a new style of campaigning that broke every rule in the political game. The replacement of the Congress Party-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) after ten years with Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) clear majority is one obvious result of what can be considered historic elections. The parliamentary elections in 2014 produced a strong leader and single-party majority rule, coupled with continuing regionalism has provided a new version of the state-nation system. The major change in the system is that coalition politics has been replaced by single-party majority rule. In other words, the 2014 general elections saw a shift in outcome, processes and personalities. The outcome itself was staggering. The BJP became the first non-Congress Party to win an absolute majority on its own by getting 282 Lok Sabha seats in the Lower House with thirty one percent votes. In a situation, the party's catchment area of winnable seats was less than 350 seats. The center of gravity of Indian elections was moving from identity politics to 'aspirational politics' in which the election was fought in the context of India itching for change and Modi being its principal agent of transformation.

The Modi juggernaut was driven by an overarching sentiment of hope and belief that the moment he got elected happy days of high growth, low inflation and a strong, corruption free governance would be ushered in. Modi was elected as an agent of change not continuity. That is what idea of 'hope' was promised upon. That Modi is capable of being an agent of change seemed doubtless. Therefore Indian polity, in general and party system in particular now entered into new era of 'single-party majority rule', that is, Indian party system is in transition from multi-polarity to single-party majority rule. Before 2014, it is believed that coalition politics and electoral alliances are integral part and parcel of Indian party system, but verdict of 2014 general elections has broken this assumption. The paper is trying to find out whether coalition politics has been replaced by the single-party majority rule? Will single party majority rule continue or not? What kind of new developments took place in the Indian party system in this period?

---

\* Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, B.U.C. College, Batala, Punjab, India



### **Emergence of BJP's Single-Party Majority Rule**

A clear majority for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Lok Sabha and its spread across most states in 2014 general elections marked a departure from the electoral outcomes of almost a quarter century. The BJP's success was made possible, among other factors due to its electoral strategy of reinventing social engineering in what may be termed as its second transformation. As a result of this, it secured significant support among Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe voters to gain a winning edge. There were three major factors, which led to BJP landslide victory over the UPA. The first issue is economy-high inflation, a slow growth rate and rising food prices particularly the prices of '*piaaz*' (onion), were impacting the budget of the common man. It is estimated that their prices had increased by 400 percent during Congress Party regime. The second factor was corruption. Anna Hazare's agitation for '*Jan Lok Pal*' at New Delhi in 2011 and Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) anti-corruption moves dented the credibility of Manmohan Singh's government. The corruption continued as an albatross against Congress Party, providing voters with an alternate for the BJP and its allies. And thirdly, the presidential and plebiscitary style of electoral campaign ran by Narendra Modi crushed the major political party-Congress. Fourthly, anti-incumbency of ten years was another factor, which pushed UPA on back foot. The BJP and its allies in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) found themselves in the position of the primary beneficiaries of anti-incumbency. The Congress and UPA-II were weighed down by charges of lack of direction in policy formulation and governance, administrative ineptitude and the corruption scandals that hit the government at regular intervals over the past four years.

The BJP's prime ministerial candidate Narendra Modi and his party campaign focused on economic growth and jobs rather than divisive Hindu nationalist issues such as building Ram Mandir (Lord Rama temple) at Ayodhya, Article 370, and Common Civil Code, etc. However, Ramdas Kadam from Shiv Sena; Amit Shah, and Giriraj Singh, senior BJP leaders chimed into the Modi campaign by giving inflammable speeches. Giriraj Singh remarked:

“Those who slaughter cows are given subsidy and those who protect cows get nothing...those who want to stop Narendra Modi are looking at Pakistan. The place of all such people is in Pakistan”.

But, Narendra Modi maintained distance from inflammatory remarks of party leaders such as Amit Shah, Giriraj Singh and Praveen Togadia by tweeting statement on 21 April, 2014 saying “I disapprove any such irresponsible statements and appeals to those making them to kindly refrain from doing so.”

### **Media and Modi Wave**

The paper also tries to investigate, whether media generated any kind of wave in favour of Modi or BJP? The Centre for Media Studies (CMS) in its survey claimed that Modi occupied a little more than a third of the total airtime that is 33.21 percent, followed by Kejriwal with just over ten percent and Rahul Gandhi with just 4.33 percent. The others regional leaders like Mulayam Singh Yadav, Naveen Patnaik, Mamata Banerjee, Jayalalitha and Mayawati, etc., barely registered on the chart. Modi got disproportionate coverage because he was after all the newsmaker number one. The media went to the extent of mirroring a reality that existed in large parts of the country. In other words “Modi become TRP (television rating point) boss at that time”. Yogendra Yadav is of view that the incessant coverage of Modi did give him incremental votes.

In 2014 general elections, most of the political parties and leaders made an attempt to reach out to voters through new forms of media such as Facebook, Twitter, Google, YouTube, and WhatsApp. They redesigned their official party websites to make them more interactive, and opened accounts on various social networking platforms to reach out to more voters, especially younger generation, who believed to be more technology savvy.

Therefore, it appears that the media now, defines politics, and politics is playing for media. Soho Square, a subsidiary of Ogilvy and Mother (O&M) created about 200 unique commercial, 300 radio spots and 1000 press and outdoor creatives for BJP in 2014 Lok Sabha elections. Madison's media plan involved taking more than 130,000 ad spots across 226 channels, 9000 insertions in 295 publications and sixteen languages and 150,000 ads on websites. '*Achhe din aane wale hain*' (good days are coming); '*Ma Ganga ne bulayahi*'; (mother Ganga is calling me), '*Bahut hui mehngai ki maar*', '*Abki bar BJP Sarkar*'; '*Janata Maaf nahi Karegi, Bahut Hua Bhrastachar, Abki bar Modi Sarkar*' (the voter will not forgive, enough of corruption, time for Modi government) '*chappan inch kee chahati*' (fifty six inch chest), etc., slogans and advertisement showed sheer strategy and energy of the BJP campaign, which was Modi centric, whereas Congress theme tried to capture the idea of an inclusive India, by airing slogans and advertisements such as '*Main, nahin hum*' (not me, us); '*Har haath shakti, har haath tarakki*' (strength and progress for all); '*Jahar ki Raj niti*' (politics of poison) and '*tode nahi, jode*' (unite, not divide) etc.

During electoral campaign, the BJP with the help of media tried to establish Modi as a credible, decisive leader. Secondly, they tried to swing public sentiment among fence sitter by creating a wave that would push the BJP beyond 272. For that, the approach would be two-fold: target the public anger against the UPA-II government and then create a sense of hope that Modi would usher in change. Anger and hope would become the twin planks of the advertising assault. In a nut-shell, the big difference between the two campaigns of the BJP and the Congress, was that the BJP's had simple and clear message; whereas the Congress campaign was tangled in jargon and tended to use long-winded words, especially in Hindi like *arajakta* (anarchy) and *kaajniti* (work policy), etc. The final ad campaign bill of BJP was around 385 to 600 crores whereas Congress Party spent around 300 crores in 2014 national elections. Perhaps, Narendra Modi mounted the most expensive election campaign, which he deliberately converted it into personalized essay. His electoral campaign was coached by American consultants who are experts in demolishing the reputation of their opponents. Narendra Modi presented himself as an authentic '*deshbhakt*' reducing Rahul Gandhi to a laughable phantom. Modi was pulverizing the Gandhis. He also introduced other themes such as inflation and unemployment, weak national leadership, the alleged pusillanimous response in the face of aggression by China and Pakistan. The Congress response to Modi campaign was uninspired and thereby failed to give a befitting reply.

In brief, the voters with higher media exposure were more likely to vote for the BJP. The media exposure influenced the political preference of the people and they supported economic reforms as concluded by Lokniti-Centre for Study of Developing Societies (CSDS). The expanding media penetration; the increasing live coverage of political rallies and presidential-style of campaigning; growing link between political interests and owners of media houses; and agenda-setting political debates, brought a paradigm shift to election campaigning in India. Now politics is likely to become more mediatised and electoral process more Americanised.

### Causes of Congress Party Debacle

The Congress Party's defeat in 2014 parliamentary elections reflected not just its failure to

## Indicators of the Emergence of Single-Party Majority Rule in India: 2014 to 2018

retain its vote share of previous polls in 2004 and 2009, but also the lack of a clear social profile of its voters. The lack of adequate leadership and confusion in its ranks played an important role, but there were other systemic reasons for the defeat of Congress Party. In terms of both seats and votes, Congress Party touched new low by getting twenty percent votes at all India level and forty-four seats, which account roughly eight percent of Lok Sabha seats in general elections of 2014. It was the party's worst ever performance in which Congress Party lost nine percent of its vote share compared to its performance in last elections. This loss was not confined to any social sections; rather it occurred across all social sections. There were two main factors which were responsible for the Congress Party's decline. The first was the performance of the government and other was the issue of leadership in the party. As major partner in UPA-II, the Congress Party could not run away from responsibilities. The decision of Rahul Gandhi before the election like Sonia Gandhi not to be designated as party prime-ministerial candidate created confusion in the voters, on the one hand and the BJP converted the election into a plebiscite on the issue of leadership. The contest between Narendra Modi and Rahul Gandhi meant that Congress was at a disadvantage. The part of this failure can be attributed to astute handling of leadership issue by the BJP. Rather the issue of who led the party; the issue of what the leadership wanted to do with the party constantly plagued the Congress.

The Congress and its partners in the ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) have been on the back foot owing to a variety of factors, primarily triggered by the anti-incumbency of ten years' regimes, while the principal opposition party, the BJP, and its allies in NDA found themselves in the position of the primary beneficiaries of this anti-incumbency. The Congress and UPA-II were weighed down by charges of lack of direction in policy formulation and governance, administrative ineptitude, corruption and scandals that hit the central government at regular intervals over the past four years.

There are other factors as well which led to Congress Party decimation. First, the Congress response to Modi campaign was uninspired and failed to give a befitting reply. Secondly, the leadership of Congress Party did not think Narendra Modi could overcome the formidable resistance from L.K. Advani group. Thirdly, the Congress leadership was convinced that Modi would have no appeal outside of Gujarat. Fourthly, the liberal/secular/ progressive camp thought India had moved away from the allurements of '*Hindutva*'. However, the BJP had a core '*Hindutva*' vote bank, but to win a national election it needed a wider base. Narendra Modi like Tony Blair reinvented the BJP, and made party market friendly, which was not pushing '*swadeshi*' economics, and religious politics, but governance became its distinctive appeal for those Indians who remained sceptical of the Bajrang Dal-Vishwa Hindu Parishad foot soldiers.

### Post-2014 General Election Trends

The party system at the national level is different from the regional level. The Indian party system for states has indeed become progressively bipolarized within many but with a difference. It may be characterized in ways: (I) bi-party system, (II) two coalitions, (III) one party versus a coalition of two or more parties, and (IV) a still-evolving system of three or more significant parties contesting independently.

**Table.1: 1 Performance of Political Parties in Legislative Assemblies from 2014 to 2018**

State & Year	Seats	Loss of Seats	Gain of Seats	BJP's Party Seats	Loss of Seats	Gain of Seats	Regional Parties	Loss of Seats	Gains of Seats
Arunachal Pradesh*									
2014	42	01	-	11	-	08	PPA-5	-	1
Andhra Pradesh									
2014	21	134	-	09	-	07	TDP-117 TRS-63 YRSC-70	- - -	25 53 70
Telangana									
2014	18			05			TRS-67 TDP-03		
Odisha									
2014	16	11	-	10	-	04	BJD-117	-	14
Sikkim									
2014	00	-	-	00	-	-	SDF-22 SKM-10	10 -	- 10
Maharashtra									
2014	42	40	-	122	-	76	SS-63 NCP-41	- -	19 21
Haryana									
2014	15	25	-	47	-	43	INLD-19	12	-
Jammu & Kashmir									
2014	12	05	-	25	-	14	PDP-28 NC-15	- 13	07 -
Jharkhand									
2014	06	-	-	37	-	-	JMM-19		
Delhi									
2015	00	08	-	03	28	-	AAP-67	-	39
Bihar									
2015	27	-	23	53	38	-	JD(U)-71 RJD-80	44 -	- 68
Tamil Nadu									
2016	08	-	03	00	-	-	AIADMK-134 DMK-89	16 -	- 66
West Bengal									
2016	44	-	02	06	-	03	TC-211 Left Front-32	- 30	27 -
Kerala									
2016	Congress led UDF - 47	25	-	01	-	01	LDF-91	-	23

Indicators of the Emergence of Single-Party  
Majority Rule in India: 2014 to 2018

Puducherry									
2016	15	-	08	00	-	-	-	-	-
Assam									
2016	26	53	-	60	-	55	AGP-14	-	05
Punjab									
2017	77	-	31	03	09	-	AAP-20 SAD (B)-15	- 41	20
Goa									
2017	17	-	08	13	08	-	MAG- 03	-	-
U. P.									
2017	07	21	-	312	-	265	SP-47 BSP-19	177 61	- -
Uttarakhand									
2017	11	21	-	57	-	26	BSP-03	03	-
Manipur									
2017	28	19	-	21	-	21	-	-	-
Himachal Pradesh									
2017	21	15	-	44	-	18	-	-	-
Gujarat									
2017	77	-	16	99	16	-	-	-	-
Tripura									
2018	00	10	-	35	-	35	CPM-16	33	-
Meghalaya									
2018	21	08	-	02	-	02	NPP-19 UDP-06	- 02	17
Nagaland									
2018	00	08	-	12	-	11	NPF-26 NDPP- 17	12 -	- 17
Karnataka									
2018	78	44	-	104	-	64	JD(U)- 37	03	-
Madhya Pradesh									
2018	114	-	56	109	56	-	SP-1 BSP-2	- 2	1 -

Rajasthan									
2018	99	-	78	73	90	-	BSP-6	-	6
Chhattisgarh									
2018	68	-	29	15	34	-	JCC-5 BSP-2	- -	- 1
Telangana									
2018	19	-	1	1	11	-	TRS-88 TDP-12	-	21
Mizoram									
2018	05	29	-	1	-	-	MNF-26 ZPM-08	- -	21 -

*Source: Various Statistical Reports to General Elections to Legislative Assemblies from 2009 to 2018, [https://eci.nic.in/eci\\_main/StatisticalReports/pdf](https://eci.nic.in/eci_main/StatisticalReports/pdf), assessed in September/October 2018.*

*\*The Congress Party got majority, but BJP toppled the government in the state by joining Pema Khandu and his group in the party in September 2016, [https://eci.gov.in/files/file/4040-arunachal-pradesh-2014/assessed in September/October 2018](https://eci.gov.in/files/file/4040-arunachal-pradesh-2014/assessed%20in%20September/October%202018).*

For example, there is bi-party system in Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Manipur and Uttarakhand where with major fight between the BJP and the Congress Party. In Assam, Kerala, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, there was the formation of '*gathbandhans*' (alliances) and '*maha-gathbandhans*' (grand-alliances) by the major stake-holders. In Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi, Maharashtra, Haryana, Punjab and Karnataka, there were triangular or multi-corner contests among national and regional political parties. The regional players are dominating in Tamil Nadu, Odisha, West Bengal, Nagaland and Telangana.

From May 2014 to May 2018, the assembly elections were held for twenty seven states. The BJP held power just in seven states, whereas the Congress Party ruled thirteen states at time of 2014 Lok Sabha elections. From the table 1.1, it appears that the BJP emerged as truly national party with significant presence in almost all parts of the country by emerging as the largest party in nineteen out of twenty seven states and managed to form governments in eighteen states, whereas Congress Party vote share and seats were continuously declining and its hold reduced to two states only. The Congress Party had lost seats in nineteen states and gain in term of seats in eight states by which party managed to form the governments in Punjab and the union territory of Puducherry only. Later on, Congress Party formed the governments in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh. The downfall of the party in 2014 general elections raises question on the future of the party.

The BJP after winning 2014 general elections asserted its identity as national party by deciding to contest assembly elections alone in Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra and Haryana in 2014 to cash 'Modi magic'. The BJP emerged stronger in these states and formed government in Haryana, Jharkhand and Maharashtra on its own, on the one hand and supported PDP to constitute coalitional government in J&K, on the other. The BJP got absolute majority in Haryana, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, and Gujarat, on the one hand and emerged as the largest party in Assam, Goa and Manipur, on the other (see. Table 1.1.). The party re-gained the power in the largest state of the country (Uttar Pradesh) by getting a thumping majority and cracked red the citadel of Tripura in 2018. The BJP

## Indicators of the Emergence of Single-Party Majority Rule in India: 2014 to 2018

shared power in Nagaland and Meghalaya. Furthermore, the BJP toppled the government in Arunachal Pradesh by joining Pema Khandu and his group in the party in September 2016. Similarly, Nitish Kumar, Chief Minister of Bihar and leader of Janata Dal (United) {JD (U)} shifted his allegiance from '*maha-gathbandhan*' (grand-alliance) to NDA in July 2017. The BJP faced defeat in five states in term of seats and votes share. The BJP lost seats in Gujarat, Goa and Bihar, but managed to retain power. The victory chariot of the BJP was stopped in Delhi by Aam Admi Party (AAP) in 2015 assembly election. Punjab was another state where the party lost power in 2017.

However, it does not mean that regional parties have withered away. They obtained the same number of seats as well as the same percent of votes share, 212 and 46.6 percent respectively in 2014 parliamentary election, as in previous elections in 2009. The All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), in Tamil Nadu; Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in Odisha; Trinamool Congress (TMC) in West Bengal; Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in Andhra Pradesh; and Telangana Rashtra Samithi in Telangana etc., swept the Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha polls, even though the national political parties were contesting the elections in these states. In contrast, Samajwadi Party (SP), Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in Uttar Pradesh, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and JD (U) in Bihar were wiped out in 2014 general elections in term of seats but they did not perform poorly in term of vote's share, their votes share increased as 3.4 percent, 4.1 percent, 1.1 and 1.3 percent respectively.

It is noteworthy that the Bihar experiment of '*maha-gathbandhan*' (grand-alliance) of RJD, JD (U), and Congress Party in 2015 assembly elections, like formation of Janata Party in 1977 indicated that they are still relevant in state politics by getting 18.4 percent, 16.8 percent and 6.7 percent votes respectively in assembly election and forming the government. Later on, the JD (U) left the '*maha-gathbandhan*' and joined hands with the BJP.

### Karnataka Assembly Elections: Ground for Next General Elections in 2019

The result of Karnataka assembly election in May 2018 added a new vocabulary, a new narrative as well as a new discourse to Indian party system. The fragmented mandate triggered a high-stake political battle with the two national parties namely Congress Party and the BJP and the regional player, the JD (S), in the region. The drama began with Governor Vajubhai Vala inviting the BJP, which emerged the single largest party in the house, to form the government in May 2018 and prove its majority within fifteen days. To stop B.S. Yeddyurappa from becoming Chief Minister, the Congress and the JD (S), quickly forged a post-poll alliance, and moved the Supreme Court to prevent the BJP leader B.S. Yeddyurappa from taking the oath of office as Chief Minister. However, the Supreme Court only reduced the time period to prove majority in the house from fifteen days to twenty four hours.

The drama came to an end, when Yeddyurappa resigned from the office without taking the mandatory floor test. The BJP's blitzkrieg and bluster over having the numbers to help him pass the floor test were thoroughly exposed. Following Yeddyurappa's resignation, the Governor invited H.D. Kumaraswamy, the leader of the JD (S) legislature party, who had announced that his party had the support of the Congress, to form the government. The whole episode made clear that the Congress Party had accepted a back-seat to seal a post-poll pact with JD (S) and was ready to forge an alliance with opposition parties to take BJP in 2019 general elections. This is a good sign for the revival of unity of the opposition particularly for smaller parties in which Congress Party emerged as an 'adjustable partner'. It is the beginning of state-specific alliances between regional parties and the Congress, which will pave the way for one-on-one fights with the BJP. The Congress will be on board. But as Lok Sabha elections draw near, there are bound to be contradictions and conflicts among them for sharing



seats and power. Further, the show of unity of opposition at the swearing-in-of Karnataka Chief Minister, H.D. Kumaraswamy, appeared as the Modi versus the rest like Indira Gandhi versus the rest in 1977.

### Assembly Elections in Five States: Eye on Coming Lok Sabha Elections 2019

The assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, and Mizoram were held in November/December 2018, which was considered as a semi-final to next Parliamentary elections because Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh send sixty-five members to the Lok Sabha. Definitely, the outcomes of these assembly elections are deeply influencing the strategy of political parties. The BJP dissolved the Lok Sabha before time after getting a landslide victory in these states in 2003, on the one hand and Congress Party changed its previous policy of 1998 Panchmarhi resolution's '*akalo chalo niti*' (move alone policy), to alliance politics, on the other. Therefore, the victory of Congress Party in three Hindi speaking states would not only boost the morale of the leadership, but also show-case the party as one being alternative to the BJP.

However, the battle in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh were on a more even keel between the Congress and the BJP, but Congress Party managed to form the governments in these states. The Congress Party emerged as the largest party by getting 114 and ninety-nine seats in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan respectively. In Chhattisgarh, the Congress decisively defeated the BJP by winning sixty-eight of the ninety assembly seats, and brought to an end nearly fifteen years of the latter's rule in the state. Similarly, the Mizo National Front (MNF) came into power in Mizoram, by ending ten years of Congress rule in the north-eastern state. The resurgence of the regional party not only decimated the Congress, but also shattered the dream of the BJP to get a stronger foothold in north-eastern states. Another regional party-Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) bagged an impressive tally of eighty eight seats in the 119-member assembly in Telangana, by pushing the Congress-led "*mahakutami*" (People's Front) second place with twenty-one seats. The TRS juggernaut dashed the Congress Party's hopes of a revival of its fortunes in the state. The debacle of '*mahakutami*'s' in Telangana assembly elections in 2018 indicated that the verdict was in favour of 'single party majority-rule' and against alliance politics. It also created the doubts about the ability of TDP to win next Andhra Pradesh assembly elections and Lok Sabha election in 2019. The Zoram People's Movement (ZPM), an alliance of seven parties, got only eight seats in Mizoram. The Ajit Jogi-Mayawati combine did not perform on expectation in Chhattisgarh. They got seven seats only (see. Table 1.1). More or less, the verdicts from these assembly elections were in favour of single party majority rule and against the weak alliances.

In brief, the Congress' performance in three Hindi speaking states signalled as revival of the party in the region, but its losses in Telangana and Mizoram were considered as wakeup call, which needs serious course correction with respect to electoral strategies and strengthening of organisational base. As for the BJP, the results were an opportunity to introspect. Not just on the performance of its governments in the state, but also the performance of the Narendra Modi government at the centre. Because the victory of opposition in Karnataka and the party's defeat in Lok Sabha and assembly by-election in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in 2018 darken its chance to win next general elections. The previous parliamentary elections of 2014, Narendra Modi contested election on his Gujarat Model of development, but the picture of the economy appeared not so flattering at that time. There are concerns on most of the fronts such as jobs, industry, fuel prices, banking, disinvestment and corruption at the grassroots. In simple words, a dismal of jobs, high inflation and rural distress have taken the sheen off from the Modi government's

## Indicators of the Emergence of Single-Party Majority Rule in India: 2014 to 2018

push for transparency and accountability.

Further, The Mood of the Nation (MOTN) survey conducted in July 2018 highlights the facts that Narendra Modi is still a popular leader as compared to others, but his popularity is waning from seventy one percent to sixty five percent. Whereas the popularity of Rahul Gandhi is on rise from ten percent to twenty seven percent. In this scenario, allies/regional players are going to become the most important and the decisive factors in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections for the BJP and the Congress.

### Conclusion

The major change in Indian party system is that coalition government has been replaced by single-party majority rule under a strong leader in this period. The BJP got absolute majority on its own by getting only thirty-one percent votes and its victory become possible due to the first-past-post-system. The BJP became truly an all-India party by gaining seats and votes across the country in 16th Lok Sabha elections 2014, and subsequently managed to form the governments in eighteen states. The single-party namely the BJP got absolute majority in a number of states such as Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, and Tripura. In Punjab, Congress Party got absolute majority by defeating the alliance of BJP and SAD (B), and regional parties as AIADMK, AAP, BJD, and TMC held power in Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Odisha and West Bengal respectively.

The general elections of 2014 marked third transformation in the BJP, the first took place in '*Mandir-Masjid-Mandal*' in 1990s. Secondly, the party deep freezed its core issues as Article 370, '*Ram Mandir*', (Lord Rama temple) and Common Civil Code in 1999 and appeared as a 'new softer BJP'. To win national election, party is trying to broaden its support base among all sections of society, particularly lower castes and the poor. For that, Narendra Modi emphasised his lower-caste origin and '*chhaya wala*' (tea vendor) as poor man in every rally to attract weaker sections of society. He said "the next decade will belong to the dalits and the backwards". It is a new kind of social engineering and transformation in the BJP. The Modi tornado crushed out the Congress Party, which for the first time since independence, was reduced to double digit tally of forty four Lok Sabha seats and lost the office of the Leader of Opposition. The Congress Party vote share and seats are continuously declining and its hold has reduced to two states only namely Punjab and Puducherry. Later on, Congress Party got absolute majority in Chhattisgarh, and managed to form governments in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan in 2018 assembly elections.

Another landslide victory for the BJP-led NDA in 17th Lok Sabha elections 2019 endorses the argument that there is beginning of a single-party-majority-rule in the country. The BJP not only improved its tally in the Lower House but also crossed 300 marked. The NDA's tally is 354 seats out of 543, with the BJP itself winning 303 seats and improving on its 2014 score of 282. This staggering victory of the BJP not just in Rajasthan but in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh as well, put a question mark on the much famous political assumption of a 'honeymoon period'. It implies that if two elections are held at close intervals, the result of the earlier elections has impact on the one being held later on. It is quite astonishing that the electorates that gave chance to the Congress only a few months ago have deserted it so quickly. The outcome also indicated that alliance formation is not the guarantee for victory. The '*maha-gathbandhan*' (grand alliance) of SP, BSP and RLD in Uttar Pradesh failed to perform. They could neither convince the voter, nor offer credible alternative. Their campaign was merely to focus on to oust Narendra Modi. The BJP outperformed its rivals except in Tamil Nadu. While, the Congress and regional parties could not make up their minds on who to slip into bed with and when, the BJP focus was clear on where it needed partners and where it did not. Further, the 17th Social Sciences

Lok Sabha election was a presidential-style of election where leadership became most important factor. The candidates of the BJP canvassed in the name of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, convinced even the allies' candidates of NDA to do so. The campaign of Congress led by Rahul Gandhi, who focused on the Rafale deal and *chowkidar chor hai*, had limited impact on voters in 2019 general elections. The message from the outcome makes clear that electorates were in favour of strong and stable government.

There is not a sure sign of nationalization of the party system, in which regional parties remain resilient in non-Hindi regions. It is new type of fragmented party system in which ruling party hold thin percentage of the votes in 2014 general elections. The BJP increased six percent of votes from 31.4 to 37.4 percent in 2019 general elections. The regional satraps and their parties such as Kumari Mayawati, Chief, BSP; M. Satlin, President, DMK; Akhilesh Yadav, President, SP; Mamata Banerjee President TMC; Naveen Patnaik, Head BJD; Chandrashekhar Rao, leader, TRS; Chandrababu Naidu of TDP and Jagan Mohan Reddy, from YRS Congress are the key players in their respective regions and may become game changer in coming elections.

### Notes

In 1984, Rajiv Gandhi offered himself as the fresh faced hope for future; it was V.P. Singh, who was projected as Mr. Clean in 1990s; BJP coined the slogan Abki Baari Atal Bihari in 1998, Singh is King for Manmohan Singh in 2009 and Narendra Modi used to say in every rally Chappan inch kee chahati (fifty six inch chest) in 2014. It means that he not weak candidate like previous Prime Minister and can face any kind of challenge.

To generate public feeling, Modi had addressed more than 200 rallies by end of March 2014 since becoming BJP's prime ministerial candidate in September 2013. And planned to address 185 rallies spread across 295 constituencies, often doing four, at time even six, in a single day. It is estimated that Modi would have travelled 300000 kilometres, or seven time the earth's equatorial circumference. These rallies established that he is not just as a politician but as a trailblazer who had evolved, or rather reinvented himself, from demagogue to statement, from divisive figure to governance guru, from a Hindu identity politician to a problem solving ideas man-the kind who would appeal to an increasingly urbanizing society, Ibid., pp.278-279.

RJD, JD (U) and Congress formed 'maha-gathbandhan' (grand alliance) to challenge the BJP in 2015 assembly election and won assembly election by overwhelming majority of 178 seats against 58 seats of the BJP and its allies, and RJD emerged as the largest party by winning 80 seats and JD (U) came second. Nitish Kumar became Chief Minister of the state. Later on, he resigned from office to protect clean image of the government when CBI filed FIR against Tejashwai Yadav, Deputy-Chief minister who refused to reign. Within few hours, Nitish Kumar re-gained office by joining hand with NDA/BJP in July 2017, The Hindu, 27 July 2017.

### References

Paul Wallace, "Introduction: Single Party and Strong Leadership", in Paul Wallace, (ed.), India's 2014 Elections, A Modi-led BJP Sweep, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2015, p.9.

Rajdeep Sardesai, 2014 The Election That Changed India, New Delhi: Viking Penguin, 2014, pp. xi-xvii.

Suhas Palshikar and K. C. Suri, "India's 2014 Lok Sabha Elections; Critical Shifts in Long Term, Caution in Short Term", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XLIX, No. 39, 27 September

Indicators of the Emergence of Single-Party  
Majority Rule in India: 2014 to 2018

2014, p. 39.

Venkitesh Ramakrishnan, "Wave and Reality", *Frontline*, Vol. 31, No.9, May 2014  
<https://www.frontline.in/cover-story/wave-amp-reality/article5955692.ece>, assessed in October 2018.

Walter K. Andersen, "The Bharatiya Janata Party: A Victory for Narendra Modi", in  
Wallace, n.1, p.48.

The Indian Express, 20 April 2014.

Rahul Verma and Shreyas Sardesai, "Does Media Exposure Affecting Voting Behaviour  
and Political Preferences in India", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XLIX, No. 39, 27  
September 2014, p.83.

Harish Khare, "How Modi Won It, Notes From the 2014 Election", Gurgaon: Hachette  
Book Publishing, 2014, pp. 210-213.

Suhas Palshikar, "The Defeat of the Congress", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.  
XLIX, No. 39, 27 September 2014, pp.57-59.

Eswaran Sridharan, "Coalition and Party Strategies in India's Parliamentary Federation",  
*Publius*, Vol.33, No. 4, Autumn, 2003, p.136.

Christophe Jaffrelot and Gilles Verniers, "The Resistance of Regionalism: BJP's  
Limitations and the Resilience of State Parties", in Wallace, n.1, pp. 33-35.

Ravi Sharma, "Deceit and Defeat", *Frontline*, <https://www.frontline.in/cover-story/deceit-and-defeat/article10108385.ece> assessed in November 2018.

Rasheed Kidwai, "Congress Risk Winner-Takes-it-All Approach in MP", *The Tribune*, 9  
October 2018.

Editorial, "Northern Comfort: On Congress's Win in Hindi Heartland", *The Hindu*, 12  
December 2018, <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/northern-comfort/article25720333.ece>  
assessed in June 2019.

Divya Trivedi, "Crippling Blow", *Frontline*, <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/article25770882.ece> assessed in June 2019.

Sushanta Talukdar, "Regional Resurgence", *Frontline*,  
<https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/article25771008.ece> assessed in June 2019.

S. Nagesh Kumar, "Riding on Welfare", *Frontline*, <https://frontline.thehindu.com/cover-story/article257758001.ece> assessed in June 2019.

M. G. Arun, "A Bumpy Road Ride So Far", *India Today*, Vol. XLIII, No. 35, 27 August 2018,  
p.46.

Ajit Kumar Jha, "A clash of Coalitions", *India Today*, Vol. XLIII, No. 35, 27 August 2

# The Unfolding of India's Democracy: A Study of Ethno-Linguistic and Ethno-Religious Identities of Darjeeling and Ladakh

Gulam Murtaza\*

## ABSTRACT

*In terms of ethnicity, religious, linguistic and cultural diversity India represents heterogeneous society. Gradually, this peculiarity has been providing a fertile ground for breeding of ethno-linguistic and ethno-religious conflicts in India's democratic political system. Similarly, electoral politics further deepening into ethno-religious and ethno-linguistic mobilization consequently accentuated inter and intra-community conflicts in India. Over the past decades, various research scholars have focused their attention at the different regions of Indian state such as the Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Punjab and Nagaland, where violent ethno-secessionist insurgencies erupted. At the same time, a somewhat different but equally important development has affected several other Indian states such as demand of Gorkhaland in West Bengal, the demand of Union Territory in Jammu and Kashmir, demands of separate Vidharba state in Maharashtra, Bodoland in Assam etc. So far the issues of Ladakh and Darjeeling are concerned their ethnic aspiration accommodated through a politico-administrative institution like Hill Development Council. In this paper, an attempt has been made to demystify the politics of ethno-linguistic and ethno-religious identities of Darjeeling and Ladakh*

**Key Words:** Ethno-Religious, Ethno-Linguistic, Gorkhaland, Union Territory, Electoral Politics, Hill Development Councils

## Introduction

The term ethnicity is a complex and elusive one. However, many scholars believe that it is a social psychological process which gives an individual a sense of belonging: an identity. There are various approaches on ethnicity among them primordial approaches believe that ethnicity is something given, ascribed at birth, deriving from the kin and clan structure of human society and hence something more or less fixed and permanent. Situational approaches believe that ethnicity is something which may be relevant in some situations but not in others. Individual may choose to be regarded as members of an ethnic group if they find it to their advantage. Thus ethnicity is a group option in which resources are mobilized for the purpose of pressuring the political system to allocate public goods for the benefit of the members of a self-differentiating group collectively. Similarly, constructionism approach believes that ethnicity is something that is being negotiated and constructed in everyday living. Hence ethnicity is a process which continues to unfold.

In spite of the discussion, the concept of ethnicity remains elusive due to the fact there is no particular element common to all ethnic groups as each ethnic group develops its own shapes, its own dynamic and its own peculiar intensities thus we find that there is no fixed variable in determining

---

\* Research Scholar, Department of Political Science, University of Jammu, Jammu, India

## The Unfolding of India's Democracy: A Study of Ethno-Linguistic and Ethno-Religious identities of Darjeeling and Ladakh

ethnicity it varies from time to time and from place to place. Sometimes a particular variable says a language may play a decisive role while at another time religion may assume the primary role in identity formation. In choosing a variable at a certain time and space the elite of a group perhaps considers to what will bring maximum economic benefit, political power and social status to them and minimize their survival risks in the competitive society in which they live. Thus any of the variables like language, religion, nationality, race, tribalism or other primordial affiliation may be chosen for the purpose. As there is no specific variable for ethnicity, so there is no fixed number of variables for the same. In some cases, one variable is sufficient to articulate ethnic identity, while in some other cases two or more variables incidentally overlap each other *boundary lines*. The language, for instance, is the only variable in identity formation among the Nepalese in Darjeeling district. Similarly, religion is the only variable in identity formation among the Ladakhis in Jammu and Kashmir. In case of the Bodos, however, the linguistic boundary synchronizes with the tribal line. This does not, however, mean that both the variables are equally effective at the same time. In a multidimensional ethnic group, it is observed, a particular variable plays a dominant role, while other variables play subordinate roles only to reinforce the dominant variable.

### The Demand for Gorkhaland and Evolution of Ethno-Linguistic Identity in Darjeeling

The territory of Darjeeling has historically belonged to Sikkim and Bhutan. From the beginning of the 19th century, the East India Company began to take an active interest in Darjeeling, and the whole territory came under the British occupation in three phases during the thirty years from 1835 to 1865. After negotiation with the Raja of Sikkim, Darjeeling was acquired by the East India Company in 1835. The East India Company also annexed the Terai region which included Siliguri from Sikkim in 1850, and Kalimpong was annexed from Bhutan in 1865 by British India. This is how the present district of Darjeeling is formed. Lepchas and Bhutias are considered as the indigenous people of Darjeeling. But in the present scenario, the Gorkha community forms the majority ethnic group and the majority of them are the followers of Hindu religion followed by the Buddhist religion.

### Articulation of Ethno-Linguistic Identity of Darjeeling and its People

The issue of the ethno-linguistic identity of Darjeeling and its people was articulated by the British rulers for their vested interests. From the 1860s onwards the British government encouraged Nepalese to migrate either from Nepal or via Darjeeling. Settlement of the Nepali in Darjeeling was a colonized design. However, among the migrant Nepalese in spite of their religious and caste divisions the Nepali language fostered a sense of oneness. The language becomes a symbol of unity. In the last quarter of the 19th century, a large number of socio-political journals were published from Darjeeling, enriching the literature and arousing political and social consciousness. The demand for a separate administrative arrangement for Darjeeling was initially asserted by the retired Nepali army and police officers. They submitted a memorandum in 1907 to the British Government, pleading for the creation of a separate administrative organization for Darjeeling outside Bengal but within the British Indian Empire. These elitist Nepalis of Darjeeling were subsequently supported by a small group of aristocratic Tibetan and Bhutia families and all of them formed the Hillmen's Association. The members of the Hillmen's Association were extremely loyal to the British rulers who had also openly encouraged these upper strata of Darjeeling to voice their demand for separation from Bengal. The grounds for separation were linguistic and racial. British India also maintained the special status of the district in one form or the other. Either it was Scheduled District (1874-1919) or a Backward Tract and Excluded Area (1919-1935) and finally Partially Scheduled Area under the 1935 Act with British India.



arguing that the objective of making such division was to protect the tribal and the backward people. Critics argue that such institutional arrangement, however, bred a sense of separatism. Moreover, the objective of declaring it as an Excluded Area by the Britishers was to safeguard the huge capital invested in the tea industry in Darjeeling and to keep them away from the influence of the Indian nationalist movement. Though the appeal of the Hillmen's Association for creating a separate administrative unit for Darjeeling was not immediately realized, their repeated demand for separation from Bengal sowed the seeds of a cleavage between the Nepalis of the hill sub-divisions in Darjeeling and the inhabitants of Bengal in the plains. During 1940's the All India Gorkha League and Communist Party of India Marxist articulated ethno-linguistic identity whereas the former demanded separate Gorkhaland outside West Bengal the later demanded regional autonomy within West Bengal.

### **Assertion for Gorkhaland**

From 1947 to 1980 politics of ethno-linguistic identity in Darjeeling revolved around the separation of Darjeeling from West Bengal, recognition of Nepali language and the Inclusion of Nepali in the 8th schedule of the constitution, Gorkhaland outside West Bengal and regional autonomy within West Bengal articulated by All India Gorkha League, Communist Party of India Marxist. On the other hand Government of India argues that demand of Darjeeling and its people have dangerous implication if a proposal of this nature is accepted it would be interpreted all over the country as another victory for separatist forces. The Congress and the Government of India opposed it on the ground that this would open flood gate of the demand for separate small autonomous regions all over the country leading to its totally unimaginable fragmentation. The moderate and compromising attitude of the All India Gorkha League led to the emergence of Gorkha National Liberation Front in 1980 under the leadership of Subash Ghising. From the beginning, the Gorkha National Liberation Front movement opted for an armed confrontation with the State's machinery. He demanded the creation of a separate homeland for the Nepalese in India, abrogation of the Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty of 1950, etc. He also alleged that "crimes of genocide and apartheid" being committed against Nepalese in India. Many provocative slogans, such as "Bengal is our graveyard," "Gorkhas will not live in graveyards," "Return our lands to us," were raised. Subhas Ghising underscored the immediate issue of the citizenship status of the Indian Nepalese by asking for the abrogation of Article VII of the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship. Ghising's interpretation of this article was that it had made the Indian Nepalese reciprocally citizen and not a bonafide citizen of India and as such there life and future were not secure. He also sought the support of the King of Nepal and sent appeals to some other Heads of the countries as well as to the United Nations seeking their cooperation for the movement for Gorkhaland.

After indulging for two years (1986-88) in a violent separatist movement for Gorkhaland in September 1987 discussions were held in Delhi. Finally, the Tripartite Agreement between the Centre government, State government, and Gorkha National Liberation Front led to the creation of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council. Although the main demand of the people for creation of a separate state, Gorkhaland, could not be fulfilled, Ghising and his men seemed satisfied with the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council. Notwithstanding The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council elections were held on 13th December 1988, and the Council Office was opened on 17th January 1989. Subhas Ghising assumed office as Chief Executive Councillor on 18th January 1989. The Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council has been administering the district of Darjeeling from August 1988. People are expecting that things are going to change for the better under the new Politico-administrative arrangement in Darjeeling. Darjeeling politics is still revolving around the issue of Gorkhaland. However, in Darjeeling district, the



## **The Unfolding of India's Democracy: A Study of Ethno-Linguistic and Ethno-Religious identities of Darjeeling and Ladakh**

decision for institutional arrangements like Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (1988-2007) or Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (2012-2017) did not go very well because mobilization for Gorkhaland on the basis of ethno-linguistic continuously surfaced in India's democratic political system time and again.

### **The Demand of Union Territory Status and Evolution of Ethno-Religious Identity in Ladakh**

Before 1842 Ladakh was an independent kingdom ruled by Gon dynasty and Namgyal dynasty. In 1842, Ladakh was annexed by the Dogra ruler of Jammu. Then for the next century, Ladakh remained a part of the Dogra kingdom. With the accession of the Dogra- princely state of Jammu and Kashmir to India, Ladakh became a part of India in October 1947. The present Ladakhi races are a combination of three ethnic groups viz; Mon, Dard and Mongolian. There was a time when the people of the entire region, right from Ladakh to Gilgit and Baltistan followed the religion of Bon prior to Buddhism. However, it is believed that Buddhism flourished in Ladakh in the 7th century during the reign of King Hrong Tsan. He made Buddhism a State religion. Similarly, from 14th century religious scholars like Mir Syed Ali Hamdani, Syed Noor Bakshee, and Shams-ud-Din Iraqi popularised Islam in Ladakh.

### **Formulation of Ethno-Religious Identity of Ladakh and its People**

By the time of the Glancy Commission hearing in 1930's intellectual community of Kashmiri Pandits (neo Buddhist) realised that the case of the Buddhist community would most likely be totally ignored consequently they formed Kashmir Raj Bodhi Maha Sabha, Ladakh Buddhist Educational Society, and Young Men's Buddhist Association through which to articulate political issues of Ladakhi Buddhist. Similarly, the office of the Home Minister noted that educationally the Buddhists form a backward community with its own distinctive culture and civilization different from the Hindus and Muslims Communities. Most of the requests made by neo-Buddhists are reasonable and desirables. However the only exception to this opinion was the Director of Education who noted in his comment that he did not think that the Buddhist were more backward than other communities in Ladakh. Therefore, he suggested that if more scholarship were given to Ladakh there need not be any discrimination on the basis of religion. The office of the Home Ministry responded to this comment by emphasizing that the Buddhists were indeed truly backward in every sense of the word and that their requests should receive more positive consideration. Finally, the label of backwardness was firmly attached to the Buddhist of Ladakh in spite of the objection of the Director of Education. In 1947 Young Men's Buddhist Association submitted a memorandum to the Maharaja in order to secure the future status of Ladakh and they made three options; the Maharaja could maintain direct rule over Ladakh, Ladakh could be merged with the Hindu- majority parts of Jammu in a separate administrative unit and Ladakh could be permitted to join East Punjab (later Himachal Pradesh) however, the Maharaja never responded to the memorandum. The president of Young Men's Buddhist Association, Chhewang Rigzin Kalon, presented another memorandum to Jawaharlal Nehru on 4 May 1949 that "we are a separate nation by all the tests-race, language, religion, culture determining nationality.

### **Political Articulation of Ladakh Buddhist Association**

Ever since the memorandum by Ladakh Buddhist Association in 1949 to Centre government, the political discourse in Ladakh has more or less been regulated by Ladakh Buddhist Association and it has always revolved around the issue of separation of Ladakh from Kashmir and argues for North East Frontier Administration type administration or Union Territory status since independence. The justification put forth for the NEFA types administration or Union Territory demand has generally been

based on the articulation that the Kashmiri dominated Government in the State has never been responsive to the needs, aspirations and peculiar problems being faced by Ladakh and its people, as a result, Ladakh has lagged behind the other two regions of the State. Ladakh Buddhist Association constructed a very exclusivist notion of Ladakhi identity restricting it to the religious domain. For the Ladakh Buddhist Association, Ladakhi identity and Buddhist identity is one and the same thing. Ladakh Buddhist Association asserts that the Ladakhi Muslim do not fit into the category of Ladakhi identity because they are associated with the ties of religion with the majority population. It is on that assumption that the Ladakh Buddhist Association constructed an exclusive Buddhist identity as the real Ladakhi identity. The Ladakh Buddhist Association generally provokes the masses by constructing imaginary fears of demographic unevenness conversions, a future Muslim dominated Ladakh and so on. Leaders of Ladakh Buddhist Association got the opportunity to mobilize the people over different issues and succeeded to raise anti-Kashmir sentiment, gave slogan like Free Ladakh from Kashmir which was chanted during 1989 agitation. Part of their argument was that Ladakhi Buddhists had always received step motherly treatment from Kashmir and that Muslims had benefitted disproportionately from economic development and in government jobs because of their links with co-religionists in Kashmir. It forced the local Buddhists to socially boycott the local Muslims population of Ladakh which remained active for about three years. Ladakh Buddhist Association claims that the agitation was a step forward in acquiring the Union Territory status for Ladakh.

#### **Political Formulation of Islamiya School and Imamiya Khomeini Memorial Trust**

The Muslim political and religious leaders of Leh and Kargil districts countered the allegation and argued that the Ladakh Buddhist Association claim was falsified and fabricated one, in fact, Ladakhis as a whole have suffered under Jammu and Kashmir Political system. They counter argued that the agitation, contrary to the claims of the Ladakh Buddhist Association, is indeed targeting the Muslim community as a whole and listing a series of attacks on Muslim property. They further stated that when one talks of Ladakh one is talking about 1, 50,000 people of mixed Aryan (Dard, Kashmiri and other Indian origin) and Mongoloid descent living along the course of the high Indus and its tributaries of a people who profess Islam and Buddhism in equal numerical strength and yet speak the same language in different phonetic forms, share the same cultural roots and lifestyle despite the difference in faith. As far as the political articulation of Muslim population of Kargil district is concerned it was altogether different from the Buddhist population of Leh district since independence. The manifestation of vibrant civil society like Ladakh Buddhist Association was absent in Kargil. Though there were many small religious organizations among them Islamiya School Kargil was considered as a major organization established in 1951 but it was not such vocal as Ladakh Buddhist Association. Its function had only to organize study trips to Najaf with sponsorships from Iraqi sources. On the other hand, neo-Buddhist articulated the political issue of Ladakhi Buddhist through various organizations. These organizations brought political consciousness among the Ladakhi Buddhist viz-a-viz State Government. Politically, political leaders of Kargil were sceptical for one thing that, they believed that Buddhist majority in Leh continue to overshadow Kargil's identity. They had strongly objected to the Leh centric conception of Ladakh region, which until 1979 had made Leh the site of all the district headquarters. In addition, the political equation in Kargil was clearly the reverse of that in Leh. Kargil's inhabitant did not wish to irritate the Kashmiri leadership although they did not support the secessionist movement in the valley. Interestingly, Ladakhi Muslims are more tilted toward Ladakhi Buddhist in terms of language, culture, history, backwardness, etc. Despite such similarities, religion becomes the bone of contention in the Ladakh region.

## The Unfolding of India's Democracy: A Study of Ethno-Linguistic and Ethno-Religious identities of Darjeeling and Ladakh

It is in this context that the dilemma of Kargil can be seen in terms of its double marginalization; firstly it is marginalized as a part of the backward area of Ladakh which has remained neglected by the dominant leadership of the State for many decades. Besides this, the marginalization of Kargil is in the context of its being internally marginalized within the politics of Ladakh for a long time. Kargil had simply the status of a tehsil and could not attain the minimum development that the capital city of Leh was achieving. Later after getting the status of the district, it could witness some development. However even after getting the status of the district, Kargil remained much more marginalized as compared to the Leh district. *Imamiya* Khomeini Memorial Trust another religious organization formed in 1989 challenged the hegemony of Islamiya School. It advertised itself as the more liberal organization arguing that it supported women's education and was more adaptive to changing time and thus the Imamiya Khomeini Memorial Trust tended to favour Iranian behavioural of norms over local custom. However, with the passage of time Electoral politics strengthened these two religious organizations. National Conference and National Congress are the dominant political parties in Kargil district former supported by Islamiya School and later supported by Imamiya Khomeini Memorial Trust. It is in this context that politicization of religion during the election was experienced in both the districts. On the one hand Leh Buddhist political leaders used it against State Government in particular and Centre Government in general, especially to expose religious discrimination within Jammu and Kashmir State, on other hand such kind of narrative was not reflected in Kargil district where political elites politicize religion to strengthen their respective religious organizations (Islamiya School & Imamiya Khomeini Memorial Trust) and to counter the hegemonic politics of the Ladakh Buddhist Association.

Nonetheless, following the tripartite talks between New Delhi, Srinagar and Ladakh Buddhist Association's leaders in October 1989, the Ladakh Buddhist Association agreed to a compromise: it decided to withdraw the demand for Union Territory status in return for the establishment of an Autonomous Hill Development Councils, along the lines of the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council. The Central Government impressed the Ladakh Buddhist Association leadership with the importance of secularizing its political demands and lifting social boycott of Muslims, which ended in 1992 following talks between the Ladakh Buddhist Association and the Ladakh Muslim Association (LMA). With the formation of a Joint Coordination Committee of Buddhists, Shia, and Sunni Muslims and Christians, the demand of a Hill Council earned the support of all the people of Leh. P.V Narasimha Rao's Government finally established on May 9, 1995, Autonomous Councils each for Leh and Kargil and Inter-District Council to advise them on the matter of common interests.

However, it is argued that the formation of Hill Development Council has not resolved the ethno-religious identities of Ladakh rather it sharpens Muslim identity and Buddhist identity creating binary politics in Ladakh region. It is due to the fact that in a major political development, all main political parties in Leh district in 2002 unanimously decided to dissolve the units of their parent organization to launch a common front for the creation of Union Territory with the overwhelming public response. This development has taken place on the initiative of the Ladakh Buddhist Association. The 2002 State Assembly Election gave a fractured mandate. The Ladakh Union Territory Front Member of Legislative Assembly from Leh decided to join the People Democratic Party-Congress coalition headed by Mufti Mohammed Sayed. In a press conference Ladakh Union Territory Front Member of Legislative Assembly from Leh said that "our support to the new government was based on three conditions-to strengthen the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils, to look into reasons behind the demand for Union Territory status to Ladakh and to ensure equitable development of Ladakh region. However, Ladakh Union Territory Front still stands for the grant of Union Territory

status to Ladakh". The coalition government immediately responded and the Hill Councils made more empowerment financially. Along with the empowerment of Hill Council Leh, the then Chief Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed also announced the formation of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Kargil in January 2003.

## Conclusion

Electoral politics or vote bank politics restricted the demand of Gorkhaland to Darjeeling. As far as the demand of Gorkhaland is concerned in West Bengal, the political discourse revolved around 'Bengali's Sentiment' and 'Gorkha's Aspiration'. Bengali's sentiment constitutes no compromise with the territorial unification of West Bengal state. On the other hand, Gorkhas' aspiration constituted the demand of Gorkhaland outside West Bengal. National political parties like Indian National Congress, Bhartiya Janta Party and Communist Party of India are more tilted towards 'Bengali Sentiment' rather to 'Gorkha's Aspiration'. Moreover, regional political parties like All India Trinamool Congress also favoured 'Bengali Sentiment' and have not nurtured 'Gorkha's Aspiration'. It is due to this fact that West Bengal has forty-two (42) Lok Sabha seats out of it Darjeeling has only one (1) Lok Sabha seat. Similarly, West Bengal has two hundred ninety-four (294) Assembly Seats out of it Darjeeling district has only five (5) assembly seats. So it is in this context that number games do not support 'Gorkha's Aspiration' in India's democratic political system. National, as well as regional political parties, agreed in principle that regional autonomy in the form of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council is the most appropriate solution for the overall development of Darjeeling district. On the other hand local political parties like All India Gorkha League, Gorkha National Liberation Front, and Gorkha Janmukti Morcha in Darjeeling district believed that Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (1988-2007) or Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (2012-2017) is a step toward Gorkhaland outside West Bengal. In spite of the institutional arrangement like Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (1988-2007) or Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (2012-2017) in Darjeeling district demand of Gorkhaland time and again has surfaced in India's democratic political system. Moreover, the demand of Gorkhaland time and again creates obstacles in the proper functioning of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (1988-2007), Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (2012-2017) which became a paradoxical situation in Darjeeling district in particular and Government of West Bengal as well as Government of India in general. Political leaders of Darjeeling argue that Gorkhaland outside West Bengal state is the only panacea for Darjeeling and its people.

Ladakh being a heterogeneous society in terms of ethnicity, religious, linguistic and culture has diversity. With the passage of time, this peculiarity has been providing a fertile ground for breeding of ethno-religious conflicts in Ladakh. Similarly, politicians and religious leaders have been appealing to voters with religious symbols further deepening of ethno-religious mobilization which accentuated inter and intra-community conflicts in Ladakh though, the binary politics existed before the establishment of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils. For instance, the political mobilization in support of 'separation of Ladakh from Kashmir' or 'Union Territory status' mainly supported by the Buddhist political and religious leaders of Leh has shown reservation besides from the side of political and religious leaders of Kargil. This has also been surfaced in the political discourse of Ladakh time and again. Nonetheless socio-economic and political aspiration of Ladakh and its people accommodated through a politico-administrative institution like Hill Development Councils. Besides Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council was not the only the outcome of the democratic struggle led by the people of Ladakh, initially for regional autonomy and subsequently for Union Territory status but also for inclusive development of Ladakh. However, it is argued that

## The Unfolding of India's Democracy: A Study of Ethno-Linguistic and Ethno-Religious identities of Darjeeling and Ladakh

unfolding of 'Two Hill Development Councils' in Ladakh region has rapidly eroded the shared culture between Muslims and Buddhists of Ladakh. With the passage of time for both the communities, religion became a primary identity and sidelined other primordial identities which became a paradoxical kind of situation in contemporary times. It is true that today the political and religious leaders of Leh and Kargil districts are fighting over the allocation of resources. Recent example, Where would be the centre (Headquarter of University and Divisional) either Leh or Kargil? While people of Leh want more resources in Leh district on the other hand people of Kargil want more resources in Kargil district that creates a paradoxical situation in Ladakh region. It is also argued that today Ladakh region and its people are again at a crossroad (unfolding of 'Two Hill Development Councils' in Ladakh region) when the transition is bound to happen. Because, such an unfolding has consolidated ethno-religious identity, communal polarization resulted in the sharpening of binary politics in the form of Leh versus Kargil, Muslims versus Buddhists and has been continuously overshadowing inclusive Ladakhi identity. Unless these fault lines are addressed it would not be realistic to hope for stable and secure Ladakh.

### References

- Snehamoy Chaklader (2004), 'Sub-Regional Movement in India with Reference to Bodoland and Gorkhaland', Kolkata: K P Bagchi and Company, pp. 12-14.
- Romit Bagchi (2012), 'Gorkhaland: Crisis of Statehood', New Delhi, Sage Publication India, pp. 15-16.
- Miriam Wenner (2013), 'Challenging the State by Reproducing its Principles: The Demand for "Gorkhaland" between Regional Autonomy and the National Belonging' Asian Ethnology Vol.72, No.2, p. 208.
- Manas Dasgupta (1988), 'The Gorkhaland Agitation in Darjeeling: Some Political and Economic Dimensions' Centre for Himalayan Studies, Special Lecture 10, University of North Bengal, March, pp. 7-20.
- Amiya K. Samanta (1996), 'Gorkhaland A Study of Ethnic Sepratism' New Delhi, Khama Publisher, pp. 93-96.
- Ibid., pp. 115-117.
- Rajat Ganguly (2005), 'Poverty, Malgovernance and Ethnopolitical Mobilization: Gorkha Nationalism and the Gorkhaland Agitation in India', Ethnic Politics, Vol.11(4), p. 488.
- Timothy J. Scrase, Ruchira Ganguly-Scrase, and Andrew Deuchar (2016), 'Young Men, Education and Ethnicity in Contemporary Darjeeling,' South Asia Research, Vol.36(1): pp. 99-100.
- Zain-ul-Aabedin Aabedi (2009), 'Emergence of Islam in Ladakh'. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2009, pp. 13-14.
- Martijn Van, Beek (1998), 'True Patriots: Justifying Autonomy for Ladakh', Himalayan Research Bulletin, Vol.28, No.1, p. 37.
- Kristoffer Brix Bertelsen (1997), 'Protestant Buddhism and Social Identification in Ladakh', Archives De Sciences Sociales Des Religions 99:129, pp.138-139.
- Beek, n. 10, p. 38.
- Sonam Chosjor (2010), 'Beyond Kashmir: Understanding Ladakh. In Rekha Chowdhary (ed.), Identity Politics in Jammu and Kashmir. New Delhi: Vitasta Publishing, p. 141.

Ibid., p. 143.

Beek, n. 10, pp. 41-42.

Navnita Chadha Behera (2006), 'Demystifying Kashmir', New Delhi: Dorling Kindersley, (India) Pvt.Ltd., p. 118.

Tashi Gyaltsen (2006), 'Ethnic Identity Politics of Ladakh: A Case Study of Kargil', M.Phil. Dissertation, Department of Political Science, University of Jammu, p. 54.

Behera, n.16, pp. 121- 122.

Beek, n. 10, pp.42-43.

Chosjor, n. 13, pp. 144-145.





# **BUSINESS STUDIES**



# The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

Payal Gandotra\*

## ABSTRACT

*Understanding what motivates and impedes shoppers from either purchasing or not purchasing through the Internet has become increasingly important as more and more consumers around the world gain access to and experience on the Internet. The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of choice overload on patronage intentions of online shoppers and also to understand whether males and females differ in patronage intentions towards online shopping. The results indicate that choice overload affects the patronage intentions of online shoppers and also males and females differ in their patronage intentions towards online shopping.*

**Key Words:** Choice Overload, Patronage Intentions, Online Shopping, Gender

## Introduction

The retail industry growth has been revolutionized by Internet and the rules of the game in retailing are fast altering. The impact of western culture on each and every aspect of Indian society is palpable. The lives of common people are making rapid progress not only in metros but also in the cities and even villages. The collapse of joint family system and growth in the number of families where both spouses are working is on the rise. Due to this people have less time to go to the market for purchasing. Other reasons like growing traffic jams, late working hours, easy availability of online banking facility and above all the availability of internet at the door step of whosoever desires it, have made online shopping very popular. Internet access becomes more accessible and the number of cybermalls continues to increase (Choi & Lee, 2003; Li et al., 2017). The role of E-commerce is inevitable in today's business and the diffusion of the internet has spurred the growth of online shoppers (MENA Bytes, 2019). Online retailers have improved their service and have made it convenient for consumers. There is revolution in payment mode as well. From payment before delivery it has moved to cash on delivery (COD). Even the delivery pattern has changed. From fixed delivery timings it has moved to convenient delivery timings at the choice of the customer.

Indian market is dominated by mostly unorganized players, but there is potential in the area of retail players as well. Entry of bigger players even in the rural areas has paved the way of growth in its sector. There has been rise in the Indian middle class people due to rapid economic growth. Though the Internet using population in India is low in terms of percentage of total population but in absolute numbers it is huge (Moslehpour et al., 2018). This gives enormous opportunities for various online shopping companies to tap this segment. Despite all this online retailing forms a small portion of the entire Indian retail markets. Market players have to be more positive, quick thinkers and pioneering in their approach to make serious inroads into the populace. In the current market, bulk of online sales is in a range of items. This market in India needs to leap to the next level.

---

\* Assistant Professor, The Business School, University of Jammu, Jammu, India

## The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

### Gender

The major perceptions towards online purchasing is cheaper product and time saving but also risky (Petryl, 2012). Pandey and Parmar (2019) found that consumers' online shopping behavior is affected by various demographic factors including gender. Compared with men, women are much more interested in browsing sites for more information. At the same time, they strongly prefer uncluttered sites with minimal graphics (Simon, 2000). Study of financial services websites also has detected that males were attracted to richer content, scoring higher on what was termed an 'audio/visual engagement' factor (Maltby et al., 2003). The researchers attributed the male preference for 'plenty of information', sounds, animation and graphics. Women made similar comments, but also appeared to consider a wider array of site cues, including message tone, color schemes, images, font style and visual appeal. Rodgers and Harris (2003) also singled out perceptual cues such as color and graphics as potential drivers of gender differences in emotional response to websites. Women tend to be more sensitive to related information online than men when making judgments (Meyers-Levy & Sternthal, 1991), causing subsequent patronage intentions presented by men and women to differ. In other words, females make greater use of cues than males. They reasoned that if the detailed processing style of women enhanced attention to more subtle cues and their emotional impact, women might have higher standards for site execution and experience less emotional gratification than males. Sarkar (2015) found that factors such as convenience, cost saving and lack of sociality are the main reasons impacting male shoppers for internet shopping, and the primary factors affecting female shoppers for web-based shopping are fashion, adventure and sociality. Cleveland et al., (2003) found that when making consumption decision, women seek more information than men. Females are less likely than males to change their future intentions (Hernandez, Jimenez & Martin, 2010; Nazir & Haq, 2018). However, according to Garbarino and Strahilevitz (2004), females more easily change their perceptions than males because of friend's recommendation and suggestion and on the other hand, also show higher intention to online patronage after they have purchased from the online store (Hernandez, Jimenez & Martin, 2010; Nazir & Haq, 2018). The lack of social interaction may further help to explain the less favorable perceptions of online shopping among females (Andrews et al., 2007; Van Slyke et al., 2002). Some sites, such as Women.com, iVillage.com and Oxygen.com, have fostered a sense of community with chat rooms and discussion boards, while others have facilitated second-hand contact by publishing customer reviews (Garbarino & Strahilevitz, 2004). Previous studies indicated that, female adolescents felt more anxiety and negative attitudes when using the internet (Kadijevich, 2000; Tsai et al., 2001; Rahman et al., 2018).

Arnold and Reynolds (2003) indicated that younger females stress hedonic values more than younger males and have stronger hedonic shopping motivations. The simplest description for observed gender differences in online shopping is associated with product category based. Women may seem to be more rational shoppers than men (Eastlick & Feinberg, 1994; Nazir & Haq, 2018) because the purchase decisions they more frequently make (e.g., clothing) are better served by an optimizing rather than a minimizing strategy (Alreck & Settle, 2002). Gender differences in online behavior may depend on the kinds of products purchased as they do on contrasting information processing styles (Bhatnagar et al., 2000; Rodgers & Harris, 2003; Van Slyke et al., 2002; Dai, et al., 2019).

Prior research suggests that within the online population, women spend less time online than men do (Allen, 2001; Pastore, 2000; Kehoe et al., 1998; Bartel-Sheehan, 1999) and view fewer pages (Allen, 2001). In addition, women have been found to be less likely than men to buy online (Allen, 2001; Pastore, 2000b; Bartel-Sheehan, 1999; Briones, 1998) and have also been found to spend less

money, on average, online (Allen, 2001). Positive perceptions of online merchandising represent another set of elements, which could positively influence on e-satisfaction levels. This includes the number of product offerings, variety of product offering, quality of product information and quantity of product information. Prior research has also demonstrated that when the probability of a negative outcome is held constant (e.g., objective probabilities are given), women are often found to be more risk averse than men (Byrnes et al., 1999, Hersch, 1997). Previous work suggests that females are more concerned than males with losing their privacy both in Internet contexts (Bartel- Sheehan, 1999; Kehoe et al., 1997) and non-Internet contexts (Westin, 1997). Beyond self-descriptions, women have been found more likely to both disclose more personal information to others and change their own behavior as a reaction to cues from those they are interacting with (Brannon, 1999). It has also been found that women are more likely than men to get together or call one another just to chat or share personal experiences (Tannen, 1990; Dai, et al., 2019).

Even in the context of online behavior, it has been observed that women view the chance to communicate with others to be among the greatest benefits of the Internet (Brunner and Bennett, 1997). Women are more likely to respond to the suggestions and actions of others in their social network (Brannon, 1999). However, gender indeed plays a role to affect consumer motivation. In Seock and Bailey's (2008) study, they found females tend to have hedonic motivation because they have higher shopping enjoyment, brand consciousness, price consciousness and shopping confidence than males. The shopping enjoyment and shopping confidence are related with emotion and also the sign of hedonic motivation. On the other hand, males tend to have utilitarian motivation during online purchasing because they have higher concerns about the saving time than females. Saving time is one of the beneficial functions and also one of the elements of utilitarian motivation in online purchasing.

A study conducted by Huang and Yang (2010) is consistent to the result of males as utilitarian purchasers. In utilitarian motivation, males are concerned more on convenience, lack of sociality and time-saving than females. In this functional motivation, the main values for females are the availability of information, convenience and choice. On the other hand, females are also confirmed through previous researches that they are hedonic purchasers. Females are concerned more on adventures, sociality, fashion and value than males. In this emotional motivation, the main values for males are to go online, fashion and value. It seems reasonable to expect that e-satisfaction would be more positive when consumers perceive online stores to offer superior product assortments. For one, superior assortments may increase the probability that consumer requirements will be met and satisfied. This is, especially when consumers desire items not widely distributed (e.g., specialty goods), produced in limited quantities, or unavailable at brick-and-mortar stores because shelf space is limited. The probability of consumers satisfying needs online would also be higher. Second, the wider assortment of products can include items of better quality that may be attractive to consumers. The lower search costs traditionally associated with online shopping are thought to result in consumers buying better quality items. Buying better quality items, in turn, can improve satisfaction by delimiting the costs of failed products. Finally, we expect richer information (more extensive and higher quality) available online to lead to better buying decisions and higher levels of e-satisfaction. Together, rich data and wide product assortments would likely lead to consumer satisfaction with online retailing (Szymanski & Hise, 2000; Bauer et al., 2002).

Meanwhile, the increasing availability and affordability of ecommerce technologies has encouraged more vendors' online presence. As a result, consumers are experiencing an unprecedented variety of choices offered by numerous vendors from the Web. In numerous everyday

## The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

domains, it has been demonstrated that increasing the number of options beyond a handful can lead to paralysis and poor choice and decrease satisfaction with the choice. Females seemed to enjoy extensive variety and number of options and presented a shopaholic tendency when faced with many options. For males, when there is too much variety, the options are considered too similar and impact their selection process (Cruz, 2017).

As on-line stores propose more and more products, it becomes harder and harder for the customers to find what they need in a reasonable time (information overload). As the time the customers spend on searching for the desired item increases, the time they spend in the store decreases, and the chances they would want to visit the store again in the future also decreases.

Thus, overcoming the information overload is important since by doing so online stores will be able to provide better services to the customers and help customers find the products they are looking for much faster and easier. Thus, it increases the chances that customers return to visit the stores.

According to selectivity model, the gender differences are one of the factors in information search process. Meyers-Levy (1989) stated that males tended to be selective processors who search only focusing on the object they want and may miss other cues, whereas females tended to be comprehensive processors who search lots of information and put effort to the object they want (Park, Yoon & Lee, 2009). Males only considered purchasing process is a mission and information search is one part of the mission, thus they only need a little information to complete the purchasing process. Females are significantly different from males.

They considered purchasing process as an enjoyment and information search as a pleasure, thus they are willing to search as much as possible for information. (Park et al., 2009). Another research has proved that females are more willing to search for information to compare with males. Information overload can be defined as a condition of being exposed to an excessive amount of information, at such level that enables the individual to process them (Malhotra, 1982). The fundamental premise that underpins the overload condition is that consumers have a finite capacity to absorb and process information, in a given period of time (Malhotra, 1982).

In the past five years, with the advent and popularity of Internet shopping, consumers have been increasingly faced with a variety of choices from online vendors. While traditional retail stores such as Wal-Mart may stock 100,000 items per location, a Web retailer such as Amazon.com may offer as many as 18 million items available to the consumer to select from.

Choice overload can be categorized as a sub-domain of information overload and the latter covers all kind of over provision of information while the former mainly refers to a set of formalized choices and each choice is characterized by a number of distinctive attributes. It is difficult to measure choice overload directly, but many symptoms related to choice overload are observable (Papadopoulou, 2019). These include deferring the decision to buy (Bettman, 1979), using too many heuristics when making the choice (Scammon, 1977; Kurup & Jain), or making poor decisions even when the decision tools provided by an agent enable the decision-maker to make an optimal choice.

Some studies proposed to investigate an ideal level of information that would optimize the buying process (Wright, 1975; Olshavsky, 1975; Scheibehenne, 2010). Six alternatives is the ideal number for the consumer final buying decision without suffering the choice overload effects (Wright, 1975). Bettman (1979), however, argues that the ideal number is five options, demonstrating that there is no uniformity of points of view on this process. It is important to note that these findings may not represent the current reality, especially when online consumers, who routinely deal with large amounts of information, are considered. The choice overload phenomenon may occur in two ways:

Brands or attributes overload (Wilkie, 1974; Scheibehenne, 2010). The first occurs when the consumer is facing a situation which has several brands of similar products (alternatives) and will choose only one. In this scenario, the information number on the attributes of brands is limited, but the excess of brands to be analyzed features an information overload. The second situation considers a scenario with a small number of brands available, but a lot of choices of the products or services.

McShane and Böckenholt (2017) study has revealed correlations between amount of information, satisfaction and confusion response. It was also observed that, being in a state of information overload, consumer has less ability to choose the “best” brand. The conclusions reached by previous studies are diverse and often contradictory. Some researches indicate that by increasing the number of choices available, there is greater satisfaction among consumers, while others say that this relationship is inversely proportional (Jacoby et al. 1974; Scammon, 1977; McShane & Böckenholt, 2017)

### ChoiceOverload

If we review history, we will find that most of our past has been spent in an information scarce age. Consequently, for many decisions, the high cost of searching for alternatives may have resulted in what may be called “choice underload.” The decision makers would stop searching upon finding a set of “satisficing” choices (Simon 1956). Actually, finding a “satisficing” set of choices with least effort is inherent in human nature (Todd 1988; Platt & Glimcher, 1999), and may well be an adaptation to an information-scarce environment.

In contrast, in the last 30 to 40 years, we have entered an information-rich age. Searching for information has become easier; we are more satisfied and more confident because we have access to more choices with ease. Paradoxically, more choices have brought another creeping problem that of choice overload (Huang 2000; Iyengar & Lepper 2000; Kwak 2001; Schwartz, Ward et al., 2002; Buturak & Evren, 2017).

Choice overload happens when the information size of a choice set of alternatives exceeds the cognitive capacity of human beings. Though “overload” is a mental construct that is hard to measure directly, there are many indicators of choice overload, such as deferring the decision to buy, using too many heuristics when making the choice or making non-optimal decisions (Haubl & Trifts 2000; Iyengar & Lepper 2000). Choice overload has been observed in traditional shopping environments. In one field research Iyengar and Lepper (2000) at a local grocery store, where two different sizes of choice set of exotic jams were presented to consumers, it was found that the extensive-choice condition attracted more customers to stop (60% vs. 40%), but the limited-choice condition actually resulted in many more purchases (30% vs. 3%). The researchers concluded that choice overload in the extensive-choice condition made shoppers hesitate to buy because there were too many jams to look over and they were afraid of the regret they might feel if the options turned out to be better than the one actually chosen. In another recent study (Papadopoulou, 2019), it was found that individuals who tried to maximize utility in choice decisions by considering more choice options felt worse off and less satisfied with their decisions than individuals who made “satisficing” choices and considered less alternatives.

There have been observations of choice overload in online shopping environments when online shoppers use various web-based product comparison agents. One research (Brynjolfsson & Smith, 2000) found that when consumers use price comparison agents (one major type of product comparison agent) to search for price information on books and CDs, instead of picking the online



## The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

vendor offering the lowest price, they tend to choose the branded vendor who charged a higher price. In addition to explanations associated with trust and convenience, choice overload is also a major factor contributing to this behavior. Consumers' limited cognitive capacity prevents them from examining too many choices and they rely on heuristics to simplify the task. In this case, they use the branded vendor as a surrogate for simplification of the decision-making (Tversky & Kahneman 1974; Buturak & Evren, 2017).

Consumers' limited committed cognitive capacity prevented them from examining too many choices, and they relied on heuristics to simplify the task. In this case, they used the branded vendor as a surrogate to simplify the decision-making. As a result, the agent was underutilized in decision making, and consumers chose to pay the premium to avoid risk.

Thus, on one hand, some evidence indicated that electronic decision aids like comparison-shopping agents can help online shoppers by reducing search and comparison cost. On the other hand, the same decision aids may also overload online shoppers by providing too many choices.

Researches have shown that as the attractiveness of alternatives rises, individuals experience conflict and as a result tend to defer decision, search for new alternatives, choose the default option, or simply opt not to choose (Schwartz, 2004; Iyengar & Lepper, 2000; Stanton & Paolo, 2012; Buturak & Evren, 2017). Furthermore, consumer research suggests that as both the number of options and the information about options increases, people tend to consider fewer choices and to process a smaller fraction of the overall information available regarding their choices (Chernev et al., 2015; Khare, 2016).

### Patronage Intentions

The generation of committed repeat purchasers has been a primary objective of marketers for decades because retaining customers requires less marketing resources than recruiting new ones

Mathwick, Malhotra and Rigdon (2001) refer to patronage intention as "the customers' willingness to consider, recommend, or purchase from a retailer in the future". Early conceptualizations of behavioral intentions toward a store/brand were mainly focused on willingness to buy (Dodds, Monroe & Grewal, 1991). Later studies, however, viewed patronage intention as a multi-dimensional construct. Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996) categorized customers' behavioral intentions caused by the service quality into favorable vs. unfavorable types. Baker et al., (2002), mentioned three elements including willingness to recommend, willingness to buy, and shopping likelihood as dimensions of the store patronage intentions.

The study of Baker et al., (2002), found that customers show higher patronage intentions toward a store if they associate less psychic cost to shopping at it. Psychic cost refers to the "consumers' mental stress or emotional labor during the shopping experience" (Baker et al., 2002). If customers realize that an online retailer has assistive intent and tries to help them in their purchase decisions, they encounter less mental stress and show higher patronage intentions toward it. Furthermore, a series of past studies confirmed the positive influence of the seller's customer orientation on customer satisfaction (Stock & Hoyer, 2005; Goff et al., 1997), customer loyalty (Jones, Busch & Dacin, 2003), and buyer-seller relationship as well as salesperson's performance (Saxe & Weitz 1982; Deshpandé, Farley & Webster, 1993; Boles et al., 2001; Knight, Kim & Crutsinger, 2007). In the online context, it was found by Poddar, Donthu and Wei (2002) and Moslehpour (2017) that an online seller's website customer orientation has a positive influence on the patronage intentions of customers.

A few past studies revealed that customers who are highly involved in a shopping task are likely to show more patronage intentions toward the seller (Saxe & Weitz 1982; Deshpandé, Farley & Webster, 1993; Goff et al., 1997). Wakefield and Baker (1998) found evidence for a positive relationship between involvement with shopping and patronage intentions toward the shopping mall as well as the desire to stay at it. In the online context, Wu (2002) found that several elements of the online consumer behavior such as rate and frequency of the purchase vary with the degree of Internet marketing involvement.

The involvement construct addressed in the current research points to the involvement in an e-tailers' website. Singh, Dalal and Spears (2005) refer to involvement as an important dimension of Web page perceptions. Those authors found that web page involvement positively influences intentions of the viewers to return to the page and explore it. Furthermore, Richard (2005) found that site involvement has a positive impact on purchase intentions of the customers. Panichpathom (2016) examines that the re-patronage intention is the possibility to repeat or keep on purchasing at the same society mall. A study by Cruz (2017) found that variety is essential for a reliable and competitive website. Besides, males tend to stick only to what they want by ignoring remaining options. Furthermore, for both genders, decision satisfaction is associated with price, time taken to search for the product and accuracy of visual and written information about the product. It could be concluded from the above studies that customers show more patronage intentions toward an online seller if they find that their interactions with the site are interesting and involving.

### Hypotheses

Thus based on the literature reviewed on gender, choice overload and patronage intentions of the online shoppers we have framed following hypotheses

H1: Choice overload on e-tailing websites affects the patronage intentions of online shoppers.

H2: Gender has a significant effect on patronage intentions of online shoppers.

### Research Methodology

Based on the documentation of literature reviewed, the research work requires an in-depth analysis of data collected to fuel further investigation. With the literature findings as a foundation, the quantitative phase of research reported next, focuses on gathering survey data to empirically test these hypotheses. A convenience sampling technique was used to collect data from respondents through questionnaires. After removing incomplete responses, a total of 172 shoppers were identified from Jammu region to test the framed hypotheses. The respondents were identified by asking them a filtering question 'have you ever shopped online'. Only those shoppers who have shopped online became the part of this research. Respondents were required to fill out a closed-ended questionnaire on seven-point scale. This includes options such as (7). Strongly Disagree; (6). Disagree; (5). Somewhat Disagree; (4). Neither Agree nor Disagree; (3). Somewhat Agree; (2). Agree and (1). Strongly Agree. Previously validated survey instruments were revised and used in order to ensure the measures are adequate and representative. Choice overload scale by Stanton and Paolo (2012) was modified. The original scale had nine statements out of which five were selected for the present study, as the remaining four statements were not relevant to meet the objectives of the present study and E-store patronage intention scale by Chang (2010) having seven statements was adopted. We used simple linear regression to test our first hypothesis and t- test to test our second hypothesis. The result of which has been discussed in next section.

## The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

### Data analysis

H1: Choice overload on e-tailing websites affects the patronage intentions of online shoppers.

Thus based on the data collected, we tested our first hypothesis by means of simple linear regression. Here in this hypothesis, the impact of choice overload on e-store patronage was analyzed by using regression analysis. The results for which have indicated that choice overload affects e-store patronage intention ( $R = 0.521$ ,  $\text{sig} = 0.000$ ). The analysis has indicated that the values for correlation ( $R$ ) at 0.521 and adjusted ( $R^2$ ) at 0.271 thereby clearly suggesting that choice overload is responsible for 27.1% variations in patronage intention (Table 1). The detailed regression analysis is as follows:

**Table 1: Model Summary: Choice overload and Patronage Intentions**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.521 <sup>a</sup>	.271	.267	1.30033	.271	63.293	1	170	.000
a. Predictors: (Constant), Choice Overload									

ANOVA Table 2 indicates a significant p-value ( $p = 0.000$ ) which means that there is a linear relationship between the dependent and independent variable.

**Table 2 ANOVA: Choice overload and Patronage Intentions**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	107.018	1	107.18	63.293	.000 <sup>a</sup>
Residual	287.445	170	1.691		
Total	394.463	171			
Predictors: (Constant), Choice Overload					
Dependent Variable: Patronage Intentions					

Further analysis indicate that choice overload faced by the online shoppers has a negative relationship with patronage intentions of online shoppers ( $\beta = -0.521$ ) at ( $p = 0.000$ ). Also the Beta coefficient weights indicate that choice overload impacts patronage intention of online shoppers.

**Table3: Regression Coefficients: Choice overload and Patronage Intentions**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Constant	6.259	.285		2.947	.000	5.696	6.821
Choice Overload	-.488	.061	-.521	-7.956	.000	-.609	-.367
Dependent Variable: Patronage intentions							

**Regression Equation**

Thus the regression equation will be

$$Y (\text{Patronage Intention}) = 6.259 - 0.488 (\text{Choice Overload})$$

**H2: Gender has a significant effect on patronage intentions of online shoppers.**

This is to determine whether there are differences between genders regarding patronage intentions. To test this hypothesis, t-test was subsequently used. The finding suggests that there is difference in patronage intentions of male online buyers and female online buyers with mean values 3.7488 and 4.7934 respectively which shows that female buyers patronize more as compared to male buyers.

**Table4: Group Statistics**

Gender		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
PI	female	63	4.7934	1.29666	.16336
	male	109	3.7488	1.51125	.14475

Thus from Table 5, it is inferred that statistically significant t-values for males and females have indicated that differences were found between the patronage intentions of males and females. Thus accepting our second hypothesis

The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload  
on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

**Table 5: Independent Samples Test**

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
PI Equal variances Assumed	8.583	.004	4.594	170	.000	1.04459	.22738	.59574	1.49343
Equal Variances Not assumed			4.786	145.93	.000	1.04459	.21827	.61321	1.47596

### Discussions and Implications

In connection with demographic variable, the independent sample t-test was used which indicates that the males and females were significantly different with respect to their patronage intentions towards online shopping. Also it was seen that choice overload on websites affect the patronage intentions of online buyers

Results of our study reveal that choice overload variable is a significant predictor of patronage intentions of online buyers. One can attribute a number of reasons for this result to be true. One of the motivations for consumers to shop online is the convenience with which one can jump from one e-tailer to the other in order to have more choices. Although this may help in achieving the motive of convenience at the doorstep, it will also result in the consumers making a more difficult decision of making a selection from among too many options. Also, since consumer memory has limited capacity to process information (Lutz & Huitt, 2003), it is assumed that beyond a specific number, consumers start feeling choice overload. Therefore, the more the number of choices made available to shoppers, the more likely are they to experience choice overload, and finally after making a purchase decision a consumer is likely to regret it for want of computational capacities that consumers need for assessing their preferences. The direct implication of the finding is that online retailers need to devise strategies such that a limited choice is made available in a particular product category for a limited time so that consumers can make informed choices and at the same time are satisfied with the choice they have made. In such a case, shopper will be exposed to lesser number of choices that will be made available over a period of time instead of a lot of choices, all at the same time. Therefore, it would result in satisfying the consumers. E-commerce development and emergence of Electronic money, and the ability to perform business operations through internet and computerized networks have led to changes in consumers behaviors. Marketing managers gain information through analysis of

consumers' behaviors. Such information assures their success in the market. Hence, examination of customer satisfaction has a critical importance, which is regarded as a means to achieve success. Marketing activities should focus on consumer satisfaction and issues related to that. The customers' satisfaction would influence their patronage intentions. Thus companies should understand the dynamic and ever-changing environment they work in, and should understand the changes happening in that to adapt them with this context. The study explored effect of gender and choice overload on patronage intentions of online buyers. It was found that males and females differ in their patronage intentions towards online shopping and also choice overload on websites affects the patronage intentions of online buyers.

All these results could have important implications for online shopping which offer various products to the customers. From a theoretical standpoint, these results contribute to existing literature by providing insights into the factors that seem to affect online shopping patronage intentions of online buyers. The number of choices available online affects the customers' willingness to visit web store. Thus online retailers must think before adding too many options to their web stores. Moreover it was found in the above study that role of gender is very important to increase the patronage intentions of online shoppers. By considering the distinctive differences between male and female online shoppers, in terms of their motives and expectations, it will be possible to give them the experience they demand. Women like to shop for fun thus likes to have more choices whereas males shop for utility hence feel overloaded with more choices if available.

### Future Research and Limitations

Future studies could be extended in other demographic group. Moreover, the sample was drawn solely from the population from Jammu region. The research should be further tested using samples from other cities as well as metros where online shopping is growing at a very fast rate. Despite the limitations, this study does furnish a fertile direction for internet marketing. The findings of this study can provide some directions for future research. First of all, one important area for future research is to explore gender differences concerning utilitarian and hedonic values of web-based shopping by culture. Consumers from different cultures have different attitudes, preferences and values, thus, consumers with different cultural background may react differently towards computer-mediated consumption. It is interesting to see how the results of this study would vary in different cultural settings. Second, future researchers could investigate the differences of shopping values based on different consumer market segments (for example, age, education, income). Future research should access consumers in other contexts. Finally, the differences of shopping values between retailing channels and web-based shopping need to be further investigated.

### References

- AL-Shukri, H. K. H. (2019). Factors Influencing Online Shopping Intention: A study among online shoppers in Oman. *International Journal of Academic Research In Business And Social Sciences*, 9(3).
- Alreck, P., & Settle, R. B. (2002). Gender effects on Internet, catalogue and store shopping. *Journal of Database Marketing & Customer Strategy Management*, 9(2), 150-162.
- Arnold, M. J., & Reynolds, K. E. (2003). Hedonic shopping motivations. *Journal of retailing*, 79(2), 77-95.

## The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

Baker, J., Parasuraman, A., Grewal, D., & Voss, G. B. (2002). The influence of multiple store environment cues on perceived merchandise value and patronage intentions. *Journal of marketing*, 66(2), 120-141.

Bauer, H. H., Grether, M., & Leach, M. (2002). Building customer relations over the Internet. *Industrial Marketing Management*, 31(2), 155-163.

Bettman, J. R. (1979). *Information processing theory of consumer choice*. Addison-Wesley Pub. Co..

Bhatnagar, A., Misra, S., & Rao, H. R. (2000). On risk, convenience, and Internet shopping behavior. *Communications of the ACM*, 43(11), 98-105.

Boles, J. S., Babin, B. J., Brashear, T. G., & Brooks, C. (2001). An examination of the relationships between retail work environments, salesperson selling orientation-customer orientation and job performance. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 9(3), 1-13.

Brannon L. *Gender psychological perspectives*. 2nd ed. Needham Heights (MA): Allyn and Bacon, 1999.

Briones, M. G. (1998). On-line retailers seek ways to close shopping gender gap. *Marketing News*, 32(19), 2-3.

Brunner, C., & Bennett, D. (1997). Technology and gender: Differences in masculine and feminine views. *NASSP Bulletin*, 81(592), 46-51.

Brynjolfsson, E., & Smith, M. D. (2001). The great equalizer? Consumer choice behavior at Internet shopbots.

Buturak, G., & Evren, Ö. (2017). Choice overload and asymmetric regret. *Theoretical Economics*, 12(3), 1029-1056.

Byrnes, J. P., Miller, D. C., & Schafer, W. D. (1999). Gender differences in risk taking: a meta-analysis. *Psychological bulletin*, 125(3), 367.

Chernev, A., Böckenholt, U., & Goodman, J. (2015). Choice overload: a conceptual review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 25(2), 333-358.

Choi, J., & Lee, K. H. (2003). Risk perception and e-shopping: a cross-cultural study. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, 7(1), 49-64.

Cleveland, M., Babin, B. J., Laroche, M., Ward, P., & Bergeron, J. (2003). Information search patterns for gift purchases: a cross-national examination of gender differences. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour: An International Research Review*, 3(1), 20-47.

Cruz, S. (2017). *An Exploratory Study of Genders, Choice Overload, Perception of Variety and Decision Satisfaction* (Doctoral Dissertation). National College of Ireland, Ireland.

Dai, W., Arnulf, J. K., Iao, L., Wan, P., & Dai, H. (2019). Like or want? Gender differences in attitudes toward online shopping in China. *Psychology & Marketing*, 36(4), 354-362.

Deshpandé, R., Farley, J. U., & Webster Jr, F. E. (1993). Corporate culture, customer orientation, and innovativeness in Japanese firms: a quadrat analysis. *Journal of marketing*, 57(1), 23-37.



Dodds, W. B., Monroe, K. B., & Grewal, D. (1991). Effects of price, brand, and store information on buyers' product evaluations. *Journal of marketing research*, 28(3), 307-319.

Eastlick, M. A., & Feinberg, R. A. (1994). Gender differences in mail- catalog patronage motives. *Journal of Direct Marketing*, 8(2), 37-44.

Garbarino, E., & Strahilevitz, M. (2004). Gender differences in the perceived risk of buying online and the effects of receiving a site recommendation. *Journal of Business Research*, 57(7), 768-775.

Goff, B. G., Boles, J. S., Bellenger, D. N., & Stojack, C. (1997). The influence of salesperson selling behaviors on customer satisfaction with products. *Journal of retailing*, 73(2), 171-183..

Häubl, G., & Trifts, V. (2000). Consumer decision making in online shopping environments: The effects of interactive decision aids. *Marketing science*, 19(1), 4-21.

Hernández, B., Jiménez, J., & José Martín, M. (2011). Age, gender and income: do they really moderate online shopping behaviour?. *Online information review*, 35(1), 113-133.

Hersch, J. (1996). Smoking, seat belts, and other risky consumer decisions: Differences by gender and race. *Managerial and decision economics*, 17(5), 471-481.

Huang, J. H., & Yang, Y. C. (2010). The relationship between personality traits and online shopping motivations. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 38(5), 673-679.

Iyengar, S. S., & Lepper, M. R. (2000). When Choice is Demotivating: Can One Desire Too Much of a Good thing? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 79, 995-1006

Iyengar, S. S., & Lepper, M. R. (2000). When choice is demotivating: Can one desire too much of a good thing?. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 79(6), 995.

Jacob, J., E.S. Donald & A.K. Carol, 1974. Brand choice behavior as a function of information load. *J. Market. Res.*, 11: 63-69.

Jones, E., Busch, P., & Dacin, P. (2003). Firm market orientation and salesperson customer orientation: interpersonal and intrapersonal influences on customer service and retention in business-to-business buyerseller relationships. *Journal of business research*, 56(4), 323-340.

Kadijevich, D. (2000). Gender differences in computer attitude among ninth-grade students. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 22(2), 145-154.

Khare, A. (2016). Consumer shopping styles and online shopping: An empirical study of Indian consumers. *Journal of Global Marketing*, 29(1), 40-53.

Knight, D. K., Kim, H. J., & Crutsinger, C. (2007). Examining the effects of role stress on customer orientation and job performance of retail salespeople. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 35(5), 381-392.

Kurup, A.J., & Jain, P. (2018). Effect of E-Loyalty Cues on Repurchase Behavioural Intentions Among Online Shoppers. *Indian Journal Of Marketing*, 48(11), 44-63.

Kwak, M. (2001). Searching for search costs. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 42(3), 8.

Li, Y., Xu, Z., & Xu, F. (2017). Perceived control and purchase intention in online shopping: The

## The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

mediating role of self-efficacy. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 46(1), 99-106.

Lutz, S., & Huiitt, W. (2003). Information processing and memory: Theory and applications. *Educational Psychology Interactive*, 1-17.

Malhotra, N. K. (1982). Information load and consumer decision making. *Journal of consumer research*, 8(4), 419-430.

Maltby, A., Chudry, F., & Wedande, G. (2003). Cyber dudes and cyber babes: gender differences and internet financial services. *Journal of Financial Services Marketing*, 8(2), 152-165.

Mathwick, C., Malhotra, N., & Rigdon, E. (2001). Experiential value: conceptualization, measurement and application in the catalog and Internet shopping environment? . *Journal of retailing*, 77(1), 39-56.

MENA bytes (2019). Ecommerce in MENA expected to reach \$28.5 billion by 2022: Retrieved from <https://www.menabytes.com/ecommerce-mena-2022/>

Meyers-Levy, J., & Sternthal, B. (1991). Gender differences in the use of message cues and judgments. *Journal of marketing research*, 28(1), 84-96.

Moslehpour, M., Pham, V., Wong, W. K., & Bilgiçli, İ. (2018). E-purchase intention of Taiwanese consumers: Sustainable mediation of perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. *Sustainability*, 10(1), 234.

Moss, G. A., & Gunn, R. W. (2009). Gender differences in website production and preference aesthetics: preliminary implications for ICT in education and beyond. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 28(5), 447-460.

Nazir, Salsabeel & Haq, Zia. (2018). Exploring Women`s attitude in Online Shopping-A review of Literature. *International Journal of Enhanced Research in Management & Computer Applications*. 7. 566-570.

Olshavsky, R. W. (1979). Task complexity and contingent processing in decision making: A replication and extension. *Organizational behavior and human performance*, 24(3), 300-316.

Pandey, A., & Parmar, J. (2019). Factors Affecting Consumer's Online Shopping Buying Behavior. *Proceedings of 10th International Conference on Digital Strategies for Organizational Success*. Available at SSRN 3308689.

Panichpathom, S. (2016). Building Customers' Re-Patronage Intention through Service Quality of Community Mall in Bangkok. *Entrepreneurial Business and Economics Review*, 4(2), 9-25.

Papadopoulou, N., Raïes, K., Mir Bernal, P., & Woodside, A. G. (2019). Gifts as conduits in choice overload environments. *Psychology & Marketing*.

Park, J., Yoon, Y., & Lee, B. (2009). The effect of gender and product categories on consumer online information search. *ACR North American Advances*.

Pastore, M. (2000). Web remains a man's world outside US. Retrieved April, 26, 2019.

Petrtyl, J. (2012). Security and trustworthiness as drivers of e-shop competitiveness (opinions of young customers). *Journal of Competitiveness*, 4(1).

- Platt, M. L., & Glimcher, P. W. (1999). Neural correlates of decision variables in parietal cortex. *Nature*, 400(6741), 233.
- Poddar, A., Donthu, N., & Wei, Y. (2009). Web site customer orientations, Web site quality, and purchase intentions: The role of Web site personality. *Journal of Business Research*, 62(4), 441-450.
- Rahman, M. A., Islam, M. A., Esha, B. H., Sultana, N., & Chakravorty, S. (2018). Consumer buying behavior towards online shopping: An empirical study on Dhaka city, Bangladesh. *Cogent Business & Management*, 5(1), 1514940.
- Richard, M. O. (2005). Modeling the impact of internet atmospherics on surfer behavior. *Journal of business research*, 58(12), 1632-1642.
- Rodgers, S., & Harris, M. A. (2003). Gender and e-commerce: An exploratory study. *Journal of advertising research*, 43(3), 322-329.
- Rodgers, S., & Harris, M. A. (2003). Gender and e-commerce: An exploratory study. *Journal of advertising research*, 43(3), 322-329.
- Sarkar, R. (2015). The Role of Gender in Online Shopping. A Literature Review. *Global Journal of Engineering, Science & Social Science Studies*, 1(8), 25-31.
- Scammon, D. L. (1977). "Information load" and consumers. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 4(3), 148155.
- Scheibehenne, B.G. (2010). Can There Ever Be Too Many Options? A Meta--- Analytic Review of Choice Overload. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32,419--- 427.
- Schwartz, B. (2004). *The paradox of choice: Why less is more*. New York: Ecco.
- Schwartz, B., Ward, A., Monterosso, J., Lyubomirsky, S., White, K., & Lehman, D. R. (2002). Maximizing versus satisficing: Happiness is a matter of choice. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 83(5), 1178.
- Seock, Y. K., & Bailey, L. R. (2008). The influence of college students' shopping orientations and gender differences on online information searches and purchase behaviours. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 32(2), 113-121.
- Sheehan, K. B. (1999). An investigation of gender differences in on-line privacy concerns and resultant behaviors. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 13(4), 24-38.
- Simon, H. A. (1956). Rational choice and the structure of the environment. *Psychological Review*, 63(2), 129-138...
- Simon, S. J. (2000). The impact of culture and gender on web sites: an empirical study. *ACM SIGMIS Database: the DATABASE for Advances in Information Systems*, 32(1), 18-37.
- Singh, S. N., Dalal, N., & Spears, N. (2005). Understanding web home page perception. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 14(3), 288-302.
- Stanton, J.V. & Paolo, D.M. (2012). Information overload in the context of apparel: effects on confidence, shopper orientation and leadership. *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management*, 16 (4), 454 476

## The Effects of Gender and Choice Overload on Patronage Intentions of Online Buyers

Stock, R. M., & Hoyer, W. D. (2005). An attitude-behavior model of salespeople's customer orientation. *Journal of the academy of marketing science*, 33(4), 536-552.

Szymanski, D. M., & Hise, R. T. (2000). E-satisfaction: an initial examination. *Journal of retailing*, 76 (3), 309-322.

Tannen D. *You just don't understand: women and men in conversation*. New York: William Morrow, 1990.

Todd, P. A. (1988). An experimental investigation of the impact of computer based decision aids on the process of preferential choice (Doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia).

Tsai, C. C., & Lin, S. S. (2001). Analysis of attitudes toward computer networks and Internet addiction of Taiwanese adolescents. *Cyberpsychology & behavior*, 4(3), 373-376.

Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1974). Judgment under uncertainty: Heuristics and biases. *science*, 185(4157), 1124-1131.

Van Slyke, C., Comunale, C. L., & Belanger, F. (2002). Gender differences in perceptions of web-based shopping. *Association for Computing Machinery. Communications of the ACM*, 45(8), 82-82.

Wakefield, K. L., & Baker, J. (1998). Excitement at the mall: determinants and effects on shopping response. *Journal of retailing*, 74(4), 515-539.

Westin, A. (1997). Privacy and American business study. Disponível: <http://www.pandab.org>.

Wilkie, W. L. (1974). Analysis of effects of information load. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 11(4), 462-466.

Wright, P. (1975). Consumer choice strategies: Simplifying vs. optimizing. *Journal of marketing research*, 12(1), 60-67.

Wu, S. I. (2002). Internet marketing involvement and consumer behavior. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 14(4), 36-53.

Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of marketing*, 60(2), 31-46.

Zhang, Z., Hou, Y., & Zhu, Y. (2019). Applying Complexity Theory To Understand Chinese Consumers' Decision-Making In Innovative Products. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 49(2), 191-212.

# Perceived Service Determinants: A Chaos between Value & Satisfaction determinant in Psychology of a Consumer

Sahil Koul\*

## ABSTRACT

*Service is any transaction in this system where no physical goods are involved or transferred from a seller to the buyer. Product may be the primary touch point of the service and its determinants. However it acts as a means of judging the quality and experiencing the benefits which makes up the perception of a person regarding the product and the associated service with it. People may pay for a good product but it is evident that they do also pay a little extra to get added service. Therefore, it is quite obvious that the Quality of the product and the service offered by the product go hand in hand. This service may be provided by the service providers which may not be directly linked with the product. For instance buying a mobile phone and getting an added data pack as a service add on. Thus to understand the service we need to dig deep into the domain of the determinants that can generalize the service that we attain. On the other hand the service is not only dependent on its determinants but its view may change from people to people or from income group to income group or even from the age group to the age group. Perception is a big player in service industry. The perception can be generalized as one's view of or about a certain service or product. This paper focuses on this concept of Perceived service. The paper also underscores the core determinants of a service that make an impact. The later part of the paper explains the Chaos that arises between the determinants of the perceived service. The main aim of this paper is to help marketers understand that in the dynamic world service determinants can surely be controlled but are not static and, therefore, a continuous effort is to be made to keep on tracking and analyzing how these dynamic determinants shift from product to product and from people to people.*

**Key Words:** Perceived Service, Determinants, Service quality, Price, Satisfaction, Image.

## Introduction

A service resulting in customer satisfaction will benefit an organisation that operates in a consumer market (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). This is based on the premise customers with rebuying intentions have been satisfied with the service in past. (Anderson & Sullivan, 1990; Bernhardt, Donthu, & Kennett, 2000; Fornell & Wernerfelt, 1987; Gale, 1997; Howat, Murray, & Crilley, 1999; Philip & Hazlett, 1997). Another research focus supports that this was done on the nature of satisfaction and its relationship to service quality and the future intentions of customers (Brady & Robertson, 2001). Several recent studies also support this position and believe it is a consequence of service quality (Brady & Robertson, 2001; McDougall & Levesque, 2000) and this appears consistent across service contexts. Similarly, relationships between service quality through satisfaction to repurchase intentions of customers were reported by Cronin and Taylor (1992), and Patterson and Spreng (1997). Many other factors have been shown to influence the satisfaction that a customer

---

\* The Business School, University of Jammu, Jammu, India

## **“Perceived Service Determinants: A Chaos between Value & Satisfaction determinant in Psychology of a Consumer”**

experiences with a service. These include affective or emotional attachments with the service, self-esteem or self-concept concerns (Mahony & Moorman, 1999), or even social norms. McDougall and Levesque (2000) recognised the already extensive research on service quality and its relationship to customer satisfaction and argued for more comprehensive models to assist managers in better understanding the key drivers of satisfaction. A specific focus was the concept of perceived value. Perceived value is generally defined as the gap between what is received compared to what is given in an exchange (McDougall & Levesque, 2000; Zeithaml, 1988). McDougall and Levesque (2000) argued that, along with perceived service quality, perceived value was an antecedent to customer satisfaction, which in turn was directly related to future purchase intentions of customers. While McDougall and Levesque (2000) encouraged further research on concepts such as perceived value, Cronin, Brady, and Hult (2000) asserted that partial consensus had been achieved, supporting perceived value along with perceived service quality as antecedents to customer satisfaction (for example, Hallowell, 1996). However, Cronin et al. (2000) did also note that the literature was deficient in research that simultaneously compares the relative influence of quality, value and satisfaction with service outcomes. Such research, they believed, would further clarify our understanding of consumers' decision-making. Similarly, Petrick, Backman, and Bixler (1999) supported the need to augment customer satisfaction measurement with such variables as perceived value to provide more in-depth understandings of customer perceptions at a diagnostic managerial level. These supportive researches have been a part of devising the core determinants of the service and its perception among the consumers. Therefore, if we want to have better service perception we need to create a better service along with the experience which may lead to satisfaction ultimately.

### **What is Customer Perception of Service?**

Perception if we define simply is the view of same thing by different people. As quoted by Anais Nin “People don't see things as they are, they see things as they are”. Thus perception is a process through which an information is interpreted to one's conscious self which may be based on various influential factors. Such concepts in marketing may make it intricate at times. Human brain is quite complex and functions in a way of its own. Customer's thoughts and behaviors tend to converge while displaying certain emotions and behaviors. A lot of these complex thoughts and behavioral patterns may be taken into consideration of forming a customer perception.

Customer Perception as a marketing concept aims to tell us that what customers presume or think about its product, services or offerings. It can be positive or negative feelings, perceptions, inhibitions, predispositions, expectations or experiences that a customer has.

If a marketer understands the customer perception as a concept, he will figure out that it single handedly may decide the future of a product or service or a company as a whole. How a brand positions itself is a critical factor in this process to create a positive brand image as a value determinant in the society dominant of social status and also to fulfill the esteem part of our ego.

If we take an example of the company Apple, which is positively perceived as a good image by most of its customer base. In fact, there are people who can be called as diehard followers of Apple as a brand offering its service. The reason being that the company throughout its past has been able to create that customer belief and perception about it through innovation, quality of service and product they offer and other similar tangible and intangible factors. As a result, Apple has been one of the top rated and performing brand in the world in the IT & Electronics sector.

Consumer Perception can be a factor that could decide how much a product or service will sell itself and how the psychological implications will be on the intended consumer group. If we take some

more examples we can say that it is not only the quality and image of the product that creates the perception itself. In some cases the perception may be caused through the price. For instance a high cost car is believed to be more luxurious despite it may have “n” numbers of competitors that are less priced in the segment and offered more. Not only this but even the psychologies play an important role say a cheaper product gets a tag of not being good and a high priced item sells for itself. However, for people with psychologies of a more logic driven human the case may be vice versa if the less priced product will offer better specification or benefits.

### **How Perceptions are made**

Human brains tend to takeout sense out of the stimuli it gets and the perceptions are what we approximate with reality.

Various theories have supported and explored how the perceptions are created some of them are:

### **Exposure(It depends on what you are Looking For?)**

Exposure is the extent to which it encounters stimulus. It is not enough to produce an impact on a person significantly.

For example, whenever we go out there are a number of advertisements and hoardings that we see. Do we pay attention to all? The answer is no. Our exposure to the product or service depends on what we are looking for. For instance think that we have to buy a car, next time when we go out our brain will tend to find out relevant things that we want, for example, an advertisement hording with a car offer or a canopy where people are offering test drives (which usually would go unnoticed) or even a TV advertisement of a car would stop us from shifting from a channel to another. This is how we find sense in things that we see and are exposed to. Thus we tend to see and perceive what we feel is beneficial to us and not the other way around. Weber's law supports this assumption as the law says “The stronger is the initial stimulus, the greater is the additional intensity needed for the second stimulus to be perceived as different.”

For example, A small decrease in the size of an item that the consumer consumes is not that effective as it may be if we project that there is a small increase in the size which is of more concern to the consumer. This can be analyzed as decreasing the quantity of a Juice bottle will have lesser effect on the consumer than that if we increase the quantity.

**Benefit & Quality:** Another factor that makes the perception is the quality of the product or service and the benefit that we can get out of it. Despite being of utmost importance a service will not be consumed if it is not of good quality.

For example, say a person is thirsty and wants water to drink for which she/he is even ready to pay. We provide the consumer with two counter to pay and take the water from. The counter “A” being where they give filtered water which is packaged, “B” where the water is offered in untreated manner having visible dirt in it. In this case despite there is a need for water with that consumer he/she will always go to counter “A”. Now even if we say that counter “B” will be cheaper than counter “A” still most of the consumers will prefer counter “A” and not counter “B” due to quality.

**Price(How much is the consumer ready to pay?):** Price is another concern that needs to be addressed for formation of perceptions in the consumers and to make buying decisions. The variation of this factor on perception can vary from the income groups that we consider. Price may not be a concern with high range income groups and thus may not be a driver of their positive perception



### “Perceived Service Determinants: A Chaos between Value & Satisfaction determinant in Psychology of a Consumer”

though it may play an important role in forming a negative perception in such people. But if we see low or middle range income groups then price forms a perception regarding services and products.

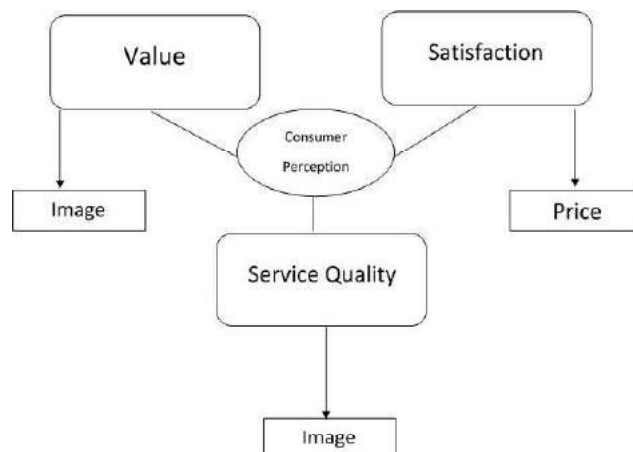
**Core Determinants of Perception:** The Determinates of the Perception can get as confusion as the term itself is. To ease out this process let us consider three prime determinants and their allied associates. Thus we may put service perception under three main Determinants:

1. Quality of service
  - a. Moment of Truth (Exposure)
  - b. Evidence
2. Value
  - a. Image
3. Satisfaction
  - a. Price

The core determinants suggest that consumer's perception is based on three factors which are the Service Quality which may be attained or examined by the consumer through the exposure to that service or that we call as the moment of truth. Or and through the Evidence that the consumer may gather from the external environment regarding the service which may be a rating from some other consumer or a satisfied or dissatisfied close associate or even the self-experience or the ambience of the product.

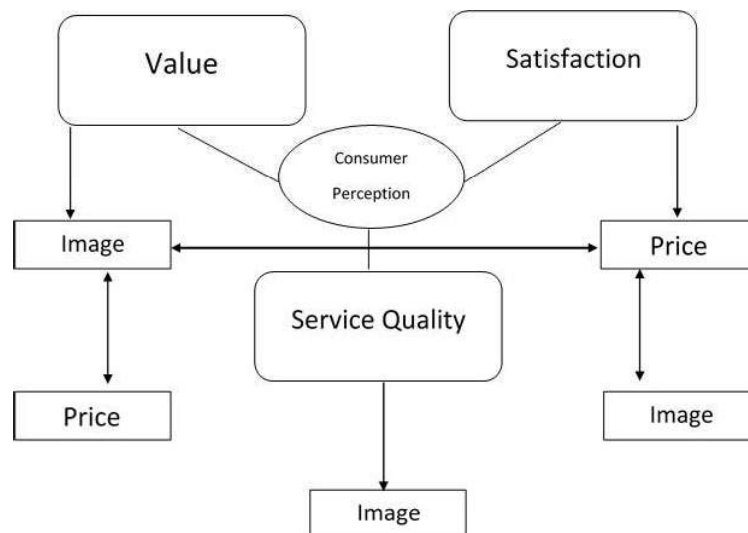
The other determinant talks about the value that the consumer may attain or get from using a particular service. This value factor can be determined by the image that the product carry as mentioned in the Apple's example above.

The last determinant talks about the satisfaction that is the ultimate goal of all consumer services. This satisfaction determinant is often associated with price as we tend to consider that price is the closest associate that decides the satisfaction of the consumer as if we pay less and the service is not of the expected or perceived level we may tend to get less dissatisfied due to non-spending of a lot of money.



**Fig. 1: Consumer Perception Determinants**

**The Chaos in Determinants:** Now if we closely examine we can judge that service quality is one factor that is prevalent in consumer perception. However, if we analyze the value & satisfaction as determinants then there is a thin line between its associates. Can price be a factor of satisfaction, image be a factor for value? Is there a correlation between the price and the value and image and satisfaction? We usually link price with satisfaction and value with image in terms of service perception. But let us consider a case where a consumer buys a product in two segments say a high end costly device and a low range device. Now in the first scenario we see that the value can be achieved through image of that product like here it is an Apple product. And since the consumer has spent a huge sum of money and is getting a value in return thus in this case we may have the satisfaction determinant fulfilled through the price. However, the same may not be true for the device that falls under the low segment. In the latter case we have a phone that is quite cheap and may even offer a good specification and quality but here the prime consideration regarding the value determinant is the price and not the image like we say it's a value for money product. In this case the satisfaction determinant is a little less dependent on the brand image than the product image itself. The latter case tells that consumer may be satisfied if he is paying less and getting similar benefits. Thus we say that the two determinants go hand in hand and have interrelated associations. Similarly no matter how less specification the device has the person whose psychology is to locate brands will be satisfied through the price due to social status of owning a high range device. While people with a psychology of looking for benefits would rate the image as "best specification mid-range device" that they own and not the brand. From this we can say that it's the psychology that defines how people interpret the value & satisfaction determinants.



**Fig. 2: Non Chaotic Consumer Perception Determinants**

### Conclusion

Thus we can say that determinants change definitions as and when they are in the dynamic environment. Hence marketers need to be aware because the determinants despite being controllable through the marketer may need attention due to their changing definition with different psychologies of consumers and even with different product and income groups. If these factors and

## **"Perceived Service Determinants: A Chaos between Value & Satisfaction determinant in Psychology of a Consumer"**

determinants are well managed, better service based results and insights can be generated which can be beneficial for the marketing community as well as for the businesses.

### **References**

Parasuraman, A., Berry, L.L., and Zeithaml, V.A. (1993). More on improving service quality measurement. *Journal of Retailing*, 69(2), 140147.

Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A., & Berry, L.L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring customer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 1240.

Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A, & Berry, L. L. (1994). Reassessment of expectations as a comparison standard in measuring service quality: Implications for further research. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(1), 111124.

Anderson, G.W., & Sullivan, M.W. (1990). Customer satisfaction and retention across firms. Presentation at TIMS College of Marketing Special Interest Conference on Services Marketing, Nashville, TN.

Bernhardt, K.L., Donthu, N., & Kennett, P.A. (2000). A longitudinal analysis of satisfaction and profitability. *Journal of Business Research*, 47, 161171.

Fornell, C., & Wernerfelt, B. (1987). Defensive marketing strategy by customer complaint management: A theoretical analysis. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 24, 337346.

Gale, B. (1997, February). Customer satisfaction relative competitors is where it's at. (Strong evidence that superior quality drives the bottom line and shareholder value.) *Marketing and Research Today*, pp. 3953.

Howat, G., Murray, D., & Crilley, G. (1999). The relationships between service problems and perceptions of service quality, satisfaction, and behavioural intentions of Australian public sports and leisure centre customers. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 17(2), 4264.

Philip, G., & Hazlett, S. (1997). The measurement of service quality: A new P-C-P attributes model. *International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management*, 14(3), 260280.

Brady, M.K., and Robertson, C.J. (2001). Searching for a consensus on the antecedent role of service quality and satisfaction: An exploratory cross-national study. *Journal of Business Research*, 51(1), 5360.

McDougall, G.H., & Levesque, T. (2000). Customer satisfaction with service: Putting perceived value into the equation. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 14(5), 392410.

Cronin, J.J., Brady, M.K., & Hult, G.T.M. (2000). Assessing the effects of quality, value, and customer satisfaction on consumer behavioral intentions in service environments. *Journal of Retailing*, 76(2), 193218.

Cronin, J.J., & Taylor, S.A. (1992). Measuring service quality: a re-examination and extension. *Journal of Marketing*, 56(3), 5568.

Cronin, J.J. & Taylor, S.A. (1994). SERVPERF versus SERVQUAL: Reconciling performance-based and perceptions-minus-expectations measurement of service quality. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(1), 125131.

Patterson, P.G., & Spreng, R.A. (1997). Modelling the relationship between perceived value, satisfaction, and repurchase intentions in a business-to-business, services context: An empirical examination. *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 8(5), 414434.

Mahony, D.F., & Moorman, A.M. (1999). The impact of fan attitudes on intentions to watch professional basketball teams on television. *Sport Management Review*, 2(1), 4366.

Brady, M.K., and Robertson, C.J. (2001). Searching for a consensus on the antecedent role of service quality and satisfaction: An exploratory cross-national study. *Journal of Business Research*, 51(1), 5360.

Petrack, J. F., Backman, S.J., & Bixler, R.D. (1999). An investigation of selected factors' impact on golfer satisfaction and perceived value. *Journal of Park and Recreation Administration*, 17(1), 4059.

Tutorial Point, "Consumer Behaviour: Attention & Perception" [https://www.tutorialspoint.com/consumer\\_behavior/attention\\_and\\_perception.htm](https://www.tutorialspoint.com/consumer_behavior/attention_and_perception.htm) , Retrieved on 5/2/2020

Marketing 91, "Why Consumer Perception is Important?" <https://www.marketing91.com/customer-perception-important/> , Retrieved on 5/2/2020

SlideShare, "Customer Perceptions of service" <https://www.slideshare.net/deepu2000/customer-perceptions-of-service-69710218> , Retrieved on 5/2/2020



**ARTS AND HUMANITIES**





## ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ (ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸੰਦਰਭ ਵਿਚ)

ਗੁਰਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਕੌਰ

### ਸਾਰ

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਪਣੀ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਾਤਮਕ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ “ੴ” ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਹਰ ਰਚਨਾ ਦੇ ਆਰੰਭ ‘ਚ “ੴ” ਲਿਖਿਆ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਮਾਨਤਾਵਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ “ੴ” ਦਾ “ੴ” ਗਿਣਨਾਤਮਕ ਅੰਕ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਇੱਕ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਸੂਚਕ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਹੋਣ ਵੱਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਇਸ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ? ਕੀ ਇਹ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ‘ਚ ਵਰਤੇ ਗਏ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਪੂਰਕ ਹੈ? ਕੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾ ਧਾਰਣੀ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਦਾ? ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਸ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਉਸਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਹਥੋਂਲੇ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਸੀਂ “ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ” ਬਾਣੀ ਨੂੰ ਆਧਾਰ ਬਣਾਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਹੱਲ ਲਭਣ ਦਾ ਯਤਨ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ। ਇਸ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖ ਤਰਕ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਸਿੱਧ ਰਚਨਾ “ਜਪੁ ਜੀ” ਨਾਲੋਂ “ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ” ਵਿੱਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਸਥਾਰਪੂਰਵਕ ਢੰਗ ਨਾਲ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪਾਤਮਕ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਨਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਬਣ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਹੱਥਲਾ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ “ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ” ਵਿੱਚਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਮੁੱਖ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਿਰਜਕ, ਏਕੰਕਾਰ, ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੀਆਂ ਪਰਿਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਆਧਾਰਿਤ ਰਹੇਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਇਸ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ‘ਚ ਅਸੀਂ ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਕਾਵਿਕ ਬਣਤਰ ਤੇ ਸੀਮਿਤ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ। ਵੈਦਿਕ ਪਰਮਸਤਾ ਦੇ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਨਾਲ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਤੁਲਨਾਮਾਤਰ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਨਾ ਇਸ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਦਾ ਉਦੇਸ਼ ਹੋਵੇਗਾ।

**ਮੂਲ ਸ਼ਬਦ:** ਬ੍ਰਹਮ, ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਸਰਗੁਣ, ਨਿਰਗੁਣ, ਵੈਦਿਕ।

### ਭੂਮਿਕਾ:

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਦੇ ਬਾਨੀ ਸਨ। ਮੱਧਕਾਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਰਗਰਮ ਭਗਤੀ ਲਹਿਰ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਦੇ ਨਿਕਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਕਾਸ ਦਾ ਆਧਾਰ ਮੰਨੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਲਹਿਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਕ ਪਹਿਲੂਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਣਾਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਵੱਖ-ਵੱਖ ਕਾਵਿ ਰਚਨਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਮਜ਼ਮੂਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਢਾਲਿਆ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਾਵਿ ਚੇਤਨਾ ਮੱਧਕਾਲੀ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਦੇ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਕਾਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਵੇਂ ਯੁੱਗ ਦਾ ਆਗਾਜ਼ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਕੁੱਲ ੧੯ ਰਾਗਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਸ਼ੋਭਿਤ ਹੈ। ਪਰਮਾਤਮਾ ਇੱਕ ਹੈ, ਮਨਮੁੱਖ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਵਿਚਲਾ ਅੰਤਰ, ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਿਖੇੜਾ, ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਪਾਖੰਡਾਂ ਦਾ ਖੰਡਨ ਆਦਿ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਕਾਵਿ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਿਦਮਾਨ ਹਨ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਟਾਅ ਲਈ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਭਿੰਨ ਲੋਕ-ਕਾਵਿ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਵੀਨਤਾ ਸਹਿਤ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਿਆਂਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਲੋਕਮਨ ਦੀ ਚੇਤਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਟੁੰਬਿਆ। ਭਾਰਤ ਦੇ ਗੋਰਵਮਈ ਇਤਿਹਾਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਇੱਕ ਕਲਿਆਣਕਾਰੀ ਪੁਰਸ਼ ਵਜੋਂ ਜਾਣੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਕ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿੱਥੇ ਮਜ਼ਮੂਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੱਕ ਅਤੇ ਸੱਚ ਦੀ ਰਾਖੀ ਕਰਨ ਹਿਤ “ਸਚ ਸੁਣਾਇਸੀ ਸਚ ਕੀ ਬੋਲਾ” ਦਾ ਆਦਰਸ਼ ਸਿਰਜਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ ਉੱਥੇ ਭਾਰਤੀ ਚਿੰਤਨ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਵਿੱਚਲੇ ‘ਬ੍ਰਹਮ’ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਖੇੜਕੇ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਵੀ ਕਾਰਜਸ਼ੀਲ ਹੈ। ਇਥੇ ਅਸੀਂ ‘ਬ੍ਰਹਮ’ ਦੇ ਦਾਰਸ਼ਨਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਗਿਆਨਕ ਆਧਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ।

ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪਾਤਮਕ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਹੀ ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ ਦਾ ਆਧਾਰ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਦੇ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਿਕ ਸਰੋਕਾਰ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਰੂਪ ‘ਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਸਿੱਖਿਆਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਹੀ ਆਸ਼ਰਿਤ ਹਨ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਵਿਚਾਰਧਾਰਾ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਸਰੋਕਾਰਾਂ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਸਤੁਤ ਕਰਕੇ ਵੀ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰੋ, ਨਾਮ ਜਪੋ ਅਤੇ ਵੰਡ ਛੱਕੋ ਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸਰਬਸਾਂਝਾ ਤੇ ਸਰਬਕਾਲੀ ਹੈ। ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਅਤੇ ਵੰਡ ਛੱਕਣਾ ਸਮਾਜਿਕ-ਰਾਜਨੀਤਿਕ ਸੰਦਰਭ ਵਿੱਚ ਇੱਕ ਆਦਰਸ਼ਾਤਮਕ ਵਰਤਾਰਾ ਹੈ। ਅਜੋਕੇ ਸਮੇਂ ‘ਚ ਮਾਨਵੀ ਸਭਿਅਤਾ ਦਾ ਵਧੇਰੇ ਸੰਕਟ ਅਜਿਹੇ ਆਦਰਸ਼ਾਂ ਦੇ ਆਭਾਸ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੀ ਉਤਪੰਨ

ੀਰਸਰਚ ਸਕਾਲਰ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਭਾਗ, ਜੰਮੂ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਜੰਮੂ, ਇੰਡੀਆ।

### ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ (ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸੰਦਰਭ ਵਿਚ)

ਹੋਇਆ ਹੈ। ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਲਈ ਪਦਾਰਥੀਕਰਨ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਕਾਰਣ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੁੱਟ-ਖਸੁੱਟ ਅਤੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਾਚਾਰ ਆਦਿ ਨੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਦਾ ਮੰਡੀਕਰਨ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਕਾਰਣ ਮਾਨਵੀ ਕਦਰਾਂ ਕੀਮਤਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਗਿਰਾਵਟ ਆ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੂਜੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਵਾਂਗ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਵਰਤਣ ਦੀ ਹੋੜ ਵਿਚ ਪਿਆ ਹੈ। ਸੱਚੀ-ਸੁੱਚੀ ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਕੁਦਰਤੀ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਰਾਬਰਤਾ ਦੀ ਵੰਡ ਦਾ ਆਦਰਸ਼ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਮਾਜ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਗਾਇਬ ਹੋ ਚੁਕਿਆ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਜਿਹੀ ਦੈਵਿਕ-ਹਸਤੀ ਦਾ ਆਦਰਸ਼ ਸਿਰਜਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਸਦੀ ਉਪਾਸ਼ਨਾ ਲਈ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਆਦਰਸ਼ ਜੀਵਨ ਤੇ ਲਾਗੂ ਕਰਨੇ ਲਾਜ਼ਮੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਇਸਨੂੰ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਆਪ ਸਦੀਵੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਾਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਸਤਿ-ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ। ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੇ ਕੇਂਦਰੀ ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ “**ਕਿਵ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ ਹੋਈਐ ਕਿਵ ਕੂੜੈ ਤੁਟੈ ਪਾਲਿ॥**” ਦਾ ਹੱਲ ਇਸਦੇ ਨਾਮ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੀ ਪਾਇਆ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਸਚਿਆਰਾ (**ਸਚਹੁ ਓਰੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੇ ਉਪਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਆਚਾਰੁ॥**) ਮਨੁੱਖ ਹੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ (ਆਦਰਸ਼ਕ ਮਨੁੱਖ) ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾ “**ਸਭੁ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਸੋਇ॥**” ਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਲਿੰਗ, ਜਾਤ, ਰੰਗ ਅਤੇ ਨਸਲੀ ਭੇਦਭਾਵਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਰੋਕ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਬਰਾਬਰਤਾ ਕਾਇਮ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਬਾਬਰ-ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਾਜਸੀ ਸ਼ਾਸਕ ਦੀ ਅਰਾਜਕਤਾ ਨੂੰ “**ਸਚੁ ਸੁਣਾਇਸੀ ਸਚ ਕੀ ਬੋਲਾ**” ਦਾ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਅਹਿਸਾਸ ਨੂੰ ਚੁਪ-ਚਾਪ ਸਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਵਿਰੋਧਤਾ ਵੱਲ ਵੀ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਹੈ। ਸਿਧ ਗੋਸਟਿ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ ਵਰਗ ਦੀ ਸਮਾਜ ਪ੍ਰਤੀ ਅਲਗਰਜ਼ ਵਤੀਰੇ ਦਾ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸੇਧ ਦਿੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਹੀ ਜੀਵ, ਜਗਤ ਅਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਭੇਦ (ਸੰਸਾਰਿਕ) ਅਤੇ ਅਭੇਦ (ਰੂਹਾਨੀ) ਅਵਸਥਾ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਕੂੜ ਦੀ ਕੰਧ ਕਾਰਨ ਹੀ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਭਰਮ 'ਚ ਰਹਿ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਕੂੜ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਮਾਇਆ ਰੂਪੀ ਅਗਿਆਨ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਵੈ (ਜੀਵ), ਜਗਤ ਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਅਸਲ ਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਮਝ ਪਾਉਂਦਾ। ਅਜਿਹੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦੀ ਧਾਰਮਿਕ, ਸਮਾਜਿਕ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜਨੀਤਿਕ ਸਰੋਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਦੇਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ। ਕੂੜ ਤੋਂ ਬਚਣ ਲਈ ਉਹ ਦੈਵਿਕ ਹਸਤੀ ਦਾ ਅਕਸ ਸੱਚ ਅਤੇ ਸਦੀਵੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਾਲਾ ਬਣਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਹੀ ਸੱਚਾ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਇਸੇ ਦੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਨਾਲ ਜੀਵ ਸੱਚ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤੀ ਕਰ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

**ਸਚਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਏਕੁ ਤੂੰ ਜਿਨਿ ਸਚੇ ਸਚੁ ਵਰਤਾਇਆ॥  
ਜਿਸੁ ਤੂੰ ਦੇਹਿ ਤਿਸੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਸਚੁ ਤਾ ਤਿਨੀ ਸਚੁ ਕਮਾਇਆ॥**

(ਸ਼੍ਰੀ. ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੧੫)

ਹੁਣ ਅਸੀਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਕਾਵਿਕ ਬਣਤਰ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਪਹਿਲੂਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ। ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਰਾਗ 'ਚ ਦਰਜ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਲੋਕ ਕਾਵਿ-ਰੂਪਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਣਤਰ ਨੂੰ ਅਪਨਾਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਰੂਹਾਨੀ ਕਲਾਮ ਦੇਣ ਦੀ ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਵਾਰ, ਬਾਰਹ ਮਾਂਹ, ਗੋਸਟਿ, ਸੋਲਹੇ, ਛੰਤ ਅਤੇ ਪੱਟੀ ਆਦਿ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਬਾਣੀ ਪੱਟੀ ਲੋਕ ਕਾਵਿ-ਰੂਪ ਦੀ ਬਣਤਰ 'ਚ ਰਚੀ ਗਈ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ ਅੱਖਰੀ ਸਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਬਾਵਨ ਅੱਖਰੀ ਵਾਂਗ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਉੱਥੇ “ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਸਾਹਿਤ 'ਚ ਪੱਟੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਯੋਗ ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਮਿਲਦਾ।” ਸਾਰੀ ਬਾਣੀ 'ਚ ਕੁੱਲ ੫੪ ਪਉੜੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਅਤੇ ਇੱਕ ਰਹਾਉ ਹੈ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਇਕ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਈ ਮੁਲਾਕਾਤ ਦਾ ਸੰਕੇਤਕ ਹੈ। ਜੋ ਇਸਨੂੰ ਉਥਾਨਿਕਾ ਅਧੀਨ ਕਰ ਸਾਖੀ ਨੇਮ 'ਚ ਅਰਥ ਤਲਾਸ਼ਣ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰੇਰਿਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾਈ ਉਥਾਨਿਕਾ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਮੱਧ ਪ੍ਰਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਅਜੋਕੇ ਖੰਡਵਾਂ ਜ਼ਿਲ੍ਹੇ 'ਚ ਨਰਮਦਾ ਨਦੀ ਤੇ ਪੈਂਦੇ ਮਾਧਾਂਤਾ ਨਾਮੀ ਦੀਪ ਤੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇੱਥੇ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੇਸ਼ਵਰ ਨਾਮੀ ਮੰਦਿਰ ਸਥਾਪਿਤ ਹੈ ਜੋ ੧੨ ਜੋਤੀ-ਲਿੰਗਾਂ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਇੱਕ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਸਿਰਲੇਖ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਦੋ ਮੁੱਖ ਅਲਗ ਧਾਰਨਾਵਾਂ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਕਿ ਨਿਮਨਲਿਖਿਤ ਅੰਕਿਤ ਹਨ :

- (ੳ) ਪਹਿਲੀ, ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾਈ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਇਸਨੂੰ ਉਥਾਨਿਕਾ ਸਹਿਤ ਜੋਤਦੀ ਹੋਈ ਇਸਦਾ ਸਿਰਲੇਖ ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਹੀ ਮੰਨਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, “ਇਹ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੱਖਣ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਚਾਰੀ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨਾਮ ਅਧੀਨ ਹੈ। ਇੱਥੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾਈ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਸੰਪ੍ਰਦਾ ਅਤੇ ਟਕਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।” ਇਸ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਦਾ ਮੁੱਖ ਤਰਕ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸਿਰਲੇਖ ਮੌਖਿਕ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਸੀਨਾ-ਬਸੀਨਾ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੀ ਚਲਿਆ ਆ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ। ਬਹੁਤੇ ਸਿੱਖ ਸਰੋਤਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਆਮ ਪ੍ਰਚਲਿਤ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਨੂੰ ‘ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ’ ਹੀ ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਥੋਂ ਤਕ ਕਿ ਭਾਈ ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਵੀ ਆਪਣੀ ਸੰਥਾ ਪੋਥੀ ਦੇ ਤਤਕਰੇ ਵਿਚ ਇਸਦਾ ਇਹੀ ਸਿਰਲੇਖ ਪਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ, ਭਾਵੇਂ ਉਹ ਆਪ ਇਸਦਾ ਸਿਰਲੇਖ ਸਿਰਫ ‘ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ’ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ।
- (ਅ) ਦੂਜੀ, ਸਿੱਖ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ‘ਚੋ ਨਿਕਲੀਆਂ ਬਾਕੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਵਾਂ “ਦਖਣੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨੂੰ ਰਾਗ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਮੰਨਦੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਸਿਰਲੇਖ ‘ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ’ ਹੀ ਮੰਨਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ।” ਸਿੱਖ ਸਭਾ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਕਲੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਵਿੱਚ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਨਰੈਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਾਹੌਰ, ਭਾਈ ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਦਿ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆਕਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਸ਼ਾਮਿਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ। ਗਿਆਨੀ ਨਰੈਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਲੋਂ ਕੀਤੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਟੀਕੇ ਦੇ ਆਰੰਭ ਵਿਚ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਸਹਿਤ ਇਸਦੇ ਸਿਰਲੇਖ ਬਾਰੇ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਸਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਹੈ ਕਿ “ਦਖਣੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਰਾਮਕਲੀ ਰਾਗ ਦੀ ਕਿਸਮ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਗਉੜੀ ਰਾਗ ਆਦਿ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਵਰਤੀ

ਗਈ ਹੈ।”

ਇੱਥੇ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੇਸ਼ਵਰ ਮੰਦਿਰ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਕਿਸੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ 'ਪਾਂਡਾ' ਕਹਿ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ। ਪ੍ਰਚਲਿਤ ਸਾਖੀ ਅਨੁਭਵ 'ਚ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ “ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਆਪਣੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਉਦਾਸੀ ਦੌਰਾਨ ਸੰਗਲਾ-ਦੀਪ ਤੋਂ ਵਾਪਿਸ ਆਉਂਦਿਆਂ ਇੱਥੇ ਪੁੱਜਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੱਟੀ ਤੇ 'ਓਅੰ ਨਮੋ' ਲਿਖਾ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਅਰਾਧਨਾ ਸ਼ਿਵ ਸਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਕਰਾ, ਵਰਨਮਾਲਾ ਸਿੱਖਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ।” ਸ਼ਿਵ ਦੀ ਮੂਰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਸਰੂਪ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਮੰਨਣ ਤੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਵਾਦ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਫਿਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਿਸਥਾਰ ਸਹਿਤ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਬਾਰੇ ਦਸਦੇ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਕੋਲ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ:

੧. ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵਜੋਂ ।
੨. ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਸਰੂਪ ।
੩. ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ।
੪. ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦਾ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ।

(੧)

ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਇਸ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੀਆਂ ਪੂਰਵ ਧਾਰਨਾਵਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਵਿਚਾਰਨਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। “ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸ਼ਬਦ 'ਵ੍ਰ' ਧਾਤੂ ਤੋਂ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੈ, ਇਸਦਾ ਅਰਥ 'ਵੱਧਣਾ' ਜਾਂ 'ਵੱਧਦੇ ਰਹਿਣ' ਵਾਲਾ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।” ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੀਆਂ ਧਾਰਨਾਵਾਂ ਦਾ ਕ੍ਰਮਵਾਰ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦਾਂ, ਵੇਦਾਂਤ (ਸ਼ੰਕਰ, ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ) ਅਤੇ ਮੱਧਕਾਲੀਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਕਾਵਿ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਸੰਖੇਪ ਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਕਰਨਾ ਜ਼ਰੂਰੀ ਹੈ। ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦਿਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਅਧੀਨ 'ਰਿਤ' ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ। “ਤੈਤਰੀਅ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦ 'ਚ ਭ੍ਰਿਗੂ, ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਪੰਜ ਕੋਸ਼ਾਂ 'ਚ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕ੍ਰਮਵਾਰ: ਅੰਨ, ਪ੍ਰਾਣ, ਮਨ, ਵਿਗਿਆਨ ਅਤੇ ਆਨੰਦਮਈ ਹਨ।” ਉਹ ਆਪਣੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਵਰੁਣ ਨਾਲ ਹੋਏ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਤੇ ਸੰਵਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਰੰਤ ਸਵੈ-ਅਨੁਭੂਤੀ ਲਈ ਪ੍ਰਯਤਨਸ਼ੀਲ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਸਦਾ ਬੁਕਾਅ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਪਦਾਰਥ ਜਾਂ ਵੈਚਾਰਿਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਲੈਣਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ 'ਚੋਂ ਸਭ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਿਸ਼ਚਿਤਤਾ ਦੇ ਅਧੀਨ ਵੀ ਨਾ ਕਰਨਾ ਪਏ, ਸੋ ਇਸ ਲਈ, “ਉਹ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਅਨੰਦ-ਸਰੂਪੀ ਸਮਝਦਾ ਹੈ।” ਇਸੇ ਕਰਕੇ ਅਗਲੇਰੇ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦਾਂ 'ਚ ਜਿਵੇਂ “ਬ੍ਰਿਹਦਾਰਣਿਕ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦ 'ਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ 'ਵਿਗਿਆਨ-ਆਨੰਦ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ' ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।” ਇੱਥੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਦੋ-ਸਰੂਪੀ ਤੱਤਵਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਅਧੀਨ, “ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਮੂਰਤ ਤੇ ਅਮੂਰਤ ਸਰੂਪੀ ਹੈ, ਮੂਰਤ ਸਗੁਣੀ ਹੋਣਾ ਜੋ ਨਾਸ਼ਮਾਨ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਅਮੂਰਤ ਨਿਰਗੁਣੀ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਹੈ।” “ਛਾਂਦੋਗਿਅ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦ 'ਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਮ ਰੂਪ ਦੇ ਧਾਰਨ ਵਾਲਾ ਕਿਹਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।” ਇਸੇ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ, “ਛਾਂਦੋਗਿਅ ਵਿਚ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਸਾਰੀ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਦਾ ਆਕਾਰ-ਵਿਸਤਾਰ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਸਰਬ-ਵਿਆਪਕ ਮੰਨਿਆ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।” ਸੋ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦਿਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ 'ਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਜਗਤ ਦਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ, ਅਨੰਦ ਸਰੂਪੀ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਜੀਵ ਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਆਤਮਾ ਦੇ ਪੱਧਰ ਤੇ ਹੈ। ਇਹੀ 'ਅਹੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਸਿ' ਮੈਂ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਹਾਂ, ਅਤੇ 'ਤਤ ਤਵਮਿ ਅਸਿ' ਤੂੰ ਵੀ ਓਹੀ (ਬ੍ਰਹਮ) ਹੈ, ਦਾ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਹੈ। ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦਾਂ 'ਚ ਹੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਓਮ ਅਤੇ ਓੰਕਾਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੱਤਵਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ, ਇੱਥੇ ਓਮ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕ ਅਤੇ ਇਸਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਛਾਂਦੋਗਿਅ, ਯਜੁਰਵੇਦ ਦੇ ਅਖੀਰਲੇ ਵਾਕ, ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦ ਅਤੇ ਕਠ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ। ਮੁੱਖ ਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਓੰਕਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਪਰ ਅਤੇ ਅਪਰ ਸਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਡਾ. ਨਿਰਾਕਾਰੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, “ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਗੁਣੀ ਸਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਮਾਇਆ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣੀ ਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਅਤੀਂਦਰੀ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ।”

ਹੁਣ ਅਸੀਂ ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਵੇਦਾਂਤ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾ ਅਧਿਐਨ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ। ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਸਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਉਪਾਸਨਾ ਲਈ ਮੰਨਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਉਸਦਾ ਸੁੱਧ ਸਰੂਪ ਨਿਰਗੁਣੀ ਮੰਨਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਆਤਮ-ਪੱਖ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦਿਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵਰਗਾ ਅਤੇ ਗਿਆਨਯੋਗ ਦਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾ ਹੈ। ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਤੋਂ ਉਪਜਿਆ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਸਦਾ ਹੈ, “ਇਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਹੀ ਅਧਿਆਸ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਣ ਜੀਵ ਅਗਿਆਨ 'ਚ ਫਸਿਆ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ।” ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਜਗਤ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਦੀ ਉਪਜ ਹੈ ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ। ਸੋ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸੁੱਧ ਸਰੂਪ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਵੇਦਾਂਤ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਦੁਆਰਾ ਦਿਤੇ ਇਸ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਅਦਵੈਤ ਸਰੂਪ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਡਾ. ਨਿਰਾਕਾਰੀ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, “ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਟਦਵੈਤਵਾਦ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਦੇ ਅਦਵੈਤਵਾਦ ਦਾ ਖੰਡਨ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ।” ਡਾ. ਬਲਕਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪਣੀ ਕਿਤਾਬ, **ਸਿੱਖ ਰਹੱਸਵਾਦ** ਵਿਚ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ ਕਿ, “ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਤੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਭਾਵ ਦਵੈ ਸਰੂਪੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸਗੋਂ ਅਦਵੈ (ਨਿਰਗੁਣ) ਸਰੂਪੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਤੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਣ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਤੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਉਸਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਿਸ਼ਟ (ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼) ਸਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਹੈ।” ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ ਪਰਾਭੋਤਿਕ ਸੱਤਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਚਿਤ, ਅਚਿਤ ਅਤੇ ਈਸ਼ਵਰ ਦੇ ਤਿੰਨ ਸਰੂਪੀ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਚਿਤ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਚੇਤਨ (conscious), ਇਹ ਉਸਦਾ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੈ, ਅਚਿਤ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਸਰੂਪ ਜੋ ਅਚੇਤਨ (unconscious) ਭਾਵ ਦਿਖਦੇ ਪਦਾਰਥ

## ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ (ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸੰਦਰਭ ਵਿਚ)

ਆਦਿ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਵਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਈਸ਼ਵਰ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਹੋਣ ਵਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਹੈ। ਡਾ. ਬਲਕਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਰਾਇ ਹੈ ਕਿ, “ਇਹ ਚਿਤ, ਅਚਿਤ ਅਤੇ ਈਸ਼ਵਰ ਕ੍ਰਮਵਾਰ ਜੀਵ, ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਹੀ ਰੂਪ ਹਨ।” ਸੋ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਦਾ ਸ਼ਰੀਰ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਣਿਆ (ਅਚਿਤ), ਆਤਮਾ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਜੀਵੰਤ (ਚਿਤ) ਅਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ (ਈਸ਼ਵਰ) ਦੇ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਣ ਹੀ ਸੰਭਵ ਹੋ ਸਕਿਆ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਅਤੇ ਚੇਤਨ ਦੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਉਸਦੇ ਸਗੁਣ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਸਾਬਿਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਵੇਦਾਂਤ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਮੱਧਕਾਲੀਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਕਾਵਿ ਦੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਇਸਦੇ ਆਧਾਰਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਲਭ ਕੇ ਵੀ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੀਤਾ ਦੇ ਚਾਰੇ ਯੋਗ (ਕਰਮ, ਗਿਆਨ, ਭਗਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਜ) ਆਪਣੇ ਸਿਖਰਲੇ ਪੜਾਅ ਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਾਣ ਦਾ ਨਿਸ਼ਚਾ ਕਰਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਵੇਦਾਂਤ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਗਿਆਨਯੋਗ ਦਾ ਬੋਲਬਾਲਾ ਸੀ। ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ ਦੇ ਆਉਣ ਨਾਲ ਭਗਤੀਯੋਗ ਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਲ ਮਿਲਣੀ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਗਈ। ਸਾਰਾ ਮੱਧਕਾਲੀਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਕਾਵਿ ਰਾਮਾਨੁਜ ਅਤੇ ਦਖਣ ਦੇ ਅਲਵਰ ਭਗਤਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵਿਤ ਰਿਹਾ, ਅਲਵਰ ਭਗਤ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦਾਂ ਦੀ ਥਾਂ ਪੌਰਾਣਿਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਕਰਨ ਲਗੇ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕਦੇ ਵੀ ਪੌਰਾਣਿਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਰੂਪ ਨਾਲ ਇੱਝ ਰੱਲ-ਗੱਡ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ। ਅਲਵਰ ਭਗਤ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਦੇ ਪੌਰਾਣਿਕ ਬਿੰਬ ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਰੂਪੀ ਦਰਸਾ ਉਸਦੀ ਭਗਤੀ ਦਾ ਰਾਹ ਅਖਤਿਆਰ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਅਵਤਾਰੀ ਸਰੂਪਾਂ 'ਚ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਲੱਭਣ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਿਆ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ, ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਲਈ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਲਸੀ ਰਾਮਾਇਣ ਨੂੰ ਦੇਖ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ। ਤੁਲਸੀ ਰਾਮਾਇਣ ਮੱਧਕਾਲੀਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਕਾਵਿ ਦਾ ਇੱਕ ਅਹਿਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਹੈ ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਤੁਲਸੀਦਾਸ, ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਅਵਤਾਰ ਰਾਮ ਦਾ ਅਜਿਹਾ ਬਿੰਬ ਅਖਤਿਆਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਰਾਮ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਰੂਪ ਹੋ ਨਿਬੜਦਾ ਹੈ। ਵੈਸ਼ਨਵ ਤੇ ਸ਼ੈਵਮਤ ਦਾ ਝਗੜਾ ਅਸਲ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਕਾਰਣਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸ਼ਿਵ ਤੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਭਗਤ ਉਸ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਬਿੰਬ ਆਪਣੇ-ਆਪਣੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਤੱਕ ਰੱਖਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਸਨ।

ਘੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੈਵਿਕ ਹਸਤੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੰਨਦੇ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਮੁੱਚਾ ਆਕਾਰ (ਬ੍ਰਹਿਮੰਡ) ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੇ ਹੀ ਸਿਰਜਿਆ ਹੈ। ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੀ ਸਾਖੀ ਇਸ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ 'ਚ ਸਹਾਇਕ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਓਅੰਕਾਰੇਸ਼ਵਰ ਮੰਦਿਰ ਦਾ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਸ਼ਿਵ ਨੂੰ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਮੰਨ ਪੂਜ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ, ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਅਤੇ ਮਹੇਸ਼ ਆਦਿ ਵੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਅਧੀਨ (ਏਕਾ ਮਾਈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ਵਿਆਈ ਤਿਨਿ ਚੇਲੇ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ॥) ਹਨ। ਪ੍ਰਤੀਕਾਤਮਕ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਹ ਉਤਪੰਨ, ਪਾਲਣ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਨਾਸ਼ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਲੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਕਤੀਆਂ ਵਜੋਂ ਵੀ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਸਭ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਦਾ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਹੈ। ਇੱਥੇ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਦੁਹਰਾਉ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ ਦੇ ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਆਧਾਰਿਤ ਹੋਣ ਕਰਕੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ-ਮੀਮਾਂਸਾ (sikh theology) ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਵ-ਰਚਨਾ ਸਿਧਾਂਤ 'ਚ ਇਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਯੋਗ ਸੰਕਲਪਿਕ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ 'ਚ ਹੋਰ ਬਾਣੀਕਾਰ ਵੀ ਇਸਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇੱਥੇ ਵਿਚਾਰਨਯੋਗ ਗੱਲ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਹ ਵੀ ਇਸ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਨੂੰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵਰਤਦੇ ਹਨ। ਨਿਮਨਲਿਖਤ ਉਦਾਹਰਨਾਂ ਜਿਵੇਂ:

ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਆਦਿ ਮੈ ਜਾਨਾ॥(ਭਗਤ ਕਬੀਰ, ਸ੍ਰੀ. ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੩੪੦)

ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਸਭ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਿ ਉਪਾਈ॥ (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ, ਸ੍ਰੀ. ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੧੦੬੧)

ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਉਤਪਾਤੀ॥ਕੀਆ ਦਿਨਸੁ ਸਭ ਰਾਤੀ॥ (ਗੁਰੂ ਅਰਜਨ ਦੇਵ, ਸ੍ਰੀ. ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੧੦੦੩)

ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਆਦਿ ਕਬਨੀ ਅਨਾਦਿ॥ (ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ, ਅੰਗ ੨੭)

ਪ੍ਰਬਿਮ ਕਾਲ ਜਬ ਕਰਾ ਪਸਾਰਾ॥ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਤੇ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਿ ਉਪਾਰਾ॥( ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ, ਅੰਗ ੧੧੪)

ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਅਕਾਰ ਕਰਿ ਏਕ ਕਵਾਉ ਪਸਾਉ ਪਸਾਰਾ॥ ( ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ, ਵਾਰ ੧. ਪਉੜੀ ੪)

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਯੋਜਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਾ ਹੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਿਆ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਆਕਾਰ ਦੀ ਨਿਰਕਾਰ ਰਾਂਹੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਹੋਈ। ਜਪੁ ਜੀ ਵਾਂਗ 'ਕਵਾਉ' ਆਦਿ ਬੋਲ ਤੋਂ ਆਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਉਤਪੰਨ ਹੋਣ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਭਵ, ਉਹ ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਹੀਂ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਸਗੋਂ ਨਿਰੋਲ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ।

ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਉਤਪਤਿ॥ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ ਕੀਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਚਿਤਿ॥

ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਸੈਲ ਜੁਗ ਭਏ॥ ਓਅੰਕਾਰਿ ਬੇਦ ਨਿਰਮਏ॥

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੨੯)

ਘੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ, ਕਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਵੇਦ ਆਦਿ ਦਾ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇੱਥੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਉਪਾਦਾਨ ਕਾਰਕ ਵਜੋਂ ਵੀ ਪੇਸ਼ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਇੱਥੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਅਫੁਰ ਸਮਾਧੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਤੋਂ ਚੇਤਨਾ ਵੱਲ ਆਉਣ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਜੋੜਦੇ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਵਿਧਾਨ 'ਚ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਇਸਨੂੰ 'ਸਹਜ' ਵਿੱਚ ਹੀ ਪੈਦਾ ਕੀਤੀ ਤੱਸਵਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਹਜ ਦਾ ਭਾਵ ਨਿਰਜਤਨ ਤੇ

ਉਚੇਰੇ ਯਤਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਗੈਰ ਅਰਥਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਹੈ।

**ਸਸੈ ਸਭੁ ਜਗਿ ਸਹਜਿ ਉਪਾਇਆ ਤੀਨਿ ਭਵਨ ਇਕਿ ਜੋਤੀ॥**

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੨੯)

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਰਣਮਾਲਾ ਦੇ 'ਸ' ਅਖਰ ਤੋਂ ਸ਼ੁਰੂ ਕਰਦਿਆਂ ਸਾਰੀ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਆਪਣੇ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜਦੇ ਹਨ, ਇਥੇ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਸਿਰਜਣ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਿਆ ਵਿਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਸਹਿਜ ਨੂੰ ਕੇਂਦਰ ਬਿੰਦੂ ਬਣਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਸਾਰੇ ਸਿਰਜੇ ਹੋਏ ਪਦਾਰਥਾਂ ਵਿਚ (ਤੀਨਿ ਭਵਨ) ਉਸ ਇੱਕ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਵਾਸਾ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਜੇ ਉਸ ਇੱਕ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਬਹੁਪਸਾਰੀ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਵਿਚ ਲਭ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਉਹੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਹੈ। ਸੋ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਹੋਣ ਅਤੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਦੀ ਬਹੁਪਸਾਰਤਾ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਵੀ ਉਸ ਇੱਕ ਨੂੰ ਲਭਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਆਦਰਸ਼ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ।

**ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਵਸਤੁ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਚੁਣਿ ਲੈ ਮਾਣਕ ਮੋਤੀ ॥**

**ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਦੇਖੈ ਸਾਚੁ ਸਮਾਲੇ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਾਚੇ ਜਗੁ ਕਾਚਾ ॥**

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੨੯)

(੨)

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਸਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਿੱਖ ਅਨੁਭਵ “ੴ” ਨੂੰ ਹੀ ਪਰਮਸੱਤਾ ਸਮਝ ਕੇ ਤੱਸਵਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ “ਸ਼ਬਦ-ਗੁਰੂ” ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਨਾਤਨੀ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਆਪਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਾਫੀ ਰਲਦੇ ਹਨ। ਡਾ. ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਹੈ ਕਿ, “ਸਨਾਤਨੀ ‘ਓਮ’ ਅਸਲ ‘ਚ ਤਿੰਨ ਅਖਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਬਣਿਆ ਹੈ, ਓ, ਅ, ਮ। ਇਹ ਕ੍ਰਮਵਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ, ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਅਤੇ ਮਹੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਲੱਖਾਇਕ ਹਨ।” “ੴ” ਵਿੱਚ “ੴ” ਗਿਣਨਾਤਮਕ ਅੰਕ ਦਾ ਸੂਚਕ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਵੱਲ ਇਸ਼ਾਰਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਇੱਕ ਈਸ਼ਵਰਵਾਦ (monotheism) ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਚਲਿਤ ਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਤੱਸਵਰ ਵੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਾਉਂਦੇ। ਡਾ. ਜਗਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, “ਬਾਣੀਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਗੁਣ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇੱਕੋ ਪਰਮ ਹੋਂਦ ਦੀਆਂ ਦੋ ਅਵਸਥਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਸੰਕਲਪਿਆ ਹੈ। ਜੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਤੋਂ ਪੂਰਬਲੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਦਾ ਲੱਖਾਇਕ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਦੇ ਹੋਂਦ ਵਿਚ ਆਉਣ ਦੀ ਸਥਿਤੀ ਦਾ ਸੂਚਕ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਇੱਕ ਦੂਜੇ ਦੇ ਪੂਰਕ ਹਨ।” ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਮੀ ਅਤੇ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਦੈਵੀ ਪਰਮਸੱਤਾ ਵਾਲੇ ਦੋਨੋਂ ਗੁਣ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹਨ। ਸਾਮੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾਵਾਂ ਇੱਕ ਈਸ਼ਵਰਵਾਦ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ। ਵੈਦਿਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਹ ਬਹੁ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਦਾ ਧਾਰਨੀ ਹੈ। ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ, ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਅਤੇ ਮਹੇਸ਼ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ ਅਧੀਨ ਉਹ ਤ੍ਰੈ-ਦੈਵੀ (trinity) ਸਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਵੀ ਹੈ। ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦਿਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ 'ਚ ਇੱਕ ਈਸ਼ਵਰਵਾਦੀ (monotheistic) ਸਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਹੈ। ਪੌਰਾਣਿਕ ਅਨੁਭਵ ਬਹੁ-ਦੇਵਵਾਦ (polytheistic), ਸਰਵ-ਈਸ਼ਵਰਵਾਦ (pantheism) ਅਤੇ ਏਕਾ-ਦੇਵਵਾਦ (henotheistic) ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਦਾ ਹੈ। ਈਸ਼ਵਰ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਇੱਥੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਉਸ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਸਭ ਦਾ ਰਚੇਤਾ ਹੈ। ਸਾਮੀ ਪਰੰਪਰਾ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਤਾਂ ਮੰਨਦੀ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਉਹ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਸਿਰਜਣਾ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਹਰ ਹੋਂਦ ਰੱਖਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਉਸਦਾ ਕੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਸੀ ਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਦੱਸਦੇ। ਸੂਫੀਵਾਦ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਦੇ ਸੰਕਲਪ ਅਧੀਨ ਦੈਵਿਕ ਹਸਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਵਹਦਾਨੀਅਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਵਹਦਾਨੀਅਤ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਰੱਬੀ ਏਕਤਾ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਹੀ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਬਾਕੀ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਸਰੂਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਣਾਂ ਵਾਂਗ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹ ਉਸਨੂੰ ਇੱਕ ਈਸ਼ਵਰਵਾਦ ਵਾਂਗ ਹੀ ਤੱਸਵਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਪਰ ਨਾਲ ਹੀ pantheism ਤੇ panentheism ਨੂੰ ਵੀ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਉਹ ਆਕਾਰ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਆਕਾਰ ਵੀ ਉਸੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੈ। pantheism ਸਰਬ ਇਸ਼ਵਰਵਾਦ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਅਸਲ 'ਚ pantheism ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਹੀ ਰੱਬ (Nature is God) ਅਤੇ ਰੱਬ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ (God is in Nature) ਤੋਂ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਇਹ ਰੱਬ ਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਤਕ ਹੀ ਸੀਮਿਤ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਜੋ ਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਚਲੀ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਅਸੀਂ panentheism ਸ਼ਬਦ ਦੀ ਵਰਤੋਂ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਾਂ, panentheism ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਰੱਬ ਵਿੱਚ (Nature is in God) ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਪ੍ਰਕਿਰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਸੀਮਿਤ ਅਤੇ ਰੱਬ ਦਾ ਦਾਇਰਾ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲ ਕਰਨਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਸਾਰੇ ਸੰਕਲਪਿਕ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਪਰਿਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਉਸਦੇ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਤਕ ਹੀ ਸੀਮਿਤ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਸ ਇੱਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦੀ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਸਦਾ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਨਿਰਮਾਣ ਦੇ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗ 'ਚ ਅਰਥ ਸੀਮਿਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਉਸਦੇ ਏਕਤਵ ਤੇ ਹੀ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਦੇਣ ਨੂੰ ਅਹੰਕਾਰ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਏਕਤਵ ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਦੇਹ ਨਾਲ ਜੋੜ ਕੇ ਨਿਵੇਕਲਾ ਅਰਥ ਸਿਰਜਦੇ ਹਨ।

**ਏਕੋ ਏਕ ਕਹੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਟੀ ਹਉਮੈ ਗੁਰੁਬ ਵਿਆਪੈ॥**

**ਅੰਤਰਿ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਏਕੁ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਇਉ ਘਰੁ ਮਹਲੁ ਸਿਵਾਪੈ॥**

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਗੁ.ਗ੍ਰੰ.ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੩੦)

**ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ  
(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸੰਦਰਭ ਵਿਚ)**

ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਨੈਤਿਕ ਅਰਥ ਪ੍ਰਦਾਨ ਕਰ ਨਵੇਂ ਅਰਥਾਂ 'ਚ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦੀ ਵਿਆਖਿਆ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਹ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸਮਾਜ 'ਚ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਭੇਦਭਾਵ ਨੂੰ ਖਤਮ ਕਰਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਹਾਈ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਅਦਵੈਤ ਜਾਂ ਦਵੈਤ ਦੇ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ ਰੱਖਦੇ ਹਨ। ਨਿਮਨਲਿਖਿਤ ਤੁਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਧਰਤੀ ਉੱਤੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਵਾਸੇ ਤੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਬਾਰੇ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ:

**ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਨੇੜੈ ਹਰਿ ਦੁਰਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਹੁ ਏਕੋ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸਬਾਈ॥  
ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਅਵਰ ਨਹੀ ਦੂਜਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਏਕੁ ਸਮਾਈ॥**

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਗੁ. ਗ੍ਰੰ. ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੩੦)

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਦੂਰ ਜਾਣਨਾ ਉਸਦੇ ਏਕਤਵ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਬ ਵਿਆਪਕੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਤੋਂ ਮੁਨਕਰ ਹੋਣਾ ਹੈ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਈ ਇਸ ਇੱਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਦੂਜਾ ਉਸਦੇ ਬਰਾਬਰ ਹੋਂਦ ਨਹੀਂ ਰਖਦਾ। ਉਸਦੇ ਏਕੰਕਾਰੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਦੀ ਵਿਵਧਤਾ ਬਾਰੇ ਉਹ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਹਨ:

**ਏਕ ਅਚਾਰੁ ਰੰਗੁ ਇਕੁ ਰੂਪੁ ॥  
ਪਉਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਅਸਰੂਪੁ ॥  
ਏਕੋ ਭਵਰੁ ਭਵੈ ਤਿਹੁ ਲੋਇ ॥  
ਏਕੋ ਬੁਝੈ ਸੁਝੈ ਪਤਿ ਹੋਇ ॥**

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਗੁ. ਗ੍ਰੰ. ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੨੯)

(੩)

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਆਦਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਹੀ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਇੱਥੇ ਆਕਾਰ-ਰਹਿਤ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨਹੀਂ, ਜਿਸਨੂੰ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਦੇ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਨਿਰ ਅਤੇ ਗੁਣ ਦਾ ਸੁਮੇਲ ਹੈ। ਇਸਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਉਹ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਕੋਈ ਗੁਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਇਹ ਅਰਥ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਠੀਕ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਪਰਿਭਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰਦੇ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਤਾਂ (ਸਭਿ ਗੁਣ ਤੇਰੇ ਮੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਇ॥) ਸਾਰੇ ਗੁਣ ਹੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਹਨ। ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਈ ਉਹ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਰੂਪ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਜਿਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ ਹੀ ਨਾ ਜਾ ਸਕੇ ਹੈ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ (ਅਰਬਦ ਨਰਬਦ ਧੰਧੁਕਾਰ॥ ਧਰਣਿ ਨਾ ਗਗਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਅਪਾਰਾ॥) ਕਾਲ, ਧਰਤੀ, ਆਕਾਸ਼ ਆਦਿ ਦੇ ਬਣਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਉਹ ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੀ। ਕਾਲ ਬਣਨ ਤੋਂ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੀ ਸਿਰਜਣ ਦੀ ਸਾਰੀ ਸਮਰਥਾ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਇਹ ਉਸ ਦੀ ਇੱਛਾ ਤੇ ਆਧਾਰਿਤ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਵਲੋਂ ਵਰਤਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਸ਼ਬਦ 'ਅਕਾਲ' 'ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ' ਦਾ ਲਖਾਇਕ ਹੈ। ਬਾਣੀਕਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਲਈ ਨਾਂਹ-ਵਾਚੀ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਵਰਤਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਉਹ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਣਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵਿਪਰਿਤ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਦਰਸਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਜਾਪੁ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਨੂੰ ਉਦਾਹਰਨ ਵਜੋਂ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੇਠ ਲਿੱਖੀ ਤੁਕਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਉਸਦੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ:

੧. ਇਸੁ ਕਰਤੇ ਕਉ ਕਿਉ ਗਹਿ ਰਾਖਉ ਅਫਰਿਓ ਤੁਲਿਓ ਨ ਜਾਈ॥
੨. ਅਗਮ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਇ॥
੩. ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਇ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਾਇਅਨੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਅਲਗੁ ਅਪਾਰ॥

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਗੁ. ਗ੍ਰੰ. ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੩੦, ੯੩੧, ੯੩੨)

ਇੱਥੇ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਫਰਿਓ ਤੇ ਤੁਲਨ ਤੋਂ ਰਹਿਤ, ਅਗਮ ਤੇ ਅਗੋਚਰ ਅਤੇ ਅਲਗ ਤੇ ਅਪਾਰ ਨਾਂਹ-ਵਾਚੀ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਂ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬਾਰੇ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਅਗਮ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਹੀ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਜੋ ਇੰਦ੍ਰੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਤੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਹੈ। ਅਗੋਚਰ, ਜਿਸਨੂੰ ਲਭਿਆ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ। ਅਖੀਰਲੀ ਤੁਕ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਉਸਦੇ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਅਤੇ ਕਰਤਾ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਭੇਦ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਿਆ ਜਾ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਆਪ ਜੀਵ-ਜੰਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੈਦਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ, ਜੋ ਆਪ ਇਸ ਸਭ ਤੋਂ ਅਲਗ ਅਤੇ ਅਪਾਰ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਦਾ ਧਾਰਨੀ ਹੈ।

(੪)

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਰੂਪ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਭਾਵ ਪੂਰਨ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਪੈਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਰ ਪਾਉਂਦਾ, ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਸ਼ੰਕਰ ਸਿਰਫ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਨੂੰ ਮੰਨਦਾ ਹੈ। ਮੱਧਕਾਲੀਨ ਭਗਤੀ ਕਾਵਿ ਵਿੱਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਕੇਂਦਰੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਰਹਿਣ ਦਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਵੀ ਇਹੀ ਹੈ। ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਧਰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਭਰਮ ਆਦਿ ਦੇ ਅਰਥਾਂ 'ਚ ਪਰਿਭਾਸ਼ਿਤ ਕਰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਧਰਤੀ ਨਾਲ ਜੁੜੇ ਸਰੋਕਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਠੀਕ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਨਹੀਂ ਨਿਭਾਉਂਦਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਸੇ ਲਈ ਧਰਤੀ ਜਾਂ ਰਚਨਾ ਨੂੰ ਕੂੜ (ਕੂੜ



ਰਾਜਾ ਕੁੜ ਪਰਜਾ ਕੁੜ ਸਭ ਸੰਸਾਰ) ਉਦੋਂ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜਦੋਂ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਇਆ 'ਚ ਗਲਤਾਨ ਹੋਈ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ। ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਇਹ ਨਾਸ਼ਮਾਨ ਹੋਣ ਕਾਰਨ ਬੂਠ ਹੈ ਪਰ ਜਦੋਂ ਇਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਵਾਸਾ (ਇਹ ਜਗੁ ਸਚੈ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਕੋਠੜੀ ਸਚੇ ਕਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਵਾਸੁ॥) ਦੇਖਿਆ ਜਾਵੇ ਤਾਂ ਅਰਥ ਪਲਟ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਡਾ. ਰਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਪਣੇ ਖੋਜ-ਪੱਤਰ 'ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ' ਵਿੱਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਇੱਕ ਪੜਾਅ ਸਮਝਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, “ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਸਥੂਲ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਵਾਜ਼ ਹੈ, ਸੂਖਮ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਸੂਖਮ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਫੁਰਨਾ ਹੈ।” ਇਹ ਤਿੰਨੋਂ ਸੰਕਲਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਉਹ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੀ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਦਸ਼ਾ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧਿਤ ਦੱਸਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ, “ਫੁਰਨੇ-ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ, ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਦੇ, ਨਿਰਗੁਣਤਾ ਵਿੱਚੋਂ ਸਰਗੁਣਤਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਲਟਣ ਦੇ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਪਲ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਬੰਧ ਜੁੜਦਾ ਹੈ।” ਡਾ. ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਮੁਤਾਬਿਕ, “ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਕਾਲਗਤ ਸਰੂਪ ਨੂੰ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਅਤੇ ਅਕਾਲਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ।” ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਆਰੰਭ ਤੋਂ ਜਿਸ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਤੋਂ ਸਭ ਦੀ ਉਤਪਤੀ ਦੱਸ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਉਹ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਹੈ। ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਤੁੱਕ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ ਸੈਲ ਜੁਗ ਭਏ॥ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਠੀਕ ਸਾਬਿਤ ਕਰਦੀ ਹੈ। ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਕਿਉਂਕਿ ਅਕਾਲ ਦਾ ਲਖਾਇਕ ਹੈ, ਇਸ ਲਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਤੋਂ ਹੀ ਕਾਲ (ਸੈਲ ਜੁਗ ਭਏ) ਉਤਪੰਨ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਪਰ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਜੋ ਵੀ ਉਤਪੰਨ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ, ਉਹ ਉਸ ਦਾ ਵਿਸਥਾਰਿਤ ਰੂਪ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਉਹ ਉਸ ਤੋਂ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਪਰੇ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਇਸੇ ਬਾਣੀ 'ਚ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਕਹਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਇ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਾਇਅਨੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਅਲਗੁ ਅਪਾਗ॥

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ, ਗੁ. ਗ੍ਰੰ. ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੩੭)

ਪਰ ਜੇ ਉਸਦੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਹੈ, ਜੀਵ ਅਤੇ ਜਗਤ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਹ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ 'ਚ ਮੌਜੂਦ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਵੀ ਉਹ ਇਸੇ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ:

ਜੇ ਦੀਸੈ ਸੋ ਆਪੇ ਆਪਿ॥ ਆਪਿ ਉਪਾਇ ਆਪੇ ਘਟ ਥਾਪਿ॥

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ, ਗੁ. ਗ੍ਰੰ. ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੩੯)

ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਤੋਂ ਭਾਵ ਸਾਰੇ ਗੁਣਾਂ ਦਾ ਧਾਰਨੀ ਜਾਂ ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਰੇ ਗੁਣ ਹੋਣ, ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਕਿਹਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਰਚਨਾ ਦਾ ਹਰ ਕਣ-ਕਣ ਉਸਦਾ ਰੂਪ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ। ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਦੇ ਸਾਰੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਅਤੇ ਪਰਾ-ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਤਾ ਉਸਦੇ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੇ ਹਨ। ਸਰਗੁਣ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਸਰਬ-ਈਸ਼ਵਰਵਾਦ ਦੇ ਨੇੜੇ ਹੈ। ਸਰਬ-ਈਸ਼ਵਰਵਾਦ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਹਰ ਥਾਂ ਹੀ ਈਸ਼ਵਰ ਦਾ ਵਾਸਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ। ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ, ਕਾਲ ਅਤੇ ਆਕਾਰ ਆਦਿ ਦਾ ਹੋਣਾ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਤੇ ਨਿਸ਼ਚਿਤ ਹੈ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੇ ਰਹਾਉ ਵਿੱਚ ਜਿਸ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਸਰੂਪ ਦਾ ਜ਼ਿਕਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ, ਉਹ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਹੀ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਰਹਾਉ ਪਦ ਇਸ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਹੈ:

ਸੁਣਿ ਪਾਠੇ ਕਿਆ ਲਿਖਹੁ ਜੰਜਾਲਾ॥ ਲਿਖਿ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਗੋਪਾਲਾ॥

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ, ਗੁ. ਗ੍ਰੰ. ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੩੦)

ਰਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਗੋਪਾਲਾ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ਣੀ ਨਾਮ ਹਨ। ਗੋਪਾਲਾ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਧਰਤੀ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਤੋਂ ਹੈ। ਰਾਮ ਦਾ ਅਰਥ ਸਭ ਜਗ੍ਹਾਂ ਰਮਿਆਂ ਹੋਇਆ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਹੈ। ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਵੀ ਇਹੀ ਤਸਵੀਰ ਕਰਾਉਂਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਸ ਬਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਅੰਤਿਕਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਉਹ ਉਸੇ ਮਨੁੱਖ ਨੂੰ ਪੜਿਆ ਭਾਵ ਸੂਝ-ਬੂਝ ਵਾਲਾ ਅਤੇ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ, ਜੋ ਹਰ ਥਾਂ ਰਮੇ ਹੋਏ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਨਾਮ ਸਿਮਰਦਾ ਹੈ।

ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋ ਪੜਿਆ ਸੋ ਪੰਡਿਤ ਬੀਨਾ ਜਿਸੁ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਗਲਿਹਾਰੁ॥

(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੁ, ਗੁ. ਗ੍ਰੰ. ਸ. ਅੰਗ ੯੩੮)

ਸੋ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰਗੁਣੀ-ਨਿਰਗੁਣੀ ਅਤੇ ਏਕੰਕਾਰੀ ਸਰੂਪਾਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਗਿਆਤ ਕਰਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਉਸਦਾ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਹੋਣਾ ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਤੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਸਰੂਪ ਲਈ ਕੋਈ ਖੜੋਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਣਦਾ। ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੀ ਮੌਲਿਕਤਾ ਇਸ ਗੱਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਕਿ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਮੀ ਅਤੇ ਵੈਦਿਕ ਪਰੰਪਰਾਵਾਂ ਦੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਵਿਰੋਧ ਨਹੀਂ ਪਾਇਆ ਸਗੋਂ ਇਹ ਉਸ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਹੀ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸਰੂਪ ਹਨ। ਨਿਰਗੁਣ ਅਤੇ ਸਰਗੁਣ ਦੇ ਦਵੰਦ ਨੂੰ ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਏਕੰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਹੀ ਸਰੂਪ ਬਣਾ ਖਤਮ ਕਰ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹਨ। ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਵਿਚਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦੇ ਸਰੂਪ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗਿਕਤਾ ਇਸਦੀ ਵਿਵਿਧਤਾ ਵਿਚ ਪਈ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਸਰੂਪ ਵਿਭਿੰਨਤਾਵਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਭਰਿਆ ਹੋਣ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਵੀ ਏਕਤਵ ਦਾ ਆਦਰਸ਼ ਸਿਰਜਦਾ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਏਕਤਵ ਸ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟੀ ਦਾ ਸਿਰਜਕ ਵੀ ਹੈ ਅਤੇ ਸੰਚਾਲਕ ਵੀ ਜੋ ਆਪ ਇਸ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਸਥਿਤ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਓਅੰਕਾਰੀ ਏਕਤਵ ਕਿਸੇ ਖਾਸ ਵਰਗ ਤਕ ਸੀਮਿਤ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਜੜ੍ਹ ਅਤੇ ਚੇਤਨ ਦੋਹਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਪਸਰਿਆ ਕਿਸੇ ਵੀ ਤਰ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਵੱਖਰਤਾ, ਦਵੰਦਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਭੇਦਭਾਵ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਵਿਰਤੀ ਉਤਪੰਨ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋਣ ਦਿੰਦਾ। ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਸਨੂੰ ਸਰਗੁਣੀ ਮੰਨਦਿਆਂ ਵੀ ਅਮੂਰਤ ਮੰਨਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਿਸ ਕਾਰਨ ਉਸਦੀ ਉਪਾਸ਼ਨਾ ਸਿਰਫ਼ ਸਚਿਆਰ ਹੋ ਨਾਮ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਹੀ ਹੋ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।



**ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸਰੂਪ  
(ਦਖਣੀ ਓਅੰਕਾਰ ਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਸੰਦਰਭ ਵਿਚ)**

**ਹਵਾਲੇ :-**

ਮਨਮੋਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਡਾ.), ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਅਤੇ ਭਗਤੀ ਅੰਦੋਲਨ, (ਨਵੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ: ਮਨਦੀਪ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ), ੧੯੬੬, ਪੰਨਾ ੯੨.

ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਭਾਈ), ਸੰਬਯਾ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਜੀ : ਟੀਕਾ ਅਨੇਕ ਬਾਣੀਆਂ (ਸੈਂਚੀ ਪਹਿਲੀ), (ਨਵੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ, ਭਾਈ ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਹਿਤ ਸਦਨ), ੨੦੦੮, ਪੰਨਾ ੧੪੯.

ਉਗੀ, ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫੦.

ਨਰੈਣ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਗਿਆਨੀ), ਓਅੰਕਾਰ 'ਚੋਂ ਮਾਣਕ ਮੋਤੀ, (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਭਗਤ ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਲਵਾੜਾ), ੧੯੯੨, ਪੰਨਾ ੨੩.

ਜਾਚਕ, ਜਗਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ, ੧੯ ਦਰਪਨ, (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸਿੰਘ ਬ੍ਰਦਰਜ਼), ੨੦੦੮, ਪੰਨਾ ੩੯.

ਮਨਮੋਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਡਾ.), ਭਾਈ ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ-ਕਾਵਿ ਦਾ ਦਾਰਸ਼ਨਿਕ ਵਿਸ਼ਲੇਸ਼ਣ, (ਨਵੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ, ਮਨਦੀਪ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ), ੧੯੯੮ ਪੰਨਾ ੨.

ਓਗੀ, ਪੰਨਾ ੪.

ਨਿਰਾਕਾਰੀ, ਆਰ. ਡੀ. (ਡਾ.), ਪ੍ਰਧਾਨ ਉਪਨਿਸ਼ਦ, (ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਪਬਲੀਕੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਿਊਰੋ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ), ੧੯੯੨, ਪੰਨਾ ੩੮੦.

ਨਿਰਾਕਾਰੀ, ਭਾਰਤੀ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ, (ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਪਬਲੀਕੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਿਊਰੋ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ), ੨੦੧੬, ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੭.

ਮਨਮੋਹਨ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਡਾ.), ਭਾਈ ਵੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ-ਕਾਵਿ ਦਾ ਦਾਰਸ਼ਨਿਕ ਵਿਸ਼ਲੇਸ਼ਣ, (ਨਵੀਂ ਦਿੱਲੀ, ਮਨਦੀਪ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ), ਪੰਨਾ ੧੫.

ਓਗੀ, ਪੰਨਾ ੧੬.

ਜੱਗੀ, ਰਤਨ ਸਿੰਘ (ਸੰਪਾ), ਸਾਹਿਤ ਕੋਸ਼ ਪਰਿਭਾਸ਼ਿਕ ਸ਼ਬਦਾਵਲੀ, (ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਪਬਲੀਕੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਿਊਰੋ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ), ੨੦੧੧, ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯.

ਨਿਰਾਕਾਰੀ, ਭਾਰਤੀ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ, (ਪਟਿਆਲਾ, ਪਬਲੀਕੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਿਊਰੋ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ), ੨੦੧੬, ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯੫.

ਉਗੀ, ਪੰਨਾ ੨੮੧.

ਉਗੀ, ਪੰਨਾ ੨੯੫.

ਬਲਕਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਡਾ.), ਸਿੱਖ ਰਹੱਸਵਾਦ, (ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ਪਬਲੀਕੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਿਊਰੋ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ), ੧੯੯੯, ਪੰਨਾ ੩੧.

ਉਗੀ, ਪੰਨਾ ੩੨.

ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ (ਪ੍ਰੋ.), ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਦਰਸ਼ਨ, (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ, ਸ਼੍ਰੋ.ਗ.ਪ੍ਰ. ਕਮੇਟੀ), ੨੦੦੪, ਪੰਨਾ ੨੪੧.

ਜਗਬੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਡਾ.), ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਸਮਕਾਲੀਨ ਪ੍ਰਸੰਗਿਕਤਾ, (ਪਟਿਆਲਾ ਪਬਲੀਕੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਿਊਰੋ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ), ੨੦੧੨, ਪੰਨਾ ੬੧.

ਰਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਡਾ.), “ਸਿੱਖ ਧਰਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਦਾ ਸੰਕਲਪ”, ਸਿੱਖ ਫਲਸਫੇ ਦੀ ਰੂਪ ਰੇਖਾ, ਪ੍ਰੋ. ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਸਿੰਘ (ਸੰਪਾ), (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ: ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ੨੦੦੧), ਪੰਨਾ ੪੦.

ਉਗੀ, ਪੰਨਾ ੪੦.

ਵਜ਼ੀਰ ਸਿੰਘ, (ਡਾ.), ਸਿੱਖ ਦਰਸ਼ਨਧਾਰਾ, (ਪਟਿਆਲਾ: ਪਬਲੀਕੇਸ਼ਨ ਬਿਊਰੋ, ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ੨੦੦੨), ਪੰਨਾ ੪.

# GUIDELINES

In the present scenario it has become pertinent for institutions of higher learning to provide a platform where all the disciplines are articulated in a manner where they have their own clearly demarcated space and yet have room for dialogue, collaboration, contestation, confirmation or negation across disciplines and this necessitates the multidisciplinary approach of the journal *Researcher*.

## AIMS AND SCOPE

*Researcher* is a bi-annual, multidisciplinary and refereed (peer-reviewed) Journal of University of Jammu that seeks to provide a specialized academic platform and reference for the dissemination of research in the broad areas of academic disciplines including Science and Technology, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Studies. This includes both qualitative and quantitative empirical work, besides theoretical and conceptual contributions. The ambit of the Journal is international and submissions are subject to blind peer review process. The editorial policy of the Journal is to invite the research articles from academicians, researchers, policy makers and practitioners. The publication is intended for readers including litterateurs, academicians, educationists, professionals, policy makers, research scholars and students.

## PUBLICATION POLICY

- ◆ Research articles will be considered for publication only if they fall within the ambit of aim and scope of the Journal. The research articles will be accessed on the basis of:
  - a) Originality;
  - b) Relevance;
  - c) Quality of research;
  - d) Research contribution and applied significance.
- ◆ The Journal does not levy any submission/publication charges. Further, the author shall be given a complementary contributor's copy of the Journal.
- ◆ University of Jammu owns the copyright © of the research articles published in *Researcher*. Articles published in the *Researcher* should not be reproduced/reprinted in any form without seeking prior written permission from the Convener, Publication Cell, University of Jammu.
- ◆ **Disclaimer:** The views expressed in the articles in the *Researcher* do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the University of Jammu.

## **PEER REVIEW POLICY**

This Journal operates a double blind review process. All contributions are initially assessed by the Editorial Board for suitability for the Journal. Research article deemed suitable is sent to a minimum of two independent expert reviewers to assess the quality of the paper. The Editorial Board is responsible for the final decision regarding acceptance or rejection of research article based on the reviewers' comments. The Editorial Board's decision shall be final.

## **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

- ◆ The Journal encourages the submission of works in the specified disciplines in a variety of styles including articles, case-studies, review essays, book reviews and other scholarly papers.
- ◆ Only original and unpublished work is sought for consideration of publication in the Journal.
- ◆ The submission of research articles is open throughout the year on rolling basis. Since the periodicity of the publication is bi-annual in nature, articles submitted till 30, April will be considered for June issue and till 31, October for December issue.
- ◆ Any research article that is identical to or substantially similar to a work already published or under review for conference / publication will not be considered.
- ◆ Unless expressly indicated, otherwise, all correspondence will be with the first author.
- ◆ Receipt of all research articles will be acknowledged.
- ◆ Each submission will be blind reviewed for technical merit and content.
- ◆ The first page of the research article should be the title page. It should contain the title of the research article and the name, designation and affiliation of the author along with the address, phone/fax number and email address of the author and co-author(s).
- ◆ The second page should contain the research article title, the abstract (not more than 150 words) and keywords (a minimum of 4 and maximum of 6 words).
- ◆ All the figures and tables should appear at the end of the research articles; should be properly numbered in Arabic notation; and bear appropriate title and labels.
- ◆ The research article should normally be of 3000-5000 words including figures and tables typed in double space and printed in 12-point font on A-4 size paper with 1 inch margin on all four sides. All tables and figures must be serially numbered, sequentially following references to them in the text. All exhibits should be in black and white only.
- ◆ The research article should not contain footnotes. References should be placed at the end of the research articles after the figures and tables. The references should mention

only those sources, which are cited in the text of the research article.

- ◆ The first paragraph of any section, including the introduction, should not be indented. Major headings should be left justified and bold with one line above and one line below the heading to separate it from the text.
- ◆ Authors are advised to follow uniform citation and referencing style throughout the manuscript. Following discipline specific reference styles are accepted:
  - i. APA Style for Social Science and Business Studies.
  - ii. MLA Style for Arts and Humanities.
  - iii. ACS/APS/IEEE for Science and Technology.
  - iv. Standard International/Indian Style approved by the University of Jammu for any other subject not covered above.

### **ETHICS POLICY**

- ◆ Authors should submit only unpublished original research article that has not been submitted for publication or published elsewhere. A declaration by the author(s) should be made that the paper has not been sent elsewhere for publication. It should be made on separate sheet with the title of the research article, name(s) of the author(s)/ co-author(s) full postal address for correspondence and signature.
- ◆ Any research article which is found to be plagiarised or if is having text match above the standards as fixed by the Editorial Board will be rejected out rightly. Authors are required to scan submissions using plagiarism detection software before submission of research article. The author shall bear the full responsibility if any malpractice is detected. Authors involvement in any of the following will be treated as malpractice:
  - a) Falsification of data
  - b) Plagiarism
  - c) Improprieties of authorship
  - d) Misappropriation of ideas of other scholars
  - e) Violation of generally accepted research practices
  - f) Material failure to comply with legislative and regulatory requirements affecting research
  - g) Inappropriate behavior in relation to misconduct.

In such cases the decision of the Editorial Board shall be final and binding.

- ◆ Authors must assign copyright of the research article in favour of the *Researcher*.
- ◆ Authors are advised to avoid biased language and subjective comments/opinion that don't in any way pertain to the research problem.

## INSTRUCTIONS TO THE REVIEWERS

- ◆ The submitted research article is a privileged communication and reviewers must treat it as confidential.
- ◆ The reviewer must not (or allow anyone else to) retain/copy or share the research article with any one without the explicit permission of the editor.
- ◆ The reviewer shall not disclose his/her identity and the review outcome with anyone other than the editor of the Journal.
- ◆ The reviewer must return the reviewed research article within two weeks from the date of the receipt.
- ◆ **Evaluation Criteria:** The criteria for evaluating a research article encompasses the evaluation of the attributes as given in the following research article review form:

## RESEARCH ARTICLE REVIEW FORM

✓ **Rankings:** Please use the symbol (✓) to indicate your assessment

(5= Excellent, 4= Good, 3= Average, 2= Poor, 1= Very Poor, NA= Not applicable)

Sl.No.	Key Evaluation Parameters	1	2	3	4	5	N.A
1.	Originality of the work						
2.	Contemporaneity of the subject						
3.	Contribution to existing knowledge						
4.	Adequacy of empirical/theoretical background						
5.	Appropriateness of the research methodology						
6.	Citation and referencing as per the style						
7.	Analysis and inferences						
8.	Legitimacy of the conclusions						
9.	Applied significance						
10.	Organization of the research article						
11.	Quality of the communication in terms of use of language.						
12.	Appropriateness for publication						

## Reviewers' Detailed Comments (Reviewers may use separate sheet)

1. Reviewer to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the research paper.

2. Additional inputs to the author on how he/she can make the topic more meaningfully aligned to the discipline specific requirement.
3. General comments for improving/adding, references, clarifying data analysis, structure and format, language editing, communication, etc.





# LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Nawang Tashi	Ecological Engineering Laboratory, Department of Botany, University of Jammu, Jammu Email: nawang7786@gmail.com
Sajan Thakur	Ecological Engineering Laboratory, Department of Botany, University of Jammu, Jammu Email: sajan0007thakur@gmail.com
Jyoti Sudan	Department of Biosciences, Govt. Higher Secondary School Lamberi, Nowshera, Rajouri, Jammu
Harish Chander Dutt	Ecological Engineering Laboratory, Department of Botany, University of Jammu, Jammu Email:hcdutt@rediffmail.com
Yash Paul Khajuria	School of Biotechnology, University of Jammu, Jammu Email: yashkhajuria@gmail.com
Sanjana Koul	School of Biotechnology, University of Jammu, Jammu Email: sanrozie@rediffmail.com
Mool Raj	Department of Political Science, University of Jammu, Jammu Email: moolrajsharma9@gmail.com
Hema Gandotra	Department of Sociology, University of Jammu, Jammu, Email: gandotrahema@gmail.com
Usha Sharma	Government College for Women, Udhampur Email: palakshrm860@gmail.com
Lalit Kumar	Department of Political Science, B. U. C College, Batala, Gurdaspur, Punjab Email: lalitkumarsachdeva@yahoo.in
Gulam Murtaza	Department of Political Science University of Jammu, Jammu Email: gulammurtaza888@gmail.com
Payal Gandotra	The Business School, University of Jammu,Jammu Email: payal07011983@gmail.com
Sahil Koul	The Business School, University of Jammu, Jammu Email: sahilkoul1995@gmail.com
Gurpreet Kour	Department of Punjabi, University of Jammu, Jammu Email: caurgupi8316@gmail.com



# RESEARCHER

A Multidisciplinary Journal

Vol. XV No. 2, 2019  
ISSN 2278-9022

## SUBSCRIPTION FORM

I wish to subscribe/renew my subscription to **Researcher: A Multidisciplinary Journal** for 1/2/3 years(s). A draft/cheque bearing No. \_\_\_\_\_ dated \_\_\_\_\_ for Rs. \_\_\_\_\_ drawn in favour of Publication Cell, University of Jammu is enclosed.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Address : \_\_\_\_\_

Pin \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Tel Number \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile No. \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

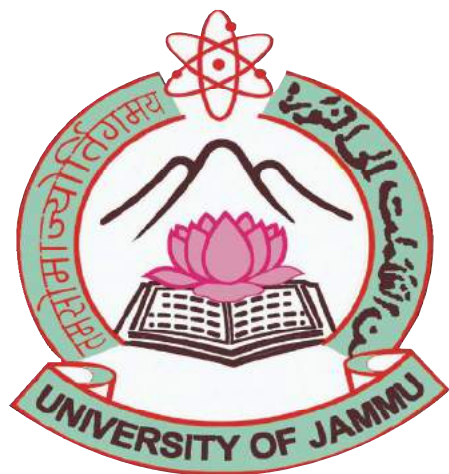
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Subscription Rates (INR)			
Category	1 year	2 year	3 year
Institutional	1000	1500	2000
Faculty/Student/Scholar	500	750	1000

### ***Mailing Address:-***

Convener, Publication Cell,  
University of Jammu, Jammu, J&K, India Pin - 180006  
E-mail : publication.ju@gmail.com





**Researcher : A Multidisciplinary Journal** is a bi-annual refereed (peer-reviewed) Journal of University of Jammu that seeks to provide a specialized academic platform for the dissemination of research in the broad areas of academic disciplines including Science and Technology, Arts and Humanities, Social Sciences and Business Studies. The ambit of the Journal is international and submissions are subject to blind peer review process. The editorial policy of the Journal is to invite the research articles from academicians, researchers, policy makers and practitioners. The publication is intended for readers including litterateurs, academicians, educationists, professionals, policy makers, research scholars and students. All the articles are considered for publication only if they fall within the ambit of aim and scope of the Journal.

### Call for Papers for Next Issue

Full paper submission	April 30, 2020
Confirmation of paper	May 31, 2020
Re-submission of revised paper	June 15, 2020
Issue publication	June 31, 2020

*Refer to "Guidelines" inside for details on paper submission.*



**Published by**

Publication Cell on behalf of the Registrar, University of Jammu, Jammu, India.

**Address**

University of Jammu

Baba Saheb Ambedkar Road, Jammu-180006 (J&K)

**E-mail :** publication.ju@gmail.com

**Editorial Assistance :** Sh. Parshotam Lal & Sh. Gourav Sharma

©Publication Cell, University of Jammu, Jammu. All copy rights are reserved. The views expressed by the authors in this journal do not represent the views either of the editor or the University of Jammu.