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Nabinchandra College, Badarpur
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FOREWORD

I am glad to write the 'Foreword' to the Ninth Volume of *Edusearch* (A Bi-lingual Multi-Disciplinary National Level Annual Research Journal) the publication of which will surely enhance research endeavour of the scholars across the nation. This will definitely lead to academic excellence of Nabinchandra College as an institution of higher education.

Nabinchandra College Badarpur, established in 1969 with only Arts stream, has made a steady progress towards the present enviable status. It is in recent years, the college has made remarkable progress in infrastructure as well as in academic expansion and excellence. The newly constructed academic building and the renovation works done with the financial assistance of RUSA (Assam) has increased the intake capacity and changed the look of the college. Moreover, the college facilitates ICT based learning platform with all the smart classrooms and technology support. As of now it is the only college under Assam University, Silchar offering B.Voc in Information Technology.

The College is located in the heart of Badarpur, a small railway town in Karimganj district of south Assam, is now offering Arts, Commerce and Science courses both at H.S and Undergraduate level and B.Voc in Information Technology in UG level. It has strong wings of N.C.C and N.S.S which have been successfully involving students in extra-curricular and social activities. In regards to academic excellence, many students of this college have been securing wonderful results both in H.S and Degree levels, with five Gold Medals and four Rank holders in last academic session. In games and sports too, this college has been able to achieve remarkable progress with Championship and Runners in Inter-college Cricket Tournament. The career & counselling cell of the college has been working to help the students for building up their careers and getting their placement successfully. Still this institution has 'miles to go' in its process of career building and academic excellence.

A research journal serves as a mirror reflecting the academic activities of an institution of higher learning. In this context "*Edusearch*", the research journal of Nabinchandra College becomes relevant by setting the ball rolling with the publication of its first volume in January, 2015. The very objective of publishing this Journal is not only to spread activities but also

to stimulate participation of interested scholars and researchers in exchange of ideas and research endeavours.

Despite the college has little expertise in publishing research papers, the effort undertaken to bring out the journal is a grand success. On behalf of the college family, I offer my heartfelt thanks and congratulations to the Research cell, the Editorial Board, the contributors, the Management and all who supported the process of bringing out this journal. I hope that "Edusearch", a multi-disciplinary national level research journal, will continue to come out every year with more and more efficacy and maturity.



Dr. Mortuja Hussain
Principal
Nabinchandra College, Badarpur

EDITORIAL

Research works generate novel and innovative ideas helping a country build up its own credibility in the global platform. For a knowledge driven growth of an economy, expansion of knowledge and outlook in diverse fields become very crucial to face global competition. In this perspective, quality research in diverse fields of education is very pertinent to improve teaching-learning capacity in higher educational institutions, which really facilitates the students, the teachers, the academicians and the society at large for their all round development. Besides, promotion of research activity in a large and diverse economy like India would pave the way to evolve as a knowledge reservoir in the globe. Hence, research activity in an academic institution is imperative for its sustainability and development which contribute largely in the country's knowledge reservoir. However, quality research has been one of the major constraints faced by higher educational institutions in India. In view of this, Nabinchandra College, Badarpur, through its Research Cell has been working to encourage quality research works among faculty members, scholars and academicians of various disciplines in different higher educational institution across the country by its modest attempt of publishing the annual multi-disciplinary national level research journal 'EDUSEARCH'.

The present ninth volume of Edusearch journal contains as many as thirteen number of research papers, of which eleven papers are in English section and two papers are in Bengali section. The very first paper of English section firmly analysed the comparisons of the quality of life and knowledge of Swachhata among the inhabitants of Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazar of Dibrugarh district. The author in the second paper explores the treatment of women in Divakaruni's *The Unknown Errors of Our Lives* in which she aims to capture the predicament faced by Divakaruni's women characters as displaced individuals both in India and overseas. The third paper empirically delineates the marketing mechanism of agricultural products with case findings in Barak Valley of Assam, in which the author realised that agricultural marketing offers the tremendous scope for enhancing the farm income and creating job opportunities. The fourth paper nicely examines the impact of bio-social factors on birth spacing beliefs and fertility in Paltan Bazar and Milan Nagar areas of Dibrugarh in Assam. The author in the fifth paper explores the evolution and principles of Triple Bottom Line (TBL) in the context of corporate sustainability with a focus on the Indian business landscape, highlighting its significance in corporate social responsibility. The sixth paper gives an insight into the political history of Sir Syed Saadulla, a prominent figure in Assam's political history,

examines his political beliefs and values as well as his role as a leader within the Muslim League in undivided Assam. The seventh paper highlights on the goals of India's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and analysed the issues, challenges and country's role in implementing SDGs to eradicate the problems of food security in India. Following this, the eighth paper examines very lucidly the status of women in contemporary Indian politics, including the impact of women's entry into politics on policy-making and governance in India. The author in the ninth paper explores the effectiveness of FLN training on continuous professional development of lower primary school teachers in Hailakandi district of Assam, which has great policy implications. The tenth paper draws attention on the study of Tagore literature in Persian world, in which it is delineated that the Persian version of Tagore literature and Tagore visit to Iran had significantly promoted Indo-Iranian cultural relations. Finally, the eleventh paper explores the factors influencing women in startup business in Katigorah Block of Cachar district in Assam, which has great policy implications for women empowerment.

In Bengali section, the first paper articulately draws attention on the popular songs of Hasan Raja in the light of *Marmabadi* Philosophy in which he showed the transmission of Hasan Raja from influential landlordship to the spiritualism. The second and the last paper of the present volume examines women disparity in matrimonial songs in muslim society of West Tripura District, which has a great relevance in the question of equality.

We are highly pleased to announce the present ninth volume of **Edusearch** with a belief that research papers contained in this issue would serve the interest of the readers and the researchers of various disciplines, as well as the socio-economic activists and business entrepreneurs. The Editorial Board would like to extend its sincere appreciation and thanks to the reader community as well as to the contributors for their valuable approach. We anticipate continuous support from all the research aspirants and stake holders to extend their sincere support and co-operation to build 'Edusearch' one of the most successful journals in academic world.



Dr. N.U. Khadem
Chief Editor

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An Analysis Comparing the Quality of Life and Knowledge of Swachhata among Inhabitants of Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazar, Dibrugarh

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Abstract

The two main pillars of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (SBA) are cleanliness and sanitation. Cleanliness, or Swachhata, is the state of being clean as well as the practice of getting and staying clean. Cleanliness may imply a moral quality and may be regarded as contributing to other ideals such as health and aesthetics. Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India mission) was launched on 2nd October, 2014. Using closed-ended questionnaires, the cross-sectional study assessed the awareness of SBA in a particular population and its relationship to socio-demographic characteristics. The study was conducted by convenient sampling procedure on primary data (direct personal interview) across 220 households from two areas of Dibrugarh, Milan Nagar area (sample size, 120) and Paltan Bazar area (sample size, 100). The data were analyzed in MS Excel and presented in pie diagrams. It is concluded that the people living in the largely Assamese neighbourhood of Milan Nagar are generally more knowledgeable about SBA than the people living in the mainly non-Assamese (Hindi speaking) neighbourhood of Paltan Bazar. The residents of Milan Nagar are also more aware of the various social welfare activities carried out under SBA.

Keywords: *Cleanliness, Hygiene, Sanitation, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Health impacts.*

1. Introduction:

Mahatma Gandhi said for the Swachh Bharat, Sanitation is more important than independence'. He made cleanliness and sanitation an integral

part of the Gandhian way of living. His dream was total sanitation for all [4].

The concept of Swachh Bharat is to pave access for every person to:

- * Sanitation facilities including toilets, solid and liquid waste disposal systems, village cleanliness and
- * Safe and adequate drinking water supply.

Thus, safe water, toilets and good hygiene keep us alive and healthy for Swachh Bharat, Swash Bharat.

To accelerate the progress of sanitation in rural areas, Government of India is implementing from 01.04.2012, the 'Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA)', a centrally sponsored scheme [earlier Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)]. Similarly, to provide drinking water to rural population in adequate quantity, the Govt. of India is implementing a centrally sponsored Scheme called the National Rural Drinking Water Program (NRDWP) [2, 8].

2. Importance of better sanitation:

With the launch of Central Rural Sanitation Program (CRSP) in the year 1986 and the introduction of the Total Sanitation Campaign in 1999, the coverage rose to 22% as per 2001 census. According to the Census 2011, about 72.2% of the Indian population in 16.78 crore households stay in around 638,000 villages. Out of this, only 5.48 crore households (32.7%) had access to toilets which means that 67.3% of the rural households in the country still did not have access to sanitation facilities [4].

While having access to basic hygiene practices like hand washing and safe drinking water is beneficial for the rural population, the absence of these services can have detrimental effects on social, economic, and health outcomes. All schools should have a sufficient number of toilets that are designated for boys and girls separately. Tropical enteropathy is a small intestine condition that is a major contributor to under nutrition in children. Stunting is brought on by faecal germs that young children who live in unsanitary and unhygienic environments consume in excessive numbers.

3. Standard of living:

Standard of living refers to the quantity and quality of material goods and services available to a given population. Standard of living is a comparison tool used when describing two different geographic areas. Metrics may include things like wealth levels, comfort, goods, and necessities that are available to people of different socioeconomic classes in those areas. The standard of living is measured by things that are easily quantified, such as income,

employment opportunities, cost of goods and services, and poverty. Factors such as life expectancy, the inflation rate, or the number of paid vacation days people receive each year are also included [6, 7].

Other factors commonly associated with the standard of living include; class disparity, poverty rate, quality and affordability of housing, hours of work required to purchase necessities, gross domestic product (GDP), affordable access to quality healthcare, quality and availability of education, incidence of disease, infrastructure, national economic growth, economic and political stability, political and religious freedom, environmental quality, climate, safety etc.

3.1. Significance of standard of living:

- * Standard of living is the material well-being of the average person in each population.
- * It is typically measured using gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.
- * Standard of living and quality of life utilize some of the same data, but standard of living represents a more physical aspect of life while quality of life represents the more intangible aspects.
- * One alternative standard of living data set is the Human Development Index (HDI), which uses many factors from life expectancy at birth, expected years of schooling, mean years of schooling, and gross national income per capita to measure a country's level of development.
- * Standard of living is closely related to quality of life, which can also explore factors such as economic and political stability, political and religious freedom, environmental quality, climate, and safety.

Standard of living is often used to compare geographic areas, such as the standard of living in the Paltan Bazar versus Milan Nagar. Standard of living can also be used to compare distinct points in time. In a narrow sense, economists frequently measure standard of living using GDP. Per capita GDP provides a quick, rough estimate of the total amount of goods and services available per person with numerous and more complex metrics of standard of living have been developed, many of them correlate highly with per capita GDP [6, 7].

3.2. Quality of life:

The term quality of life is more subjective and ambiguous than the term standard of living. The factors that affect the overall quality of life vary by people's lifestyles and their personal preferences. Regardless of these

factors, this measure plays an important part in the financial decisions in everyone's lives. Some of the factors that can affect a person's quality of life can include conditions in the workplace, healthcare, education, and material living conditions.

Some factors that may be used to measure the quality of life include ; freedom from slavery, equal protection under the law, freedom from discrimination, right to be treated equally (without regard to gender, race, language, religion, political beliefs, nationality, socioeconomic status, and more), right to privacy, freedom of thought, freedom of religion, equal pay for equal work, right to vote, right to rest and leisure, right to education, etc.

3.3. Standard of living versus quality of life:

The term 'standard of living' typically refers to the comfort, wealth, material possessions, and needs of particular social classes in particular locations; these are more objective measures of income and consumption, whereas the term 'quality of life' is more ethereal and subjective and refers to the happiness that comes from economic factors that affect people's well-being. Items such as personal liberty or environmental quality are considered. Characteristics that make up a good quality of life for one person may not necessarily be the same for someone else. In other words, standard of living refers to the level of wealth, comfort, material goods, and necessities available to a certain socio-economic class or geographic area. Quality of life, on the other hand, is a subjective term that can measure happiness.

Standard of living is a quantitative, concrete term that describes the resources accessible to a certain socioeconomic class or region, but quality of life is a subjective term that can gauge happiness. Both can be flawed indicators because the factors can vary between people in the same geographic area or socioeconomic class [6, 7].

3.4. Some terms and abbreviations used in the present context:

* **The Human Development Index (HDI):** The Human Development Index (HDI) developed by the United Nations as a tool to assess and rate the social and economic development of nations.

* **Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** Gross domestic product is the monetary value of all finished goods and services made within a country during a specific period.

* **Happiness economics:** The study of how economic variables like wealth and work affect an individual's level of happiness is known as happiness economics.

* **Gross Domestic Product per capita (GDP per capita):** GDP per capita is a metric that breaks down a country's GDP per person and is calculated by dividing the GDP of a country by its population.

* **Developed economy:** A developed economy is one with sustained economic growth, security, high per capita income, and advanced technological infrastructure [6, 7].

4. A brief review of literature:

Bashet, A. et.al., on their study carried out to determine the water, sanitation, and hygienic practices of elderly people from a selected old home and nearest community, Gazipur, Bangladesh in 2019 [1]. Gyasi, R.M. et.al. focuses on Water, sanitation, and the risk of chronic diseases in old age, result from the Ghana WHO SAGE in 2022 [3]. Rajiv, K.K. et.al., studied two blocks of Bandra and Gaja district of Jharkhand regarding the implementation of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan Project. The main concern of this study was to inform and guide the Aarogya Foundation on how far the community becomes aware about the cleanliness, health and hygiene, sanitation, and safe drinking water, etc. and the change in practices [4]. Shrestha, M. V. et.al., focuses on paediatric diseases related to water; sanitation and cause of mortality and morbidity among children in Nepal in 2018 [5].

5. Goals and objectives of the study:

The sanitation status of any area is interlinked with the social, economic, education and cultural development of the area. But sanitation, as both a determinant and the product of any such development, should be given a priority. The goal of this study is to analyze the sanitation and environmental conditions to be able to identify the essential factors in the provision of sanitation systems in the surveyed areas and also, to find out the management of sanitary facilities in Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazar.

The specific objectives are as follows:

- * To identify present status of water supply, latrine, and household waste disposal in the surveyed areas.
- * To find out management of sanitary facilities in the surveyed areas.
- * To find out the existing and possible health problems of poor sanitation among the surveyed areas.
- * To determine garbage disposal systems have been used in these communities and identify problems associated with their application;

Thus, the main objective of the present work is to compare the aware-

ness of Swachhata, such as knowledge and practices of water, sanitation, hygiene, and the standard of living in two different areas of Dibrugarh i.e., Paltan Bazar and Milan Nagar.

6. Significance of the study:

Safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene are fundamental to improving standards of living for people. The improved standards made possible by WASH include, among others, better physical health, protection of the environment, better educational outcomes, convenience time savings, assurance of lives lived with dignity, and equal treatment for both men and women. Poor and vulnerable populations have lower access to improved WASH services and have poorer associated behaviors. Improved WASH is therefore central to reducing poverty, promoting equality, and supporting socioeconomic development.

Various areas are currently experiencing a variety of problems, and health and sanitation are both part of the equation. Better sanitation and sanitary facility is sign of good health. Sanitary status is directly affected by poverty. The study specifically keeping the following points in consideration:

- * It will help in use and management of concept of sanitary facilities.
- * It will be helpful to conduct sanitary awareness program.
- * It will be helpful for the planning and policy making of development insanitary field.
- * It will be helpful to find out the major sanitary problems.
- * It would be helpful for governmental and non-governmental organizations in launching health and sanitary management programs.

7. Scope and limitations of the study:

The scope of analysis of sanitation is not limited to the operational definition of proper disposal of human waste and the construction of latrines. The study encompasses other elements such as water supply, disposal of waste water and solid waste, community hygiene and health, and environmental conditions. The study is limited to the preliminary stage of the selection process that involves the identification of problems related to environmental, technical, social, cultural, and health aspects of the community. It focuses on the selection process involved and the issues relevant to the provision of sanitation systems for the community. Since specific findings are based on the case study, it must not be assumed that they are applicable in other

communities. Only general recommendations are provided in the larger context.

8. Delimitation of the study:

The study's delimitations relate to time, money, and materials. In order to enhance the study's worth and dependability, the study's delimitations can be articulated as follows:

Delimitation of the study concerns to time, financial resource, and material. To make the study more valuable and reliable, the delimitation of the study can be stated as follows:

- * The study will be limited to two areas only.
- * Only one head of the family will be taken from selected households.
- * This study will be focused to only water supply, latrine, and household waste disposal, human excreta disposal system.
- * The study will be based on analytical and quantitative method.

9. Material for the study:

Since the goal is to compare the knowledge and practices of water, sanitation, and hygiene in two areas of Dibrugarh, schedules pertaining to the daily home practices of the residents of Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazar were used to gather information.

10. Methodology of the study:

* **Research design:** It is based on descriptive type as well as qualitative and quantitative in nature. It will be applied to assess the management of sanitary facilities in Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazar areas in Dibrugarh.

* **Population:** The population of the study was the total households of Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazar areas in Dibrugarh and the source of data will be all the head member of each household.

* **Sampling procedure and sampling size:** A sample of 220 houses was chosen from an unspecified population in the two Dibrugarh localities, including 120 households in Milan Nagar and 100 households in Paltan Bazar. Because of the limited time, insufficient resources, and lack of instruments for the entire population, we are adopting the convenient sampling approach in this instance.

* **Data collection tools:** In this study interview schedule and observation sheet were used for the data collection and required information and facts about understanding of use and management sanitary facilities of Milan Nagar

and Paltan Bazar areas in Dibrugarh.

*** Standardization of the tools:** To collect the information for the study, tool applied must be more reliable and valid. Before finalizing the interview-schedule and observation form were administered by pilot survey to make the study reliable and practical. Then they were modified and finalized according to result of pilot study for better outputs.

*** Data collection procedures:** During course of data collection the interviewers first consulted ward member/Gaonburha of the Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazar areas in Dibrugarh by a request letter. Then the interviewer started meeting the respondents. Before filling up the interview schedule the investigator will make the respondents assured about the purpose of the study and request them to give information regarding the study.

*** Method of analysis and interpretation of data:** After the collection of data and information the interviewer presented the data in different tables and classified into several heading like bar diagram, pie chart, table, and percentage to analyze the data and interpret the results. Finally, the findings and conclusion will be drawn.

11. Hypotheses used in the study:

The hypotheses used in the study are:

*** Null hypothesis (Ho):** There is no association between residence, municipalities, region, wealth index, education and literacy level and sources of drinking water and type of sanitation.

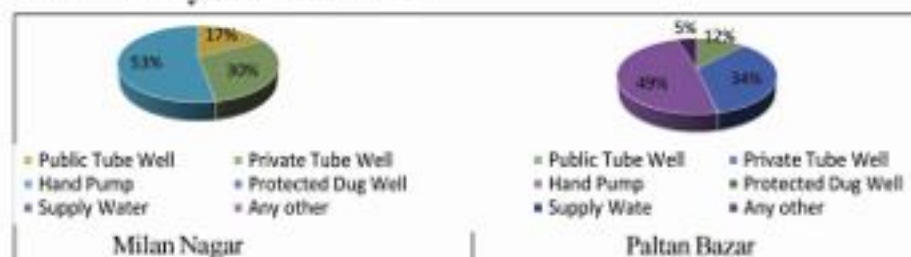
*** Alternative hypothesis (H1):** There is an association between residence, municipalities, region, wealth index, education and literacy level and sources of drinking water and type of sanitation.

12. Analysis:

Comparative diagrammatic representations of findings on several metrics are shown as follows:

12.1. Water:

12.1.1. Family's source of water:



12.1.2. Water handling practices:

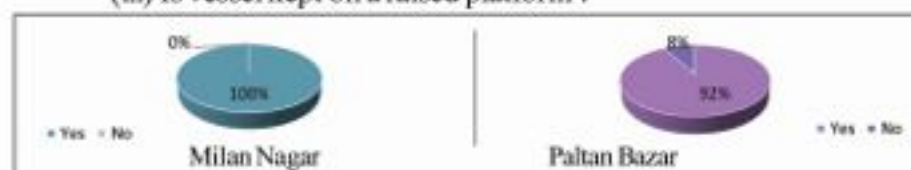
(i) Is vessel cleaned before water collection ?



(ii) Is vessel covered while transporting ?



(iii) Is vessel kept on a raised platform ?



(iv) Is vessel covered while storing water ?

**12.1.3. Water consumption (drinking) habits:**

(a) Whether boiled or not:



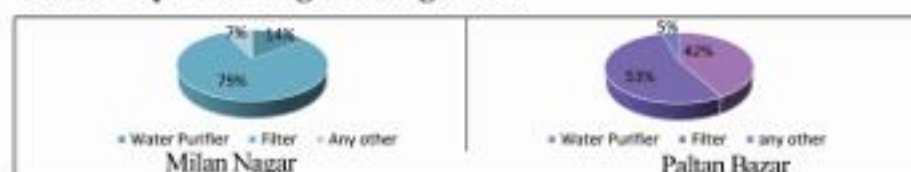
(b) Whether filtered:



(c) Any other method:



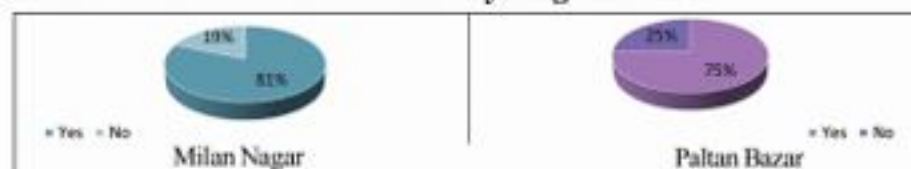
12.1.4. Ways of storing drinking water:



12.1.5. Ways of storage of water (other than drinking):



12.1.6. Water stored out of reach of young children:



12.2. Sanitation system:**12.2.1 Toilet:**

(i) Is there a permanent toilet practice ?



(ii) Is the toilet is sanitary ?



(ii) Who provided the toilet ?



(iv) Is the toilet private or shared ?



(v) Is the toilet connected to a septic system ?



(vi) Is there a simple pit system of the toilet ?



12.2.2 Problem facing during sanitation:**(i) Leakage from pit / latrine :****(ii) Problem due to share toilet :****(iii) Feel suffocated and congested due to structure :****(iv) Bad odour ?****(v) Non availability of water source nearby :**

12.2.3 Defecation practice:

(i) Adults:



(ii) Children:

**12.3 Hygienic behaviour:**

(i) Washing hands after defecation (with soap / without soap) :



(ii) Washing hands before eating (with soap/without soap):



(iii) Washing hands before feeding children/infants (with soap/without soap):



(iv) Are the surroundings cleaned ?



(v) Maintaining cleanliness at water source :



12.4. Disposal of domestic garbage's / sewages:

i) Where is domestic garbage disposed ?



ii) What is the process for disposing of household garbage ?



iii) How often do you dispose of household garbage ?



12.5. Drainage system:

(a) Drainage System:



Conclusion:

From the afore mentioned data, it can be shown that, in contrast to Milan Nagar, the residents of Paltan Bazar lack basic education and are ignorant of basic hygiene practices; in other words, they continue to engage in unsafe traditional practices. The majority of Paltan Bazar's population are people below the poverty line. Their lack of knowledge about personal sanitation and environmental pollution is due to their inadequate education and poor health. Residents of Paltan Bazar disperse rubbish anywhere, and there is no organised system in place for the collection, storage, or disposal of waste. On the other side, the people of Milan Nagar are highly hygienic they wash their hands after using the lavatory and follow good sanitation practices. Most people are educated, and are conscious of health issues. They also wash their hands before and after taking food and dispose of waste through the Dibrugarh municipal garbage collection system.

Improper garbage disposal can have significant impacts on public health. Disease transmission, water pollution, air pollution, soil pollution, injuries and accidents, mental health impacts, vector borne diseases, food contamination, cancer risks and community economic impacts are some ways in which communities may be affected by improper waste disposal. Therefore, education and awareness about proper waste disposal practices are crucial to mitigate the public health risks.

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Treatment of Women in Divakaruni's The Unknown Errors of Our Lives

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Abstract

*Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, one of the most significant Indo-American fictional artists, has contributed remarkably to the field of literature that has led to earn worldwide recognition for her. Being a first-generation diaspora, she has been highly influenced by the miserable condition of the immigrants, especially that of women both in homeland and abroad. The immigrants' dilemma who remain in a nowhere position between the pull of their inherited land and the call of the present or that of the foreign one, is central to her works. Most of her diasporic characters, instead of deep identity crisis, are able to establish distinct identity of their own. Her women characters are essentially remarkable in this respect. The present paper aims to capture the predicament faced by her women characters as displaced individuals both in India and overseas as evident in her short story collection *The Unknown Errors of Our Lives*. To meet the set objective, both primary and secondary sources comprising books, articles published in journals have been consulted. It has been followed by thorough analysis, interpretation, close examination and evaluation of the same.*

Keywords: *Diaspora, Nostalgia, Women Identity, Migration, Displacement*

As a literary artist, Divakaruni's creative works have been appreciably recognized all over the globe. In her short story collection, *The Unknown Errors of Our Lives*, out of nine stories, the present paper examines five stories titled "Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter", "The Intelligence of Wild Things", "The Lives of Strangers", "The Love of a Good Man" and "The Blooming Season for Cacti". All these stories are full of diasporic note where the life

and the struggle of diasporas, particularly women, in and outside India have been highlighted.

"Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter", the very first story, represents a psychological study of the tradition bound Bengali widow named Mrs. Dutta who arrives in the USA, California in response to her son Sagar's letter. The incidents that take place in her life tell us of the misery and struggle that the immigrants face in host society. The letter written by the lady to Mrs Roma Basu, living in Calcutta, plays a very crucial part in unearthing her mental conflict, her way of life as a traditional Indian and the shift in her life during her stay at San Francisco.

The story begins with Mrs. Dutta's uneasiness in sleeping on Perma Rest American mattress that her son and daughter-in-law have bought for her. Being an ideal and obedient Indian house wife, she always gets up early in the morning which is quite contrary to modern metropolitan American life. She strongly follows her mother-in-law's words that "a good wife wakes before the rest of the household" (7). Such a culture and tradition becomes absolutely unbearable for her son, daughter-in-law and grand children too. Hence, she decides to return to her home country. Her pain and agony burst out as she writes, "Although I miss you, I know you will be pleased to hear how happy I am in America. There is much here that needs getting used to, but we are no strangers to adjusting, we old women. After all, haven't we been doing it all our lives" (32). These words of the old lady express the feeling of a tradition bound woman who stands as a representative of her sort in India, particularly, the Bengali women who spend and sacrifice their whole life in adjusting with the members of the family, mostly the in-laws and with the overall environment of the society.

The whole American world appears to Mrs. Dutta to be a totally strange one. She is surprised when Sagar speaks in favour of his wife, children close their doors against their parents, Shyamoli utters her husband's name and asks him to wash her clothes, the way children and others remain busy in watching T.V. without any familial affection and so on. Even soon after her arrival in America, when Mrs. Dutta wishes to meet 'her next-door neighbours' so to share some sweets as it's usually done in India, Shyamoli objects and says, "Such things were not the custom in California. . . . Here everyone was busy, they didn't sit around chatting, drinking endless cups of sugar tea" (21). This clearly shows an absence of affection and fellow-feeling among the Americans, that is in American culture, just opposed to Indian Bengali society.

The artificiality of American cultural norms has been presented through the reference to a Mother's Day gift, a photograph of Mrinalini and Pradeep taken with "a charming background" of "a glorious autumn forest" (10). But later on, it comes to the knowledge of Mrs. Dutta that the forest was not a natural one, rather, a background scenery in a studio in California. Further, the concept of Mother's Day celebration astonishes Mrs. Dutta and on listening to this she thinks "a strange concept, a day set aside to honour mothers. Did the sahebs not honour their mothers the rest of the year, then?" (10). Even Indian natural "bittersweet neem stick" stands in sharp contrast with "the minty toothpaste" of America. Hence, the minty American toothpaste can't make her teeth as fresh as that of Indian bittersweet neem stick.

The character of Shyamoli stands in close contrast with Mrs Dutta. If one stands for the typical Indian culture, the other represents the American cultural values. Being a typical Bengali widow, deeply rooted in Indian Bengali culture and tradition, Mrs. Dutta wears sari. Shyamoli, as she has been living in California, has changed a lot and this has been noticed by Mrs. Dutta as she writes to Roma, "I can't believe she is the same timid bride I sent off to America just a few years ago" (32). Hence, under the influence of American values, she wears skirt. As for their appearance Mrs. Dutta's skin has been described as "brown as roasted cumin" and that of Shyamoli as having "unusually fair skin, she could pass for an American" (3).

Unlike Shyamoli, Mrs. Dutta faces difficulty in each and every respect in following American way of life. Like any other Bengali housewife or widow, she has been used to in getting up early in the morning, likes to prepare Bengali food in the kitchen for the family, believes that wives should not call their husbands by name, and that men and women have assigned roles to play in life and so women are supposed to do all the household works while men all non-domestic activities. She also believes that only men are authorised to direct women and not the latter.

On the contrary, Shyamoli appears as a spokesperson for women right and women empowerment. She is much influenced by modern American thought which has been noticed many a times in her words and actions. Being a working lady, like many other men, she works outside for the whole day. She doesn't differentiate between men and women and their roles in family or society. Thus, when she asks Sagar to wash cloths, Mrs. Dutta says, "No no no, clothes and all is no work for the man of the house" (15). Shyamoli's prompt reply to this is, "Mother! This is why Indian men are so useless around

the house. Here in America we don't believe in men's work and women's work" (15). Though the two children of Sagar and Shyamoli are given Bengali name as Pradeep and Mrinalini, but their mother calls them in American fashion as Pat and Minnie. While, Mrs. Dutta still calls her son Sagar as 'khoka' and she finds a unique sense of happiness and satisfaction in it.

Another notable aspect is the way the variation takes place in Mrs. Dutta, Shyamoli and Sagar in adapting to the American way of life. Oliva M. Espin very aptly observes, "Although some immigrant women choose to adhere to the traditional roles dictated by their culture, most – particularly young women – find these dysfunctional and unsatisfying in the new environment" (22). Hence, in case of Shyamoli, the shift from Indian to American becomes easier, while, her mother-in-law sticks to her inherited tradition and culture.

"The Intelligence of Wild Things" is about a helpless Bengali mother and her two children Tarun and Supriyo and their sense of alienation while living in two separate countries. Here, Divakaruni depicts a mother who is highly concerned about the socio-political condition of Calcutta. This anxiety on the lady leads her force Tarun leave Calcutta and get migrated to Vermont, USA. In the old lady, we witness a caring, anxious Bengali mother trying to keep her son safe of the ongoing chaotic social situation, the Naxalite movement in Calcutta. She sacrifices the most precious thing for her, the love, affection and the tender touch of her son to keep him safe and away from any impact of such a chaotic state of affair.

As Tarun begins living in Vermont, he deeps into homesickness and suffers from extreme loneliness. No exception is his sister Supriyo. She regards her state as a state of change and loss and this change, according to her, "is perhaps crueller than loss". She wishes that if she were an artist, she "would have printed" her home only "to keep it safe from loss- and from change" (40).

After migrating to Vermont, Tarun keeps no contact with his mother in India or with his sister in America. For, he didn't want to leave the homeland and so can't appreciate the new, host culture. He is of the view that living in one's own land without any material progression is better than leading a sophisticated life in a foreign land. Supriyo, his sister, comes to his place to communicate him of his mother's willingness to see him once. When she starts her conversation, he seems totally inattentive and shows no affection for anybody, not even for his mother. Indeed, he maintains complete silence and remains wholly indifferent. Even Supriyo gets surprised as she discovers that he has a girlfriend who wears T-shirts and jeans. When she enquires him of

the photograph of that American girl in Bengali, Tarun replies in English. This change in Tarun, who was not at all willing to move to America, is noteworthy as it reflects the adaptation process of male diasporas in foreign soil.

Although Supriyo was fond of marrying a man living in America, her trend towards Bengali culture is clearly evident in her behaviour and spoken words. Her attitude to the use of one's language can be traced from her conversation with Tarun about the latter's girlfriend. She asks him in Bengali and he replies in English and she terms it as "a mismatched dance" (37). When Tarun declares the girl in the photograph as his girlfriend, Supriyo exclaims, "You never told me you had a girlfriend, especially a white one! What is Ma going to say when she finds out!" (37-38). On the one hand, these words of Supriyo tell us of her attitude to Western culture, as also they speak of her trend towards Indian tradition. The gap and clash between the two cultures are also clearly traceable here.

The old woman bears endless pain owing to the separation from her children. It has become a decade that Supriyo has not visited India after she got married to Sandeep in America. It is under her pressure that Tarun migrates to America and for this he doesn't keep any contact with his mother. The lady tries to communicate him a number of times, but the son remains totally indifferent to those calls. Thus, the mother feels extremely lonely and its extent is such that she 'was almost dying'. This condition of the old lady is not only due to her old age but also due to the psychological trauma that she went through for last ten years in absolute loneliness in an empty house. Through her tale Divakaruni reflects on the plight of countless Indian mothers and the immigrants' near and dear ones like her, who bear similar pains of separation and mental agony due to the migration of their loved ones.

So far the cultural aspect is concerned, the mother and her daughter Supriyo essentially stand for that. The old lady is the representative of all those Bengali women who remain stick to their own culture and tradition and who sacrifice all their happiness and comfort for the betterment of their children. When Supriyo begs her mother to stay with her in America, she replies, "I want to die in the house where your father died, where you were born, you and Tarun" (52). Again when Supriyo asks, "What can I do for you, Mother? What will make you happy?" Her mother repeatedly says, "Seeing my children before I die. . . . Seeing my children before I die. . . . Seeing my children. . ." (52). Thus, like any other typical Bengali mother, her first and last aspiration is to keep and see her children happy and to see them once. These last words

of the old lady further proves her longing for her children and how terribly she missed them for such a long period.

In the story, a number of times Supriyo speaks of gender. Once speaking to Tarun about Sandeep she states he is "like most husbands brought up in India, no help at all" (44). Again, talking about her business at home she states, "Those days, I worked hard at being cheerful because Sandeep had informed me that men disliked gloomy women" (44). However, she bears an open-minded approach towards others and life even. When she sees the photograph of Tarun's girlfriend, though initially she shows disapproval, but thereafter asserts, "He had the right to his own life. To run around with a white girl, if that is what he wanted. He had the right not to tell me". These words of Supriyo and her attitude to life and people are undoubtedly the impact of American culture on her as she confesses, "A decade of living in this country had taught me that" (37).

It is observed that male immigrants easily get adapted to foreign setting than that of the females. This can be clarified by having a glance at the characters of Tarun, Sandeep and Supriyo. Tarun, who was not at all willing to move to America, transforms so easily within a very short period as compared to Supriyo, who had been staying at Sanfransisco for a long period of ten years. When Supriyo comes to meet Tarun at his house she is astonished seeing the photograph of a white girl. Sandeep is also seen to be accustomed to the American mindset. Hence, when Supriyo wishes that Tarun should come and stay with them for a few days, he opines that they (Supriyo and Sandeep) need to stay together and need some more time to know each other. He criticises Indian families saying that they don't allow their children stay alone and are too much anxious about them. However, in this story, Supriyo has been portrayed as a well balanced character, traditional yet modern. Undoubtedly, she willingly marries Sandeep so to migrate to America, her dream world. But once she steps there, she realises how troublesome it is to lead life in far off land. She proves to be quite traditional and so doesn't get used to American way of life like that of her brother and husband. But the writer shows that wherever we live, its culture and tradition casts more or less impact on us. Therefore, along with her Bengali cultural thought, Supriyo is sometimes guided by the Western thought. This is very much clear in her view about Tarun's choice of his girlfriend.

Divakaruni also highlights that various movements that took place in India from time to time play a significant role in the life of the immigrants. Often such movements have become one of the major causes of migration.

The primary cause of Tarun's migration to America is the Naxal movement. This is very much clear from his mother's letter when she writes to Supriyo, "Every morning they find more bodies of young men in ditches. . . . Just last week there was a murder right on our street" (42). Such is the intensity of Naxal movement in Calcutta as a consequence to which a mother opts to send her one and only son to America so to keep him away from the clutch of it. This brings about sorrows and sufferings as well as extreme loneliness not only in the life of the old lady but also in the life of her two children. Moreover, through this, Divakaruni throws light on the existing socio-political condition of India.

The pivotal characters in the story "The Lives of Strangers" are Leela and Mrs. Das. Leela, a second generation diaspora and a computer programmer in America, has been grown up by her parents quite independently. We come across the alienation of Leela that leads her to the extent of attempting to commit suicide. Unlike Mrs. Dutta in "Mrs. Dutta Writes a Letter" or Supriyo in "The Intelligence of Wild Things", Leela's parents neither long for their relatives or places in their home soil, nor do they follow Indian cultural values or norms in the adopted country. Rather, they feel privileged in following American way of life. Leela has been born and brought up in America in an extremely lonely environment. As the author states, "LEELA'S HAPPIEST CHILDHOOD memories were of aloneness: reading in her room with the door closed, playing chess on the computer, embarking on long bike rides through the city, going to the movies by herself" (58-59). Thus, when Dexter leaves her, she becomes tremendously alienated and attempts to commit suicide, though fortunately escapes the situation. Later on when she communicates her parents about her plan to visit India, her father suggests her "to stay away from the crowds". Her mother says, "Just be sure to take your shots before you go, drink boiled water at all times, and don't get involved in the lives of strangers" (61).

In India, Leela joins a group of ladies who were going for a pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Lord Shiva in Kashmir. But she is astonished to find that Mrs. Das, the old lady, is not identified with the group members. The lady is considered as an unlucky, wretched woman, whose presence and participation, as the other women pilgrims believe, may bring about any unexpected incident in their lives. But when everybody remains unconcerned during Mrs. Das's suffering, in spite of being an American-Indian, Leela shows human compassion and extends her helping hand towards the old lady. The blame and the resultant feeling of being a wretched woman, becomes so much dominating in Mrs. Das that once she attempts to commit suicide. Being a rationalist, Leela remains absolutely indifferent to such superstitious belief and hence, she develops a

good friendly relation with Mrs. Das. She assists the old lady in all ways so to lessen her sufferings and alienation.

The attitude of Leela, born and brought up in America, and her parents as first-generation diasporas, reflect the differences in mentality and attitude of two different generations of diasporas. It brings out the two sides of Leela's identity, Indian-American and American-Indian. During her visit to India, she is more an Indian in her attitudes than an American-Indian. This reflects the impact of her upbringing in America, a background that enables her foster such an open-minded approach.

Despite being the first-generation diasporas, Leela's parents consider the Indians as strangers. Thus, at the time of Leela's visit to India she is advised not involve herself personally with the lives of the Indians. On her arrival at her aunt's house, Leela is seen overwhelmed by the warm welcome and treatment of Indian people. She is welcomed by her aunt Seema "with a delighted cry, Kissing her on both cheeks, pulling her into her ample, talcum-powder-scented bosom". The narrator sets a contrast between Indian and American way of treatment as it describes, "In America Leela would have been repelled by such effusion, especially from a woman she had never seen in her life. Here it seems as right-and as welcome- as the too-sweet glass of orange squash that the maid brought her as soon as she reached the house" (62-63).

Leela gets a kind of "unexpected pleasure" (63) from the company of Indian people and their treatment. In America, she had been an agent of individuality and the short trip to India teaches her a new lesson and "... she thinks, that she has known such intimacy. ... a stranger who has opened her like a dictionary and brought to light this word whose definition had escaped her until now" (69). This also throws light on American metropolitan life and its cultural values which is so mechanical and which fails to teach the sense of love, affection and integrity owing to which Leela had to endure an absolutely alienated life at her home in America.

Leela and Mrs. Das, in spite of being Indian in origin, bear two completely different setting in which they were born and brought up. But surprisingly, both face similar predicaments. Both of them have been the victims of loneliness, one in India and the other in America. In all respect, Leela has been brought up with all American values. Although her parents are first generation Indians, she doesn't have any idea about her ancestral land.

The irony is that as the first-generation diasporas, Leela's parents don't show any affection for their homeland. Rather, they are inclined to American culture and its way of life. While despite being a second generation

diaspora, their daughter shows attachment towards India. She visits the country and in spite of her parents' advice and aunt Seema's warning, she meets Indian people, develops strong bond with them. Her relation with Mrs. Das, whom each and every Indian woman pilgrim avoids, deserves special attention. In depicting Leela, Leela's visit to India becomes very important as it leads her expose various facts about India and its people. Further, it provides her with an opportunity to see American mechanical life from the light of Indian way of life. Leela, thus, reveals that Indians remain affectionately attached to one another in their relationship which is hardly found among the people of America. Her trip to India brings about a kind of positive change in her attitude to her ancestral land and its culture and hence, she realizes her true identity in its being.

Mrs. Das, the demoralized old lady, remains marginalised among the other women pilgrims. Her identity as a wretched being is believed by all women pilgrims except Leela who considers those women to be too superstitious. This makes her think, "Are people in India harder to understand because they've had so many extra centuries to formulate their beliefs?" (72). Thus, if Divakaruni represents the features of American mechanical life, she points finger towards superstitious India too.

Further, Mrs. Das's voyage to the holy shrine leads towards an exploration of her own identity. Divakaruni proves so tactful in exhibiting that there is every possibility of remaining alienated even if someone stays in his or her own country, society or even identical group. This is what happens with the old lady that is Mrs. Das. Leela feels sorry for her wretched condition and extends her helping hand towards her. But by the end of the story, we observe her rejecting the old lady's company and Mrs. Das too leaves the hospital without anybody's notice. The writer shows, if Americans are too mechanical in maintaining family and social relations, then Indians are too superstitious and the novelist condemns these attitudes and approaches of both the worlds.

"The Love of a Good Man" offers us a two-way view as to how migration can lead to loneliness and sufferings in family life and how the same can bring about happiness and fulfilment in one's life. This story is about a young lady Monisha whose father abandons her and her mother "for a new life in America" (92). This displacement of Monisha's father brings about all darkness in the mother and daughter's life and shatters Monisha's faith on men and marital relationship. Despite her father's betrayal, she proves to be a sentimental, resolute girl and so, in spite of her relatives' insistence, she denies to stay with anyone of them.

Monisha has a sense of self-respect and a firm faith on her own ability as a woman. After her father's departure, she neither looks for anybody's help, nor even any sort of assistance from her father's side. She is not bothered about traditional mentality and thought "of an unmarried girl living alone" (97). Hence, she utterly discourages Ila Mashi, her mother's cousin's profound anxiety on their being alone and offer to write a letter to her father "begging him to come back, or at least to arrange for their green cards" (113). However, she is offered "a student's visa" despite her mention "in university applications that she had no relatives in America" (97).

Unlike her mother, who believes that women's identity primarily lies with their husband's identity, Monisha believes that women can stand on their own feet and shape their own life and that too successfully. She wholly dislikes her mother's sacrifice for her husband and resolves, "Even as I wouldn't ever be like her, staking my happiness on a man's whims. . . ." (90-91).

As a responsible and dutiful daughter, Monisha deeply feels for her mother and terribly experiences her mother's pain, her sufferings from the deadly disease like cancer and her consequent death. But her philosophy completely varies from her tradition bound mother's despite being quite conscientious. Hence, after her mother's death, she leaves for America for her study. She has been quite contrary to the idea of marriage. However, in California, she meets Dilip and in course of time, gets married to him. She identifies some exceptional qualities in Dilip as compared to other men and so she marries him. This ultimately offers a new turn to her life.

The story highlights if displacement can lead to helplessness, alienation and sufferings, the same can bring about happiness in the same individual's life too as it is observed in respect of Monisha. In the story it has been repeatedly stressed that the love of a good man only can save a women's life. Divakaruni shows how important love is in the life of human being and how ironically the lack of it can even lead to tragic death of a woman. This becomes clear when Monisha speaks of her mother's saying of the same, "I was thinking of the saying she had liked so much, and how, ironically, her death had proved its corollary: the loss of love, even if it's not a good man's, can kill you" (91). However, we see Monisha's migration to America and her marriage with Dilip proves to be a fruitful one that provides her with a peaceful environment abroad. We also notice that Dilip establishes himself to be a good man and

finally acts as the agent in the reunion of father and daughter. Moreover, forgiveness, which Monisha's mother often told her about, is the greatest virtue of all and Monisha does the same in allowing her father visit their house.

As the resolute and dutiful daughter, Monisha always wishes 'to comfort her mother' (109) and by marrying Dilip and letting her father visit them, she wonderfully serves this purpose. Hence, she speaks in this connection, "If she were really looking down on us, my mother would be pleased to see that over the years I've come to accept much of what she tried to teach me. That saying, for example, about a good man's love" (92). This shift in Monisha's life also shows that time and space have great role to play in shaping and changing the life of people.

In "The Blooming Season for Cacti", we come across the displacement and alienation of Mira a middle class unmarried woman who moves abroad from Bombay, India, following her mother's death in a riot. Priya and Radhika, two other women, too face similar predicament. However, the causes of migration in respect of these women characters are not the same. Here Divakaruni highlights the Indian attitude to marriage and the attitude to women that they are unsafe and insecure in absence of males. This is not only a social problem in India but it is also one of the chief causes of migration of many Indian women who consequently find themselves alienated in the foreign land which in course of time brings about their extreme frustration and depression. Mira stands strongly against such social dogmas and instead of marrying seeks job for her recognition. Her introduction and familiarity with Priya and Radhika leads to the exposition of various facts particularly the reality of the life of such diasporas abroad and the reality of American life. Priya and Radhika's episodes tell us of those immigrant women overseas who consider America as a dream world and feel excited at getting married to the men living there but thereafter, find themselves in no-where condition.

Mira's migration to America occurs following her mother's death in a riot in Mumbai. But the problem of being a woman, who is supposed to be unsafe and insecure in absence of a male, chases her everywhere. This is obvious in her brother's letter, "*It's not safe in India, how many times I told you and mother this. More so now that you're unmarried and alone*" (170). The same message is imparted by her sister-in-law, "Unfortunately, time doesn't wait for women to recover. Today the men are buzzing around

Mira. Tomorrow, who knows? . . . A marriage might help her get over what happened" (183). But Mira is not a woman to stop and bear such words and to be guided by such beliefs. Hence, she leaves the house, moves to Sacramento, seeks a job at Malik's restaurant and starts working there as a cashier. Like that of Monisha in the story "The Love of a Good Man", Mira believes on her own self as an individual and discards anyone else's sympathy for her and so, when the manager speaks of the reference of her relatives, she unhesitatingly declares, "Did I say I was a relative? I'm looking for a job. If you don't have one, I'll be happy to look elsewhere." (170). These words of Mira further establish the firmness and self-confidence in her. Moreover, her brother and sister-in-law represent the traditional, orthodox Indians on whom living in America for a considerable period of time casts no positive impact and so they still embrace such poor mentality.

Mira's arrival at Sacramento leads to the exposition of some dismal facts about the life of the immigrant women in America. Priya and Radhika's episodes tell us of those immigrant women overseas who feel excited at getting married to men living abroad, but thereafter, find themselves in no-where condition. She discovers how lonely are the people or women like Priya, Radhika or even Ajit who live abroad and how the Indian notion that a woman's safety lies in getting married to a man, especially, when that person lives overseas, puts her in a better and advantageous position, is an entirely false notion. On the contrary, such a woman faces unending struggle and identity crisis that bring about alienation and sufferings to the highest level. Mira experiences this intensely and gets struck by all these and realises that her notion about the life of the Indians in America has just been an illusion.

Although a first-generation diaspora, Mira is able to adjust with American environment easily. It is to be pointed out here that Mira is a well educated woman and this has well been studied by Malikji while appointing her as the cashier, "You are too educated, too smart . . ." (174). When the manager of the restaurant dejects Mira about her dating with Ajit, her daring reply is "That's none of your business" (193). Thus, Divakaruni shows that it needs education and an open-minded attitude to get adjusted with other culture.

To conclude, Divakaruni's short stories reflect her amazing artistic skill in portraying the lives of Indians, particularly women both in homeland and abroad with varied experiences. Her women protagonists are observed

to be both traditional and modern and so a clash between the two is clearly traceable. There are many characters who experience immigration, but there are many others too who live isolated lives without crossing the border and are marginalised within their homogeneous group. The causes of migration also differ from character to character. It is also observed that in many respects displacement is more psychological than physical. Her women protagonists suffer immeasurably as they struggle for their survival and identity under Indian traditional patriarchal social setting and this becomes more challenging for the diasporic traditional Indian women as compared to the males. However, the modern educated women like Shyamoli, Leela or Mira face less trouble and get easily adapted to new setting. Characters like Shyamoli, Supriyo, Monisha and Mira are powerful embodiment of women right and emancipation. Although there is a clash between the old and the new, the American and the Indian, Divakaruni suggests that 'the happiness will be in the figuring out' (34). Through her stories she strongly condemns human hatred and modern mechanical values and advocates the need of love and affection for peaceful existence of human being.

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Marketing Practices of Agricultural Products: An Exploration

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Abstract

Agricultural marketing has a pivotal role to play in the socio-economic transformation of the predominantly agrarian economy. A good agricultural marketing system, especially food marketing, is crucial for effective agricultural and rural development, particularly with regards to sustained increase in agricultural production and farmer's income and improvement of the food security capabilities of concerned countries. The efficient agricultural marketing process helps the primary producers to get the best possible returns, provide facilities for lifting all produce, reduce the price difference between the primary producer and ultimate consumer and make available all products of farm origin to consumers at reasonable price without impairing on the quality of the produce. The present paper intends to study the major issues of agricultural marketing prevailed in Barak Valley of Assam and find out the ways of overcoming the problems faced by farmers-sellers in marketising their products. The study finds that agricultural marketing in the valley offers the tremendous scope for enhancing the farm income and creating job opportunities, but due to some challenges faced by the farmers-sellers they could not marketise their produce properly and fetch suitable market prices for their products

Key Words: *Agricultural Marketing, Barak Valley, Black Markets.*

1: Introduction:

1.1 Background of the Study:

Agricultural marketing has a pivotal role to play in the socio-economic transformation of the predominantly agrarian economy like Barak Valley. A good agricultural marketing system, especially food marketing, is crucial for

effective agricultural and rural development, particularly with regards to sustained increase in agricultural production and farmer's income and improvement of the food security capabilities of concerned countries. According to National Commission on Agriculture, "Agriculture marketing is a process which starts with a decision to produce a saleable farm commodity and it involves all aspects of market structure or system, both functional and institutional, based on technical and academic considerations and includes pre and post harvest operations, assembly, grading, storage, transportation and distribution". Thus, in agricultural marketing we are concerned with demand and supply conditions, marketing operations including marketing functions, functionaries and cost, price fixation, market structure, conduct and performance and market efficiency.

Agricultural marketing system is an efficient way through which farmers can dispose their surplus produce at a fair and reasonable price. It plays a pivotal role in improving the condition of the farmers and agriculture. The term agricultural marketing involves all the activities relating to procurement, grading, standardizing, storing, transporting and selling of agricultural produce. The National Commission on Agriculture defines agricultural marketing as a process which starts with a decision to produce a saleable farm commodity and it involves all the aspects of market structure or system, both functional and institutional, based on technical and economic consideration and includes pre- and post-harvest operations viz., assembling, grading, storage, transportation and distribution. It is the study of all the activities, agencies and policies involved in the procurement of farm inputs by the farmers and the movement of agricultural products from the farms to the consumers. The agricultural marketing system is a link between the farm and the non-farm sectors. It includes the organization of agricultural raw materials supply to processing industries, the assessment of demand for farm inputs and raw materials, and the policy relating to the marketing of farm products and inputs. The efficient agricultural marketing process helps the primary producers to get the best possible returns, provide facilities for lifting all produce, reduce the price difference between the primary producer and ultimate consumer and make available all products of farm origin to consumers at reasonable price without impairing on the quality of the produce.

Barak Valley consists of three districts of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi in southern part of Assam on the bank of river Barak and her tributaries. The population of the valley is 3,612,581 as per 2011 census. The economy of the Barak Valley is pre dominated by agriculture and allied sec-

tors. More than 58 percent of the total working population in the valley is either cultivators or agricultural laborers and 70.7 percent of its workers earn their livelihood from the primary sector activities. But agriculture is already overcrowded and it shows that only 30.9 percent of the total geographical area in the valley constitutes its net sown area against 41.6 percent in the State of Assam. This means that the Barak Valley suffers from relative scarcity of cultivable land. In the consequence, Barak Valley is constrained to feed as many as 8277 persons per 1000 hectares of cultivable land. The corresponding figures for the Brahmaputra Valley and the State of Assam are 6445 hectares and 6567 hectares respectively whereas the all-India figure is 4305 hectares. Added to the scarcity of cultivable land in the valley, inadequate progress in intensive farming also exists. As such it would be interesting to study the issues of agriculture marketing scenario in the valley. India is an agricultural country and one third population depends on the agricultural sector directly or indirectly. Agriculture remains as the main stay of the Indian economy since times immemorial. Indian agriculture contribution to the national gross domestic product (GDP) is about 25 per cent. With food being the crowning need of mankind, much emphasis has been on commercialising agricultural production. For this reason, adequate production and even distribution of food has of late become a high priority global concern.

Agricultural marketing is mainly the buying and selling of agricultural products. In earlier days when the village economy was more or less self-sufficient the marketing of agricultural products presented no difficulty as the farmer sold his produce to the consumer on a cash or barter basis.

Today's agricultural marketing has to undergo a series of exchanges or transfers from one person to another before it reaches the consumer. There are three marketing functions involved in this, i.e., assembling, preparation for consumption and distribution. Selling of any agricultural produce depends on some couple of factors like the demand of the product at that time, availability of storage etc. The products may be sold directly in the market or it may be stored locally for the time being. Moreover, it may be sold as it is gathered from the field or it may be cleaned, graded and processed by the farmer or the merchant of the village. Sometime processing is done because consumers want it, or sometimes to conserve the quality of that product. The task of distribution system is to match the supply with the existing demand by whole selling and retailing in various points of different markets like primary, secondary.

Most of the agricultural products in India are sold by farmers in the private sector to moneylenders (to whom the farmer may be indebted) or to

village traders. Products are sold in various ways. For example, it might be sold at a weekly village market in the farmer's village or in a neighboring village. If these outlets are not available, then produce might be sold at irregularly held markets in a nearby village or town, or in the mandi.

In India, there are several central government organisations, who are involved in agricultural marketing like. Commission of Agricultural Costs and Prices, Food Corporation of India, Cotton Corporation of India, Jute Corporation of India, etc. There are also specialised marketing bodies for rubber, tea, coffee, tobacco, spices and vegetables. Under the Agricultural Produce (grading and marketing) Act of 1937, more than forty primary commodities are compulsorily graded for export and voluntarily graded for internal consumption. Although the regulation of commodity markets is a function of state government, the directorate of marketing and inspection provides marketing and inspection services and financial aid down to the village level to help set up commodity grading centers in selected markets.

As we have a tradition of agricultural production, marketing and allied commercial activities, now it is the time for us to brainstorm and come out with new ideas of value added services. These value added services will give the existing agricultural engine a new dimension. The next logical step could be food-processing which not only could be another revenue generating area but also can provide lots of full-time employment to our youths. With the changing agricultural scenario and global competition, there is a need of exploiting the available resources at maximum level.

There was a survey undertaken by the directorate of marketing and inspection in the ministry of agriculture in 1970-71 and 1971-72, of five hundred regulated markets was, with a view to assessing the adequacy and efficiency of the existing regulated markets and highlighting their drawbacks and deficiencies and suggesting measures to develop them. One of the most important drawbacks has been the inadequate financial resources of some of the market committees. During the fourth plan, a central sector scheme was drawn up by the ministry of agriculture to provide a grant at 20 per cent of the cost of development of market, subject to a maximum of Rs. 2 lakhs. The balance will have to be provided by the commercial banks.

1.2 Statement of the Problem:

The agricultural marketing system is an efficient method for farmers to dispose of surplus produce at a reasonable and fair price. The elaborate arrangement of agricultural marketing plays a large role in improving the condition of farmers and their agriculture. Agricultural marketing covers the ser-

vices involved in moving an agricultural product from the farm to the consumer. These services involve the planning, organizing, directing, and handling of agricultural produce in such a way as to satisfy farmers, intermediaries, and consumers. Agriculture marketing system is a mechanism that allows goods to reach various locations based on the market. The term refers to the entire range of agricultural supply chain operations. Due to lack of proper implementation of the Market Regulation Act by the State Agricultural Marketing Boards, private traders and big farmers dominate agricultural commodity marketing in the North Eastern States. Barak Valley grows a variety of agricultural crops including paddy, pulses, oilseeds, spices, fibre crops such as jute and cotton and as well as fruits and vegetables. Marketing of the Agricultural produce in the Valley is a severe issue for farming sector. Lack of structured marketing facilities, lack of storage infrastructure near the farm, need for money after harvest for repayment of agricultural loan and other factors push farmers to sell their hard-earned produce as soon as possible and at throwaway rates. Keeping farmers' interests in mind, the Government of Assam, in addition to engaging the Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board and FCI for crop acquisition, has developed storage capacity.

1.3 Conceptual Framework:

Agricultural marketing system is a platform and linkage between farmers and consumers for exchange of agricultural commodities. It comprises the activities like buying, selling, storing, procurement, transportation of the Agriculture products. A well organized and controlled marketing system helps in economic development of the district and the state. The socioeconomic condition and nation's economic development is highly depends on good Agricultural marketing system. During off season in Barak Valley it has been observed that Potato mainly comes from West Bengal (Dhupguri, Alipurduar), Uttar Pradesh (Agra) and Punjab (Jalandher). The traders stock in a limited quantity and sell according to their profitable price. If our farmers and consumers had advanced storage and cold storage facility in the district then they could store their commodities for a longer duration for off season so that the prices will not hike at markets during high demand. Agriculture marketing covers the services involved in moving an agricultural product from the farm to the consumer. These services involve the planning, organizing, directing, and handling of agricultural produce in such a way as to satisfy farmers, intermediaries, and consumers. Agriculture marketing system is a mechanism that allows goods to reach various locations based on the market. The term refers to the entire range of agricultural supply chain operation. A well organized and controlled marketing system helps in economic

development of the district and the state. The socioeconomic condition and nation's economic development is highly depends on good Agricultural marketing system. If our farmers and consumers had advanced storage and cold storage facility in the district then they could store their commodities for a longer duration for off season so that the prices will not hike at markets during high demand. The lack of regulated markets and timely market information/ intelligence acts as a disincentive for the farmers. The maximum number of rural farmers in the Valley does not get proper information about market activities on arrivals and prices, due to which level of risk of wrong decision making gets increased and leads to improper working of the markets in the state.

1.4 Objectives of the Study:

- i) To study the major issues of Agricultural Marketing in Barak Valley.
- ii) To study the present scenario of the Agricultural marketing system of Barak Valley in Assam.
- iii) To find out effective measures to overcome the problems faced in Agricultural marketing system in Barak Valley.

1.5 Research questions:

- i) What are the major issues of Agricultural Marketing in Barak Valley ?
- ii) What kinds of present scenario of the Agricultural Marketing in Barak Valley ?
- iii) What kinds of measures taken to overcome the problems faced in Agriculture marketing system in Barak Valley ?

1.6 Significance of the study:

The commercialization of agriculture and the increasing trend of agricultural production have drawn significant attention to the marketing arrangement both national and international level. The new challenges have emerged in the new economic regime, and have also prescribed in the need of strengthening the agricultural marketing system of the states of the entire country. It is argued that, for a sustained development of the agricultural and nonagricultural sector, an efficient agricultural marketing arrangement, a multistage process, which includes all activities moving products from the producer to the final consumers by way of storage, transportation and processing, is undoubtedly the most important prerequisite. Agricultural marketing is the performance of all business activities involved in the flow of goods and services from the point of initial agricultural production until they are in the hands of the ultimate consumer. An efficient agricultural marketing

arrangement provides an incentive to farmers to grow more and enhance their income. In the process the countries export capacity increases, which considerably have great diversified and favourable effects in the economy. It creates a chain effect on market demand, consumer's consumption pattern and ultimately in the process of economic development.

There should be a policy implications call for educating the farmers about cleaning, drying and other standards of procurement, so that their produce should be well suited for marketing and for export worldwide. as there is high demand of varieties of agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, forestry produce, etc. in all over the nation, which they can produce from in Barak Valley, but with suitable and efficient marketing functionaries and system. Also, by establishing cooperatives societies which should give task of purchasing marketed surplus on one hand and providing market information on arrivals and prices of produce, on the other hand, so that they will be less prone to exploitation, malpractices and ensure fair prices to both the producers as well as the consumers. These would help the farmers with an assured market for their produce and also raises the livelihood of rural people and economy of the Valley. Agricultural marketing is the performance of all business activities involved in the flow of goods and services from the point of initial agricultural production until they are in the hands of the ultimate consumer. An efficient agricultural marketing arrangement provides an incentive to farmers to grow more and enhance their income. In the process the countries export capacity increases, which considerably have great diversified and favourable effects in the economy. It creates a chain effect on market demand, consumer's consumption pattern and ultimately in the process of economic development.

2: Review of Literature:

The important related literature reviews of the present study are as follows:

Barah (2007) in his research paper "Strategies for Agricultural Development in the North-East India" has made an attempt to diagnose the problems of regional agricultural economies in the changing scenario and to analyze future prospects, identify the sources of agricultural growth and the constraining factors for agricultural development. The study was mainly based on secondary data. The data set was consisted of area and production of various crops livestock, fishery activities and other relevant variables.

Boro and Rajesh (2012) in their paper "Agricultural Marketing System in North-East India: Problems And Prospects With Special Reference To Assam" examined on major concern about how effectively agricultural

products are marketed in India. High and volatile consumer prices are said to be driven by insufficient infrastructure for marketing and weak channel connections. The wheels that move economic operations are marketing infrastructure. In India, a major portion of the population relies on agriculture for their living, either directly or indirectly benefiting the general rural population as a whole. The evolution of the marketing mechanism for agriculture is crucial because the Market Regulation Act has not been properly implemented. Private merchants dominate the marketing of agricultural goods in the North Eastern States. Although the North Eastern States produce a large number of fruits, spices, and other products, they earlier were unable to match pricing with the marketplaces in other states. Additionally, the infrastructure, procurement procedures, marketing strategies, and processing facilities all provide serious challenges to rural marketing in the North-East (NE) area. The underdevelopment of agro-industries in the area to better add value to horticulture products is also significantly attributed to social and cultural norms. To enhance the marketing environment and the farmer's economic advantages through better management of various post-harvest functions of the agricultural products, it is crucial to identify the issues in the NE area. This paper examined the current state of agricultural marketing in NER and attempt to discuss its challenges and future opportunities. Additionally, it proposes some recommendations for future improvements in agricultural marketing.

Deka and Sharmah(2012) in their research paper "Constraints and Prospects of Agricultural Marketing in North-East India" has tried to study the current position of agricultural marketing in North Eastern region and study its prospects and challenges. They have also put forwarded few measures that might help in bringing development in the sector in the future. They suggested that agri-business needs to be developed and diversification of agricultural produce creates a marketing system which yields value added remuneration to the farmers and the end users. They have also given some suggestive lines of development in future. Their study was based on both primary and secondary data. The required primary data has been collected from randomly selected households representing the three districts i.e., Karbi Anglong of Assam, Senapati district of Manipur and East Garo Hills of Meghalaya. The sample size was 51 villages of the three selected districts. The data has been analyzed and interpreted theoretically to draw conclusion. Bharadwaj et.al(2012) in their paper "Prospects and Challenges of Agriculture Marketing in North-East India" examined that North-East India comprises of eight states and about 77% of the working population is dependent on

agriculture for livelihood, hence development of agricultural marketing bears great importance. It has been seen that there exists a weak link between marketing channels and poor marketing infrastructure, which ultimately leads to high and fluctuating consumer prices. Marketing infrastructure is considered to be the wheels of the economic activities. The rural marketing is unorganized in the region. The socio-cultural taboos of the region also acts as a constraint for development of agro based industries which could have served in the value addition of the economy. This paper tries to analyze the prospects and challenges faced by agricultural production and agricultural marketing in NE region. The study found that non-availability of bio-pesticide, lack of information about organic farming, absence of crop insurance etc. as some of major problems abstaining agricultural production. Lack of proper information of the market, lack of proper storage facilities, high cost of production, lack of agricultural credit facilities etc. serves some of the significant problem in agricultural marketing

Kumar (2012) studies in his paper "Farmers awareness of agricultural marketing in India: Status, Disparity and Determinants" has revealed from his study that Efficient marketing plays a significant role in economic development, while unawareness is the major symptom of inefficient market. In this paper we analysis the regional inequality, imbalance and determinants of awareness about agriculture marketing in farmers with the help of appropriate statistical tool and techniques. The study indicates that there is a large inequality has exists in different states of India. Only three states i.e., Haryana, Punjab and Kerala are the high aware states while awareness is poor in NES's. Further, both (farmers' literacy and farmer's organizations) are positively associated to the farmer's awareness about agriculture marketing. So, the govt. of India should boost the literacy rate of farmers and also create farmers organization to enhance the farmers awareness in India.

Sharmah (2012) in their research paper "Constraints and Prospects of Agricultural Marketing in North-East India" has made an attempt to examine the existing position of agricultural marketing in NER with a view to diagnose the problems and prospects. They have also given some suggestive lines of development in future. Their study was based on both primary and secondary data. The required primary data has been collected from randomly selected households representing the three districts i.e. Karbi Anglong of Assam, Senapati district of Manipur and East Garo Hills of Meghalaya. The sample size was 51 villages of the three selected districts. The data has been analyzed and interpreted theoretically to draw conclusion.

Rajendran & karthikesan (2014) in their study "Agricultural Marketing in India: An Overview, Asia Pacific" found that in order to avoid isolation of small scale farmers from the benefits of agricultural produce they need to be integrated and informed with the market knowledge like fluctuations, demand and supply concepts which are the core of economy.

Bissa and Vyas (2014) in their research work "Study of Infrastructural Status in Agricultural Marketing" has made an attempt to analyze the infrastructural status of Agricultural Marketing in India. They have argued that the proper infrastructure system will not only decrease the cost of distribution but also will facilitate to various section of the population like farmers, traders, consumers, scientists etc.

Murugesan & Rajarajan (2016) in their research paper "Problems and Prospects of Agricultural Marketing" has tried to highlight the problems and prospects of agricultural marketing in India. The statistical data revealed that agricultural labor forces are shifting towards the construction industry, textile industry and other unorganized sector causing the scarcity of labor force.

Singha(2016) in his research paper "Agricultural Marketing in Hailakandi District of Assam" studied agricultural marketing is one of the vital marketing system in Hailakandi District of Assam. Due to geographical location the district is very much fruitful for production of agricultural product but earlier the farmers were face to many problems but with the development of transportation system with compare to early period the farmers are now getting right price of their product. The District is only 2 percent of total population is engaged industrial sector and expansion rate of Industries like small scale and large scale are very low in percentage. The existing practice of agricultural marketing in the Hailakandi District is a combination of informal and formal arrangements. As per the paper the farmers of Hailakandi District of Assam are poor, illiterate and ignorant and due to these reasons, the trace of green revolution comes to this district a bit later. One more another important feature is that in Hailakandi District most of the farmers are belongs to marginal farmers so commercialization of agriculture s very struggle in the District.

Kumar, et.al (2021) in their paper, "Problems and Prospects of Agricultural Marketing in Hills of Himachal Pradesh" have been examined agricultural marketing plays a crucial role in accelerating the economic development of hill agriculture. An efficient agriculture marketing system is supposed to add to the welfare of producers as well as consumers. The hills of

Himachal Pradesh also have lots of inherent constraints related to agricultural marketing in terms of inaccessibility and remoteness, marginality and fragility, scattered land holdings, traditional mode of production, low use of modern inputs, transportation difficulty due to the difficult hilly terrain, non-availability of regulated markets, lack of proper market information and absence of post-harvest infrastructure. As we all know that hilly regions are gradually diversified in favour of fruits and vegetables, different flower plants and forest trees production but, due to scarcity of proper transportation, lack of postharvest infrastructure, under-developed supporting institutions, industries, undulating topography, lack of innovative technologies etc. the growth potential of hill agriculture is still remained unexploited. Therefore, strengthening of markets, innovative marketing techniques and boosting on-line trading can help in a big way for solving the problems of marketing in hill.

3: Data Source and Methodology:

3.1 Data Source

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through personal interviewing method with the farmers, traders, marketing committee and local consumers of the three district of Barak Valley viz. Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj from important daily and weekly market of the Valley. Information were collected from the various markets. We also visited the dry storage, godowns, cold storage available in the Valley. The secondary data were collected from Dept. of Agricultural Statistics, Government of Assam, Agriculture Marketing Board, research paper and journals related with agricultural marketing.

3.2 Methodology

Different statistical tools like tables and graphs were used to describe and evaluate the present scenario of the Agriculture marketing system in Barak Valley of Assam. Here we set up a sample survey with well organized questionnaires of total 45 respondents, 15 from each district of Barak Valley.

In this study firstly, analyzed the comparative study of productivity of major crops of Barak Valley and Assam. Secondly, study the various problems faced by the respondents and traders. Thirdly, study the satisfaction level of the present Agriculture marketing system in Barak Valley. Lastly, Study the necessary suggestions to solve the issues or problems.

4. Results and Analysis:

Agriculture is the primary source of income of the people of Barak Valley of Assam. The vast majority of the people depend directly as well as indirectly upon agriculture for their livelihood. Therefore, agriculture plays not

only an economic role but also an important role in the overall development of the valley. As per 1971 census, the population of the valley was 17.13 lakhs which stood at 24.92 lakhs in the 1991, 29.96 lakhs in 2001 and 36.5 lakhs in 2011. With 8.82% of the total land area of the state of Assam, the valley supports about 11.12% of the total population and about 9.98% of the growing population of the state of Assam. Thus, the unusually high growth of population has made it all the more necessary to increase the food production in order to feed the rising number of population. Since horizontal expansion of land to increase production has little scope in the valley due to limited availability of land, agricultural productivity takes the dominant role in supplying food to the growing population. Since the pace of industrialisation in the valley is very low in comparison to the state as a whole, agriculture provides employment to such a high proportion of population of the valley. However, as the pressure on land has been increasing with the growth of population, labour productivity is declining over the years. Therefore, to provide at least a reasonable return to the farmer, it is necessary to increase agricultural productivity. Agricultural productivity and hence production is of utmost important in so far as the growth of industrialisation is concerned.

Basing on the abundance of agricultural product, the valley supports about 9.7% of the total food product manufacturing industries of Assam in the year 1993 and 14.27% of the tea industries of Assam. These industries directly depend upon agricultural output and hence agricultural productivity of the region. A look to the annual indices of Assam and of the valley reveals that the number of these industries has been declining over the years. As for example, in 1990, the number of food product manufacturing industries was 1062 and 101 respectively of the state of Assam and of the valley. But, it declined to 978 and 94 respectively in the year 1993 which is a very disturbing feature for the future development of the state and of the valley. On the other hand, the valley possesses sufficient quantity of jute, coconut, sugarcane etc., which may help in the growth and development of some more medium and small scale industries in the valley.

Table-1: Present scenario of Agricultural Marketing in Barak Valley in 2023-24

Barak Valley	Registered traders	Transaction Amount
Cachar	432	240 cr
Karimganj	340	195 cr
Hailakandi	280	174 cr
Total	1052	609 cr

Source: Handbook of Assam

In the table -1 shows that the major share of registered traders of Agriculture in Cachar district because of higher number of population and geographical location and boundaries.

Table-2: Major Crops of Agriculture Marketing in Barak Valley in 2023

Crops	Average Yield of Barak Valley (kg/ha)	Average Yield of Assam (kg/ha)
Rise	1872	2135
Wheat	1487	2557
Pulses	1645	2872
Sugarcane	45213	69859
Jute and		
Mesta	3210	2550
Potato	19023	27854
Fish	38723	3433

Source: Agriculture Statistical Year book 2023

The above table 2 depicts that the comparative study between the Barak Valley and Assam in case of production of major crops of per hector of land. Here we found that the Jute and fish productivity in Barak valley is higher than Assam. Others crops performance are lesser productivity than Assam.

Table-3: Major issues of Agriculture Marketing in Barak Valley in 2023-24 (Total 45 Respondents)

Issues/Problems	Number of Respondents	Types of Issues
Infrastructure Issues	40	Serious
Middleman Issues	10	Justifiable
Grading Issues	8	Justifiable
Organized Market Issues	45	Serious
Credit Facilities issues	45	Serious
Storage Facilities Issues	45	Serious
Other Issues	30	Moderate

Source: Field Survey by Author

In the above table 3 shows that out of 45 respondents of traders we found that all of them have same kind of issues in Agriculture marketing in Assam, only Grading issues and middleman issues are little bit in Barak valley region. Also we noticed that respondents could not exactly provide the data

for their grouping pressure and local market union pressure.

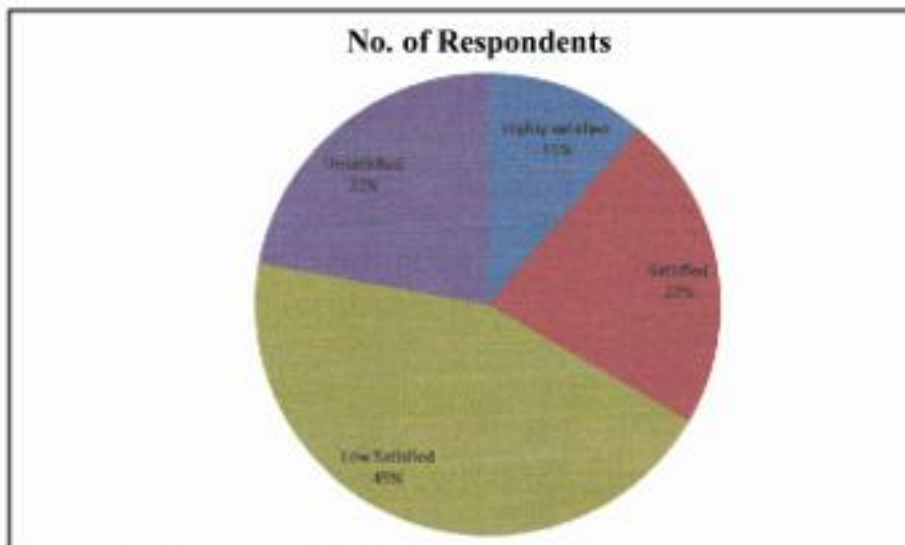
Table-4: Present Satisfaction level of Agriculture Marketing in Barak Valley

Satisfaction Level	No. of Respondents
Highly satisfied	5
Satisfied	10
Low Satisfied	20
Unsatisfied	10
Total	45

Source: Field Survey

The above table showed that the respondents and traders satisfaction level of Agriculture Marketing in Barak Valley are not expected. Here we found that the half of the respondents has low satisfied in present condition of Agriculture Marketing in Barak Valley. This can be shows in following figure:

Figure 1: Satisfaction level of Agriculture Marketing in Barak Valley



Source: Authors own Calculation.

Major Findings of the Study:

1. Though the pattern of growth of rice as a whole in Barak Valley is similar to that observed in the state as a whole, seasonwise the pattern and composition of growth was very different in Barak Valley and Assam as a whole. In the

state as a whole, there has been an impressive growth in production of summer rice helped by growth in both area and yield. As mentioned above, similar growth in summer rice did not occur in the Barak Valley region. In contrast to negative growth of production of autumn rice in Barak Valley, there was a significant positive growth in the same for Assam as a whole nor was there a decline in the area under this crop for the state as a whole. But the redeeming feature of the seasonwise growth pattern of Barak Valley is the much higher rates of growth in production and yield of winter rice compared to the state as a whole.

2. Among the crops other than rice of the region, rape and mustard and pulses recorded rapid growth at 8.24 percent and 7.58 percent per annum respectively during the reference period. Both these crops enjoyed rapid expansion on area and in case of pulses, there was some growth in yield too. In case of potato, there was a mild decline in the yield rate but a significant growth in area resulting in the annual compound growth of production at 2.64 percent per annum.

3. There is a reasonably good network of branches of commercial banks. Regional Rural Bank and Co-operative credit institutions engaged in the region for the provision of institutional credit to the farm sector. Yet, the delivery of credit to the farm sector has not been found to be satisfactory. The achievement of targets for delivery of credit to the farm sector by all credit institutions in the region actually declined from 46.45 percent in recent years.

4. In Barak Valley, there is a strong barrier of Agriculture credit is poor infrastructure facilities. For this reason the output of agricultural products could not easily reach in market, if reaches then the transportation cost is much higher.

5. The half of the respondents (out of 45 samples) has low satisfied in present condition of Agriculture Marketing in Barak Valley.

6. There is lack of storage facilities of Agricultural products for long lasting and the middle man are slightly hampered the normal market condition in Barak Valley.

7. Geographical backwardness is the major issues of Agricultural marketing in Barak Valley.

8. People or Traders of Agriculture activities mainly interested in non institutional credit systems or facilities.

9. Agriculture marketing conditions of Cachar district is much better than other two district of Barak Valley.

10. There is a negligence of govt. or legal authority of Barak Valley to improve the Agriculture Marketing.

Policy Prescriptions and Conclusion:**5: Policy Prescriptions**

The following measures may be taken into account in order to develop a well-organized marketing system for agricultural goods in Barak Valley:

Improve transport facilities: For a well-organized system. Indian leaders or governors have to give more priority to the development of road facilities in rural areas which are linked with markets in the urban area. It will help the farmers to sell their products in the market directly to the customers.

Increase in credit facility: The system should provide loans to farmers for storage facilities and for purchasing high-quality of improved seeds. The government has to build space for storing stocks of varieties of goods.

Market reforms: The government has to help in the improvement of the marketing system of national market leaders have to recognize and market supervisors have to check the cost of farming.

To build new markets: Manufacturer goods centers should be present near the new markets as its government duties. So the goods can be transported easily. It shall ensure that farmers should get the proper cost of their products.

Freezing facilities: It is really needed and a part of the systematic structure of the market. It is very useful for goods or products like delicious fruits and vegetables. It government's duty to spend for cold storage for the Agricultural sector.

Proper merit of Products: Various organizations are present which are working for the rank of farming products. It's really urgently needed to spread out among the organization for good marketing way.

Market information: Market information should be known by the farmers through, televisions, newspapers, and radio. Governments should be convenient towards the betterment of the marketing system.

Marketing research: Farmers should be allocated the sufficient expenditure of their products through the government for marketing research. It made farming selling more and more effective and beneficial for the producers.

5.2: Conclusion:

From the above discussion it is clear that agriculture sector is facing various difficulties in marketing of its production yet information technology can play a vital role in agriculture marketing and role of Government of India is going

into right directions. Inclusion of many middlemen in marketing system also creating problems in getting optimum price by the farmers. Though the Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB) has proposed various acts to control the marketing system it needs to be implemented properly to facilitate the marketing system. The economic and real sector growth in Assam, India, which hinges on agriculture, is constrained by poor irrigation facilities and poor marketing and storage facilities in the district. The increasing casualisation of labour together without migration for livelihood speaks about the levels of deprivation. The most difficult part of adapting to climate changes would be to change the mindset of the growers. It would take a great deal of continuous and tireless efforts to change the age-old practices of crops productions before many of them quit the practice of agriculture and shift the mode of livelihood. "We have to prove two things. First, our farmers have to feed the nation and the world and secondly, our agriculture should be able to provide financial sustainability to farmers." (Narendra Modi)

Agricultural marketing in Barak Valley of Assam offers the tremendous scope for enhancing the farm income and creating job opportunities, but due to some challenges faced by the farmers-sellers they could not marketise their produce properly and fetch suitable market prices for their products. So, there should be generation of new distribution network that connects the farmers directly to the consumer to get maximum return. There should be strict action against middleman or black marketers and holders who buy the stock from the producer in higher price and sell to the consumer in cheap rate, to make self-profit. There should be counselling centres at the village level for farmers about the worth of their stock so that they get fair price. There should be efficient Public Distribution System objective of providing reasonable prices for the basic food commodities, monitored by state government so that farmers and the final consumers would not be deprived of by the presence of too many intermediaries.

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A Study that Contrasts the Conception on Birth Spacing Beliefs and Fertility Indicators of Residents of Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazar, Dibrugarh

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Abstract

An investigation is conducted to determine the impact of bio-social factors on birth spacing beliefs and fertility in the Paltan Bazar and Milan Nagar areas of Dibrugarh, Assam. Data on socioeconomic and bio demographic characteristics were gathered from Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazaar, two locations in Dibrugarh, using primary data obtained through direct personal interviews. A convenient sampling method was used to choose a sample of 220 households, or around 20% of the total population, from the Milan Nagar (100) and Paltan Bazaar (120) areas. The data were analysed using graphical displays, and MS Excel was used to compute the fundamental fertility rates.

Keywords: *Fertility matrix and population growth.*

1. Introduction:

Fertility refers to a woman's ability to bear children. The study of human fertility occupies an essential position in the study of population for several reasons. The biological replacement and upkeep of human society are dependent on human fertility. The world's population expansion is solely dependent on human fertility. Human fertility is a process that all societies use to replenish themselves. Thus, fertility is a positive force in population dynamics that allows the population to expand, preventing alteration caused by mortality within the biological limits of human fertility. On the other hand, mortality is

desired as the branch of demography analysis which deals with the total process of death and the change it brings about in a population. The different fertility rates which are used in the present study are available in any demography/vital statistics book.

2. A Brief Review of Literature:

Kumar, P. *et. al.* (2006) analysed the demography of India. The work focused on the variation in the age at menopause, age at marriage and age at cohabitation and linkage of the mentioned with fertility along with other intervening factors. Narayan, P.K. and Smyth, R. (2006), on their paper named "Female labour force participation, fertility and infant mortality in Australia: some empirical evidence from Granger causality tests", applies Granger causality tests within a multivariate error correction framework to examine the relationship between female participation rates, infant mortality rates and fertility rates for Australia using annual data from 1960 to 2000 [5]. Furuoka, Kato, Ho and Munir (2010), in their paper aim to examine empirical determinants of total fertility rate by employing and exploring a threshold regression analysis. The econometric model used incorporates three main determinants of total fertility rate; human development level, income level, and infant mortality [2]. Yilmaz, O. and Soytas, U (2012), discussed on the relation between infant mortality rates, fertility rates, and income in an emerging economy, specifically in Turkey. They use infant mortality, fertility rates, and per capita gross domestic product as variables for an analysis. The authors explain that their results provide enough evidence in favour of a negative link between per capita real income and fertility rates [6]. Saikia, M.M. (2019), focused on the population increase in India, how India and Assam's over population has affected their development and proposed a strategy for turning the population to an asset. Kulkarni, P.M. (2021), focused on the population growth in India in the 21st century due to mortality decline and lagged fertility decline as it happens in the process of classical demographic transition and hence large transitional growth that took place for some time.

3. Methodology being Used:

A sample of two hundred twenty (220) household were selected from a population of unknown total households of Milan Nagar (100) and Paltan Bazaar (120) areas in Dibrugarh; by using convenient sampling method because of short period of time, lack of enough resources and instruments out of entire population. Data were analyzed by using MS Excel, and then basic fertility rates have been calculated.

4. Overview of Dibrugarh District:

Dibrugarh is the headquarters of Dibrugarh district, Assam, India,

and the second largest city after Guwahati Assam. It is situated on the banks of the Brahmaputra River, about 435 kilometers north-east of Guwahati. It is the gateway to the three tea-producing districts of Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, and Sibsagar. The district of Dibrugarh with only one sub-division is situated in the eastern part of Assam. The river Brahmaputra flows throughout the North Western boundary of the district. The Dibrugarh district is a plain district of Assam. The entire is flat with gradual slope and this adjoining with the river Brahmaputra are composed sand and clay in varying proportion.



As of 2001 India census, Dibrugarh had a population of 61,000. Males constitute 54% of the population and females 46%. Dibrugarh has an average literacy rate of 81%, higher than the national average of 59.5%: male literacy is 82% and, female literacy is 80%. In Dibrugarh, 9% of the population is under 6 years of age.

Paltan Bazar is an area in Dibrugarh District in Assam State, India, having pin-code 786005. Paltan Bazar is a bustling area in Dibrugarh. The majority community residing in this area is Hindi speaking community.

Milan Nagar is an area in Dibrugarh District in Assam State, India, having pin code 786003. The majority residing community in Milan Nagar area is Assamese.

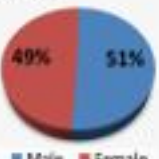
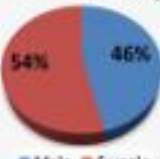
5. Limitations of the Study:

In a survey, the collection of necessary data is a difficult job. The foremost problem that was faced there was the lack of trust on us by the people. They feared to supply the adequate data due to unseen faces and fear of government officials. Also, the people refused or failed to give us enough facts and events due to lack of education/knowledge. Some people refused to co-operate with us, we had to offer them enough reason behind our purpose. Endless arguments pursued, such as some of the people asked about the benefits of our research work to them. Ignorant people asked us whether they would get any job if they supply us with the required information. There is also

communication problem faced during our survey process, though the collection of data was tedious one but we found it interesting and tried to complete at the best we could.

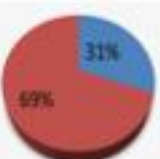
6 Analysis and findings:

6.1 Sex ratio (per 1000):

Measures	Paltan Bazar	Milan Nagar
Sex Ratio	SR = 954.29	SR = 1164.18
Percentage of Male and Female	% of Population  ■ Male ■ Female	% of Population  ■ Male ■ Female

6.2 Child woman ratio (CWR):

The CW Ratio is given by,

Measures	Paltan Bazar	Milan Nagar
Child Woman Ratio (CWR)	CWR = 89.89	CWR = 204.82
	 ■ Milan Nagar ■ Paltan Bazar	

6.3 Crude Birth Rate (CBR):

Table No. 1: Calculation of Crude Birth Rates from 2014 to 2024

Year	Paltan Bazar			Milan Nagar		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
	$\frac{^m B^z}{^m P^z} \cdot 1000$	$\frac{^f B^z}{^f P^z} \cdot 1000$	$\frac{B^z}{P^z} \cdot 1000$	$\frac{^m B^z}{^m P^z} \cdot 1000$	$\frac{^f B^z}{^f P^z} \cdot 1000$	$\frac{B^z}{P^z} \cdot 1000$
2014	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015	5.26	11.49	8.24	7.52	12.66	10.31
2016	15.87	5.78	11.05	7.58	18.99	13.79
2017	0	0	0	7.63	0	3.44
2018	0	5.88	2.82	0	0	0
2019	5.50	5.85	5.67	15.50	13.07	14.18
2020	5.56	0	2.86	7.69	13.07	10.60
2021	0	5.92	2.91	23.26	25.81	24.65
2022	5.71	5.95	5.83	23.08	0	10.45
2023	0	0	0	15.15	12.90	13.94
2024	0	0	0	0	0	0



Fig 2: Total CBR of Paltan Bazar and Milan Nagar in the period 2014-2024



Fig 3: CBR of Males of Paltan Bazar and Milan Nagar in the period 2014-2024



Fig 3: CBR of Females of Paltan Bazar and Milan Nagar in the period 2014-2024

6.4 Age-specific fertility rate (ASFR):

Table No.2: Calculation of ASFR during the period 2014-2024

Age Group	Paltan Bazar		Milan Nagar	
	ASFR	Female ASFR	ASFR	Female ASFR
	${}_n f_x = \frac{{}_n B_x^z}{{}_n P_x^z} \cdot 1000$	${}_n f_x = \frac{{}_n B_x^z}{{}_n P_x^z} \cdot 1000$	${}_n f_x = \frac{{}_n B_x^z}{{}_n P_x^z} \cdot 1000$	${}_n f_x = \frac{{}_n B_x^z}{{}_n P_x^z} \cdot 1000$
15 – 19	0	0	0	0
20 – 24	181.82	90.91	190.48	95.24
25 – 29	62.50	0	333.33	66.67
30 – 34	133.33	133.33	500.00	125.00
35 – 39	50.00	0	444.44	444.44
40 – 44	0	0	0	0
45 – 49	0	0	0	0
Total	427.65	224.24	1468.25	731.35

6.5 General fertility rate (GFR):

- GFR of Paltan Bazar for the period 2014-2024 = 58.25.
- GFR of Milan Nagar for the period 2014 -2024 = 221.05.

6.6 Total fertility rate (TFR):

- TFR of Paltan Bazar for the period 2014-2024 = 2138.25.
- TFR of Milan Nagar for the period 2014 -2024 =7341.25.

6.7 Gross reproduction rates (GRR):

The GRR for the quinquennial data are,

- GRR of Paltan Bazar for the period 2014-2024 = 1121.20.
- GRR of Milan Nagar for the period 2014-2024 = 3656.75.

6.8 Vital index:

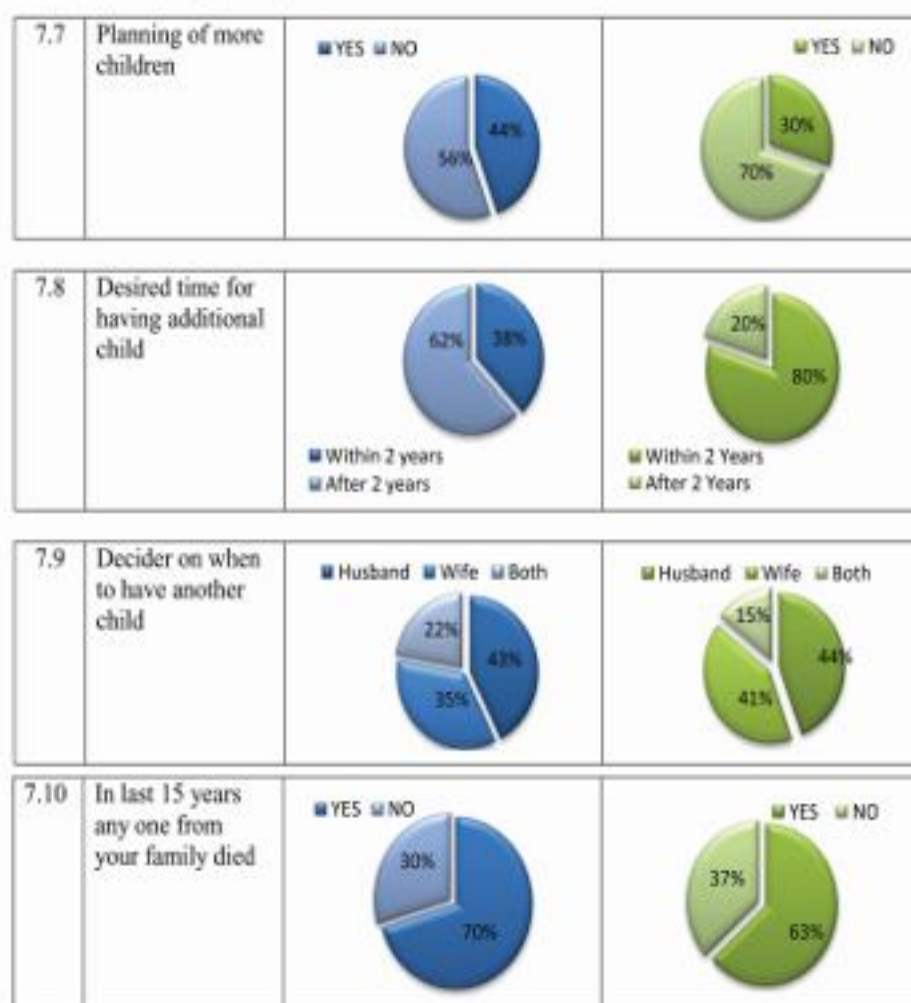
- Vital Index of Paltan Bazar for the period 2014-2024 = 35.29.
- Vital Index of Milan Nagar for the period 2014-2024 =161.54.

7 Observations on birth spacing:

Table No. 4: Comparison of Birth Spacing of Paltan Bazar & Milan Nagar, 2024

Sl. No.	Criteria	Paltan Bazar	Milan Nagar
7.1	Conscious about birth spacing		

7.2	Receiving source of information about birth spacing	■ Health Facility ■ Mass Media ■ Family Member Friend	■ Health Facility ■ Mass Media ■ Family Member Friend
7.3	Agrees about, birth spacing a good practice	■ YES ■ NO	■ YES ■ NO
7.4	Method(s) known of birth spacing	■ YES ■ NO	■ YES ■ NO
7.5	Aware of interval between the birth of one child and the other	■ Within 2 years ■ After 2 years	■ Within 2 Years ■ After 2 Years
7.6	Plan to space own children	■ YES ■ NO	■ YES ■ NO



8 Conclusions / observations:

Various fertility rates of Paltan Bazar & Milan Nagar area are obtained as,

Measures	Paltan Bazar	Milan Nagar
General fertility rate	58.25 per thousand women	221.05 per thousand women
Total fertility rate	2138.25 per thousand women	7341.25 per thousand women
Gross reproduction rate	1121.20 per thousand women	3656.75 per thousand women
Vital index	35.29 per 100 persons	161.54 per 100 persons

On comparison of CBR of Paltan Bazar and Milan Nagar, it is seen that the birth rate of Paltan Bazar is different from Milan Nagar. Also, it is seen that the ASFR for the area shows fluctuations in every year.

A standardised fertility rate that is very useful for comparisons is the total fertility rate (TFR). After calculation the TFR for Milan Nagar is 7341.25

during the period 2019-2024, and Paltan Bazar is 2138.25 and for India is 2.68 during the same period. If we do not multiply 1000 in calculating TFR then Milan Nagar TFR becomes 7.34 and Paltan Bazar TFR becomes 2.14 and we compare these values with India. Hence on comparing TFR of Milan Nagar and Paltan Bazar it shows that the live births to mother during their life time (i.e. reproductive period) for Milan Nagar is greater than that of Paltan Bazar. Also comparing with India, it shows that TFR of Milan Nagar is greater than that of India, but TFR of Paltan Bazar is lesser than that of India. Thus, from TFR, it can be concluded that the fertility rate for Milan Nagar is better than that of Paltan Bazar.

Thus, comparing all the fertility rates except for CBR, from TFR, ASFR we can conclude that the fertility rates comparatively differ from Milan Nagar.

From the two surveyed areas, on comparing all the queries from the questionnaire, it can be concluded that the people of Milan Nagar are more educated, health concerned of the mother and have higher awareness regarding birth spacing for better upbringing of the child and improved health of the mother than that of Paltan Bazar. During the survey, it was observed that the different fertility rates of Paltan Bazar were comparatively less than that of Milan Nagar; therefore, it may imply that the people of Milan Nagar are clean and hygienic by nature, having good quality of food, water supply, the transport and communication system are also in a quite better stage. Also, the people of Milan Nagar are well educated, concerned about modern scientific care and other various modern outfits.

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The Triple Bottom Line Approach: Balancing People, Planet and Profit

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Abstract

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach, which integrates social equity (People), environmental sustainability (Planet), and economic viability (Profit), has become a fundamental framework for evaluating sustainable business practices. This review-cum-conceptual paper explores the evolution and principles of TBL in the context of corporate sustainability with a focus on the Indian business landscape drawing insights from academic literature, policy documents, industry reports, etc. A comparative analysis distinguishes TBL from traditional profit-centric models, highlighting its significance in corporate social responsibility (CSR), and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) factors. The three pillars of TBL-People, Planet, and Profit are examined, emphasizing the importance of balancing social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and economic success. The study also investigates the challenges and barriers to TBL implementation. The paper concludes by providing policy and strategic recommendations emphasizing the need for integration of sustainable practices, promotion of green innovation, enhancement of financial inclusion, strengthening regulatory frameworks, and investment in capacity building and education. The findings underscore the importance of a collaborative approach involving businesses, governments, and civil society in fostering a resilient and inclusive economy through the adoption of the TBL framework.

Key Words: TBL, Sustainability, ESG, CSR

1. Introduction:

Sustainability is now a crucial part of business operations, especially in India, where economic challenges exist alongside environmental and social concerns. The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach, which focuses on people, planet, and profit, provides a balanced framework for businesses to grow responsibly while ensuring long-term sustainability. Instead of focusing only on financial success, organizations adopting this approach contribute to community well-being and environmental protection.

India, known for its rich biodiversity and indigenous cultures, requires a development model that balances economic growth with environmental and social responsibilities (Anjani et al., 2025). The region faces challenges such as limited industrialization, resource exploitation, and ecological degradation, making the TBL approach highly relevant. By prioritizing sustainability, businesses can create long-term value rather than seeking short-term financial gains (Ali et al., 2024). This shift can lead to resilient business models that support economic development while preserving natural resources and improving social welfare.

As India moves towards green finance and sustainable tourism, the TBL approach is gaining importance in shaping future business strategies. It highlights the need for ethical decision-making and responsible economic activities, particularly in countries like India, where businesses can play a role in inclusive and sustainable growth (Asraf & Supriaddin, 2024). By integrating people, planet, and profit into their core strategies, businesses contribute to sustainable economic development, ensuring that progress does not come at the cost of the environment or local communities.

1.1 Evolution of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Concept:

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach has become a fundamental concept in sustainable economics, encouraging businesses to consider social and environmental responsibilities alongside financial performance. Introduced by John Elkington in 1994, TBL broadened the traditional corporate focus to include people, planet, and profit, advocating a more balanced and responsible way of measuring business success (Elkington, 1997).

In India, the TBL framework has moved beyond theory to practical application, shaping policies and business strategies across various sectors.

Industries such as agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing have increasingly adopted TBL principles, fostering economic growth while ensuring environmental conservation and social well-being ((Mullick, 2023)).

Government policies have further reinforced the integration of TBL into corporate practices. The Companies Act of 2013 mandates that businesses meeting specific financial criteria allocate at least 2% of their average net profits toward Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities, embedding social and environmental goals into business strategies (Companies Act, 2013, Section 135). This policy initiative has encouraged enterprises across India to embrace sustainable practices in areas such as organic farming, renewable energy, and eco-friendly manufacturing, aligning business profitability with environmental stewardship and community development.

From an economic perspective, the TBL approach promotes sustainable development by advocating inclusive growth models. By balancing profitability with ecological responsibility and social equity, businesses can enhance their long-term resilience, create employment opportunities, and optimize resource utilization. Embracing TBL principles strengthens India's sustainable economic future, ensuring that business success contributes to both environmental preservation and societal progress (Parsa et al., 2024).

1.2 Objectives of the Study:

- * To understand and explain the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework by exploring its definition, evolution, and relevance to corporate sustainability practices compared to traditional profit-driven business models.
- * To examine the three pillars of TBL: People, Planet, and Profit by analyzing how businesses can balance social responsibility, environmental sustainability, and economic success, including the role of CSR, ESG, and corporate governance.
- * To explore the integration of TBL into business strategy.

1.3 Methodology of the Study:

This conceptual review paper employs a descriptive research approach, drawing insights from different studies undertaken to examine the

Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework and its role in corporate sustainability. It is grounded in a thorough analysis of academic literature, policy documents, industry reports, and case studies, offering a well-rounded understanding of the evolution, core principles, and business applications of TBL... Through a comparative analysis, the study differentiates TBL from traditional profit-driven models, emphasizing its relevance in corporate social responsibility (CSR), environmental, social, and governance (ESG) considerations, and corporate governance.

2. Conceptual Foundation of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL):

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) is a framework that emphasizes the need to balance three key aspects of sustainability: People, Planet, and Profit. Introduced by John Elkington in the 1990s, TBL challenges businesses to go beyond financial success and consider their social and environmental impact as well (Elkington, 1997). It underscores the idea that a truly successful business should contribute to the well-being of society and the environment while remaining financially sustainable.

In the TBL framework, "People" represents the social aspect, encouraging businesses to prioritize fair wages, labor rights, and the overall well-being of employees, communities, and stakeholders. Companies are expected to engage in ethical practices and contribute to the development of the areas in which they operate (Prakash et al., 2023). "Planet" focuses on environmental responsibility, urging businesses to adopt sustainable practices that minimize their carbon footprint and conserve natural resources. Lastly, "Profit" refers to the economic dimension, ensuring that businesses remain financially viable while fostering long-term growth, resource efficiency, and lasting economic value (Elkington, 1997).

The TBL approach aligns with sustainable economics by encouraging businesses to recognize the deep connection between social progress, environmental conservation, and economic growth. It suggests that investing in people and the planet can lead to long-term financial benefits. For instance, implementing energy-efficient technologies may involve initial costs, but it can result in significant savings and a competitive market advantage over time. Additionally, fostering strong relationships with local communities can enhance a company's reputation and customer loyalty, ultimately strengthening its sustainability (Nogueira et.al... 2023)

In essence, the Triple Bottom Line expands the definition of business success by integrating economic, social, and environmental considerations. It promotes a more holistic approach to sustainability, where businesses are not just profit-driven entities but also responsible contributors to society and environmental preservation.

2.1 Comparison with Traditional Profit-Centric Business Models:

For decades, businesses have primarily focused on maximizing profits, following traditional economic theories that emphasize efficiency, cost-cutting, and revenue growth (Samuelson & Nordhaus, 2009). While this approach has driven economic expansion, it often overlooks environmental and social responsibilities, leading to resource depletion, inequality, and unsustainable business practices. As concerns about sustainability grow, there is an increasing need for businesses to adopt a more responsible approach that balances profit with long-term social and environmental well-being.

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework offers a more holistic approach by integrating economic, social, and environmental priorities. Instead of focusing solely on short-term financial returns, it encourages businesses to embed sustainability into their core strategies (Freeman, 1984). This approach aligns with sustainable development goals, ensuring that economic progress does not come at the cost of environmental degradation or social disparity.

Companies implementing TBL often invest in renewable energy, waste management, and fair labor practices. Though these efforts may require higher initial investments, they lead to long-term benefits such as increased efficiency, stronger brand reputation, and customer loyalty (Ahmed & Haq, 2024). As consumer preferences shift towards ethical businesses, TBL has become essential for corporate success.

2.2 Relevance to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance):

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework is closely tied to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) principles, both of which encourage ethical business practices. While CSR initially focused on voluntary philanthropy, it has evolved

into a structured approach where companies actively support social and environmental well-being (Carroll, 1999). By adopting TBL, businesses can embed sustainability into their core operations, making it an essential part of decision-making rather than just an add-on.

ESG criteria provide measurable indicators to assess a company's impact on the environment, social responsibility, and governance. The TBL framework enhances ESG strategies by promoting long-term value across financial, social, and environmental dimensions. For example, the "Planet" aspect aligns with ESG's environmental goals, while "People" emphasizes fair labor and community engagement. The "Profit" pillar ensures financial sustainability while fostering ethical economic growth (Kotsantonis et al., 2016).

Integrating TBL, CSR, and ESG reflects a broader shift toward responsible economic growth, where companies balance profitability with sustainability. This approach is increasingly essential as stakeholders demand greater transparency and accountability. By following TBL principles, businesses can contribute positively to society and the environment while securing long-term success.

3. The Three Pillars of the Triple Bottom Line:

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach offers a comprehensive view of sustainability by integrating three essential elements: people, planet, and profit. Instead of solely focusing on financial gains, businesses are encouraged to consider their broader impact on society and the environment. A key component of this approach is social sustainability, which emphasizes the well-being of individuals. Companies that uphold social responsibility foster fair working conditions, support local communities, and promote diversity, contributing to long-term stability and growth.



Fig. 1 Tripple Bottom Line

3.1 People (Social Sustainability):

Social sustainability focuses on creating a positive impact on both individuals and society. It involves supporting employees, fostering community engagement, and promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion. By prioritizing these values, businesses can achieve long-term success while upholding ethical and sustainable economic growth.

Employee Well-being and Ethical Labor Practices

Employees are the foundation of any successful business. Prioritizing their well-being not only boosts productivity but also fosters commitment and job satisfaction. Well-being goes beyond fair wages it includes mental and physical health, work-life balance, and career growth opportunities. Research suggests that companies investing in employee welfare experience higher efficiency, reduced turnover, and a positive workplace culture, leading to long-term success (Chatterjee & Sanyal, 2021). Moreover, ethical labor practices ensure fair treatment of employees, promoting sustainable economic growth that values long-term stability over short-term profits.

Community Engagement and Social Responsibility

Businesses thrive when they actively contribute to the communities they serve. Supporting education, healthcare, and local initiatives strengthens social bonds and builds trust. Engaging in social causes not only enhances a company's reputation but also fosters economic stability, benefiting both businesses and society (Khan et.al., 2021). Investing in communities creates a foundation for lasting success and shared prosperity.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Business

A truly sustainable business embraces equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). A diverse workforce brings fresh perspectives, driving creativity and innovation. Inclusion ensures that every employee, regardless of background, has equal opportunities to grow and succeed. Studies show that businesses fostering EDI benefit from higher employee engagement, stronger collaboration, and better financial performance (Kapoor & Gupta, 2022). Promoting fairness in the workplace contributes to a more just economy and long-term social progress.

3.2 Planet (Environmental Sustainability):

Environmental sustainability is a crucial aspect of the Triple Bottom

Line (TBL) framework, which aims to balance economic growth, social well-being, and environmental responsibility. The "Planet" pillar highlights the importance of using resources wisely, minimizing pollution, and adopting sustainable business practices to protect the environment for future generations. A sustainable economy supports this approach by ensuring long-term economic stability while preserving natural resources.

Sustainable Resource Management and Waste Reduction

Efficient use of natural resources is essential for both environmental protection and economic stability. Managing resources sustainably helps minimize waste and conserve biodiversity. Many industries are shifting to circular economy models, which emphasize reusing and recycling materials instead of the traditional "take, make, dispose" approach. By adopting better production methods and relying on renewable energy, businesses can reduce costs while lessening their environmental footprint.

Another important strategy is life-cycle assessment (LCA), which evaluates a product's impact from creation to disposal. This method promotes recycling and repurposing, cutting down on landfill waste and contributing to a greener economy (Mullick, 2023). Sustainable resource management not only supports the environment but also leads to cost savings, fosters innovation, and enhances a company's market reputation.

Carbon Footprint and Climate Change Mitigation

Cutting carbon emissions is crucial for tackling climate change. A carbon footprint measures the total greenhouse gases (GHGs) released due to human activities like manufacturing and transportation. Since industries are major contributors, adopting low-carbon technologies is vital for sustainability.

Governments and businesses worldwide are shifting to renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power to curb emissions. In India, policies are promoting electric vehicles (EVs) and energy-efficient manufacturing to meet climate targets under the Paris Agreement. Companies that implement carbon reduction strategies not only protect the environment but also gain a competitive edge, as consumers increasingly prefer sustainable products (Priya, 2024). Moreover, reducing energy use helps businesses cut costs and improve financial stability.

Green Technologies and Circular Economy Principles

Adopting green technologies and circular economy principles is crucial for businesses aiming for sustainability. Green technologies like energy-efficient systems, waste reduction techniques, and renewable energy solutions help companies reduce their environmental footprint. For example, installing solar panels and wind turbines not only cuts energy costs but also reduces reliance on fossil fuels (Qamruzzaman, 2022). These measures support sustainability while offering long-term financial benefits.

The circular economy promotes extending material lifecycles through repair, reuse, and recycling instead of single-use disposal (Munir & Fausiah, 2025). Industries such as fashion, electronics, and construction are adopting this approach to minimize waste and conserve resources. In construction, reusing materials like bricks and steel lowers energy consumption and reduces the demand for new raw materials, making the sector more sustainable (Moorthy et al., 2024).

In India, government initiatives support circular economy practices, including plastic and e-waste recycling, to build a sustainable industrial ecosystem. Businesses integrating circular strategies can turn waste into valuable resources, creating economic and environmental benefits (Prakash et al., 2023). Efficient resource management, lower carbon emissions, and green technologies are essential for long-term success. Sustainable practices help businesses cut costs, attract eco-conscious consumers, and contribute to a greener future.

3.3 Profit (Economic Sustainability):

Economic sustainability, a core element of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework, highlights the importance of businesses achieving long-term financial stability while positively impacting society and the environment. A sustainable economic approach encourages businesses to adopt responsible strategies that extend beyond short-term profit-making, ensuring steady growth and stability. Companies integrating sustainability into their operations not only strengthen their financial position but also build trust among consumers, investors, and local communities.

Long-Term Financial Viability vs. Short-Term Gains

Businesses prioritizing long-term growth invest in innovation, efficiency,

and sustainability instead of solely focusing on immediate profits. While short-term financial strategies may bring quick returns, they often lead to challenges such as resource depletion, reputational risks, and regulatory hurdles (Ne & Nirmala, 2023). In contrast, companies committed to sustainability earn consumer trust, regulatory support, and resilience against market fluctuations. In India, industries like renewable energy and green construction have demonstrated that sustainable investments can yield strong financial returns. Businesses in these sectors are aligning with global environmental and social responsibility standards, enhancing their competitiveness in both domestic and international markets (Gou & Xie, 2017).

Ethical Business Practices and Stakeholder Value

Ethical business practices play a crucial role in economic sustainability by promoting transparency, fairness, and accountability. Companies that uphold ethical standards foster strong relationships with employees, consumers, investors, and local communities, which are vital for long-term success. Ethical decision-making enhances customer trust, investor confidence, and employee satisfaction, contributing to financial stability (Prakash et al., 2023). In India, the Companies Act 2013 mandates corporate social responsibility (CSR), encouraging businesses to invest in social and environmental initiatives. This underscores the link between ethics, sustainability, and financial growth. Companies that embrace ethical and sustainable practices often gain a competitive edge, a strong brand reputation, and greater customer loyalty.

4. Challenges and Barriers to TBL Implementation:

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework aims to create a balance between people, planet, and profit, making businesses more sustainable in the long run. However, despite its potential benefits, many companies especially in developing economies like India face significant challenges in integrating TBL into their business strategies. These barriers arise due to economic pressures, regulatory gaps, cultural resistance, and measurement difficulties, making it harder for businesses to adopt sustainable practices.

4.1. Lack of Awareness and Understanding:

A major barrier to TBL implementation is the lack of awareness among businesses, particularly small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Many

companies do not fully understand the benefits of TBL or how to implement it effectively (Wu et. al., 2024). Additionally, limited training programs for business leaders and employees prevent organizations from developing strategies that balance economic, social, and environmental goals.

4.2. Economic Constraints and Short-Term Profit Focus:

Many businesses, especially smaller firms, struggle with financial constraints that make it difficult to invest in long-term sustainability initiatives. The focus on short-term profits often leads to the neglect of environmental and social responsibility. Investors and stakeholders usually prioritize immediate financial returns over sustainable development, making it harder for businesses to justify expenses related to green technologies, employee welfare, or ethical sourcing (Jayashree, 2021)

4.3. Difficulty in Integrating Social and Environmental Goals with Profit:

Businesses often struggle to align profitability with sustainability. While many companies recognize the importance of reducing their carbon footprint or contributing to social causes, implementing these changes without affecting financial performance is a challenge. Additionally, the lack of standardized frameworks for measuring social and environmental impact makes it difficult to track progress and demonstrate value to stakeholders.

4.4. Regulatory and Policy Barriers:

Although sustainability regulations are evolving in India, they are often fragmented or poorly enforced. Many businesses face uncertainty regarding compliance requirements, tax incentives, and environmental laws, making TBL adoption more complicated (Gupta & Singh, 2020). Without strong policy incentives such as tax rebates or government grants-companies lack motivation to integrate TBL into their strategies (Dhameja & Agarwal, 2017).

4.5. Resistance to Change and Cultural Factors:

Many companies, particularly in traditional industries, are resistant to adopting new sustainability models. Business leaders often perceive TBL principles as costly and unnecessary, believing that prioritizing social and environmental responsibility could reduce competitiveness. Furthermore, corporate cultures that emphasize profit above all else create internal

resistance to sustainable business transformations (Ogreaan&Herciu, 2020).

4.6. Data Availability and Measurement Challenges:

One of the biggest barriers to TBL implementation is the lack of reliable data on social and environmental performance. Many businesses do not have the necessary tools to measure their carbon footprint, social impact, or ethical sourcing practices. The absence of standardized metrics makes it difficult to compare sustainability performance across industries.

4.7. Stakeholder Conflicts and Expectations:

Businesses must balance the expectations of various stakeholders, including employees, customers, investors, and regulators. However, these groups often have conflicting priorities for example, investors may push for cost-cutting strategies, while consumers demand eco-friendly products. Finding a middle ground that satisfies all stakeholders without compromising financial stability remains a key challenge.

4.8. Limited Access to Resources and Technology:

For businesses operating in rural or underdeveloped areas, the lack of resources, infrastructure, and technology prevents them from implementing sustainable practices. Green technologies and circular economy models require significant investment, which many businesses especially in the informal sector cannot afford.

5. Role of Government Policies, Incentives, and Regulatory Frameworks in Promoting the Triple Bottom Line Approach:

5.1. Government Policies Driving the Triple Bottom Line:

Government policies serve as enablers of sustainable development, providing structured frameworks that encourage businesses to adopt green and ethical business models. In India, several initiatives have been introduced to integrate TBL into industrial and corporate sectors:

*** National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC)**

Encourages businesses to implement energy-efficient and low-carbon technologies to combat climate change.

*** State-Level Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Frameworks**

Align businesses with the United Nations' SDGs, ensuring corporate accountability for environmental and social impact.

*** Companies Act, 2013**

Makes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) spending mandatory, requiring businesses to invest in community development, environmental conservation, and social programs.

*** Perform, Achieve, and Trade (PAT) Scheme**

Encourages businesses to improve energy efficiency, allowing them to trade energy-saving certificates for economic benefits.

5.2 Incentives for Sustainable Business Practices:

Government incentives play a pivotal role in promoting sustainable business practices in India by offering economic benefits to enterprises that adopt eco-friendly and socially responsible operations. Key initiatives include:

*** Tax Exemptions and Subsidies**

The Indian government provides various financial incentives to businesses investing in renewable energy and sustainable infrastructure. These incentives aim to reduce the initial capital burden and encourage the adoption of green technologies. For instance, the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme offers financial support to companies manufacturing electric vehicles and related components, fostering a shift towards cleaner energy sources.

*** Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) Scheme**

This initiative is designed to accelerate the production and adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) in India. The scheme provides subsidies for various categories of EVs, including two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and buses, thereby facilitating the country's transition to a low-carbon transportation system. The FAME scheme also emphasizes the development of charging infrastructure to support the growing EV ecosystem.

*** Green Credit Program**

Introduced under the Environment Protection Act, this program incentivizes industries to undertake environmental projects such as afforestation, water conservation, and pollution control. In return, businesses earn credits that can be traded or used to comply with environmental regulations, promoting proactive engagement in sustainability efforts.

These initiatives collectively aim to make sustainability financially

viable for businesses, ensuring that eco-friendly practices are not only environmentally beneficial but also economically rewarding.

5.3 Regulatory Frameworks Ensuring Compliance:

Regulatory frameworks are essential in ensuring businesses adhere to sustainability mandates, holding them accountable for their environmental and social impacts:

*** Polluter Pays Principle (PPP)**

This principle mandates that industries responsible for environmental pollution bear the financial costs of remediation and damage control. It serves as a fundamental economic instrument to allocate costs of pollution prevention and control measures, encouraging the rational use of environmental resources and avoiding distortions in international trade and investment.

*** Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations**

These regulations require businesses to assess their potential environmental impacts before initiating new projects, ensuring that industrial growth does not compromise ecological balance. The EIA process involves identifying, describing, and evaluating the potential significant effects of proposed projects on the environment, thereby integrating environmental considerations into the decision-making process.

By implementing these frameworks, governments can promote sustainable development and ensure that economic activities are conducted responsibly, minimizing adverse effects on the environment and society.

6. Future Research Opportunities in TBL:

The evolving Triple Bottom Line (TBL) framework offers several key areas for future research. One crucial focus is leveraging AI to enhance sustainability, particularly through predictive models for environmental impact assessments and resource optimization. Developing accessible AI tools across industries can help maximize the benefits of digital transformation.

Another important research direction is addressing the digital skills gap in the sustainability sector. Exploring effective educational frameworks and training programs that integrate digital literacy with sustainability education could provide valuable insights for policymakers and educators.

Examining the long-term effects of impact investing and green finance on both environmental and financial outcomes is essential. Research in this area could help establish best practices and guide investors toward strategies that align profitability with sustainability goals.

7. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations:

The Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach has become a fundamental model for evaluating sustainable business practices. By integrating social (People), environmental (Planet), and economic (Profit) dimensions, TBL provides a comprehensive framework for assessing organizational performance beyond traditional financial metrics.

Recent research highlights the growing importance of TBL in fostering holistic sustainability. Studies indicate a rising interest in the connection between sustainability and economic development, emphasizing the need for integrated strategies that balance financial, environmental, and social objectives. Particularly in the case of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), green innovation and sustainable manufacturing have emerged as crucial factors for improving TBL outcomes. The transition towards sustainability requires a collaborative approach involving businesses, governments, and civil society. By adopting the TBL framework, organizations can generate value that extends beyond financial profits, fostering positive social and environmental impacts.

In the Indian context, the adoption of Industry 4.0 technologies has played a significant role in enhancing sustainability efforts. Digital solutions have been instrumental in improving economic performance while positively impacting environmental and social factors. These developments highlight the transformative potential of digitalization and financial inclusion in achieving long-term sustainability goals.

Policy and Strategic Recommendations for Businesses and Governments

1. **Integration of Sustainable Practices:** Businesses should incorporate sustainability into their core strategies by adopting green technologies, optimizing resource use, and reducing waste to ensure long-term environmental and social benefits.
2. **Promotion of Green Innovation:** Encouraging research and development in eco-friendly products and services can provide businesses with a com-

petitive edge. Governments can support this by offering incentives, grants, and fostering collaborations between industry and academia.

3. Enhancing Financial Inclusion: Policies that expand access to financial services, particularly through digital platforms, can empower underserved communities and promote inclusive economic growth.

4. Strengthening Regulatory Frameworks: Governments should establish clear and enforceable sustainability regulations, including emission standards, ethical labor practices, and corporate accountability measures, ensuring compliance through transparent mechanisms.

5. Capacity Building and Education: Investing in education and skill development programs can prepare the workforce for sustainable industries. Raising awareness about TBL principles and training professionals in green technologies will be essential for long-term sustainability.

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Saadulla, the Muslim League Premier of Undivided Assam

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Abstract

Sir Syed Saadulla, a prominent figure in Assam's political history, served as the Premier of pre-independence Assam started his political career as a member of the Legislative Council in 1912. Since then till 1952, Saadulla held a significant place in Assam's governance. Despite his influential role, his legacy has faded into obscurity. This erasure of memory regarding Saadulla can be attributed to several factors. One significant reason is the widespread perception of his close ties to the imperial British Government, which has led many to view him with suspicion. Additionally, his association with the Muslim League during a critical period in Indian politics has further fuelled negative sentiments against him. This paper seeks to examine the factors that led to his joining the Muslim League. It will also explore his political beliefs and values, as well as his role as a leader within the Muslim League.

Key words: Saadulla, Legislator, Congress, Muslim League, Surma Valley.

Introduction:

In Assam's political history, the role of Sir Syed Saadulla stands out as particularly significant. He was not only a prominent member of the Legislative Council but also served as the Premier of pre-independence Assam, holding office five times from 1937 to 1946. As an indigenous Assamese Muslim, Saadulla was instrumental in shaping the political landscape of the region during a tumultuous period. Syed Saadulla was born in Guwahati on May 21, 1885, to Tayibulla, a teacher of Arabic and Persian at Sonaram High School, and his wife. The family's roots traced back to Sibsagar, where they descended from Azan Pir, a 17th-century Islamic preacher. Saadulla

received his early education at Sonaram High School, later attended Collegiate High School and Cotton College in 1901, where he became the first Muslim graduate¹. He pursued a Master's in Chemistry at Presidency College, later joining Cotton College as a Chemistry Demonstrator². However, after being denied a Lectureship, he resigned and turned to law, qualifying for the Guwahati Bar within a year. Saadulla balanced his legal career with active engagement in public affairs, demonstrating a lifelong commitment to education and community service. In 1937, when Saadulla established his first ministry, he made the deliberate decision not to include any members of the Muslim League in his cabinet, maintaining a certain degree of independence from the party. However, in a significant and somewhat unexpected shift, he later chose to formally join the Muslim League and restructured his ministry to bring Muslim League ministers into key positions within his administration. Although Saadulla joined the Muslim League and expressed full support for Jinnah's Two-Nation Theory, he ultimately chose to remain in India when the country was partitioned into India and Pakistan. Hardly any leaders from the early days of the Provincial Legislative Councils up to the eve of Indian Independence have sustained or held such a prominent position or a lengthy tenure in government and politics than Sir Syed Muhammad Saadulla. Despite his active involvement in Assam's political arena prior to independence, it is surprising that his legacy has been largely forgotten, especially when compared to other contemporaries.

(Footnotes)

Objectives of the Research:

The chief objectives of the present study can be stated as follows.

1. To throw light on Saadulla's political ideologies or principles.
2. To highlight the cause and situation that compelled him to join muslim league.
3. To study his attitude and relation with the Muslim League and other political parties and organisations.

Review of Literature:

Several books explore the politics of Assam, focusing on individual leaders and issues from both Muslim and Hindu perspectives.

Muslims in Assam Politics by M. Kar provides a chronological account of Muslim settlement, socio-economic conditions, and political status since the 13th century. It addresses issues like Bengali immigration, the Sylhet controversy, and the language issue, but offers limited insight into Saadulla's motivations regarding these challenges.

The Man Who Divided India by Rafiq Zakaria analyzes Jinnah's political evolution, emphasizing his shift from promoting Hindu-Muslim unity

to advocating for Pakistan. However, it lacks details on Jinnah's connections to Saadulla or the Assam Provincial Muslim League.

Planter-Raj to Swaraj by Amalendu Guha discusses political developments in Assam during the colonial period, including the evolution of the Provincial Legislature. While it touches on significant issues like Bengali immigration, it does not delve into Saadulla's administrative challenges.

Political History of Assam (Vols. I-III), edited by H. K. Barpujari and A. C. Bhuyan, outlines Assam's political developments under British rule, focusing on the rise of political organizations.

Assam Muslim Politics and Cohesion by B. J. Dev and D. K. Lahiri is a comprehensive account of Muslims' political role in Assam, discussing the impact of the Muslim League and immigration politics.

Sajal Nag's *Roots of Ethnic Conflict* addresses the Assamese nationality question and the tensions between Assamese and Bengali communities from the 19th century onward.

Religion in Politics: Eastern India 1905-1947 by Binayak Dutta briefly mentions Saadulla in relation to Ulemas' influence on the Muslim League.

Comprehensive History of Assam by S. L. Baruah details socio-political history during British rule, while *Gopinath Bordoloi, The Assam Problem and Nehru's Centre* by Nirode Kumar Barooah covers Bordoloi's early political life and the freedom movement.

Assam Attitude to Federalism by Girin Phukon examines the Assamese elite's push for greater provincial autonomy during the Constituent Assembly debates.

A Century of Government and Politics in North East India by V. Venkata Rao and Niru Hazarika provides a detailed overview of Assam's political landscape but lacks an analysis of Saadulla's policies.

A.H. Shibly's biography of *Abdul Matin Chaudhary* emphasizes his role in advocating for Bengali immigrants and interactions with Jinnah and Saadulla, but overlooks Council politics.

Monirul Hussain's *Assam Movement, Class Ideology and Identity* discuss the immigration problem and its socio-political ramifications but offer little on Saadulla's policies regarding immigration.

Overall, existing literature lacks a comprehensive study of Saadulla's political career, highlighting the need for a focused exploration of his role in the political arena of Assam.

Methodology:

This work is based on qualitative approach. Historical and content analysis methods have been adopted in preparing this paper. Both primary and secondary sources have been extensively utilized in the historical inquiry. Various articles from magazines, journals, books, and selected newspaper issues have been referred. Government letters, reports, gazetteers, debates, and private papers of Assam's political figures have also been consulted. Reliable sources are organized to analyze and interpret facts, aiding in achieving the paper's objectives and forming a strong conclusion.

Analysis:

In the early stages of his political career, Saadulla became deeply engaged in the activities of Municipal and Local Boards. His dedication and effectiveness soon led him to the Council, where he became a member in 1912¹. As a member of the Council, Saadulla quickly gained stature and importance, eventually holding significant offices as a minister and later as an executive councillor under the Dyarchy system established by the British². Saadulla was a pragmatic parliamentarian, who strongly believed that obstructing provincial administration and attempting to undermine the government would not yield benefits for the populace. Instead, he advocated for the formation of a united opposition aimed at democratically compelling the Government of India to concede to the needs and demands of the people. Saadulla's commitment to working within the system gained particular relevance with the announcement of Provincial elections in British India, set for the winter of 1936-37 under the Government of India Act of 1935. True to his stance on accepting office, he promptly began preparing for the elections, sparking a flurry of political activity from early 1936 onward. Saadulla contested the election from the South Kamrup constituency and achieved the remarkable feat of being elected uncontested to the Assam Legislative Assembly³. In the broader context of the elections, a total of 34 Muslim legislators were elected to the Assam Legislative Assembly. Among these, 21 representatives hailed from the Surma Valley, while the remaining members were from the Brahmaputra Valley. Despite being elected through a separate electorate, these Muslim legislators were not a unified group; instead, they were fragmented into several small factions, often driven by ethno-linguistic rivalries and jealousy. The Muslims from the Brahmaputra Valley identified

primarily as Assamese first and Muslims second, while those from the Surma Valley prioritized their Muslim identity over their Sylheti heritage⁴. Moreover, the Muslim legislators from the Brahmaputra Valley were further divided into two distinct factions: the native Muslim legislators who had settled in Assam long ago and established themselves economically, and the newer Muslim legislators who had migrated from present-day Bangladesh and subsequently made Assam their permanent home. These internal divisions among the Muslim legislators created complexities in their political alignment and made it difficult for them to present a unified front.

Amidst this ethno-linguistic fragmentation, Saadulla recognized the need for political stability and made concerted efforts to form a stable government through the coordination and cooperation of various parties and groups within the Assembly. To achieve this, he reached out to different factional leaders, with a particular focus on uniting the Muslim legislators. He appealed to the diverse Muslim groups from both the Brahmaputra and Surma Valleys, urging them to set aside their differences and unite under a common banner for the greater good.

In response to his call for Muslim unity, the various Muslim factions in the Brahmaputra Valley agreed to collaborate, ultimately designating Saadulla as their leader. Concurrently, the Muslim groups in the Surma Valley united under the banner of the Surma Valley United Muslim Party, which quickly gained strength, boasting a membership of 17 representatives. This coalition was partly catalyzed by the efforts of Abdul Matin Chaudhury, who had previously resigned from the Central Legislative Assembly to focus on provincial politics and was instrumental in founding the Muslim League in the Surma Valley. Despite this development, the Muslim League struggled to gain significant traction during the elections, with only four of its candidates securing seats. However, rather than merging with the Surma Valley United Muslim Party, the Muslim League chose to maintain its separate identity, underscoring the fragmented nature of Muslim politics at the time.

Recognizing the critical importance of securing a stable government, Saadulla made a strategic decision to forge an alliance with the Surma Valley United Muslim Party, even though doing so required him to accept several of the party's substantial and, at times, demanding conditions. Saadulla understood that this alliance was indispensable to his ambitions of forming a strong and enduring ministry, as the Surma Valley United Muslim Party held considerable sway in the Assembly, being the largest single party after the Congress Party. As a gesture of appreciation for the support provided by the Surma Valley

United Muslim Party, Saadulla personally travelled to Kulaura to meet with its leaders¹. After securing the cooperation of the Surma Valley United Muslim Party, Saadulla extended his negotiations to other key political figures. He entered discussions with Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri of the United People's Party and J. J. Nicholas Roy of the Progressive Party, aiming to bring them into the fold of his coalition. Through these negotiations, Saadulla was able to form a broad non-Congress coalition, combining the diverse political interests of various groups. With the support of these different parties and factions in place, Saadulla finally took office as the head of the non-Congress coalition ministry on April 1, 1937, following three months of intense political maneuvering after the Legislative elections². His ability to bring together such a diverse array of political groups showcased his diplomatic skill and political acumen in navigating the complexities of Assam's fragmented political landscape.

However, Saadulla's preference for Surma Valley United Muslim Party over Muslim League while forming government caused significant disappointment and frustration for Abdul Matin Chaudhury, a key leader of the Muslim League. Feeling sidelined, Chaudhury became increasingly resentful of Saadulla's leadership and sought to challenge his authority. In a strategic move, Abdul Matin Chaudhury joined forces with the Congress Party, aligning himself with the goal of toppling Saadulla's coalition ministry. As Premier, Saadulla was acutely aware that Chaudhury was advocating for the Line System and addressing immigration issues, aiming to mobilize Muslim legislators to strengthen the Muslim League's influence. Chaudhury's assurances that he would advocate for the rights and needs of immigrant Muslims significantly swayed the immigrant legislators, led by Abdul Hamid Khan, to shift their allegiance away from Saadulla's administration. This transition further solidified the Muslim League's position, allowing them to orchestrate repeated challenges to Saadulla's ministry. The escalating tensions prompted Gopinath Bardoloi to comment that "so long as such capable men like Abdul Matin Chaudhury were out of office, the chance of keeping the Muslims behind the Saadulla team is remote." Reflecting on the disarray within Saadulla's camp, the British newspaper *The Statesman* remarked, "A Government which cannot control its own supporters and is continually humiliated by defeats carries little authority and should either reassert its authority or resign." These developments left Saadulla in a precarious position, facing a critical juncture in his leadership. At this point, Saadulla had two choices: he could attempt to regain the support of the groups that had defected to the Muslim League, or he could resign from his position. Choosing not to relinquish the Premiership easily, Saadulla opted

to solidify his political standing by aligning himself with the Muslim League. His first strategic move in this direction was to attend the Muslim League conference held in Lucknow in October 1937, signalling his intent to join forces with the party². During the session, Saadulla committed to convincing his party members to join the Muslim League, marking a decisive shift in his approach to securing political stability and maintaining his leadership amidst the rising challenges to his ministry. It is evident that his decision to join the League was driven by necessity and the demands of political survival. If the influential immigrant lobby had not shifted its allegiance away from Saadulla to the Muslim League, he might have never joined the party, and the political landscape would likely have taken a different course.

After aligning himself with the Muslim League, Saadulla found himself grappling with a serious internal conflict. Muslim legislators within the party expressed dissatisfaction with two of his ministers, Ali Hyder Khan and Shamsul Ulema Waheed, both of whom were from the Surma Valley United Muslim Party. These ministers were deemed by the legislators to be ineffective and incapable of addressing the pressing issues of governance, leading to calls for their removal. The critics, who aligned with Abdul Matin Chaudhury's faction, insisted that the ministry would be considerably strengthened by replacing these two ministers with members of Chaudhury's group.

Ali Hyder Khan, the youngest member of the cabinet, was dismissed as being "innocent of all knowledge of politics and administration," with the allegation that his sole qualification for being included in the ministry was his status as a wealthy zamindar. On the other hand, Shamsul Ulema Waheed, the oldest minister in Saadulla's cabinet, was criticized for being "absolutely out of touch with modern Indian politics and its problems"¹. His detractors believed that his outdated views and inability to engage with contemporary political issues made him an ineffective leader.

Under immense pressure from the Muslim League legislators, Saadulla was forced to make significant changes to his cabinet. He had to reconstitute his ministry in 1937 to accommodate the demands of the party and bolster its internal cohesion. This reorganization led to the inclusion of Abdul Matin Chaudhury and Munawwar Ali, both prominent members of Chaudhury's group, in an effort to strengthen the ministry and pacify the dissenting factions within the Muslim League. Despite these adjustments, Saadulla was unable to avert the decline of his ministry, and by 1938, he faced significant challenges that ultimately led to his political downfall.

In 1939, Sir Muhammad Saadulla returned to power in Assam under challenging political conditions². Although he lacked the majority support typically required to form a government, the British Governor permitted him to establish a ministry and work freely to consolidate party support³. At this juncture, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the leader of the All India Muslim League, announced that December 22nd would be observed as "Deliverance Day" by Muslims across India, marking the resignation of Congress ministries in several provinces⁴. Jinnah portrayed this as a celebration of liberation from what he labeled as Congress's oppressive, unjust, and tyrannical governance. As the President of the Assam Provincial Muslim League and the Premier of Assam, Saadulla was expected to follow Jinnah's directive and observe Deliverance Day within the province.

However, this directive placed Saadulla in a complex, precarious situation. His dual roles created a conflict of interest: as the Muslim League's provincial leader, he was under pressure to comply with Jinnah's call, yet as Premier, he faced a different political reality. His cabinet comprised members not affiliated with the Muslim League, and openly endorsing Deliverance Day celebrations in Assam could alienate these non-Muslim League ministers and provoke dissent within the administration, threatening his government's stability⁵. On the other hand, failing to heed the League's call to observe Deliverance Day would likely anger Muslim League supporters and risk his standing and influence within his own party. Saadulla's predicament thus highlighted the challenges of navigating a delicate balance between party loyalty and the practical considerations of governing a diverse, coalition-based cabinet.

Saadulla was acutely aware that a decision either in favor of or against observing Deliverance Day could alienate key factions within his fragile political coalition, which he had painstakingly cobbled together. With no clear way to navigate the political minefield, he chose a path of avoidance. When the time came to implement the Deliverance Day program, Saadulla tactfully removed himself from the situation by leaving for Calcutta, thus avoiding any direct involvement. The Muslim League members in Assam carried out the celebrations without his participation, allowing him to sidestep the issue altogether.

Saadulla's tendency to act independently, prioritizing a pragmatic approach to governance, is further exemplified in his decision to accept a seat on the National Defence Council without seeking Jinnah's approval. In an attempt to impress the British authorities, Saadulla even defied the Muslim League's directive of 15th June 1940, which explicitly forbade Muslims from serving on War Committees. This move not only highlighted Saadulla's willingness to act autonomously but also underscored his pragmatic approach to politics.

His handling of the Deliverance Day celebration, his decision to join the National Defence Council, and his defiance of the League's 1940 directive clearly demonstrated that Saadulla was primarily guided by political considerations rather than ideological commitments. Had ideological alignment with the Muslim League been his main priority, he would have followed Jinnah's instructions without hesitation. However, Saadulla's actions revealed that maintaining political stability and safeguarding his broader political goals were his chief concerns, even at the expense of defying the directives of the Muslim League. Saadulla's decisions, driven more by political expediency than by adherence to the principles and ideologies of the Muslim League, culminated in 1945 with his controversial settlement with Congress leaders Gopinath Bardoloi and R. K. Choudhuri. Saadulla was so focused on negotiating with Bardoloi and Choudhuri that he did not inform the Muslim League High Command, likely fearing that they would oppose the agreement¹. His actions reflected his eagerness to consolidate his political position in Assam, even if it meant acting independently of the party's leadership.

However, the agreement fell apart when Bardoloi withdrew his support following Lord Wavell's announcement of Central and Provincial elections scheduled for the upcoming winter. The collapse of the Tripartite Agreement, which had been negotiated without the knowledge or approval of the Muslim League High Command, left Saadulla in a precarious situation. He found himself politically isolated, with strained relationships both with the Muslim League and the Congress Party.

As the general elections approached, Saadulla faced a difficult decision. With his ties to both major political forces at an all-time low, he considered two options: either leave the Muslim League and join another political party, or remain in the Muslim League and fully commit to advancing the party's

goals. However, in Assam, no other strong political force existed that could effectively challenge the dominance of either the Congress or the Muslim League. This left Saadulla with little choice but to stay with the Muslim League. Compelled by political necessity, Saadulla opted to align himself fully with the Muslim League's ideology. He embraced the League's two-nation theory, a significant shift that allowed him to maintain his relevance in Assam's political landscape. This decision marked a turning point in his career, as it signaled his full identification with the Muslim League's objectives, even though his earlier actions had often been motivated more by personal ambition than ideological loyalty. Saadulla's ultimate alignment with the two-nation theory was not so much a matter of conviction as it was a calculated response to the political realities he faced at that time.

Conclusion:

From the above discussion, it becomes evident that at the time of forming the ministry in 1937, Saadulla was not initially aligned with the Muslim League. In fact, his decision to join the Muslim League was not born out of genuine ideological conviction but rather out of necessity, driven by the pressing need for political survival in a rapidly changing landscape. The political atmosphere of the time compelled him to align with the Muslim League in order to secure his ministry and maintain his influence. His move was strategic, a calculated response to the circumstances, rather than a reflection of deep-rooted loyalty to the party or its principles.

Although Saadulla eventually became associated with the Muslim League, it would be incorrect to label him as a staunch or pure Muslim League leader. Unlike many other prominent figures of the time, he did not wholeheartedly follow the directives of Muhammad Ali Jinnah or adhere strictly to the party's ideologies. Instead, Saadulla was a seasoned and pragmatic politician who prioritized his own political interests above party lines or dogmatic adherence to the League's core principles. His political maneuvers were often designed to safeguard his own position and to remain relevant in the evolving political dynamics of the era.

It is important to recognize that while Saadulla was a member of the Muslim League, he used the party more as a vehicle to rejuvenate his waning political fortunes rather than as an ideological home. His association with the League was largely opportunistic, aimed at revitalizing his diminishing influence

in the state's politics. He saw in the Muslim League a platform through which he could regain political stature, and he capitalized on it to ensure his continued prominence.

Despite his pragmatic approach, Saadulla's association with Jinnah's All India Muslim League, and later his support for the controversial two-nation theory, left an indelible mark on his legacy. His alignment with the Muslim League and his backing of the divisive theory, which ultimately led to the partition of India, have made him one of the most unpopular political figures in the history of Assam. His actions, viewed by many as a betrayal of the region's interests, have contributed to the lasting perception of him as a divisive and controversial figure. Today, Saadulla is remembered not for his political acumen or the strategies he employed for his survival but rather for the role he played in aligning with a party and an ideology that contributed to the deep divisions in the subcontinent, especially in Assam.

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Sustainable Development Goals and Food Security in India: A Study

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Abstract

The concept of sustainable development has been the talk of the millennium, focusing on achieving different humanitarian, ecological and environmental goals. The concept of sustainable development considers different issues and challenges that have been a concern of the hour. It emphasises on utilization of the existing resources in an appropriate way with a focus on sustaining the resources for the needs and demands of the upcoming generation. The world leaders and various organizations have been focusing on sustainable development goals and meeting the goals by 2030.

The paper highlights on one of the India's Sustainable Development Goals and discusses the issues, challenges and country's role in implementing SDG to eradicate food security issues in the country.

Keywords: Food Security, Millennium. Resources, Sustainable Development Goals

Introduction:

Sustainable development has become the debating concept in development discourse, having been associated with different definitions, meanings and interpretations. Sustainable development would simply mean development that can be continued either indefinitely or for the given time period. The concept has been constructed of two words, "sustainable" and "development.". The word "development", has been defined variously from various perspectives and the concept of sustainable development has also been looked at from various angles, leading to a plethora of definitions of the

concept. Brundtland Commission Report defines sustainable development as development that meets the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Mensah, 2019)

Overall development of humanity over the last decades has not only led to the increasingly unfavorable climate changes and natural disasters, but also wars and political and socio-economic instability.

Humans with their actions have negatively impacted on the environment, endangering the survival of the Earth and the future generations. These conditions have indicated changes in the behavior aiming towards more rational and efficient management of all resources that will allow less pressure and environmental impact (Klarin, 2018)

The concept of sustainable development is based on the concept of socio-economic development in line with ecological constraints, the concept of needs redistribution of resources to ensure the quality of life for all and the concept of future generations. The essence of the concept of sustainable development is derived from the Triple bottom line concept, which implies the balance between three pillars of sustainability: environmental sustainability focused on maintaining the quality of the environment which is necessary for conducting the economic activities and quality of life of people, social sustainability which strives to ensure human rights and equality, preservation of cultural identity, respect for cultural diversity, race and religion, and economic sustainability necessary to maintain the natural, social and human capital required for income and living standards. (Larin, 2018)

Limitations of Sustainable Development:

Every concept that has been developed has certain weaknesses and problems while implemented on the ground, similarly the concept of sustainable development also has certain weaknesses and problems. The major weakness of the sustainable development movement is the rejection of the notion that environmental conservation necessarily constrains development or that development necessarily means environmental pollution. Certainly not an insignificant gain. Where the sustainable development movement has faltered is in its inability to develop a set of concepts, criteria and policies that are coherent or consistent both externally (with physical and social reality) and

internally (with each other). The mainstream formulation of sustainable development suffers from significant weaknesses in: (a) its characterization of the problems of poverty and environmental degradation; (b) its conceptualization of the objectives of development, sustainability and participation; and (c) the strategy it has adopted in the face of incomplete knowledge and uncertainty. (Lele, 1991) However the concept of sustainable development is working hard in promoting different international, national and regional issues One such issue that SDG focuses is the issue of food security.

Food security exists when all people, at all times have physical and economic access to 21 sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an 22 active and healthy life'. Close to 800 million individuals do not have access to enough food, over 23 two billion individuals experience key micronutrient deficiencies and about 60% of individuals 24 in low income countries are food insecure (Escamilla,2018)

The food security and sustainable development of the agriculture sector is subject to a widerange of economy wide policies as well as measures specific to the sector itself. The relationship between economic country stability and agriculture always are made by the most important food security factors: agriculture country policies and productivity, sustainability outcomes, price volatility, public-private partnership and agriculture potential.

A state has food security and sustainable development only when it has enough available food and agricultural products to provide nutrition for all its inhabitants, while ensuring forage for animals and water in case of natural disasters, crises, war etc. The classification of food security difficulties into two areas quality and quantity and have serious effects on the five dimensions of food security. (Bazga,2015)

- 1) Food Availability
- 2) Price Volatility
- 3) Population Access to food Availability
- 4) Food Utilization
- 5) Stability of Food

India's Role in Sustaining Food Security:

India has, over the past years, directed its development pathway to meet its priorities of employment, economic growth, food, water and energy security, disaster resilience and poverty alleviation. India has also aimed to restore its natural capital and adopt transparent and robust governance along democratic lines. However, emerging challenges of climate change impacts, increasing inequities, and lagging human development indices are well recognized by both the citizens as well as the government. The post 2015 UN Sustainable Development Agenda framework provides an opportunity to renew and integrate efforts in order to meet, to a significant degree, national and global aspirations in a defined time frame (Ministry of Environment, 2015).

For a nation like India the issue of food security and nutrition is of great importance. The country's 60% of the population is still resides in rural areas and problems of poverty, under-nourishment, hunger and malnutrition still prevails at great extent. India's position as World Hunger Index stands 94 with respect all such issues and problems achieving a sustainable food production and distribution stands out as a major challenge for the nation.

Achieving food security requires that all the three separate dimensions such as availability, access and utilization are sufficient and stable over time. This means ensuring that aggregate availability of physical supplies of food from domestic production, commercial imports, food assistance and national stocks is sufficient and that household livelihoods, state policies and socio-cultural norms provide adequate access for all members of the household to those food supplies through home production, market purchases, or transfers from other sources. Utilization of those food supplies must also be appropriate to meet the specific dietary and health needs of individuals within a household. (Food and Nutrition Analysis, 2019) The need of addressing the issue of food security has been put as the 2nd Goal in country's 17 SDGs.

The financial requirement for India to meet its costs for food security is around INR 46 lakh crores (USD 729 billion) from 2015-24. This cost includes the financial requirements for providing access to safe and nutritious food for all. It also includes investments in irrigation, soil and water conservation, wasteland regeneration and rain-fed farming. Of the finances required for ensuring food security, the financial gap that India is estimated to face is of the order of INR 18.5 lakh crores (USD 293 billion) for access and

distribution costs of food and for financing sustainable agricultural production systems.

The gap is likely to rise in the case of agricultural production, which shall require huge investments for an overall transition of the country to sustainable agricultural practices. Further, costs of implementing and scaling up agricultural intensification techniques, urban agriculture, agro forestry, horticulture, etc. have also not been included. Continuous shrinking of land for agriculture due to land demand for industries, infrastructure and cities may increase the costs of food security. Climate change may influence the availability of various resources for agriculture, further increasing the costs. Transition to sustainable agriculture systems is also likely to increase the food subsidy bill of the government due to a probable dip in the food production during the transition period. (Ministry of Environment, 2015)

Table1: Financial Gap in achieving goals in case of Food Security Aspects

Sustainable Development Goal	Thrust area assessed	Cross-goal linkages	Source of finance considered	Finance required in lakh crore INR	Gap in lakh crore INR
End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	Sustainable agricultural production, food distribution	1 (Poverty); 5 (Gender); 10 (Inequality); 13 (Climate); 15 (Ecosystem)	Public	46	18.5

Source: Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

The table highlights the financial gap in achieving sustainability in for eradicating hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture. This financial gap are major obstructions in achieving sustainability, lack of proper source of finance, failure in utilizing the existing finance on given goals, over-utilization of finance in a single goals and corruptions are the hindrance that needs to be addressed to achieve sustainability.

Overlooking the financial gap of the country and highlighting on India's

productivity. Over the last 20 years, total food grain production in India increased from 198 million tonnes to 269 million tonnes. Since 1996, the per capita net availability of food grains has increased from 475 to 484 gm/day in 2018, while per capita availability of pulses has increased from 33 to 55 gm/capita/day. Although there has been a huge increase in production of rice, wheat and other cereals, their per capita net availability has not increased at the same level, due to population growth, food wastage and losses, and exports.

Production Trends: Between 1996-99 and 2015-18, the annual growth rate for food grains was 1.6 percent. The growth rate is highest for maize (5.9 percent) followed by pulses (2.4 percent), wheat (1.8 percent), cereals (1.6 percent), rice (1.4 percent) and bajra (0.9 percent) during 1996-99 to 16-18. Conversely, the annual growth rates have declined for jowar (-2.26 percent), small millets (-1.71 percent) and ragi (-1.21 percent).

Farm Productivity: Though yields in food grains have increased by 33 percent in last two decades, it has been far less than desired. As per the recent SDG India baseline report (2018) by Niti Aayog, a target has been set for India to achieve yields of 5,018 kg/hectare for rice, wheat and coarse grains by 2030, compared to the present combined yield of 2,509 kg/hectare. While no state or Union Territory (UT) in India has achieved this target yet, the UT of Chandigarh is nearing the targeted productivity with current levels at 4,600 kg/hectare, followed by yields of 4,297 kg/hectare in Punjab. (Food and Nutrition Analysis, 2019)

Though the production of food grains has increased from 198 million tonnes to 269 million tonnes, and yield in food grains has also increased by 33% the target set by the Planning Commission to achieve the yields of productivity of different crops by 2030 is a big challenge for the nation to complete its SDG since the per capita availability of land has declined from 0.5 hectares in 1951 to 0.15 hectares in 2011.

The Census data reveals that in the 10-year period between Census 2001 and Census 2011, there were nearly 9 million less cultivators in India. The number of landless agricultural workers in the country rose from 106.7 million in 2001 to 144.3 million in 2011. Further, landlessness is highest among Dalits (57.3 per cent), Muslims (52.6 per cent) and women headed (56.8 per cent) households, there is also a growing trend of feminization of

agricultural labour, but only 13.6 per cent households are headed by women, owning 7.17 per cent of total productive land.

There has been a continuous decline in the share of Agriculture and Allied sector in the Gross Value Added from 18.2% in 2012-13 to 17.0% in 2015-16 at current prices. The Agriculture and Allied sector witnessed a growth of 1.2% in 2015-16 in basic prices. As far as the agricultural land is concerned, the per capita availability of land has declined from 0.5 hectares in 1951 to 0.15 hectares in 2011, and is likely to decline further. The area under agriculture is also shrinking continuously from 1243.0 lakh hectares (2014-15) to 1226.50 lakh hectares (2015-16). The yield has improved marginally from 2028 Kg/Hectare to 2056 Kg/hectare. Area under non-agricultural uses is about 26.3 million hectares.

Consequently, during the same period, the number of landholdings in the marginal and small categories swelled by about 17 million and 2 million, respectively. Landholding size determines investment in agriculture, productivity, farm mechanization and the sustainability of farm incomes itself. Landholdings in the marginal category (less than 1 ha) constitute 67% of the operational holdings in the country (2010-11). In terms of area operated, the share of marginal holdings has increased to 22% (2010-11) from 19% (2000-01) (SDG Agenda, 2030)

Overpopulation, Food Wastage, Shrinking Agricultural Lands, Fragmented Marginal Land Holdings, Financial Gap, Excessive use of pesticides and chemicals and Natural Calamities are some of the factors that can be considered as a major set-back for providing a sustainable agriculture practice and maintaining food security in India

Food Wastage in India- An Issue of Concern:

Every day on an average every household of the nation has a little to contribute to food wastage. The Global Hunger Index of India is already a grave problem for the nation and above that food wastage adds on a difficulty to really strive to achieve food security.

Food wastage or food loss is that which is left, uneaten or discarded. Food loss is not only at the end of the chain, but also at the beginning from production, processing, retailing and consumption. According to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, one-third of the total global food

production is wasted, costing the world economy about \$750 billion dollar. Annually close to 31 million. 70-75% of waste is dumped into open landfill sites. India ranks seventh globally in-terms of overall food wastage, agricultural produce, poultry and milk.

Around 67 million tonnes of food is wasted in India every year which has been valued at around 92,000 crores enough to feed all of Bihar for a year. Annually, close to 21 million metric tonnes of wheat rots in India, a figure that is equal to Australia's total annual production. According to the BMC, Mumbai generates close to 9,400 metric tonnes of solid waste per day, from which 73% is food, vegetable, and fruit waste. Delhi alone generates around 9000 metric tonnes of waste. (Goswami,2018)

While we are wasting such a huge amount of food we are also wasting other resources that are involved while producing food. Valuable resources like water, acres of land, million barrels of oil are wasted along with food. 25% of the water used to produce food is ultimately wasted, even as millions of people still don't have access to water. Acres of land are deforested to grow food. Approximately 45% of India's land is degraded primarily due to deforestation, unsuitable agricultural practices, and excessive groundwater extraction to meet the food demand. 300 million barrels of oil are used to produce food that is ultimately wasted. With enough to waste 20 crore Indians sleep hungry on any given night. About 7 million children died in 2012 because of hunger/malnutrition. (CSR Journal,2018)

Indian waste as much food as the whole United Kingdom consumes (Nigam S Sharma,2017) Factors like lack of cold storage facility in India accompanied by inappropriate supply chain management resulted in India becoming a significant contributor towards food wastage both pre and post-harvest.

Conclusion:

For a nation like India, SDG goals are huge goals considering its growing population, limited resources and economic development. With 17 goals listed within its targets to be achieved within 2030 and each target being divided into sub-targets the nation is striving hard to overcome all the hardships and financial constraints to achieve its goals. The need of the hour is the cooperation of its population also to help the nation in achieving its

sustainable development goals.

The year of 2030 is thus the thrust year ensuring the eradication of hunger, end of all forms of malnutrition, doubling the agricultural productivity and income, ensuring sustainable food production system and implementing resilient agricultural practices, increasing investment, preventing trade distortions in world agricultural markets and ensuring proper functioning of food commodity markets. These sub-goals that have been developed under one single framework are very hard to achieve within a limited time, as hunger is not an issue of a small region or a state. It's a problem plagued within the whole nation and reaching out each and every population to eradicate hunger would really take time, as such the problems of food waste should be really considered as a grave issue and it is here where we can help our nation in helping her by minimizing our food waste by contributing to NGOs who are focused in such problems and contributing them the food waste. The practice would really minimize the problem of food waste and would also at-least help the hungry to have a meal of the day.

Sustainable approach requires practice rather than discussion, with limited resources dependence on technology to overcome the sustainable approach would be the wrong approach, since technology can give you the solution to problems only that are possible. India's Sustainable Development Goals requires really to overcome the financial gap, implementing the goals through proper channels and monitoring the utilization of funds are necessary. The 17 SDG would be possible to be achieved only when the process of implementation is sustainable in practice.

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Role of Women in Contemporary Indian Politics

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Abstract

The role of women in Indian politics has been evolving rapidly over the past few decades. In this research article, I have explored the current status of women in contemporary Indian politics, including their representation, participation, and challenges faced by them. The article also examines the impact of women's entry into politics on policy-making and governance in India. The research is based on a literature review of academic articles, reports, and news articles. The findings reveal that while the representation of women in politics has improved over time, it is still far from being gender-balanced. Women face various challenges, including discrimination, lack of resources, and cultural stereotypes. However, the presence of women in politics has brought new perspectives to policymaking, and their representation has had a positive impact on governance in India.

Keywords: *Women, politics, representation, participation, challenges, India.*

Introduction:

The place of women in politics has long been a topic of discussion and contention. Women have been involved in politics in India since before the country gained its independence, and their involvement has grown dramatically in recent years. Women's participation in politics has been a significant step towards achieving gender equality, and their contribution to governance and policymaking cannot be undervalued. With the use of an analysis of women's representation, engagement, and contributions to policymaking, this research piece seeks to shed light on the place of women in modern Indian politics. By examining their representation, engagement, and contribution to policymaking, this research paper is an attempt to assess the

position of women in modern Indian politics.

Representation of Women in Indian Politics:

Despite being the largest democracy in the world, women have historically had a low presence in Indian politics. With only 14.6% of seats held by women, India ranks 148th out of 193 nations in the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) report on the representation of women in parliament. But in recent years, there has been a noticeable rise in the proportion of women in politics. The highest number of women elected to parliament in India's history-78 was achieved in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. Additionally, the proportion of female candidates rose to 9.6% in the 2021 assembly elections, a notable rise from the 7.4% seen in the assembly elections of 2016. (Election Commission of India, 2021).

A number of things, including the allocation of seats for women in local governing bodies, the efforts of political parties to enhance women's involvement, and the rising awareness of women's rights and empowerment, can be credited with the rise in women's representation. One-third of seats in local government bodies were set aside for women via the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Indian Constitution, which were passed in 1993. This considerably enhanced women's participation in local politics. Many women leaders who went on to assume significant roles in national politics as a result of this phenomenon emerged. For instance, Sushma Swaraj, India's former Minister of External Affairs, began her political career in 1977 as a member of the Haryana Legislative Assembly before rising to become the country's first woman to hold the position.

Participation of Women in Indian Politics:

The number of women running for office in Indian politics has grown dramatically over time. Since the time when India gained its independence, women have been actively involved in political movements. The Indian National Congress's women's wing was led by renowned women like Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant, and Kamala Nehru. However, up until the 1970s, women's political participation was mostly restricted to the upper and educated classes.

The rise of the women's movement in India throughout the 1970s resulted in a dramatic change in the way that women participated in politics.

Women's rights, violence against women, and other causes were all targets of the women's movement. Women's organisations and advocacy groups were created as a result of this movement, giving women a forum to express their concerns and get involved in politics. The women's movement also made a substantial contribution to the cause of female seat reservations in local government.

The increase in women's involvement in politics has been largely attributed to the reserving of seats for women in local governmental organisations. The reservation policy gave women the chance to run for office and win, and it helped a lot of women become leaders at the local level. In tackling issues affecting women, such as domestic abuse, dowry harassment, and gender discrimination, women who have been elected to local government organisations have outperformed males, according to a study by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. (CSDS, 2013).

Contribution of Women to Policy Making:

In India, policymaking and governance have been significantly impacted by women's participation in politics. Women's unique perspectives have aided in addressing issues pertaining to women's rights and gender equality in the policymaking process. Women's involvement in politics has also contributed to the prominence of topics that had previously been disregarded or marginalised. As the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, for instance, Mayawati established policies targeted at resolving the worries of marginalised minorities like Muslims and Dalits.

A number of legislation and policies aiming at advancing women's rights and gender equality have also been introduced as a result of the inclusion of women in parliament and other decision-making bodies. For instance, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act of 2013, the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act of 2017, and the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act of 2005 are all examples of laws that have been introduced to protect women's rights and advance gender equality.

In recent years, women's participation in politics has been increasing steadily in India. Despite facing several challenges and barriers, women have made significant contributions to policymaking and governance in the country.

The reservation of seats for women in local government bodies has been a major step towards increasing women's participation in politics. However, women's representation in higher levels of government remains relatively low, and there is still a long way to go in terms of achieving gender parity in politics.

Despite these obstacles, good accomplishments include the rise of grassroots female leaders and the adoption of legislation and policies that support women's rights and gender equality. As this will not only assist in addressing issues linked to women's rights and gender equality but also result in improved governance and policymaking in the nation, it is critical to continue working towards boosting women's engagement and representation in politics.

One of the key factors that have contributed to the increased participation of women in politics in India is education. As more women have gained access to education, they have been able to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to engage in politics and policymaking. Moreover, education has also helped in challenging the patriarchal norms and gender stereotypes that have traditionally discouraged women from entering politics.

The growth of feminist activism and women's movements is a significant element that has influenced the participation of women in politics in India. These movements have been essential in promoting gender equality and women's rights. They have also given women a platform to express their concerns and call for political representation. For instance, the Women's Reservation Bill has long been a demand of women's organisations in India. It aims to reserve one-third of the seats in parliament and state legislatures for women.

Women still encounter a number of obstacles and hurdles in politics, despite an increase in their participation. The lack of resources and support for female candidates is one of the major issues. Women frequently experience financial hardships and have less access to the networks and resources needed for a successful political career. In addition, women encounter social and cultural obstacles including harassment and discrimination that may discourage them from entering politics.

The belief that women are not capable or competent enough to hold positions of leadership is another difficulty they encounter. The patriarchal

values and gender stereotypes that are pervasive in Indian society are the origin of this impression. Therefore, it is imperative to combat these beliefs and stereotypes and advance a political culture that is more diverse and gender-sensitive.

Challenges Faced by Women in Indian Politics:

Women in Indian politics face numerous challenges that hinder their full participation and success. These obstacles are deeply rooted in cultural, socio-economic, and institutional factors, and they continue to impede the progress of gender parity in the political arena. The major challenges include the following:

a. Cultural Stereotypes and Gender Bias

Cultural stereotypes and deeply ingrained gender biases are significant barriers for women in Indian politics. The traditional perception that politics is a male-dominated field persists, leading to societal skepticism about women's capabilities as leaders. This bias is reflected in the underestimation of women's leadership potential, where women are often not taken seriously in political discussions or decision-making processes. The patriarchal mindset prevalent in many parts of India reinforces the belief that a woman's primary role is within the household, limiting her public and political engagement.

b. Discrimination and Harassment

Discrimination against women in politics is widespread, ranging from subtle biases to overt harassment. Women politicians often face hostility from male colleagues, and their contributions are frequently undervalued or ignored. Harassment, both verbal and physical, is a significant issue, with many women facing threats, intimidation, and abuse. This hostile environment discourages many women from entering or continuing in politics. According to Mukhopadhyay (2014), the lack of a supportive environment and the prevalence of gender-based discrimination are major reasons why women are underrepresented in higher political offices.

c. Lack of Resources

Women in Indian politics often struggle with a lack of resources, including financial support, access to influential networks, and opportunities for political mentorship. Politics in India is resource-intensive, requiring signifi-

cant financial investment for campaigning, networking, and sustaining a political career. However, women generally have less access to financial resources than their male counterparts, limiting their ability to run successful campaigns. This financial disparity is further exacerbated by the fact that many women lack the political connections and support networks that are crucial for advancing in a highly competitive political landscape.

d. Socio-Economic Challenges

The socio-economic status of women also plays a crucial role in their political participation. Women from marginalized communities, including those from lower castes and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, face additional layers of discrimination. These women often lack the education, skills, and opportunities needed to engage in politics effectively. Socio-economic barriers, such as poverty and lack of access to education, restrict many women from pursuing political careers, particularly at higher levels. The intersectionality of caste, class, and gender creates a complex web of challenges that many women must navigate to succeed in politics.

e. Limited Support from Political Parties

Political parties in India have been slow to adopt gender-sensitive policies that promote women's participation. Despite the existence of women's wings in many parties, these are often symbolic and lack real influence over party decisions. Women's representation in party leadership positions remains low, and women are frequently sidelined in the nomination process for elections. Political parties may also be reluctant to nominate women candidates in constituencies where they perceive a higher chance of losing, thus further limiting women's electoral opportunities.

Impact of Women's Representation on Policy Outcomes:

The increased representation of women in Indian politics has had a profound impact on policy-making and governance. Women leaders bring unique perspectives to the political arena, often prioritizing issues related to gender equality, social justice, and the welfare of marginalized communities. Their presence in decision-making bodies has led to the introduction of several progressive policies and legislation that have significantly influenced the socio-political landscape of India.

a. Advancement of Women's Rights and Gender Equality

One of the most significant impacts of women's representation

in politics is the advancement of women's rights and gender equality. Women leaders have been instrumental in the formulation and implementation of laws aimed at protecting and empowering women. For example, the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005 was a landmark legislation that addressed domestic violence, a widespread issue that had long been neglected in India's legal framework. This law was the result of sustained advocacy by women politicians and activists who highlighted the need for comprehensive protection against domestic violence.

Similarly, the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, commonly known as the POSH Act, was introduced following the recommendations of the Vishaka Guidelines. This legislation was championed by women leaders and aimed at creating safer work environments for women by addressing sexual harassment in the workplace. The enactment of the POSH Act marked a significant step towards gender equality in professional spaces, reflecting the influence of women's representation in addressing critical issues affecting women across various sectors.

b. Inclusion of Marginalized Groups

Women politicians in India have also played a crucial role in advocating for the rights and welfare of marginalized communities, including Dalits, Adivasis, and other minority groups. For instance, Mayawati, the former Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and a prominent Dalit leader, focused her tenure on policies that uplifted Dalits and other marginalized communities. She implemented social welfare schemes, ensured reservation in government jobs, and worked towards the educational and economic empowerment of these communities. Her leadership exemplifies how women's representation can lead to more inclusive governance that addresses the needs of historically oppressed groups.

Another example is the *Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017*, which extended the duration of paid maternity leave for women from 12 to 26 weeks, making India one of the countries with the longest maternity leaves. This legislation was driven by women leaders who recognized the need for better support systems for working mothers, and it has had a significant impact on improving the work-life balance for women in the workforce.

c. Focus on Social Welfare and Developmental Policies

Women's representation has also led to a stronger focus on social welfare and development policies. Women politicians often prioritize issues such as healthcare, education, sanitation, and child welfare, recognizing their importance in achieving overall social development. For example, during her tenure as the Chief Minister of Delhi, Sheila Dikshit focused on improving urban infrastructure, expanding healthcare facilities, and enhancing the quality of education. Her initiatives in these areas significantly improved the quality of life for residents, particularly women and children, and demonstrated how women's leadership can contribute to holistic development.

Additionally, the increased participation of women in local governance, facilitated by the reservation of seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions, has led to more gender-sensitive governance at the grassroots level. Studies have shown that women elected to local government bodies tend to prioritize issues like water supply, sanitation, health, and education, which are often overlooked by their male counterparts. This shift in policy priorities at the local level underscores the positive impact of women's representation on governance outcomes.

d. Long-Term Impact on Gender Norms and Political Culture

The growing presence of women in politics has also started to challenge and gradually change gender norms and political culture in India. As more women assume leadership roles and demonstrate their effectiveness in governance, societal perceptions of women's capabilities in politics are evolving. This has encouraged more women to participate in politics, creating a positive cycle of increased representation and influence. The success of women leaders serves as a powerful example that can inspire future generations of women to pursue careers in politics, thereby contributing to the gradual dismantling of patriarchal norms.

Future Prospects and Recommendations:

To achieve greater gender parity and inclusivity in Indian politics, strategic and comprehensive efforts are necessary. This section explores the future prospects for enhancing women's participation and representation in politics and provides recommendations on how to achieve these goals. The

focus is on educational initiatives, mentorship programs, policy reforms, and societal changes that can collectively create a more equitable political landscape.

1. Educational Initiatives

Education plays a pivotal role in empowering women to participate in politics. By increasing access to education, particularly in rural and marginalized communities, women can acquire the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to engage in political processes. Educational programs that focus on political science, leadership, and public policy can help women better understand the political system and their potential roles within it. Additionally, incorporating gender studies into the curriculum at various educational levels can raise awareness about gender equality and the importance of women's participation in governance.

The success of such initiatives can be seen in the increased political awareness and participation among women who have had access to education and political training. For instance, the National Literacy Mission and other government-sponsored educational programs have contributed to a rise in literacy rates among women, which in turn has led to greater political engagement. To build on these gains, there should be an emphasis on expanding such programs, particularly in regions with low female literacy rates.

2. Mentorship and Leadership Development Programs

Mentorship programs can play a crucial role in nurturing the next generation of women leaders. By connecting aspiring women politicians with experienced mentors, these programs can provide guidance, support, and networking opportunities that are essential for success in the political arena. Mentorship helps women navigate the challenges of a political career, from campaign strategies to legislative work, and offers them role models who have successfully overcome similar obstacles.

Leadership development programs specifically designed for women can also enhance their political prospects. These programs can offer training in public speaking, negotiation, policy analysis, and media engagement, all of which are critical skills for political leadership. Programs like the Indian School of Democracy and Women's Political Leadership Program have been instrumental in preparing women for political roles. Expanding such initiatives

and making them accessible to women across the socio-economic spectrum would be a significant step toward achieving gender parity in politics.

3. Policy Reforms

Policy reforms are essential to institutionalize gender equality in politics. One of the most significant policy changes needed is the passage of the Women's Reservation Bill, which seeks to reserve one-third of seats in the Lok Sabha (the lower house of Parliament) and state legislative assemblies for women. While women's reservation at the local level has been successful in increasing their participation, extending this policy to higher levels of government would ensure a more significant representation of women in decision-making positions.

In addition to reservations, political parties should be encouraged or mandated to nominate a higher percentage of women candidates for elections. Implementing party-level quotas or offering incentives for parties that field more women candidates could help achieve this goal. Moreover, electoral reforms that reduce the financial barriers to entry, such as state funding for campaigns or caps on election spending, would make it easier for women to contest elections.

To support these reforms, it is crucial to establish monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure compliance and track progress toward gender parity. The Election Commission of India could play a central role in this regard by setting guidelines and regularly publishing data on women's participation and representation.

4. Societal Changes and Advocacy

Achieving lasting change in women's political participation requires a shift in societal attitudes and norms. Advocacy and awareness campaigns that challenge patriarchal values and promote gender equality are essential for creating an environment where women are encouraged to pursue political careers. Media plays a powerful role in shaping public perceptions, and greater representation of women leaders in the media can help normalize their presence in politics.

Community-based initiatives that engage men and women in discussions about gender roles and the benefits of women's participation in governance can also contribute to changing societal attitudes. Programs that

involve men as allies in promoting gender equality in politics are particularly important, as they help break down resistance to women's leadership.

Moreover, civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) should continue to advocate for women's rights and support women's political participation. These organizations can provide training, resources, and platforms for women to voice their concerns and build networks that support their political ambitions. Collaborative efforts between government, civil society, and the private sector will be crucial in driving these societal changes,

5. Strengthening Legal Protections and Support Systems

To ensure that women can participate in politics without fear of harassment or discrimination, it is vital to strengthen legal protections and establish robust support systems. Laws such as the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, 2013 should be strictly enforced, and additional measures should be taken to protect women politicians from violence and abuse, both online and offline. Political parties should also be required to adopt and implement policies that address gender-based harassment and discrimination within their ranks.

Support systems, such as women's caucuses or gender equality committees within legislative bodies, can provide a platform for women politicians to collaborate on issues of common interest and advocate for gender-sensitive policies. These structures can also offer a support network for women facing challenges in their political careers, fostering a more inclusive and supportive political environment.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, women have played a substantial part in modern Indian politics, but gender equity in politics is still a long way off. Women still have a low representation in politics, despite the rise in their numbers, and they still encounter a number of obstacles to being involved in politics. The rise of women leaders at the grassroots level has been encouraging, and the reserve of seats for women in local government organisations has been a significant step towards strengthening women's engagement in politics. Positive changes have resulted from women's involvement in politics, including the establishment of various laws and policies that support women's

rights and gender equality. Therefore, it is crucial to continue working towards increasing women's participation and representation in politics, and to ensure that women's voices are heard and their contributions to policymaking are recognized.

Although women have made a substantial contribution to Indian politics today, gender parity in politics is still far from being achieved. It's a good thing that more laws and policies encouraging women's rights and gender equality have been introduced as a result of women's involvement in politics. However, there are still a number of obstacles and hurdles that women must overcome in order to participate in politics, thus it is critical to address these issues and advance a more diverse and gender-sensitive political culture. India can make sure that women's perspectives are heard and their contributions to policymaking are recognised by expanding women's engagement and representation in politics.

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Effectiveness of FLN Training on Continuous Professional Development of Lower Primary School Teachers: A Study in Hailakandi District

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Abstract

Foundation Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) is one of the most important trainings undertaken by the government to strengthen the basic literacy and numerous skills among students at foundation stage. The present study is conducted in Hailakandi district with an object to investigate the effectiveness of FLN Training on the professional growth of the teachers of lower primary stage and to make suggestions for strengthening the competence of foundational literacy and numeracy training. This study employs descriptive survey method wherein 49 clusters in the Hailakandi blocks and among these clusters, 20% clusters i.e. 10 numbers of clusters have been selected randomly and sixty (60) numbers of teachers from the sampled clusters have been selected with the help of purposive sampling technique. A self developed questionnaire consists of 12 items is prepared by the investigator considering the objectives of the study and an item wise tabular analysis is done by the researcher. From the study, it is tinted that most of the teachers have clear understanding on the concept of foundational literacy and numeracy; and they have clear understanding about the different strategies discussed in the FLN training which resultant to implementation of NIPUN Axom (FLN) into the classroom. The study also recommended class wise sufficient number of teachers for effective classroom management.

Key words: - FLN Training, Continuous Professional Development, Lower Primary School Teacher.

Introduction:

A teacher is the most important human resource who plays a crucial role in moulding and shaping the character, personality and attitude of the young minds. He/ she should have some personal qualities as well as professional qualities so that he can prepare his thoughts to meet the needs of the dynamic world. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is a process which allows teachers to improve his knowledge and skills in the field of teaching and learning. It enables a teacher to understand the various ways and methods of teaching and therefore choose the appropriate methods that work best for his students. It makes a teacher to understand child psychology, so that he can provide a favourable and positive learning environment for his student. It also allows a teacher to know the skills of classroom management so that the expected learning outcomes can be achieved easily. Continuous professional development also helps a teacher to understand the different aspects of evaluation such as summative and formative evaluation and knows the utility of those.

In our country, there are several in-service programmes which try to enhance the knowledge, skills and attitude of the teachers. Foundation Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) is one of the most important trainings undertaken by the government to strengthen the basic literacy and numerous skills among students at foundation stage. As per the recommendation of National Education Policy 2020, each teacher must undergo not less than 50 hours of training which may be 'face to face' or online as a part of continuous professional development. Thus, at the primary stage, the teachers should be familiar with the basic principles and methods of teaching-learning processes so that they can use the text books and the other supplementary learning materials which are provided for literacy and numeracy effectively by which the goal of FLN Mission can be achieved easily. The present study considers what influence the Fundamental Literacy and Numeracy training may have on the continuous professional development of teachers and reflects on Teachers' experience of participating in the FLN training in the Hailakandi district of Assam.

Objectives of the Study:

- i. To investigate the effectiveness of FLN Training on the professional growth of the teachers of Lower Primary stage.
- ii. To make suggestions for strengthening the competence of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy training.

Operational Definition of the Terms Used:

FLN Training- FLN training is a fully planned and pre-designed training programme organised every year by the government to enhance the professional skills of the teachers so that they will be able to strengthen the literacy and numeracy skills of the students at the foundation stage.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) - Continuous Professional Development is a holistic approach to enhance the professional skills and proficiency in a particular profession. It is an ongoing process through which the professional qualities of a person are improved frequently in the form of in-service residential and non-residential training, online video conferences, off-line meetings, workshops etc.

Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) - Foundational Literacy and Numeracy refers to the essential skills in reading, writing and numeracy which are very essential to attain for the children of 3 to 8 years of age group. It is a magnificent initiative launched by the Government of India under National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN) Bharat Mission.

Review of Related Literature:

Dr. Agarwal C. and Dr. Sethi C. (2022) conducted a study on "Foundational Literacy and Numeracy: A Pre-requisite to Learning." which focused on the importance of literacy and numeracy skills in the foundational stage in the context of the New Education Policy 2020 and suggested some means and ways to achieve the goal of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy. The strategies suggested by the study are Reformation of Curriculum, innovation in the pedagogical aspects, restructuring the teacher education programme, revising the assessment system, integration of literacy and numeracy skills and administrative support. The study also suggested to integrate print-rich environment, textbooks which are child friendly, work books and story books in the classroom where the teaching learning process will be activity based and play based in order to achieve the goals of FLN mission.

A study is conducted by Kumar M. and Behera B. (2022) on "Influence of home environment on children's foundational literacy and numeracy skills: A systematic synthesis with India in focus" with an object to study the importance of the home environment of Literacy and Numeracy skills at the foundation stage. The study detected a great variation on the literacy and numeracy environment at home and the major reasons for this are socio-economic status of the family, learning practices at home, home language, relationships among the family members etc. The study provided a complete overview on the impact of home environment on the FLN skills and highlighted the role of home in improving the same.

Vasoya, N. and Vansdadiya, R. (2023) conducted a study on "Effective Strategies for Promoting Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in Early Childhood Education." The findings of the study reveal that the Literacy and Numeracy skills in the Foundational Stage are very important in order to achieve academic

success during Early Childhood Education. The study highlights that many children face difficulties and lacks in Literacy and Numeracy skills during the Early Childhood period which has a great impact on their future academic performance. For promoting Foundational Literacy and Numeracy, the research suggested some strategies such as Play Based Learning, Teachers' Training and Support, Family and Community Involvement, Use of Technology etc. The findings from this study may greatly help the policy makers and the educators to implement Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in a more convenient way. A study is conducted by Bashir, R. and Dr. Jan, T. (2023) on "Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (NEP, 2020) -Urgency, Essential Skills, Challenges and The Integration of Key Areas." The objectives of the study are to analyse the recommendations of National Education Policy-2020 on FLN., to understand the FLN Skills as per NIPUN, 2021 and to understand the challenges in the attainment of FLN at the national level. This study stressed the importance of pre-school education as it has a significant impact on cognitive development. The study also discussed the recommendations made by NEP-2020 including NIPUN Bharat mission in order to ensure the universal literacy and numeracy by 2026-27. The study also recognized the poor infrastructure, lack of quality training, and poor access to quality pre-school education being the challenges of implementation of FLN.

Methodology:

Methodology is an important task of research which is a way to solve research problem systematically. Methodology of a research involves the following aspects: -

Method of the Study

The present study employs descriptive survey method which includes surveys and enquires of different types followed by mixed data analysis combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. The quantitative approaches will assess the impact of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) training on the professional development of the teachers. However, the qualitative approaches will examine the understanding and experiences of the teachers in different pedagogical aspects of FLN by combining both quantitative and qualitative data.

Population of the Study

All the Lower Primary schools and the teachers teaching in the LP Schools of Hailakandi district are the population of the present study.

Sample of the Study

There are 3 (three) educational blocks in Hailakandi district, among these 3 three educational blocks, Hailakandi block is selected randomly with

the help of lottery method. There are 49 clusters in the Hailakandi blocks and among these clusters, 20% clusters i.e. 10 numbers of clusters have been selected randomly and sixty (60) numbers of teachers from the sampled clusters have been selected with the help of purposive sampling technique.

Tools of the Study

In this study, the investigator has developed a questionnaire consists of 12 items consulting with the supervisor keeping in view of the objectives of the study.

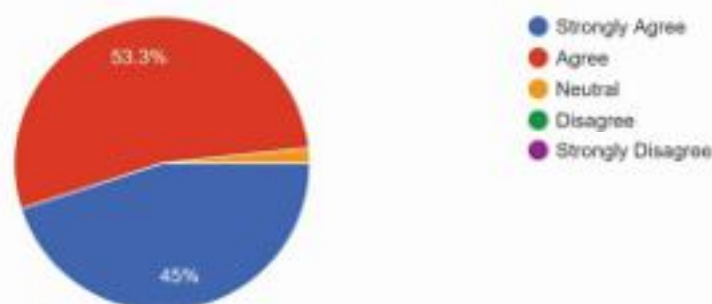
Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

Analysis of data means studying the tabulated material in order to determine inherent facts or meanings. Here, data analysis mainly aims to find out the impact of FLN training on the professional growth of the teachers who are working at the primary schools. A self developed questionnaire consists of 12 items is prepared by the researcher considering the objectives of the study. The survey is taken among 60 numbers of primary school teachers who are interacting with their students of foundational literacy and numeracy stage (class i – iii) on a daily basis. An item wise Tabular Analysis is done below –

Item No.1 Clear understanding on the Concept of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

The study reveals that out of 60 primary school teachers, 27 numbers of teachers strongly agreed with the statement, 32 numbers of teachers agreed and 1 teacher is neutral. The graphical representation is given below -

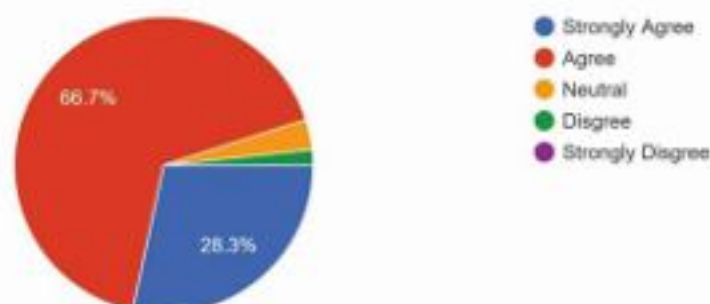
60 responses



Item No.2 - Able to identify students who are facing difficulties with the skills in Foundational Literacy and Numeracy

From the study it is shown that out of 60 primary school teachers, 17 numbers of teachers strongly agreed with this statement, 40 numbers of teachers agreed, 2 numbers of teachers are neutral and only 1 teacher disagreed. The graphical representation is specified below.

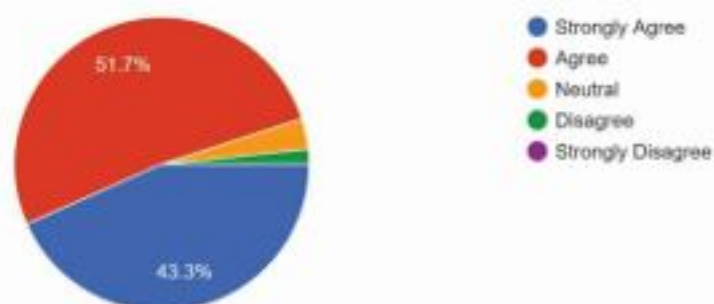
60 responses



Item No. 3 – Familiar with a variety of components for developing Foundational Literacy Skills

The study shows that 26 numbers of teachers strongly agreed, 31 numbers of teachers agreed, and 2 numbers of teachers are neutral and only 1 teacher disagreed with the above statement

60 responses



Item No. 4 - Clear understanding about planner and tracker and able to use these tools to monitor students' progress in foundational literacy and numeracy

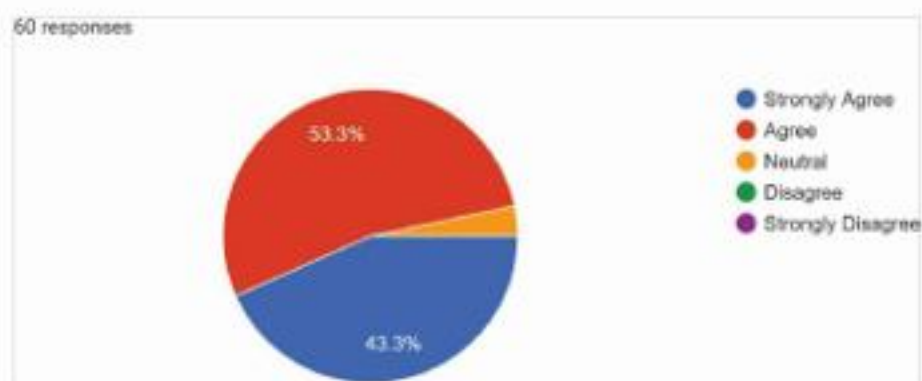
From the study, it is found that out of 60 primary school teachers, 14 numbers of teachers strongly agreed, 38 numbers of teachers agreed and 8 numbers of teachers are neutral. The graphical representation is shown below.

60 responses



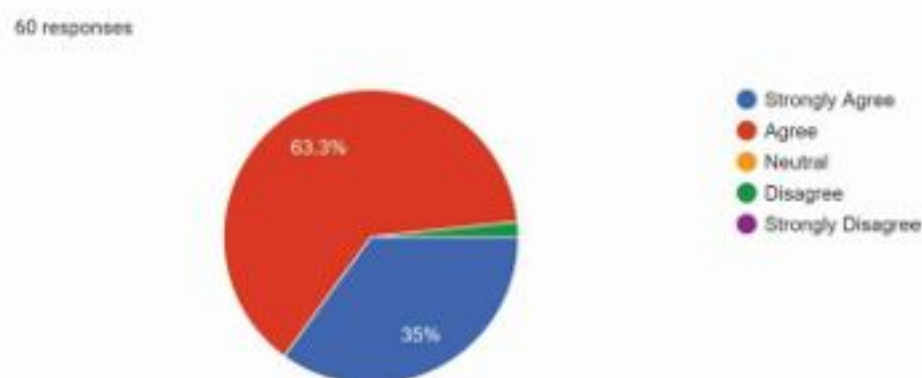
Item No. 5 - A clear understanding about the different strategies discussed in the FLN training and able to implement these in the classroom

In this statement, out of 60 primary school teachers, 26 numbers of teachers strongly agreed, 32 numbers of teachers agreed and 2 numbers of teachers are neutral. The graphical representation is given below.



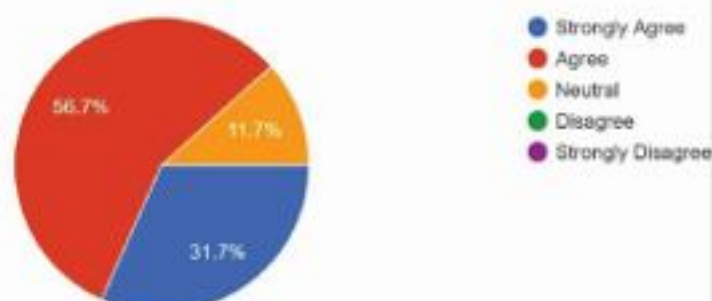
Item No. 6 - Feeling confident in ability to increase the engagement of the students and create effective learning experiences in Foundational Literacy and Numeracy classroom

The study highlighted that out of 60 primary school teachers, 21 numbers of teachers strongly agreed, 38 numbers of teachers agreed and 1 number of teacher is disagreed with the above statement. The graphical representation is set below.



Item No. 7 - Feeling better equipped to collaborate with parents and guardians to support students' Foundational Literacy and Numeracy development

60 responses

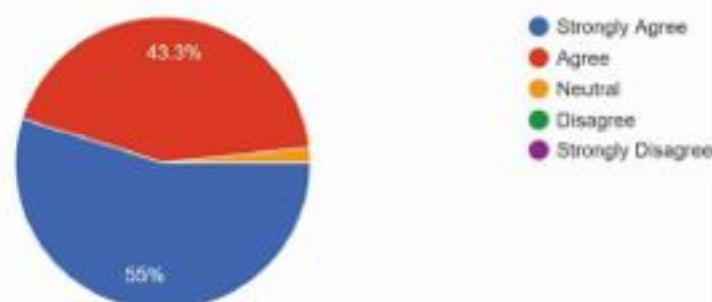


From the above circle, it is shown that out of 60 primary school teachers, 19 numbers of teachers strongly agreed, 34 numbers of teachers agreed and 7 numbers of teachers are neutral with the above statement

Item No. 8 – Believing that the FLN training has appositive impact regarding knowledge, attitude and skills as a primary school teacher

The study indicates that 33 numbers of teachers are strongly agreed, 26 numbers of teachers agreed and 1 teacher is neutral with the above statement out of sixty sampled teachers.

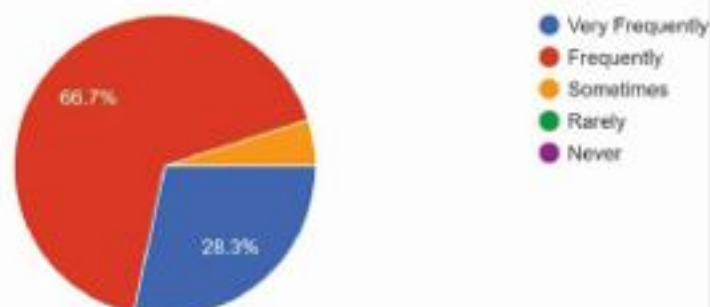
60 responses



Item No. 9 - The strategies learned in the FLN training into daily teaching practice:

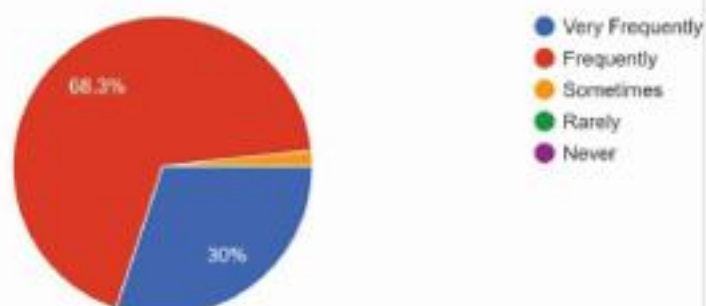
In this item, out of 60 primary school teachers, 17 numbers of teachers are applying the strategies learned in the FLN training very frequently into classroom transaction, 40 numbers of teachers are applying frequently and 3 teachers are applying sometimes. The graphical representation is given below -

60 responses



Item No. 10 - Applying the materials provided in school aligned to NCF FS into daily teaching practice

60 responses



From the above diagram, it is found that out of 60 primary school teachers, 18 numbers of teachers opine that they apply the materials provided in school aligned to NCF FS into daily teaching practice very frequently, 41 numbers of teachers apply frequently and but sometimes 1 teacher apply the materials provided in school aligned to NCF FS into daily teaching practice.

Item No.11 – Challenges in implementation of Foundational Literacy in school:

Most of the respondents opined that the following challenges are facing to implement the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in their schools are –

- i. Irregularity of students
- ii. Multi-grade teaching system,
- iii. Inadequate number of teachers,
- iv. Lack of awareness and illiteracy among the parents,
- v. Lack of community participation and
- vi. Scarcity of Materials for Language-2 aligned to NCF-FS

Item No. 12 – Suggestions to the policy makers regarding better implementation of FLN:

All the sampled teachers have shared their valuable suggestions for better implementation but the most relevant suggestions are given below –

- i. Capacity Building of the teachers via Frequent Online mode of Training,
- ii. Ensuring class wise adequate number of teachers,
- iii. Infrastructural development and adequate number of classrooms,
- iv. Online platform for Monthly reporting.

Major Findings:

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of data, the following major findings of the study are identified –

1. So far as clear understanding on the concept of foundational literacy and numeracy are concerned, the study reveals that 32 numbers of teachers (53%) agreed but 45% primary school teachers (27) are strongly agreed with the statement. The study also shows that 67% primary school teachers are agreed that they are able to identify the students who are facing difficulties with the skills in foundational literacy and numeracy.
2. The study shows that 31 numbers of teachers (52%) agreed but 26 numbers of teachers (43%) strongly agreed that they are familiar with a variety of components for developing foundational literacy skills like phonological awareness, decoding, reading comprehension etc.
3. So far as clear understanding and able to use the tools to monitor students' progress in foundational literacy and numeracy are concerned, the study reveals that 38 numbers of teachers (63%) agreed that they have attended block level training and consequently using TLMs of FLN properly. The study also reveals that 32 numbers of primary teachers (53%) are agreed and 43% are strongly agreed that they have clear understanding about the different strategies discussed in the FLN training and able to implementation of NIPUN Axom (FLN) into the classroom.
4. The study highlighted that out of 60 primary school teachers, 38 numbers of teachers (63%) agreed but 21 numbers of teachers (35%) strongly agreed that they are feeling confident in ability to increase the engagement of the students and create effective learning experiences in foundational literacy and numeracy. It also highlights 34 numbers of teachers (57%) agreed that they are also feeling better equipped to collaborate with parents and guardians to support students' foundational literacy and numeracy development.
5. From the study it is shown that 40 numbers of primary teachers (67%) apply the strategies learned in the FLN training into classroom transaction frequently but 28% primary teachers apply the strategies very frequently in classroom

transaction. The study also reflects that 41 numbers of teachers (68%) frequently apply the materials provided in school aligned to NCF FS into daily teaching practice.

6. For better implementation of FLN, the most relevant suggestions are forwarded by this study are –

- i. Capacity building of the teachers via frequent online mode of training,
- ii. Ensuring class wise adequate number of teachers,
- iii. Infrastructural development and adequate number of classrooms,
- iv. Online platform for monthly reporting, etc.

Conclusion:

It can be concluded from the study that the FLN mission has significantly improved the overall educational scenario of the district. Although, the Foundational Literacy and Numeracy training hold the significant potential in the improvement of the professional qualities of the teachers but still there are some challenges encountered in this study, which is hindering the effectiveness of FLN mission. By addressing these challenges and implementing the suggested strategies, the stake holders as well as the policy makers can not only support the improvement of professional qualities of the primary school teachers but also can enhance the overall learning experience of the students which ultimately leads to reaching the goal of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy mission in the district.

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A Study of Tagore Literature in Persian

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Abstract

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) was one of the towering personalities of all the ages. He was certainly an exceptional poet and writer, one of the greatest in the history of literature. He was the first Asian who was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1913 for his Gitanjali (English). Gitanjali in its theme & content is undoubtedly a unique master piece of literature. Tagore visited Iran twice in 1932 and 1934 for promoting Indo-Iranian cultural relations and it was probably to carry on that mission after coming back to India that he invited the renowned Iranian poet and writer Ibrahim Pour Davoud to join his Visva-Bharati and it was under his supervision that an Indian teacher of Persian, Muhammad Ziauddin, translated Hundred selected poems of Tagore in Persian under the title Sad Band-i-Tagor, which was published by the Visva-Bharati in the lifetime of Tagore in 1933. Tagore is most revered Indian poet to Persian World. As the popularity of the works of Tagore increased remarkably among the Persian people, most of his works had to be translated into Persian with great effort and endeavor.

Key words: Reception, Mysticism, Literature, legacy, Transation etc

Introduction:

There are perhaps no two countries in the world which have had such close and long contacts as Iran and India. These contacts date from even before the dawn of history. Iran by her geographical position, by her inherent and uncompromising pride as a nation, by the adjustable character of her people and their assimilative behavior and, above all, by her inborn love of traditions, has ever secured a outstanding position in the archives of the many nations with which she has come into contact¹

Indo-Iran, Ed. Malik Ram, p. 45

The first Indian book, Pancho Tantra was translated into Pahlawi language by the Iranian scholar and Prime Minister of King Naushirwan, Buzurwi during the Sasanid period. Then it was translated into Persian (verse form) by

the Rudaki Samarqandi during Samanid period then it was again and again translated into Persian during Seljuk, Taimurid and Mugal period. Ramayana was translated by Mullah Abdul Qadir Badauni, Mahabarata was translated in the name of Rezm Nameh by some of the Persian and Sanskrit scholars, Upanisad was translated by Dara Sheko. So in this way Persian scholars translated many Indian books into Persian and enrich their literary treasure. On the other hand Indian scholar also translated many Persian literatures such as Sahnama of Firdousi, Quatrains of Omar Khayyam, Literature of Sa'adi, Masnavi of Rumi, Ghazals of Hafiz etc into Indian languages. These translations had played an important role in promoting cultural relation between the two great countries, India and Iran and enrich Indian language and literature through these translations.

Persian Literature in Tagore Family:

During 18th century, Persian literatures, especially literature of Khayyam, Sa'adi, Hafiz and Rumi were deeply taught among Bengali educated of Bengal. Tagore's grandfather, Dwarkanath Tagore was well versed in Persian language and literature. Tagore's father, Debendranath Tagore was a pious man and was called Maharshi for his piousness. He was called Hafiz of Devan-e-Hafiz. He used to start his daily life by reciting some verses of the Upanishad and Dewan-e-Hafiz. Following couplets of Hafiz was like a Tasbeh (Recite recurringly) of Debendranath Tagore.²

هرگز نقش تو از لوح دل و جان نرود
هرگز از یاد من آن سرو خرامانی نرود (حافظ)

Tagore narrates in his book Parosho Jathri about Persian literature and his family that:

"Persia's Introduction came to me when I was a boy. It was that of the ideal Persia, the Persia of the poet, the Persia which sends her welcome in songs to strangers across all barriers of geography.

*My father was a great scholar. He was intoxicated with Hafiz verses. When I was a boy I often used to listen to his recitation of those poems, he translated them to me with a fervour of enjoyment that touched my heart."*³

Maghrebi Bengal, p-¹⁰⁴

Parosho Jathri, p-¹³⁰

Tagore also mentioned in his book Parosho Jathri that when his father Devendronath Tagore recite the poem of Hafiz with rhyme and meters before him, He listen it carefully and do murmur. When father explained the meaning of that poem, its became astonished for him in this way Tagore come into

close contact with Iranian philosophy and literature.⁴

Tagore visit to Iran

Tagore visited Iran twice in the year 1932 and he revisited Iran in 1934 to participate in the Firdousi(National poet of Iran) millennium celebrations. He loved Iran and he had sweet memories associated with his visit to Iran that he mentioned his book, *Parosho Jatri*. This visit proved very fruitful in strengthening the cultural relations and promoting the age old friendship between India and Iran. In his first visit to Iran he was shown many historical places of Iran such as tomb of Sa'adi, Hafiz etc. Tagore gave remark to Mr. Khalili, after visiting Hafiz tomb that:

*"Verily the entire period of my poetical career may be placed on one side, and this short period of poetical reflection in Shiraz on the other. I do not know my spiritual and eternal attraction there is in this land that has captivated my heart."*⁵

Tagore's 71st birth day was celebrated by the Iranian with great eagerness in Tehran on May 6, 1932. In this occasion Tagore said:

*"Iran, thy brave sons have brought
Their priceless gifts of friendship
On this birthday of the poet of a faraway shore,
For they have known him in their heart as their own"*⁶

Tagore invited an Iranian Professor to teach Persian language and literature at the Visva-Bharati University. Accordingly Late Ibrahim Pour Davoud, Professor of Persian literature at the University of Tehran came to Visva-Bharati and taught Persian language and literature about two years. Prof. Pour Davoud writes about Tagore in his memories: while talking, Tagore has repeatedly told me, "I think nobody knows me in Tehran because none of my works has been translated into Persian". When "I heard him saying it more than once, I promised him that I would do it with the help of one of the teachers

⁴Parosho Jathri, p-109

⁵Maghrebi Bengal, p-105

⁶Parosho Jathri, p-115

there named Muhammad Ziauddin and it was under Prof. Pour Davoud supervision and guidance that an Indian teacher of Persian, Muhammad Ziauddin, translated hundred selected poems of Tagore in Persian under the title *Sad Band-e-Tagor*, which was published by the Visva-Bharati in the lifetime of Tagore in 1933. This Persian version is regarded as the first translation of Tagore's work.

Tagore Literature in Persian:

Tagore literatures are originally in Bengali of which some have been translated into English by Tagore himself, a few by others into English and various languages. But most generally, in translating one language to other, there comes a diversion in meaning and significance sought to be expressed by the original one. So, after performing a deep research into the Persian versions of Gitanjali by me it could be sure that the same diversion in meaning happened in case of Tagore's other works, because his poetry is rich in metrical pattern, eloquent themes and fine pictorial thoughts which in fact defy translation. However, as a result of the keen interest of the Persian world and Tagore in particular and rich cultural heritage of India in general, the following works of Tagore have been made available in Persian.

1. The poetic book Gitanjali contains mystical songs, components of Indian philosophy, prayers to God, love of nature etc, was originally written in Bengali, and later on Tagore himself translated this book into English in 1912. Though both the books are named same, but English version of Gitanjali is not the original Bengali Gitanjali. This book has been translated into Persian prose by Husain Shahbaz from the English in the year 1984. Taqi Muqtadari & A. Pashai translated Gitanjali into Persian prose in the year 1964 & 1965 respectively. Dr. Ravan Farhadi translated Gitanjali into Persian in poetry form in the year 1975 A.D.

2. **Sacrifice** was translated into Persian by Faridun Gargani. In a single volume, it was twice published in 1961 and 1980 by the Bureau of Translation and publication in Tehran.

3. Sad Band-i-Tagore (Hundred verse of Tagore) has been translated by M. Ziauddin, published by Visva-Bharati in the lifetime of Tagore in 1933. This Persian version is regarded as the first translation of Tagore's work.

4. The Gardener by K. Khatir, published from Tehran in 1955

⁷Tagore wa Iran, Translated by Dr. Syed Akhtar Husain, Danesh, Quarterly Journal, p-⁷

⁸Gitanjali in Persian: A Comparative Study, p-⁶

5. The Eternal Songs by G.L. Tikku, Published by Rasti press, Tehran, 1961

6. Chitra by Dr. Fathul-lah Majtabai, Neel publication, Tehran in 1955

7. Fruit Gathering by Naseeruddin Doost, published from Tehran in 1955

8. Sad Band-i-Tagore (Hundred verse of Tagore) again translated by Prof. Pour-e- Davoud, published by University of Tehran in 1961AD/1340s.

9. Kabuliwala by Ashique Uddin Mazumder Published from Inland Publishers, Hailakandi, Assam, India in 2004.

10. Our songs in a Child's dream by Naseeruddin Doost, Published from Mashhad, Iran in 1963.
11. The Wrecked Ship by Abdul Mohammad Aeiyei Published from Tehran in 1965
12. The Crescent Moon by Mohammad Mehr Yar Published by faculty of arts. University of Istan in 1962.
13. Who was Zoroaster, What was his contribution? By Abul Husain Sepanta published from Iran League, Bombay in 1930.
14. Mard e Jahani (Towards Universal Man), is translated into Persian by Dr. Allauddin Pazargade in a volume which was published by the University of Tehran in 1962. The book Towards Universal Man is comprises eighteen articles of Tagore with the headings: i) Changes In Nature ii) Society and Government iii) Problems of Education iv) What at last ? v) The Presidential Address vi) The East and The West vii) Hindu University viii) the Process of Movement ix) Thy will be Done x) The Centre of Indian Civilization xi) Lessons in Unity xii) The Voice of truth xiii) Struggles for Freedom xiv) The School of a poet xv) The City and The Village xvi) co-operation xvii) The Transitory Period xviii) Crisis in Civilization."

The Commandments of Zoroaster by Abdul Hussain Sepanta, Crisis in Civilization by Mohammad Tafazzoli, 14th April, 1941, on his Eightieth Birthday, Tagore personally delivered an address in which he had analyses the causes of the war and also presented his proposals for global peace. This address is considered as a master piece of prose work and was published with the heading "The religion of Man" in Persian.¹⁰

Persian world always remember Tagore. The University of Tehran celebrated the Tagore Centenary for two days in 1961. The Iran had also sent its delegates at the Tagore Centenary held at Delhi from 12-17 November, 1961. The Committee of Tehran University had also decided to adorn one of the halls of an academic institute with a tablet in memory of Tagore's visit to Iran and to name a high school after him. Moreover, the committee had also suggested the translation of some of his works into Persian and it

⁹Mard e Jahani (Towards Universal Man) content

¹⁰Tagore wa Iran, Translated by Dr. Syed Akhtar Husain, Danesh, Quarterly Journal, p-9 was in the fitness of the things that a special issue of journal on Tagore was brought out by the arts faculty of Tehran University". Recently Iran culture House in India published Journal named Qande Persi special vol. on Tagore for his 150th birth anniversary in the month of May, 2011. On the other hand Iran Society, Kolkata also organized an international seminar on

Tagore and Indo-Iran Relations in the month of March, 2011 to celebrate 150th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore.

Conclusion:

In brief, it is clear from above discussion; Persian version of Tagore literature and Tagore visit to Iran had played an important role in promoting cultural relation between the two great countries, India and Iran and enrich Persian language and literature through these translations. Persian world love India in general and Tagore in particular. Even today Persian people remember Tagore in the pretext of Tagore's birth day, 100th birth anniversary, 150th birth anniversary etc. etc. I have conclude this paper mentioning one Persian version of Gitanjali by Dr. Ravan Farhadi that his approach is beautiful and he maintain original Bengali by his versatile genius and multilingual scholarship.

Thou hast made me endless, such is thy pleasure.
This frail vessel thou emptiest again and again,
And fillest it ever with fresh life.
This little flute of a reed
Thou hast carried over hills and dales,
And hast breathed through it melodies eternally new.¹²

بیکران از لطف خویشم، ساختی
ساغر ته را، چنانکه خواستی،
بارها با دست خود، کردی تهی
باز پر کردی ز آب زندگی
مه چو "وی" بونم بدستت، سرورا
تله صد کوی و چمه بردی مرا
در وی مه، چون دمیدی بارها
هر زمان آهنگ ووشد در صدا¹³

¹¹ Tagore wa Iran, Translated by Dr. Syed Akhtar Husain, Danesh, Quarterly Journal, p-11

¹² Gitanjali (English/Bengali), UBS Publication and Distributor Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi, p-3

¹³ Sarude Neyahish (Persian translation of Gitanjali), Ambassy of Afganistan, New Delhi, p-23.

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Factors Influencing Women Startup Business: A Study in Katigora Block

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Abstract

Startup business has currently occupied an important place in the list of rewarding career options. In many nations across the world, there has been a significant growth in the level of female entrepreneurship and it has been estimated that women own and manage up to one third of all businesses in developed countries. The emergence of entrepreneurship is considered to be closely linked to social, cultural, religious and psychological variables and these changes seems to have become acceptable norms in the context of women at work and many more women participating in the economic development. Many factors like urbanization, technical progress, women education etc., have profoundly changed the traditional conditions. The level of Entrepreneurial activity among women increase as levels of education rise. The level of entrepreneurs who could serve as role models are increasing and they are encouraging other women to start their own business. The motivations for women to be entrepreneurs go beyond the established norms of making money, freedom from jobs, personal development and welfare. Most often it is the perceived opportunities in the changing environment, which is the driving force for entrepreneurship. The reason for starting business are as varied as their background; some out serious economic compulsions, some due to quitting of a job and accompanied frustration, using their leisure time, converting their past-times into lucrative activities, inspired by a new idea etc. The survey on 20 sample enterprises has been conducted on the basis of convenience sampling technique. The study found that 'Self-esteem development' is the most important factor influencing women startup business in Katigora Block while 'Social supports.' is found to be the least important factor influencing women startup business in Katigora Block.

Keywords: *Startup business, Self-esteem development, Social supports.*

Introduction:

Female entrepreneurship has attracted increasing attention in recent

years in light of concrete evidence of the importance of new business creation for economic growth and development (Acs et al., 2005; Langowitz and Minniti, 2007). Not only does female entrepreneurship contribute to economic growth and employment creation, but it is increasingly recognized to also enhance the diversity of entrepreneurship in any economic system (Verheul et al., 2006) and to provide avenues for female expression and potential fulfillment (Eddleston and Powell, 2008).

Statement of the Problem:

From a Human Resource Management Perspective, the rise in female entrepreneurship is vital for the economy. In addition, research demonstrated that economies and organizations suffer when skilled and talented women leave their jobs (Hewlett and Luce, 2005)

Entrepreneurship is believed to enable women to balance work and family commitments at home while fulfilling their business objectives. Married women with greater family responsibilities are more likely to be self-employed, and that in turn the impact is stronger for more educated women (Wellington, 2006).

Entrepreneurs emerge in the society mainly due to two reasons forces of circumstances or change and ambition or choice. Some women enter into entrepreneurial field due to forces of circumstances that is merely by chance. But, there are others whose aim to undertake entrepreneurial career. Thus, entrepreneurship is their only choice and there is no second option of some other career.

Literature Review:

McClelland's motivation theory (McClelland, 1988) suggested that human being has three sorts of achievement motivation needs, need for achievement, need for power, and need for affiliation. However, the need for achievement is essential for top managers to achieve their targets (Dewi, Bundu, & Tahmir, 2016).

Successful entrepreneurs have characteristics such as exploiting opportunities and quick investment decision-making compared to the high market uncertainty (Viinikainen et al., 2017). Nurwahida (2007) claimed that most successful women entrepreneurs have the characteristics of motivation and risk-taking while achievement is also one of the crucial attributes mentioned by Rasheed (2001). Past studies have investigated that those top women entrepreneurs who have high motivation, entrepreneurial intention, and managerial skills can improve their business success easier (Al Mamun & Ekpe, 2016). Moreover, the motivation for achieving objective behavior is supportive for top managers (Rasheed, 2001). Dolan, Peasgood, and White (2008) specified that motivation behavior is not just supporting the managers but at the same time, it plays a vital role as the backbone for achieving their targets.

There is some evidence that women entrepreneurs have a stronger impact on business success, especially in firms that represent relatively fixed personality traits such as motivation (Ehman et al., 2017). While Chuluunbaatar, Ottavia, and Kung (2011) explained that entrepreneurial orientation in the start-

up stage affects social capital and personal characteristics, they also have revealed that these own characteristics include motivation and ability of risk-taking. These personal factors also have a positive impact on SMEs (Mahadalle & Kaplan, 2017; Ehman et al., 2017; Chuluunbaatar et al., 2011). Based on the past literature, we propose that women entrepreneurs' success, who have high motivation and need for achievement, can have a significant and positive impact on their business success.

From an entrepreneur's success story (Zhang & Cain, 2017), not everyone gets inspired but specifically, those who wish to start their own business, because they want to accept a higher level of risk (Bird, 1988; Chen, Greene, & Crick, 1998). Therefore, previous literature postulated that the risk-taking tendency among entrepreneurs is unfailing (MacCrimmon & Wehrung, 1990). Thereby, the constancy of this idea has confronted from time to time; there are some cross-debates, which believe that entrepreneurs can pose risk-taking capabilities at the same time (Palich & Bagby, 1995). Academic literature postulated that women CEOs in an uncertain situation could take the risk, which significantly affects firm performance and success (Wiklund & Shepherd 2005) because entrepreneurs highly inclined to take risks might receive compensation through higher expected profits (Danso, Adomako, Damoah, & Uddin, 2016).

Women entrepreneurship and risk are two concepts that are viewed as devoted to entrepreneurship literature. For example, women entrepreneurship mostly correlated with risk exposure, separating women entrepreneurship from employees and managers (Begley & Boyd, 1987). For this reason, the way a woman deals with risk is likely to influence the firm's performance (Pattillo & Söderbom, 2000). Thereby, women entrepreneurs are encouraged to take investment in the turbulent market (Johnell et al., 1995), because female entrepreneurs have the validity to make decisions in the turbulence market (Gedajlovic, Lubatkin, & Schulze, 2004).

Given that, female CEOs are interested in participating in risky activities, while Zalata, Ntim, Aboud, and Gyapong (2019) scrutinized that women are more risk-taker, which significantly impact firm performance and success, especially in emerging economies (Zalata et al., 2019). As such, the level of risk-taking by the women entrepreneur is expected to have a positive impact on performance (Wang & Poutziouris, 2010; Zalata et al., 2019; Zhao, Seibert, & Lumpkin, 2010). Therefore, we postulate from previous literature that women entrepreneurs are more risk-taker oriented during the decision-making process; it, in turn, has some impacts on firm performance and business success.

Confidence in entrepreneurship literature is defined as the capability of entrepreneurial perception, which helps entrepreneurs to pursue their target with a strong belief on their way (Twibell et al., 2008). Self-confidence plays a critical role in entrepreneurship literature and it is believed that it helps entrepreneurs in their entrepreneurial activities (Oney & Oksuzoglu-Guven, 2015). While Hassan and Yusof (2015) noted that the self-confidence level of entrepreneurs is their basic thoughts on behalf of their businesses and their interest to face any unexpected failure in the future. Rieger (2012) suggested that en-

trepreneurs struggle for their objectives with high self-confidence. Abd Rani and Hashim (2017) showed that the women entrepreneurs, who have a high

On the other hand, entrepreneurial intention is also affected by the self-confidence level and without these factors, it will be impossible to compete in the turbulent markets (Mehtap, Pellegrini, Caputo, & Welsh, 2017). Hence, past literature suggested that women naturally tend to show less intention toward entrepreneurial activities as compared to men, while their decision-making style is also affected by low self-confidence level (Diaz-García & Jiménez-Moreno, 2010). Besides all these issues as mentioned by Al-Dajani and Marlow (2010) due to cultural and religious boundaries in Islamic countries, women mostly get permission from their husband, brother, or father for starting up a new venture; these all can increase or decrease their self-confidence level.

Furthermore, Dabic, Daim, Bayraktaroglu, Novak, and Basic (2012) conducted a study comparing male and female entrepreneurs' confidence level and found that male entrepreneurs have higher confidence compare to females. Hence, the results from previous literature suggested that women's entrepreneurial intention and confidence positively influence their business success (Balogun et al., 2017; Mondal, Ghosh, & Das, 2013). Based on the above literature, the below hypothesis is developed:

Economic factors refer to the arrangement of necessary data identified with internal company financing and external financial situation, which influences business success (Wube, 2010). Even though there is an agreement that women can scarcely get credit for their entrepreneurial ventures in many developing countries like Pakistan, the rate of women's commitment to the economy in the private sector is strikingly contrasted with their male counterparts. In a large number of developing countries, women need to find solutions and gain easy access to finance for their startup businesses. While as mentioned by Afza and Amir Rashid (2009), women entrepreneurs are significantly affected by external factors such as political, financial, and social factors, almost in any sector. Furthermore, Saleem (2017) postulated that women entrepreneurs' success was significantly affected by external factors such as the environment, government policies, and political issues in emerging economies.

In addition, political, economic, and environmental factors are an external factor and play a pivotal role in firms' success. In women context, SMEs which have a lack of finance for developmental and other innovative strategies cannot gain and sustain a competitive advantage and manage the political, economic, and social issues themselves (Abdallah & Alnamri, 2015; Radzi, Nor, & Ali, 2017). Lindvert, Patel, and Wincent (2017) found that fluctuation in political and economic systems affects women entrepreneurs' success. Hence, the external factors (e.g., financial and political factors) significantly increase or decrease business performance and success (Abdallah & Alnamri, 2015; Lindvert et al., 2017; Radzi et al., 2017; Saleem, 2017). Based on the above literature, we propose below hypothesis:

Socio-cultural factors include a blend of social and cultural factors that affect women entrepreneurs' success. In Islamic countries, social and cultural

norms on the one hand and family issues, on the other hand, are the most serious issues for women entrepreneurs (Poggesi, Mari, & De Vita, 2016). Hence, Roomi et al. (2018) suggest that women's entrepreneurial career choices both revolve around and are shaped by a complex interplay of socio-cultural factors. In addition, socio-cultural factors determine the level of entrepreneurial activity in a specific time and place (Veciana, 1999). While Arasti, Zandi, and Talebi (2012) explained that social relationships have a crucial impact on women business's performance and success. It empowers the business visionary to distinguish opportunities and resources better. Social networks affect entrepreneurs' business start-up initiatives as it shows them a model for progress and gains support (Mehtap et al., 2017). Even the social bonds and networks with close relatives and life partner is a critical issue for women entrepreneurs' success (Omwenga, Mukulu, & Kanali, 2013). Balakrishnan and Low (2016) postulated that social-cultural factors (religious, family, etc.

Objectives of the Study:

The study has been undertaken to evaluate the factors influencing women in start up business in Katigora Block. However, following are the objectives of the study:

- 1) To identify the factors influencing women enterprises in start up business.
- 2) To analyse the factors influencing women enterprises in start up business in Katigora Block.

Methodology of the Study:

The present study has been conducted by using primary data and secondary data. Primary data have been collected from the field survey and secondary data have been collected from various sources, viz., books, annual reports, journals, websites, census reports, etc.

Total number of women enterprises in Katigora Block on 11-05-2023 which is the population of the study is 25. Population has been identified on the basis of field survey. In order to conduct the survey on women enterprises in Katigora Block it has been decided to conduct a sample of twenty (20) women enterprises in Katigora Block. In order to collect first hand information, first of all, pilot survey has been conducted on 3 women enterprises in Katigora Block and accordingly gap of schedule has been found and modified and after that final survey has been completed on 14-05-2023.

The survey on 20 sample women enterprises has been conducted on the basis of random sampling technique. In order to get actual response from the respondents local language of the particular place has been used. The enterprises which have at least one year experience and which are functioning have been studied in the present study.

Based on the perception of the respondents, the importance of the selected factors influencing women in start up business in Katigora Block has been analysed. For that five point likert scale has been used. Likert items are Extremely important(EI), Largely important(LI), Moderately important (MI), Slightly important (SI), Not important (NI). The value has been assigned to

the likert items as EI-5, LI -4, MI3, SI2, and NI0. Total score of each factors has been calculated by multiplying the frequency of each degree of importance of the factors with their value and then by adding the total value of each degree of importance of the factors. The mean score of the factors has been calculated by dividing the total score by the total respondents.

Scope of the Study:

Following are the scope of the study

1. The unregistered women enterprises have been studied in the present study.
2. The women enterprises who have at least one year experience have been studied

Limitations of the Study:

Following are the limitations of the study

1. In the present study the registered women enterprises have not studied.
2. Present study is based on the opinion of respondents (Schedule) and hence it may be biased.
3. Since the study is based on sample data and hence it may not represents the whole population. As results, this may affect the judgement made on the basis of the sample of the study.

Results and Discussion:

Identification of Factors Influencing Women in Start up Business. There are many factors that influence the women in start up business. From the review of literatures, followings important factors influencing women enterprises in start up business have been identified

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| # Identity development. | # Risk taking |
| # Social supports | # Role modelling |
| # Self-esteem development | # Education level |
| # Need for achievement | # economic stability |

Moreover, the researcher has conduct a pilot survey on 10 customers at Katigorah Block, Assam to identify the factors influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block and accordingly followings important factors have been identify on the basis of importance of the factors as indicated by the review of literature and pilot survey :-

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| # Identity development. | # Risk taking |
| # Social supports | # Self-esteem development |
| # Education level | # Need for achievement |
| # economic stability | |

After converging the above factors which are identified on the basis of review of literature and pilot survey, the followings important factors have been selected for the purpose of analyzing the factors influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block:

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| # Identity development. | # Risk taking |
| # Social supports | # Self-esteem development |
| # Education level | # Need for achievement |
| # economic stability | |

Relative importance of Factors Influencing Women Enterprises in Start up Business at Katigorah Block

Table: 1 Relative importance of factors Influencing Women Enterprises in Start up Business at Katigorah Block

Factors	Mean score	Rank
Identity development.	3.9	5th
Risk taking	3.3	6th
Social supports	2	7th
Self-esteem development	5	1st
Education level	4.3	3rd
Need for achievement	4.8	2nd
Economic stability	4	4th

Source: Field survey

Based on the mean score it is found that the 'Self-esteem development (5) is the most important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block while, 'Social supports' is found to be the least important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block. The factor 'Need for achievement is found to be second most important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block (4.8). The factor 'Education level is found to be third important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block (4.3). The factor 'Economic stability is found to be the fourth important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block (4) while the factor "Identity development is found to be the fifth important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block (3.9). The factor 'risk taking' is found to be the sixth important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block (3.3)

Summary of the Findings of the Study:

Summary of findings of the Present study are-

1. The study has identified eight important factors influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block which are- Identity development, Risk taking, Social supports, Role modelling, Self-esteem development. Education level, Need for achievement, economic stability.
2. The factor "Self-esteem development" is found to be most important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block.
3. The factor "Need for achievement" is found to be 2nd most important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block
4. The factor "Education level" is found to be 3d most important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block
5. The factor "Economic stability" is found to 4th most important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigorah Block
6. The factor "Identity development." is found to be 5th most important factor in

determining investment decision in bank of Baroda.

7. The factor "Risk taking" is found to be most 6th important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigora Block.

8. The factor "Social supports" is found to be least important influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigora Block

Area for Further Research:

Further research can be conducted in the areas of registered women enterprises in Karimganj district. Also the utilization of finance, the accounting and marketing practices followed by the women enterprises are the suitable areas where research can be conducted..

Conclusion:

The study finally let us to conclude that the relative importance of the factors influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigora Block is not same. "Self-esteem development" is the most important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigora Block while 'Social supports' is the least important factor influencing women enterprises in start up business at Katigora Block.

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মর্মবাদী দর্শনের আলোকে হাছন রাজার গান

ড. নিজাম উদ্দিন

সহকারী অধ্যাপক, বাংলা বিভাগ

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সারসংক্ষেপ

মরম বা মরমিয়া এই শব্দের মধ্যে নিহিত রয়েছে ব্যাপক অর্থের দ্যোতনা। এই দ্যোতনা কীভাবে ব্যক্ত ও ব্যক্তি লাভ করেছে মরমিয়া সাধক-গায়ক হাছন রাজার মধ্যে তা বিভিন্ন স্তর পরম্পরার ভেতর দিয়ে দেখানোর প্রচেষ্টা করা হয়েছে বক্ষ্যমাণ নিবন্ধে। সিলেট মূলত আউল-বাউল-পির-ফকির-দরবেশ-সুফি-সাধক ও সাধু-সন্ন্যাসীদের সাধনার উর্বর ভূমি। হাছন রাজা এই ধারারই অন্যতম উজ্জ্বল সাধক ব্যক্তিত্ব। হাছন রাজা দোদও প্রতাপ জমিদার। যার ভয়ে বাঘে-গরুতে এক ঘাটে জল খেত। তিন লক্ষ (মতান্তরে ৫ লক্ষ) বিঘার মালিক। মোটেই চাঞ্চিখানি কথা নয়। সেই প্রবল প্রতাপ জমিদার কীভাবে জমিদারি থেকে আসমানদারিতে উত্তীর্ণ হলেন উদ্দীষ্ট নিবন্ধে তাই দেখানোর প্রয়াস পেয়েছি।

বীজকথা : মরমিয়াদের অর্থন্যাস, মরমিয়াদের আলোকে হাছন রাজার জীবন ও দর্শনের ওপর আলোকপাত।

আলোচনা:

মর্মবাদী দর্শন শব্দবদ্ধ মূলত মরমিয়া বা মরমি শব্দের ঘরানার সঙ্গে সম্পৃক্ত। সঙ্গতকারণেই মরমিয়া শব্দের অর্থন্যাসকে আলোচনার পাদপ্রদীপে নিয়ে আসা অধিকতর যুক্তিগ্রাহ্য। মরমি বা মরমিয়া শব্দের অন্ত্যে 'বাদ' যোগে মরমিবাদ বা মরমিয়াদ বা সার্বিকভাবে মানবমনের শাস্ত্র অতীন্দ্রিয়ানুভূতির এক ঐন্দ্রজালিক দ্যোতনাকেই তত্ত্বগতভাবে প্রকাশ করে।

ইংরেজি মিস্টিক সম্পর্কে The Cambridge Paperback Encyclopaedia বর্ণনা করেছেন এভাবে, 'The spiritual quest in any religion for the most direct experience of God. Characteristically, mysticism concentrates on prayer, meditation, contemplation and fasting, so as to produce the attitude necessary for what is believed to be a direct encounter with God.' চলন্তিকায় রাজশেখর বসু মরমিয়া অর্থে জানিয়েছেন, 'সাধারণ বুদ্ধির অতীত গূঢ় ঐশ্বরিক তত্ত্ববিষয়ক। মর্মের বার্তা, মর্মের বাণী।' আকাদেমি বিদ্যার্থী অভিধান মরমিয়ার বিশেষণ অর্থে

বলেছেন, অন্তরের মধ্য দিয়ে উপলব্ধি করেন যিনি। আবার বিশেষ্য হিসেবে বলা হয়েছে, সাধারণ বুদ্ধির অতীত, গূঢ় অধ্যাত্ম বিষয়ক। সংসদ বাঙ্গালা অভিধানকার মরমিয়ার অর্থ নির্দেশ করতে গিয়ে বলেছেন, 'যিনি বিশ্বপ্রকৃতির মর্ম বা গূঢ় তত্ত্ব উপলব্ধি করিয়াছেন। অতীন্দ্রিয় ও ঐশ্বরিক বিষয় সম্বন্ধীয়'।

'বস্তুত বিশ্বপ্রকৃতির মর্মে যিনি প্রবিষ্ট, তিনিই মরমী'। ইংরেজি Mystic শব্দের বাংলা হচ্ছে মরমি বা মরমিয়া। গ্রিক ভাষায় Muien (ম্যুইন) থেকে Mystic শব্দটির উৎপত্তি। এই Muien এর অর্থ হল নয়ন মুদ্রিত করা, ভাব অন্তরের মহালক্ষ্যের দিকে ফিরিয়ে দেওয়া। বিশ্বের অন্তরের সঙ্গে মানবাত্মার অন্তরঙ্গ সম্বন্ধের নিগূঢ় উপলব্ধি। সোজা কথায় 'মরমিয়া তিনি পরমাত্মার সঙ্গে যার ঘনিষ্ঠ আধ্যাত্মিক পরিচয় ও অভিজ্ঞতা আছে'।

উপরোক্ত উদ্ধৃতি ও আলোচনা থেকে এটা স্পষ্ট প্রতীত হয় যে, প্রকৃতপ্রস্তাবে মরমিয়া শব্দের সঙ্গে আধ্যাত্মিকতার নিগূঢ়-নিবিড় সম্বন্ধ। মরমিয়াবাদ কথটি ধর্মচেতনা বা সাধনার সঙ্গে যুক্ত। 'কবি যেখানে সাধক বা সাধক যেখানে কবি সেখানেই মিস্টিসিজম জন্ম নিতে পারে। মিস্টিসিজম হল মনের গভীরলোকে অনুভূত সূক্ষ্ম ধর্মীয় অনুভূতির সাহিত্যরূপ'।

খ্রিস্টীয় অষ্টম থেকে ত্রয়োদশ চতুর্দশ শতকের মধ্যে বাংলার সংস্কৃতি বৌদ্ধ-হিন্দু-মুসলিম রাজশক্তি, ক্ষাত্রশক্তির লড়াই, রাজ্যজয় কিংবা পরাজয়ের সামনাসামনি হওয়ার ফলশ্রুতিতে বিভিন্ন পরোক্ষ পথপছা অনুসরণ করে গড়ে ওঠতে থাকে। শামসুজ্জামান খান বলেন, 'নানা ধর্মমতের পরস্পর বিরোধী শাসককুল, আধিপত্যবাদী জাতিগোষ্ঠীর প্রভাব বলয়কে স্বীকার করেও স্থানিক জনসমষ্টির ভেতর থেকে নানা ক্ষুদ্র গ্রুপ তাদের নিজস্ব উপ-ধর্ম-কাল্ট (Cult) বা মর্মবাদী দর্শন গড়ে তোলে। শাস্ত্রীয় ধর্মনিরপেক্ষ ধর্ম-দর্শন জীবনাচরণের এই গূঢ় ধারাই মরমীবাদ (Mysticism) হিসেবে চিহ্নিত।'।

ভারতবর্ষ বিশেষ করে বঙ্গদেশের আলো হাওয়া মরমিয়া সাধকদের উর্বর লীলাভূমি। তবে সে একদিনে গড়ে ওঠেনি। শতশত বছর ধরে এদেশের মৃত্তিকা সংলগ্ন মরমিয়া সাধকদের সাধনা ও ইসলাম অধ্যুষিত পশ্চিম ও মধ্য এশিয়া থেকে বিভিন্ন সময়ে অসংখ্য সুফি-দরবেশদের আগমনের ফলশ্রুতিতে এটি সম্ভব হয়েছে। অপরদিকে সিলেট প্রকৃতপ্রস্তাবে হিন্দু-মুসলমানের ধর্ম ও মর্মসাধনার তীর্থভূমি। একদিকে যেমন শাহজালালের সাধনক্ষেত্র সিলেট, ঠিক তেমনি সিলেটের অদূরে ঢাকা-দক্ষিণে চৈতন্য স্মৃতি বিজড়িত প্রসিদ্ধ তীর্থস্থান রয়েছে যা গুণ্ড বৃন্দাবন নামে খ্যাত। এছাড়া একাধিক সাধক-গায়ক এই পুণ্যভূমিতে জন্মলাভ করেছেন। দীনভবানন্দ (জন্ম আনুমানিক সতেরো শতক- মৃত্যু তারিখ অনুপ্লবিত), শীতালং শাহ (১৮০৬-১৮৯৯), রাধারমণ দত্ত (১৮৩৩-১৯১৫), হাছন রাজা (১৮৫৪-১৯২২), আরকুম শাহ (১৮৭৭-১৯৪১), শাহ আব্দুল করিম (১৯১৬-২০০৯) এবং দুর্বিন শাহ

(১৯২০-১৯৭৭) প্রমুখ সাধককুল শিরোমণি এই পুণ্যভূমিতেই অবির্ভূত হয়েছেন।

হাছন রাজা অপরাপর সাধকদের মধ্যে এত জনপ্রিয় ছিলেন, ফলত তাঁর নাম নিয়ে বিভ্রাটের শেষ নেই। হাছন রাজা, হাসন রাজা, হাসন রাজা কিংবা হাসন রাজা চৌধুরী - এসব নাম কিন্তু একই ব্যক্তির পরস্পর সংলগ্নরহিত নাম বিভ্রাট বটে। অনেক আলোচক সমালোচক ভিন্ন ভিন্ন নাম গ্রহণ করে একে যথেষ্ট জটিল করে তুলেছেন। তবে এই মুহূর্তে আলোচনার গহীনারণ্যে প্রবেশ না করেই শুধু বলতে পারি এই সাধকের নাম দেওয়ান হাছন রাজা চৌধুরী। আমরা সংক্ষেপে হাছন রাজা এই নামে অভিহিত করতে পারি।

হাছন রাজার গানের পরিসর মানে সংখ্যা নিয়ে আমাদের কৌতূহল রয়েছে। এ বিষয়ে যতটুকু জানা যায় যে কবির জীবদ্দশায় ১৯১৪ খ্রিস্টাব্দে 'হাছন উদাস' শীর্ষক গ্রন্থখানি সর্বপ্রথম প্রকাশিত হয় সিলেট রহমানিয়া প্রেসে। শ্রীমান আব্দুল গনি দ্বারা মুদ্রিত এবং স্বয়ং হাছন রাজা কর্তৃক প্রকাশিত। প্রথম সংস্করণে ১২২টি গান ছিল যার মধ্যে ৩টি গান ২বার করে ছাপানো হয়। দ্বিতীয় সংস্করণে ২০৬টি গানের সংখ্যা হলেও ৩টি গান ২বার করে ছাপা হয়েছে। ইদানীং এ দুটি সংস্করণ দুষ্প্রাপ্য। তবে এসব তথ্য ছাপিয়ে গেছে দেওয়ান তাজাওয়ার রাজা চৌধুরীর 'হাছন রাজা সমগ্র' গ্রন্থ মোতাবেক। তাঁর মতে ইতিমধ্যে বাংলা গান প্রকাশিত হয়েছে ২০৭টি ও হিন্দি গানের সংখ্যা ৫টি। অপ্রকাশিত বাংলা গান ও হিন্দি গান উদ্ধার করে প্রকাশ করেছেন যথাক্রমে ৩৩০ এবং ১৩টি। অতএব দেওয়ান তাজাওয়ারের তথ্য অনুযায়ী প্রকাশিত ও অপ্রকাশিত গানের সংখ্যা যথাক্রমে ৫৩৭ এবং ১৮টি। এছাড়া 'সৌখিন বাহার' নামে তাঁর আরও একটি চটি বই আছে যাতে বহুদর্শনজনিত অভিজ্ঞতার সারকথা বর্ণিত হয়েছে। এতে বিভিন্ন পোষ্য জীবজন্তু, পশুপাখি বিশেষ করে কোড়া পাখির বর্ণনা, জীলোকের চরিত্র বর্ণনা রয়েছে। গ্রন্থটির রচনাকাল বা প্রকাশকাল সম্পর্কে বিশেষ জানা যায়নি। সম্ভ্রতি এটিও দুষ্প্রাপ্য।

হাছন রাজা কোন্ মার্গের সাধক? এ প্রশ্নের উত্তরে বলতে পারি তিনি মরমিয়া সাধক। মুসলিম মরমিয়া সাধকদের সাধারণত সুফি হিসেবেই চিহ্নিত করা হয়। তবে হাছন রাজা এই পরিচয় নিয়ে শুধু ক্ষান্ত থাকেননি। বঙ্গদেশের বহুত্ববাদী সংস্কৃতির অঙ্গনেই তিনি বড়ো হয়েছেন এবং বহুত্ববাদী সংস্কৃতিই তাঁর জ্ঞাত বা অজ্ঞাতসারে গানে-চিন্তায়-ভাবনায় মূর্তিমান হয়ে ধরা দিয়েছে। তবে হাছন রাজা প্রথমদিকে একজন খাঁটি মুমিন হিসেবে তুলে ধরেছেন। মুমিন একটি আরবি শব্দ যার অর্থ ধর্মনিষ্ঠ মুসলমান। তাঁর অজস্র গানে এই মুমিনত্বের প্রকাশ লক্ষ্য করি। যেমন,

মমিন আরে ভাই। ঈমান রাখিও দড়।

ঈমান না থাকিলে মমিন কিসের নমাজ পড়।।

ও ঈমান রাখিও দড়।।

এক আল্লা বিনে রে শরিক নাহি তাঁর।
লা শরিক জানিলে মমিন হইবায় উদ্ধার।
ও ঈমান রাখিও দড়।।

-১৫২ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

কিংবা

আল্লা বিনে কিছু নাহি মনেতে রাখিও।
এই মতে নমাজ যে পড়িবেক ভাই।
নিশ্চয়ই জানিও তার বেহেস্তে হবে ঠাই।।
নামাজ পড়, রোজা রাখ, কর এবাদত।
মমিন মুসলমানের ভাই মূল এই পথ।।

- ১০৭ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

শাক্ত নির্দেশিত পথে চলতে চলতে তাঁর মনে হয়েছে আল্লার একমাত্র অসীম করুণা ব্যতীত এই ভবসমুদ্র সত্তরণ করা সম্ভব নয়, কারণ আল্লাই তো করুণার সাগর। তিনি বলেন,

আল্লা ভব সমদুরে তরাইয়া লও মোরে।
পড়িয়া দরিয়ার পাকে ডাকি হে তোমারে।।
এমন অকূল দরিয়া কূল নাই তার।
আমি অভাগিয়া আর জানি না সাঁতার।।
কৃপা কর দয়াল বন্ধু অনাথ জানিয়া।
রক্ষা কর তব দাসে নিজ তরী দিয়া।।

- ৩১ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

মুসলমান মাত্রই শেষ বিচারের দিন অর্থাৎ কেয়ামতের দিন নিয়ে যথেষ্ট ভাবতে হয়। কেননা, এই শেষ বিচারের দিনেই নিজ কৃতকর্মের তুল্যমূল্যের ভিত্তিতে পাপী ও পুণ্যবানের নিজ নিজ ঠিকানা সাব্যস্ত হয়। পাপপুণ্যের নিরিখেই কেউ যান বেহেস্তে, কেউ-বা যান দোজখে। হাসরের দিন নিয়ে তাঁকে ভাবতে দেখি অধিক পরিমাণে। যেমন,

কি হইব মোর হাসরের দিন ভাই মমিন।
মমিন হায়েরে, কি হইবে মোর হাসরের দিন।।

- ৭১ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

সংসারে দারাপুত্র-পরিবার, জমিজমা-সম্পত্তির নাগপাশে বন্দি ছিলেন এতদিন। 'বেভুলে' থেকে ঈশ্বরচিন্তা হতে শতযোজন দূরে ছিলেন। তিনি যখন বলে ওঠেন,
মাটিরার পিঞ্জিরার মাঝে বন্দি হইয়া রে।
কান্দে হাছন রাজার মন মনিয়া রে।।

- ১৫৭ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

কবি এখন বুঝতে পারছেন যে তার অতীতের কর্মফল কখনও শোভনীয় হতে পারে না। কিন্তু হাসরের দিনের চিন্তা, ভবসমুদ্র পারাপারের চিন্তা এখন তাকে চেপে ধরেছে। জগৎ-জীবনে এমন কোনো ভালো কাজ করেননি যার বিনিময়ে আল্লা-ঈশ্বর তাকে ক্ষমাসুন্দর দৃষ্টিতে দেখবেন। সংসারসমুদ্রের বেলাভূমিতে দাঁড়িয়ে একান্ত আত্মসমর্পিত চিন্তে স্বীকার করে নিচ্ছেন যে এমন কোনো 'পয়সা কড়ি' নেই অর্থাৎ পুণ্যসঞ্চয় নেই যার বিনিময়ে 'খেওয়ানী' অর্থাৎ জগদ্বন্ধু তাঁকে উদ্ধার করবেন। তবে কবি আশাবাদী। কারণ, 'আল্লা নবিজী' তাঁর চিন্তে সদাজাগ্রত। যেমন গানে পাই,

ঠাকুর মোরে পার করবায়নি।
পয়সা কড়ি নাই গফুর রহিম খেওয়ানী।।
যত ধন ছিল মোর সব হইল চুরি।
কেমন হইমু পার এই তাইসে মরি।।
দাঁড়াইয়া আছি নদী তীরে হইয়া অস্থির।
ভরসা মোর আছে চিন্তে আল্লা নবিজীর।।

- ৮৫ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

এভাবেই দেখলাম একটি ধারাবাহিকতার মধ্য দিয়ে কবি জাগতিক লোভ-লালসার গতি ছাড়িয়ে হয়ে উঠেছেন ঈশ্বরে সমর্পিত প্রাণ। নীচের গানটি তারই উজ্জ্বল দৃষ্টান্ত। যেমন,

মনবাসনা পূর্ণ কর, দয়ার ঠাকুর
চরণ ছাড়া আমারে যে, না রাখিও দূর।।
চরণ ভিক্ষা চাই আমি তোমারও ঠাই।
চরণ ছাড়া কোন স্থানে আমি যে না যাই।।

- ১০ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

কবির মনে ঈশ্বরপ্রেমের প্রগাঢ়তা লক্ষ করা যায়। যতই আধ্যাত্মিক স্তরে এগিয়েছেন ততই তাঁর মনে প্রেমবৈরাগ্য ও উচ্চানুভূতি জন্মলাভ করেছে। ঈশ্বরপ্রেম জ্বলে ওঠছে কবিচিন্তে। তিনি যখন বলেন,

প্রেমের আগুন লাগল রে, হাছন রাজার সঙ্গে।
নিভে না আগুন ডুবলে সুরমা গাঙ্গে।।

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বন্ধুর আশায় নাচে হাছন, প্রেমেরই তরঙ্গে।।
হাছন রাজায় বলে আমি, যাইমু বন্ধের সঙ্গে।
আমিত্ব ছাড়িয়া দিয়া মিশব তার সঙ্গে।।

- ১২৬ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

এ তো যেই-সেই প্রেম নয় এবং এই প্রেমের তীব্রতা অত্যন্ত প্রবল। যাকে

পেয়ে বসে সে হয় সংসারত্যাগী। আর এই প্রেমানলের তীব্র অন্তর্দাহে সুরমা গাঙের জল ঢেলেও রেহাই পাওয়া যায় না। তিনি এখন সমস্ত দর্পচূর্ণ করে, আমিত্বের খোলস থেকে বেরিয়ে এসে স্রষ্টার সঙ্গে মিলিত হতে চাইছেন।

এই আমিত্বের গাঙকে অস্বীকারের প্রথম ধাপ সংসারের প্রতি উদাসীনতা, লোভ-লালসা, কামনা-বাসনার প্রতি অনীহা এবং প্রবল আন্তিক্যবাদ। আমরা হাছন রাজার গানে তাই লক্ষ করি। আত্মজিজ্ঞাসার সুরে তা-ই অভিব্যক্ত। যেমন,

মরণ কথা স্মরণ হইল না হাছন রাজা তোর,
মরণ কথা স্মরণ হইল না।।
যখন মরিয়া যাইবায়, মাটিতে হইব বাসা।।
তখনে কোথায় বইব রঙ্গের রামপাশা।।

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না রহিব ঘরবাড়ি না রহিব সংসার
না রহিব লক্ষণছিরি নাম পরগণার।।

- ১৫৪ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র
অথবা

কিসের দেশ কিসের খেঁশ কিসের সংসার।
শ্রী পূজ না চাই দাস হইয়াছি তাহার গো,
সই সজনী।

- ১৩৩ সংখ্যক গান

বহুশ্রুত, শ্রুতিনন্দন, দার্শনিক প্রজ্ঞাসম্পন্ন ও বিশ্ববিশ্রুত তাঁর সেই বিখ্যাত গান যা আজও গানের সমঝদার রসিকচিন্তকে রসের সায়াহ্নে অবগাহন করিয়ে শুধু ক্ষান্ত হয় না, বরং এই শিল্পীশ্রেষ্ঠ মরমিয়া কবি-দার্শনিকের অন্তর্ভূতবনকে পাঠকচিন্তে সমুদ্রাসিত করে তোলে। স্মরণ করা যেতে পারে, এই গানটির কয়েক ছত্র তাঁর কবরের পাঁচিলে খোদাই করে গাঁথা রয়েছে যা প্রত্যক্ষ করে নিজেকে গর্বিত বলে মনে হয়েছে। গানটি এই,

লোকে বলে লোকে বলে রে, ঘর বাড়ি ভাল নায়ে আমার।
কি ঘর বানাইব আমি শূন্যের মাঝার।।
ভাল করি ঘর বানাইয়া কয়দিন থাকব আর।
আয়না দিয়া চাইয়া দেখি পাকনা চুল আমার।।
এই ভাবিয়া হাছন রাজায়, ঘর দুয়ার না বান্ধে।
কোথায় রাখবা আল্লায় এর লাগিয়া কান্দে।।
হাছন রাজায় বুঝতো যদি বাঁচব কতদিন।
দালান কোঠা বানাইত করিয়া রঙিন।।

- ১৬৭ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

বহুত মানুহ মাজই ঈশ্বরের হাতের জীড়নক মাজ। স্রষ্টা যেমন খুশি তেমনি নাচান-এই প্রবসত্য তাঁর গানে এসেছে অবলীলায়। বন্দি মানবাত্মার করুণ স্বংকার তাঁর গানে লক্ষ করি এভাবেই,

ঙভিঙ উড়াইল মোরে, মৌলার হাতে ডুরি।
হাছন রাজারে যেমন ফিরায়ে, তেমনি দিয়া ফিরি।।
মৌলার হাতে আছে ডুরি, আমি তাতে বান্দা।
যেমনে ফিরায়ে, তেমনি ফিরি, এমন ডুরির ফান্দা।।

৭৬ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

অতঃপর আমরা লক্ষ করি তাঁর অন্তরের ঐশীপ্রেমের প্রাবল্যকে। কিন্তু সংশয় দূর হয়েও হতে চাইছে না। সত্যিই 'মাবুদ আল্লা' কি তাকে স্থানে দেবেন? একটি গানে পাই,

হাছন রাজায় বলে
বুঝতে নারি মাবুদে কারে লইব কুলে।।
দিনে রাইতে যার প্রাণ
খোদার লাগি জ্বলে
হাছন রাজায় বলে
সেই খোদার জাতে মিলে।।
সব দুঃখ দূরে যাবে
খোদার জাতে গেলে
সর্বকার্য পূর্ণ হবে
আল্লাহুতে মিশিলে।।

- ৭ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

কোন সময়ে হাছন রাজার ভাবচক্ষের উন্মীলন ঘটে সে নিয়ে আমরা কিঞ্চিৎ আলোচনা করতে পারি।

সময় ১৮৯৭ সাল। পৃথিবীর ইতিহাসে আসাম ও সিলেট জুড়ে সবচেয়ে বড়ো ভূকম্প দেখা দিয়েছিল। রিখটার স্কেলে যার প্রাবল্য ছিল ৮.৮। প্রচুর জানমালের ক্ষয়ক্ষতি হয়েছিল এই ভূমিকম্পে। তখন হাছন রাজার মনে ভীষণ দাগ কেটেছিল। যিনি ছিলেন বিরাট জমিদার, অগাধ বিস্তবেশাতের মালিক, যার ভয়ে বাঘে-গরুতে একঘাটে জল খেত সেই দোদর্ভ প্রতাপ মানুষটির জীবনালেখ্যের পটপরিবর্তন দ্রুতলয়ে ঘটতে থাকে। যিনি ইতিমধ্যে খাঁটি মুমিনরূপে নিজেকে প্রমাণ করেছেন এবং ধীরে ধীরে ঐশীপ্রেমের সন্মোহনী আকর্ষণে প্রাণসরমান তিনিই এবার প্রত্যক্ষ করলেন এই বিধ্বংসী ভূমিকম্পের সর্বনাশা রূপকে-যার ফলশ্রুতিতে তাঁর চিন্তাকাশে দ্রুত পরিবর্তন লক্ষ করা গেল। আবার এটাও হতে পারে যে একে একে আপনজন তথা মাতাপিতা ও ভ্রাতার মৃত্যু তাঁর জীবনে

ইতিমধ্যে পটপরিবর্তনের প্রেক্ষাপট তৈরি করে রেখেছিল এবং এই ভূমিকম্প সেই নান্দীমুখের সূচনা মাত্র—যার মধ্য দিয়ে তিনি ও প্রভু, স্রষ্টা ও সৃষ্টির মধ্যকার অদৃশ্য পর্দা খুলে গেল। তিনি যেন বন্ধুভাবে তাকে সাধনা করেছিলেন। এবার নয়ন সম্মুখে উদ্ভাসিত হল ‘নূরের বদন’। এয়েন দীর্ঘরাত্রির প্রতীক্ষার পর,

আইলরে, আইল রে বন্ধু আইল রে
চান্দমুখ দেখিয়া হাছন রাজা পাগল হইল রে।।
কিবা শোভা বলমল করে বাঁকা তার নয়নে রে।
কাল না হয় ধলা না হয় নূরের চটক রে।
দেখা মাত্র প্রেমের আগুন উঠিল জুলিয়া রে।
প্রেমানলে জুলিয়া মইলাম কি যাদু করিল রে।।
ভৈসালের বৎসর বন্ধে দরশন দিল রে।
দয়া করিয়া আমার সঙ্গে কথাবার্তা কইল রে।।

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নূরের বদন হাছন রাজা দিলের চক্ষে দেখল রে।
আমার দুঃখের কথা শুনিয়া বন্ধের দয়া হইল রে।।

- ৯ম সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

‘ভৈসাল’ শব্দটি ভূমিকম্প শব্দের প্রাকৃত রূপ। সিলেটি আঞ্চলিক উচ্চরণে একে ‘ভুইসাল’ বা বানানভেদে ‘ভুইছাল’ও বলা হয়ে থাকে।

এই ‘বন্ধের অর্থাৎ বন্ধুর আগমনে হাছন রাজা স্থির থাকতে পারেননি, নিজে হয়েছেন বেসামাল। যেমন,

আইল রে আইল বন্ধু, কোলে আইল রে
আরে চান্দমুখ দেখিয়া হাছন রাজা পাগল হইল রে।।
তারা জিনি দুইটি অঙ্গ, সূর্য জিনি অঙ্গ।
হাছন রাজা দেখিয়ে বলে ছাড়ব না তোরঙ্গ রে।।

২ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

কবি এখন তাঁর কাক্ষিত প্রেমময়কে খুঁজে পেতে বেগ পান না। কারণ তাকে নিবিড়তর করে পাওয়ার সকল রাস্তাই তাঁর জানা, চোখ বুজলেও পাওয়া যায় তাকে। যেমন,

আঁখি মঞ্জিয়া দেখ রূপ রে।
আঁখি মঞ্জিয়া দেখ রূপ রে।
আরে দিলের চক্ষে চাহিয়া দেখ বন্ধুর স্বরূপ রে।

৬ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

যাকে এতদিন তিনি খুঁজেছেন বিশ্বসংসারে, তাকেই তিনি এবার পেয়ে গেলেন আপনার মধ্যে। কবির সত্তাতেই বিশ্বভুবনের উৎপত্তি। বিশ্বসৃষ্টির মূলেই

তিনি, মৃলাধারও তিনি। তাঁর থেকে সর্বোৎপত্তি; চন্দ্র-সূর্য, আকাশ-বাতাস, পতপাখি-গাছপালা, মানুষ আদির মূলেই তিনি। যেমন,

আমি হইতে আল্লা রসুল, আমি হইতে কুল।

পাগল হাছন বলে তাতে নাই ভুল।।

আমা হইতে আসমান জমিন আমি হইতে সব।

আমি হইতে ব্রিজগৎ, আমি হইতে সব।।

- ১৪১ সংখ্যক গান, হাছন রাজা সমগ্র

আমরা যদি ইসলামি সংস্কৃতির বিকাশ পর্যালোচনা করি তাহলে দেখতে পাব জীবাত্মার স্থিতি ও প্রাধান্যের ভিত্তিতেই যুগে যুগে মুসলিম সাধক ও মনীষীগণ নানাবিধ উক্তি করেছেন। মনসুর হাফিজের উচ্চারণ ‘আনাল হক’ (আমিই সত্য), বায়োজিদ বলেছেন ‘সবহানী’ (আমিই পবিত্র), ইবনুল ফরিদ বলেছেন ‘আনা হিয়া’ (আমিই সেই সুন্দরী নারী) যাকে এই দুনিয়া কামনা করে। এই উক্তির ভিত্তিতে জালাল উদ্দিন রুমি বলেছেন, ‘আমার সত্তাই প্রস্তর ও মৃত্তিকার সাথে মিশে রয়েছিল। তারপর একদিন তাতে প্রাণের সাড়া দিল এবং আমি প্রথমে বৃক্ষাদি রূপে দেখা দিলাম। তারপর আমার প্রকাশ হল হামাওড়ি দিয়ে চলা জানোয়াররূপে-আকাশের বুকে বিচরণশীল পাখিরূপে-জলে সঞ্চরমাণ প্রাণীরূপে এবং সর্বশেষ মানুষরূপে দেখা দিয়ে আমি এখন আপনার রূপই অবলোকন করছি।’ এই সংস্কৃতির তরঙ্গ লহরী আমাদের চিন্তাদর্শন যুক্ত হয়ে সেদিন বিপুল বঙ্গভাগ্য নবকলবরে আত্মপ্রকাশ করেছিল। লালন ফকির বলেছেন, ‘এই মানুষে আছে রে মন যারে বলে মানুষ রতন’। আমাদের সাধক কবি হাছন রাজা আরও গভীরতর প্রদেশে গিয়ে বলেছেন, ‘আমি হইতে সব উৎপত্তি হাছন রাজায় কয়’। রবীন্দ্রনাথও সারাজীবন এই কথাটি বলেছেন, আমি আছি বলেই তো বিশ্ব সত্য। যেমন

আমি এলেম, ভাঙল তোমার ঘুম-

শূন্যে শূন্যে ফুটল আলোর আনন্দকুসুম।

আমায় তুমি ফুলে ফুলে

ফুটিয়ে তুলে

দুলিয়ে দিলে নানা রূপের দোল।

.....

ওগো আমার প্রভু,

জানি আমি, তবু

আমায় দেখবে বলে তোমার অসীম কৌতূহল-

নইলে তো এই সূর্যতারা সকলই নিষ্ফল।

-২৯ সংখ্যক কবিতা, বলাকা

কিংবা অপেক্ষাকৃত পরিণত বয়সের রচনা ‘শ্যামলী’র সেই বিখ্যাত

কবিতাতে প্রত্যক্ষ করি মরমিয়া কবি রবীন্দ্রনাথের মহা উপলক্ষি,

আমারই চেতনার রঙে পান্না হল সবুজ,

চুনি উঠল রাজ্য হয়ে।

আমি চোখ মেললুম আকাশে

জ্বলে উঠল আলো

পূবে পশ্চিমে।

গোলাপের দিকে চেয়ে বললুম 'সুন্দর'

সুন্দর হল সে।

উপরে আমরা বিস্তৃত পরিসরে আলোচনার মধ্য দিয়ে দেখানোর প্রচেষ্টা করেছি যে, হাছন রাজা তাঁর শুরুতে শরিয়তের আইন-কানুন বাস্তবজীবনে প্রয়োগ করার জন্য মুমিন-মুসলমানদিগকে আহ্বান করেছেন। অতঃপর পরবর্তী স্তরে প্রেমের মাধ্যমে তাঁর প্রিয়তমকে লাভ করার চেষ্টা করেছেন। এই প্রিয়তমকে পেতে গিয়ে তিনি প্রায় সংসারবিবাগী হয়েছেন। দারা-পুত্র-পরিবার, জ্ঞানমাল-সম্পত্তির প্রতি তাঁর নিষ্পৃহাই প্রকট হয়েছে। আর তৃতীয় তথা চূড়ান্ত স্তরে আমরা লক্ষ করি, ভাব-সাধনমার্গের শীর্ষবিন্দুতে তিনি আরোহণ করেছেন এবং সমস্ত প্রতিকূলতা অতিক্রম করে দার্শনিক প্রত্যয় বলে নিজের মধ্যে প্রিয়তমের অর্থাৎ 'বন্ধে' বা 'বন্ধুর' অবস্থান সুদৃঢ় করেছেন। এই স্তরেই উন্নীত হয়ে প্রিয়তম এবং তাঁর নিজের মধ্যে কোনো ফারাক খুঁজে পাননি। স্রষ্টা এবং সৃষ্টির পারস্পরিক সহাবস্থান এই চূড়ান্ত স্তরে সম্ভব হয়েছে, আমরা যাকে বলব 'ফানাফিলাহ' হয়ে 'বাকবিলাহ'তে চরম অবস্থান-যার ফলস্বরূপ তিনি অবলীলায় বলতে পেরেছেন, 'আমি হইতে সব উৎপত্তি হাছন রাজায় কয়'।

তথ্যসূত্র :

- ১। বসু, রাজশেখর (সংকলিত) চলচ্চিত্র, (নতুন সংস্করণ), এম.সি সরকার অ্যান্ড সন্স প্রাইভেট লিমিটেড, ১৪১৬ বঙ্গাব্দ।
- ২। দত্ত, বিজিতকুমার প্রমুখ (সম্পাদিত), আকাদেমি বিদ্যার্থী বাংলা অভিধান, (দ্বিতীয় সংশোধিত মুদ্রণ), পশ্চিমবঙ্গ বাংলা আকাদেমি, আগস্ট ২০০০ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ৩। বিশ্বাস, শৈলেন্দ্র (সংকলিত), সংসদ বাঙ্গালা অভিধান (সংশোধিত ও পরিবর্তিত চতুর্থ সংস্করণ), শিও সাহিত্য সংসদ প্রা লিমিটেড, মার্চ ১৯৯৩ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ৪। রাজা, দেওয়ান মোহাম্মদ তাছাওয়ার, হাছান রাজা সমগ্র, পাঠক সমাবেশ, ২০০৯ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ৫। চক্রবর্তী, ড. মৃদুলকান্তি, হাছন রাজা, তাঁর গানের তরী, মেরিট ফেয়ার প্রকাশন, ২০০৭ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ৬। চক্রবর্তী, অজিতকুমার, কাব্যপরিক্রমা, বিশ্বভারতী, মাঘ ১৪০২ বঙ্গাব্দ

- ৭। কামাল, সৈয়দ মোস্তফা, হাছন রাজার গান, গানের গুণতত্ত্ব : ভাব ও ভাষা বিশ্লেষণ, মালঞ্চ বুক সেন্টার, মে ১৯৯৭ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ৮। ওয়াহাব, আব্দুল, লালন-হাসন : জীবন-কর্ম-সমাজ, বাংলা একাডেমী, জুন ২০০৯ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ৯। আজরফ, দেওয়ান মোহাম্মদ, মরমি কবি হাসন রাজা, মজিল প্রকাশনী, ১৯৭৮ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ১০। চৌধুরী, আবুল আহসান (সম্পাদিত), হাসন রাজার গান, বাংলা একাডেমী, জুন ২০০৮ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ১১। ঠাকুর, রবীন্দ্রনাথ, রবীন্দ্র রচনাবলী (সুলভ সংস্করণ), বিশ্বভারতী ১৪১৭ বঙ্গাব্দ।
- ১২। দেওয়ান, সামারীন, একনজরে হাসন রাজা, ফরিয়াদ ইয়াসমিন রাব্বী, ২০০৮ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ১৩। রায়, ড. কৃষ্ণগোপাল, সাহিত্যের পরিভাষা, সোমা প্রকাশন।
- ১৪। হক, খোন্দকার রিয়াজুল, মরমীকবি খোদা বক্শ শাহ : জীবন ও সঙ্গীত, বাংলা একাডেমী, ১৯৯৭ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।
- ১৫। চৌধুরী, আবুল আহসান (সম্পাদিত), হাসন রাজা : মরমি মৃত্তিকার ফসল, উৎস প্রকাশন, অমর একুশে বইমেলা ২০০৯ খ্রিস্টাব্দ।

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উত্তর ত্ৰিপুরা জেলার মুসলমান সমাজেৰ বিবাহেৰ গানে নাৰী বৈষম্য

ড. হুমায়ুন কবীৰ

অতিথি অধ্যাপক

ধৰ্মনগৰ সরকারি মহাবিদ্যালয়, ত্ৰিপুরা

অৱগ্যকুন্তলা ত্ৰিপুরা ভাৰতেৰ উত্তৰ-পূৰ্বদিকে অবস্থানৱত একটি ছোট ৰাজ্য। এৰ আয়তন মাত্ৰ ১০,৪৮৬ বৰ্গ কি.মি:। বৰ্তমান ত্ৰিপুরায় আটটি জেলা রয়েছে। এই গবেষণাৰ পৰিধিতে আগে ছিল উত্তৰ ত্ৰিপুরা জেলা, কিন্তু বৰ্তমান ত্ৰিপুরায় আটটি জেলা হওয়ায় এৰ পৰিধি উত্তৰ ত্ৰিপুরা ও উনকোটি জেলাৰ মধ্যে ব্যাপ্ত হয়েছে। উত্তৰ ত্ৰিপুরা জেলাৰ (বৰ্তমান উত্তৰ ত্ৰিপুরা ও উনকোটি জেলা) আয়তন ২০৩৬ বৰ্গ কিমি:। ২০১১ সালেৰ জনগণনা অনুযায়ী ত্ৰিপুরায় মোট ৩,২৮,৮৭০ জন মুসলমান জনসাধাৰণ উত্তৰ ত্ৰিপুরায় বাস কৰেন। ত্ৰিপুরায় আটটি জেলাৰ মধ্যে উত্তৰ ত্ৰিপুরা ও উনকোটি জেলাৰ মুসলমান জনজীবন একদিকে যেমন অন্যান্য জাতিগোষ্ঠী থেকে আলাদা, তেমনি ধৰ্মীয় ও ভৌগোলিক কাৰণে তাৰেৰ সংস্কৃতিৰ পৰিমাণলও স্বতন্ত্ৰ এবং বৈচিত্ৰে ভৰপূৰ।

উত্তৰ ত্ৰিপুরা জেলাৰ মুসলমান জনজীবনেৰ বিবাহ কেন্দ্ৰিক লোকাচাৰেৰ অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত বিবাহেৰ গানে নানা আচাৰ অনুষ্ঠানেৰ চিত্ৰ যেমন প্ৰতিভাত হয়, তেমনি প্ৰতিভাত হয় নাৰী জীবনেৰ আনন্দ বেদনা, হাসি-কান্না, তৃপ্তি-অতৃপ্তিৰ এক কৰুণ অধ্যায়। উত্তৰ ত্ৰিপুরা জেলাৰ বিবাহেৰ মেয়েলী গান গুলি অধিকতৰ বাস্তব জীবন ৱসানুভূতিতে সৱলভাবে প্ৰকাশ পেয়েছে। এই গানগুলি সুগভীৰ মানবিক ও মানসিক আবেদনে ভৰপূৰ। যেহেতু গানগুলি নাৰীদেৰ দ্বাৰা নাৰীদেৰ নিয়ে ৱচিত তাই এই গানগুলিতে নাৰী জীবনেৰ বাস্তব চিত্ৰ ভেসে ওঠা স্বাভাবিক।

নৱ-নাৰীৰ মধ্যে চিৰায়ত সম্পৰ্ক সৃজন কৰাই বিবাহেৰ মূল উদ্দেশ্য। আৰ বৈবাহিক অঙ্গনকে সঙ্গীতে সঙ্গীতে উল্লাস মুখৰ কৰে তুলাই বিবাহেৰ গানেৰ অন্যতম লক্ষ্য। কিন্তু উত্তৰ ত্ৰিপুরা জেলাৰ বিবাহেৰ মেয়েলি গানগুলিতে আনন্দেৰ চেয়ে বেদনাৰ, উল্লাসেৰ চেয়ে বিষাদেৰ কালো মেঘ জমে ওঠে। একটি মেয়ে পিতা-মাতাৰ স্নেহেৰ পালিত হওয়াৰ সময় তাৰ জীবনে নেমে আসে এক দুৰ্লভ্য পৰিণাম। কিশোৰী মেয়েকে সাত পুৰুষেৰ ভিটেমাটি ছিন্লে কৰে, স্নেহ-প্ৰেমেৰ সুমধুৰ সম্পৰ্ক ছিন্লে কৰে যেতে হয় স্বত্তৰালয়ে। সেই স্বত্তৰালয়ে যাওয়াৰ প্ৰাকমুহূৰ্তে গানেৰ মাধ্যমে

ব্যক্ত হয় সমাজ জীবনে নারীর বিড়ম্বিত হওয়ার করুণ কাহিনি। কোন কোন গানে ফুটে উঠে বাল্য বিবাহের চিত্র। আবার কোন কোন গানে ফুটে উঠে পিতা-মাতা পরিজন দ্বারা নারীর বিতাড়িত হওয়ার দৃশ্য। নারীরা এই সামাজিক বৈষম্যকে আপন ভাগ্যের পরিহাস হিসেবে মেনে নেয়। পুরুষ প্রধান সমাজে পুরুষদের পেশিজগত প্রভাপে নারীকে বশ্যতা স্বীকার করতে হয়। নারীজীবনে এই সামাজিক বৈষম্যই বিবাহের গানের অন্ধরে অন্ধরে মুদ্রিত হয়ে আছে। কোন কোন গানে দেখা যায় নাবালিকা মেয়ে যে বয়সে তার সঙ্গীদের নিয়ে খেলাধুলায় ব্যস্ত, সে সময়ে তাকে বাল্যবিবাহের রথচক্রের তলায় ঠেলে দেয়া হচ্ছে। এ সম্পর্কিত একটি গান নিম্নে উল্লেখ করা হল।

১। বিয়ার কথা শুনিয়া গো, হাতের খেইড় ছাড়িয়া গো
কান্দইন বিলাইয়া দয়ার মাইজীর গলায় ধরিয়া
কোন ও পরানে গো, ও দয়ার মাইজী গো
বিদেশি পুরুষের কাছে আমায় দিতায় বিয়া।
তুমার বাবায় লইছইন গো কবিন মহর আনো গো
তুমার চাচায় লইছইন গো হাতের বালা, কানের ঝমকা তুমার লাগিয়া।
বিলাইয়া কান্দন শুনিয়া গো মাইজদীর সাথে নিয়া গো
কোন পরানে দিতাম বেলয়া ঘরের বাইর করিয়া।
মিষ্টিমুখো লইয়া গো বাটার পান খাইয়া গো
তোমার ভাইয়ে লইছইন শাড়ি মধুবন বাছিয়া
বিয়ের শাড়ি পিন্ধইন গো বেলয়ার দাদির হুকুম পাইয়া।
বিয়ার কথা শুনিয়া গো, হাতের খেইড় ছাড়িয়া গো
কান্দইন বিলাইয়া দয়ার মাইজীর গলায় ধরিয়া।

১। বিয়ার - বিয়ের ২। খেইড়- খেলা ৩। ছারিয়া- ছেড়ে ৪। কান্দইন-কাঁদেন
৫। দয়ার মাইজীর - দয়ার মা, মাতাজি, সসম্মানে মাতৃ সম্বোধন।
৬। ধরিয়া-ধরে ৭। দিতায় - দিবেন, অর্পণ করবেন। ৮। তুমার - তোমার
৯। লইছইন - কিনেছেন ১০। মহর- মহরানা। ১১। আনগো- নিয়ে এস
১২। চাচায় - জ্যাঠায়, কাকায়
১৩। ঝমকা - কানের অলংকার বিশেষ ১৪। লাগিয়ারে - জন্য নিমিও
১৫। কান্দন-কান্না ১৬। দিতাম-দেব ১৭। বাইর - বাহির
১৮। করিয়া - করে ১৯। মুখো - মুখে ২০। লইয়া-নিয়ে ২১। খাইয়া- খেয়ে
২২। ভাইয়ে - ভ্রাতায় ২৩। বাছিয়া - বেছে ২৪। পিন্ধইন - পরিধান করেন
২৫। দাদির - পিতামহীর ২৬। পাইয়া- পেয়ে।

উপরিউক্ত গানটির বিষয়বস্তু এরকম - 'বেলয়া' নামক একটি নাবালিকা মেয়ে নিজের বিয়ের কথা শুনে খেলা ছেড়ে মায়ের গলায় ধরে কাঁদছে। সে মেয়েটি আরোও হৌচট খেয়েছে বিদেশী পুরুষের সাথে বিয়ের কথা শুনে। সে তার মায়ের কাছে অভিযোগ করেছে - কেন তাকে বিদেশী পুরুষের সাথে বিয়ে দেয়া হচ্ছে মা নিজের ব্যর্থতা প্রকাশ করেছেন স্বামীর উপর দোষ চাপিয়ে। পিতার মহরানা নিয়ে আসা আর জ্যাঠার হাতের বালা, কানের অলংকার নিয়ে আসার কথা বলে মা কন্যাকে এক্ষেত্রে প্রবোধ দিচ্ছেন। বিয়েতে রাজি না হওয়া মেয়েকে কেমন করে ঘর থেকে বের করে দেবেন এ ভাবনায় মায়ের মনও বিমর্ষ। কিন্তু কনের ভাই মিষ্টি মুখে নিয়ে বাটার পান পান খেয়ে মধুবন থেকে আকর্ষনীয় শাড়ী বোনের জন্য নিয়ে এসেছেন। সেই শাড়ি পিতামহীর আদেশে নাবালিকা বেলয়াকে পরিধান করতে হচ্ছে।

আলোচ্য গানটিতে বাল্যবিবাহের করুণ চিত্র উদ্ভাসিত হয়ে আছে। নাবালিকা মেয়েটিকে তার স্বাভাবিক বিচরণ ক্ষেত্রে খেলাধুলার অঙ্গন থেকে এনে বিয়ে দেয়া হচ্ছে। মেয়েটি বিয়ের কথা শুনে যতটা বিমর্ষ হয়েছে, তার চেয়ে বেশি উৎকণ্ঠিত হয়েছে বিদেশী পুরুষদের সঙ্গে বিয়ের প্রস্তাব শুনে। সে তার মায়ের কাছে অভিযোগ করেছে ঠিকই, কিন্তু তার অভিযোগ ফলপ্রসূ হয়নি - বিয়ের শাড়ি পড়ার আদেশ দানের মধ্যে দিয়ে তা প্রকাশ পেয়েছে। সামাজিক বৈষম্যের শিকার হয়ে নারীদের বাল্যবিবাহের প্রস্তাব মেনে নিতে হয় - এই চিত্রই আলোচ্য গানে উপস্থাপিত হয়েছে।

কোন কোন গানে কনেকে স্বস্তর বাড়ি গিয়ে তার স্বস্তর শাওড়ি - স্বামীর সেবায়ত্ন করার মন্ত্র শিখিয়ে দেয়া হয়। কারণ নারীদের কাজই হল স্বস্তরালয়ে গিয়ে স্বস্তর বাড়ির লোকদের স্নেহ প্রেম ও সেবা যত্নে আকৃষ্ট করে সংসার ধরে রাখা। নারীর পক্ষে তা সম্ভব না হলেও এই দণ্ড তাকে মেনে নিতে হয় নিরবে। অধিকাংশ গানে দেখা যায় কনের মা - বাবা ও আত্মীয়রা কনের গলায় ধরে কাঁদেন আর মেয়েকে বিদায় করে কেমন করে থাকবেন এই বিষয়ে উৎকণ্ঠা প্রকাশ করেন। কিন্তু এই উৎকণ্ঠিত অবস্থায় ও মেয়ের প্রতি উপদেশ প্রদানে তারা মোটেও পিছ পা হননা। বরের আগমনীতে এই দৃশ্য দেখা যায়। যেমন

২। আইলারে নতুন জামাই মুখে রুমাল দিয়া
কইরইলায় গো কইনার মা কইরইলায় বসিয়া
কইনার মায়ে কান্দইন কইনার গলায় ধরিয়া
এত মায়ার বিয়াই আমার কেমনে দিতাম বিয়া ?
যাও যাও ওগো জিয়াই যাও শস্তর দেশে
আপনও শাওড়ির সেবা করিও যতনে
আইলারে নতুন জামাই মুখে রুমাল দিয়া

আইলারে নতুন জামাই মুখে রুমাল দিয়া
 কইরইলায় গো কইনার ভবি কইরইলায় বসিয়া
 কইনার ভবিয়ে কান্দইন কইনার গলায় ধরিয়া
 এত মায়ার ননন্দআমার কেমনে দিতাম বিয়া
 যাও যাও ওগো ননন্দ যাও শতর দেশে
 আপনও স্বামীর সেবা করিও যতনে ।
 আইলারে নতুন জামাই মুখে রুমাল দিয়া
 কইরইলায় গো কইনার বিবি কইরইলায় বসিয়া
 কইনার বিবিয়ে কান্দইন কইনার গলায় ধরিয়া
 এত মায়ার নাতিন আমার কেমনে দিতাম বিয়া
 যাও যাও ওগো নাতিন যাও শতর দেশে
 আপনও শাওড়ির সেবা করিও যতনে
 বৎসরে বৎসরে নাইয়ের আনাইমু তুমারে ।

১। আইলারে - এলেন, আসলেন ২। দিয়া - দিয়ে ৩। রইলায় - রয়ে গেলেন,
 ছিলেন, ৪। কইনার - কনের ৫। বসিয়া - বসে ৬। কান্দইন - কাঁদেন
 ৭। ধরিয়া - ধরে ৮। বিয়াই - কন্যা, মেয়ে ৯। দিতাম - দেব ১০। বিয়া - বিয়ে
 ১১। ননন্দ - নন্দ ১২। বিবি - পিতামহী ১৩। নাতিন - নাতনি
 ১৪। নাইয়ের - স্বামী গৃহ থেকে পিতৃগৃহে কনের বেড়াতে আসা।
 ১৫। আনাইমু - এনে দেব, নিয়ে আসব ১৬। তুমারে - তোমাকে।

এই গানটির বিষয়বস্তু এইরূপ - নতুন বর রুমাল মুখে দিয়ে বিয়ে করতে
 এসেছেন এ সংবাদ নারীরা গানের মাধ্যমে কনের মায়ের কাছে পৌঁছে দিচ্ছেন।
 কনের মা কনের গলায় ধরে বিলাপ করে কাঁদছেন এত আদরের মেয়ে তিনি কি
 করে বিয়ে দেবেন একে একে কনের মা, বৌদি, কনের গলায় ধরে কাঁদছেন আর
 স্বতর দেশে গিয়ে স্বাতরী স্বামীর সেবা যত্ন করার মন্ত্র শিখিয়ে দিচ্ছেন। আবার
 কনের পিতামহী কনেকে প্রবোধ নিয়ে বলেছেন, প্রতি বছর তাকে একবার পিত্রালয়ে
 আপ্যায়ন করবেন।

আলোচ্য গানটিতে একটি মেয়ের বিবাহকে কেন্দ্র করে মেয়ের মা-বৌদি
 পিতামহীদের আত্ননাদ ফুটে উঠেছে। পাশাপাশি কনেকে স্বতরালয়ে গিয়ে স্বাতরী
 - স্বামীর সেবা যত্ন করার ও উপদেশ প্রদান করা হচ্ছে। লক্ষনীয় এখানে মেয়ের
 নিজের শরীরের প্রতি যত্ন নেওয়ার পরামর্শ না দিয়ে তাকে স্বতরালয়ের লোকদের
 প্রতি সেবা যত্ন করার উপদেশ দেয়া হচ্ছে। কনের আপনজনরা তার গলায় ধরে
 কাঁদছেন, কিন্তু তাদের মমতার অন্তরালে ফুটে উঠেছে উপদেশ। বলা বাহুল্য কনের
 মা, বৌদিরা নিজ নিজ স্বতরালয়ের লোকদের সেবা যত্ন করে এই মন্ত্র কনেকেও

শিখিয়ে দিচ্ছেন। কারণ নারীদের কাজই হল স্বত্তরবাড়ীর সদস্যদের স্নেহ-প্রেম, সেবা যত্নে মোহিত করা। নারীদের প্রতি এই বৈষম্যই গানটিতে বিধৃত হয়ে আছে।

উত্তর ত্রিপুরা জেলার মুসলমান সমাজের বিবাহের কোন কোন গানে প্রতিভাত হয় নারীর পিত্রালয় ছেড়ে যাওয়ার মুহূর্তে হাহাকারের চিত্র। এই পরিস্থিতিতে নারী পিত্রালয়ের নিকট আত্মীয়দের কথা স্মরণ করে মনকে বিষাদাচ্ছন্ন করে। এরকম একটি বিবাহের গান এখানে তুলে ধরাছি।

৩। লং চলে ধীরে ধীরে, মটর চলে পলকে
মটরের ভিতর সামাইয়া কইনা জুড়ের বাজনা বাজে
পরার দেশে গেলে গো কইনা মাইজী ডাকবে কারে
পরর মাইজীরে মাইজী ডাকলে আশুন জুলে
নিজের মাইজীরে মাইজী ডাকলে টানদি লইবা কোলে।
লং চলে ধীরে ধীরে, মটর চলে পলকে
মটরের ভিতর সামাইয়া কইনা জুড়ের বাজনা বাজে
পরার দেশে গেলে গো কইনা বাবাজী ডাকবে কারে
পরর বাবাজীরে বাবাজী ডাকলে আশুন জুলে
নিজের বাবাজীরে বাবাজী ডাকলে টানদি লইবা কোলে।
লং চলে ধীরে ধীরে, মটর চলে পলকে
মটরের ভিতর সামাইয়া কইনা জুড়ের বাজনা বাজে
পরার দেশে গেলে গো কইনা চাচাজী ডাকবে কারে
পরর চাচাজীরে চাচাজী ডাকলে আশুন জুলে
নিজের চাচাজীরে চাচাজী ডাকলে টানদি লইবা কোলে।
মাটির ভিতর সাম্যশায় কোকা জুড়লে বাতাস বাকে
পরর দেশে গেলে লো কোকা বাতাস জাড়বি পরর
পরর বাজানির বাজানির ডাকলে আশুন জুলে
নিজের বাজানির বাজানি ধরলে টানবি নাইবা কোল।
লং চলে ধীরে ধীরে, মটর চলে পলকে
মটরের ভিতর সামাইয়া কইনা জুড়ের বাজনা বাজে
পরার দেশে গেলে গো কইনা চাচিজী ডাকবে কারে
পরর চাচিজীরে চাচিজী ডাকলে আশুন জুলে
নিজের চাচিজীরে চাচিজী ডাকলে টানদি লইবা কোলে।

১। লং - লাঞ্চ ২। মটর - মোটর গাড়ি ৩। সামাইয়া - প্রবেশ করে

৪। জুড়ের বাজনা - ভীষণ কান্না যা বাজনার মতো শুনায়। ৫। পরার - অন্যের

৬। কইনা - কনে ৭। মাইজী - মা ৮। ডাকবে - ডাক দেবে ৯। কারে - কাকে

১০। পরর - অপরের ১১। মাইজীরে - মাকে ১২। টানদি - টান দিয়ে

১৩। লইবা - নেবেন ১৪। বাবাজী - বাবা, পিতা ১৫। চাচাজী - কাকা

১৬। কইতে - বলতে ১৭। চাচিজী - কাকি।

গানটির মর্মার্থ এইরূপ - বিদায় কালে মোটর গাড়ির ভেতরে প্রবেশ করে কনে কান্না জুড়েছে। কারণ তার মনে এই কথার উদয় হয়েছে যে, স্বস্তরবাড়ি যাওয়ার পর সে কাকে মা বলে ডাকবে শ্বাশুড়িকে মা বলে সম্বোধন করতেই হবে। কিন্তু অন্যের মাকে মা বলে ডাকলে তার ভেতর আগুন জ্বলে উঠবে। অন্য নারীকে মা বলে সম্বোধন করলে তৃপ্তি পাওয়া যাবে না। একই ক্রমে সে পিতা, কাকা, কাকিদের প্রসঙ্গ স্মরণ করছে।

এই গানটির মধ্যে একটি নববধূর হতাশা ও নৈরাশ্যের চিত্র অঙ্কিত হয়েছে। গানের অন্তর্নিহিত তাৎপর্য বেদনা-বিধূর। নতুন পরিবেশে পরবাসীদের আপন করে নেয়া নববধূদের কাজ। কিন্তু আপনজনদের ভুলে থাকা তার পক্ষে অসম্ভব। তাই দুই পক্ষের তুলনা করে নারী আপনজনদের অগ্রাধিকার দেয়। কারণ পিজালয়ে সে ছিল স্নেহের দুলালী, কিন্তু স্বস্তরালয়ে প্রবেশ করে সে হয় স্নেহের কাদাল।

অতীত স্মৃতি রোমন্থনের মাধ্যমে নারী জীবনের - অশ্রু বেদনাময় কাহিনি কোন কোন গানে ধরা পড়ে। তাই এই গানগুলির আবেদন হয়ে উঠে করুন-মধুর ও মর্মস্পর্শী। নারীরা তাদের এই সুপ্ত বেদনার কাহিনীকে নানা ক্রোধ অভিযোগের মাধ্যমে ব্যক্ত করে গানগুলিতে। নববধূরা তাই ফেলে আসা জীবনের আনন্দময় দিনগুলির কথা স্মরণ করে অশ্রুসিক্ত নয়নে। আবার কোন কোন গানে পিতা-মাতা পরিজন দ্বারা বিতাড়িত হওয়া নারীর চিত্র নানা অভিযোগের মাধ্যমে প্রকাশ পায়।

৪। বাবাজীর বাড়ীর তোতা না ময়না পাখি বাবাজীর ঘরে চলে।

বারো না বৎসরের কালে গো বাবাজী পরার ঘরটি করিলায় মোরে।

বাবাজী ছাড়িয়া যাইতে গো বাবাজী তুমের ও আগুন জ্বলে গইয়া গইয়া।

মাইজীর বাড়ীর তোতা না ময়না পাখি মাইজীর ঘরে চলে।

বারো না বৎসরের কালে গো মাইজী পরার ঘরটি করিলায় মোরে।

মাইজী ছাড়িয়া যাইতে গো মাইজী তুমের ও আগুন জ্বলে গইয়া গইয়া।

চাচাজীর বাড়ীর তোতা না ময়না পাখি চাচাজীর ঘরে চলে।

বারো না বৎসরের কালে গো চাচাজী পরার ঘরটি করিলায় মোরে।

চাচাজী ছাড়িয়া যাইতে গো চাচাজী তুমের ও আগুন জ্বলে গইয়া গইয়া।

চাচিজীর বাড়ীর তোতা না ময়না পাখি চাচিজীর ঘরে চলে।

বারো না বৎসরের কালে গো চাচিজী পরার ঘরটি করিলায় মোরে।

চাচিজী ছাড়িয়া যাইতে গো চাচিজী তুমের ও আগুন জ্বলে গইয়া গইয়া।

১। বাবাজীর - পিতার ২। পরার ঘরি - পরের ঘরের বাসিন্দা ৩। করিলায় - করলে

৪। ছাড়িয়া - ছেড়ে ৫। যাইতে - যেতে ৬। আফাল মারে - বড় ডেউ উঠে
৭। গইয়া গইয়া - আস্তে আস্তে ৮। মাইজীর - মায়ের ৯। চাচাজীর - কাকার,
জ্যাঠার ১০। চাচিজীর - কাকির।

এই গানটিতে বাল্যবিবাহের দৃশ্যের পাশাপাশি নিকটাত্মীয় দ্বারা নারীর বিভাঙিত হওয়ার চিত্রও ফুটে উঠে। অন্যদিকে নারী জীবনের করুণ অধ্যায় নানা ক্রোধ ও অভিযোগের মাধ্যমে বর্ণিত হয়েছে। গানে মেয়েটি বলছে -- তার পিতার ঘরের তোতা বা ময়না পাখিটি নিজ ঘরে বসবাসের সুযোগ পাচ্ছে, কিন্তু মেয়েটির বারো বছর হতে না হতেই তাকে জোর করে পরের ঘরে ঠেলে দেয়া হয়েছে। এজন্য মেয়েটি তার পিতা-মাতা-কাকা-কাকিদের ছেড়ে যাওয়ার দৃশ্যকে সমুদ্রের জলোচ্ছ্বাসের সঙ্গে তুলনা করছে। আবার তাদের ছেড়ে চলে যাওয়ার মুহূর্তে তার মনে ভুঘের আগুন জ্বলে ওঠে। নারীর এই বিভাঙিত জীবনের জন্য সে সকলকে সমভাবে দোষারূপ করছে। গানটি গভীরভাবে অনুধাবন করলে দেখা যায় -- মেয়েটির বিবাহ নামক পাণিগ্রহণের হাতে সমর্পন করা হয়নি, সমর্পন করা হয়েছে বাল্যবিবাহের করাল গ্রাসে।

বিয়ের গানগুলিতে ভেসে ওঠে শ্বশুরবাড়ির লোকদের ভয়াল মূর্তির চিত্র। অনেক গানেই দেখা যায় আসন্ন বধুনির্যাতনের আশঙ্কা। বধু নির্যাতনের মূলে রয়েছে বাল্যবিবাহ বয়সের চাপল্য, অভিজ্ঞতার সীমাবদ্ধতার ফলে নারী জীবনে নেমে আসে নানা ক্রটি বিচ্যুতি। আর এর কারণেই নারীর উপর চলে শ্বশুরালয়ের খাত্তার, খাত্তারীদের অত্যাচার বাস্তবে তার অনেক প্রমাণ পাওয়া যায়। উত্তর ত্রিপুরা জেলার মুসলমান সমাজের বিবাহের গানে আসন্ন নারী নির্যাতনের চিত্র নানা রূপে চিত্রিত হয়েছে। একটি গানের উপস্থাপনে আলোচ্য বিষয়ের উদাহরণ তুলে ধরা হয় ---

৫। ওত মায়ার তোতা আমার ঘুরে ডালে ডালে,
কাজলা পাখি সোনার ময়না কই রইলায় রে।
ওতই জন্মাদ শাওড়ীর ঘরে কেমনে দিন কাটাইমু রে
কাজলা পাখি সোনার ময়না কই রইলায় রে।
ওতই জন্মাদ শ্বাওড়ীর ঘরে কেমনে দিন কাটাইমু রে
কাজলা পাখি সোনার ময়না কই রইলায় রে।
ওতই জন্মাদ ননদাইর ঘরে কেমনে দিন কাটাইমু রে
কাজলা পাখি সোনার ময়না কই রইলায় রে।
ওত মায়ার তোতা আমার ঘুরে ডালে ডালে,
কাজলা পাখি সোনার ময়না কই রইলায় রে।

১। মায়ার - স্নেহের, আদরের ২। কাজলা পাখি - কনে নিজেই এ নামে উপমিত করেছে ৩। সোনার ময়না - কনে নিজেই এই নামে উপমিত করেছে। ৪। রইলায় রে - ছিলে ৫। জল্লাদ - প্রাণঘাতক ৬। শওড়ির - শাওড়ির ৭। কেমনে - কেমন করে ৮। কাটাইমুরে - কাটাব ৯। শ্বশুরার - শশুরের ১০। ননদাইর - ননদির।

পিত্রালায়ে অবস্থানকালে একজন নারীর পক্ষে নিজেই 'কাজলা পাখি,' 'সোনার ময়না,' বলে অভিহিত করা স্বাভাবিক। তাই আলোচ্য গানে নারী নিজেই স্নেহের ডাকে স্মরণ করেছে। সে শ্বশুরালয়ের লোকজনদের রক্তচক্ষুর দৃশ্য যেন উপলব্ধি করতে পারছে। তাই 'জল্লাদ' শ্বশুর - শাওড়ি - ননদির ঘরে কেমন করে সে দিনাতিপাত করবে ভেবে অস্থির হয়ে যাচ্ছে। শ্বশুরালায়ে প্রবেশ করার পূর্বেই এই দুঃশিক্ষায় নারীরা যে কতটা নিমগ্ন হয় তার চিত্র এই গানের ভাষায় ব্যক্ত হয়েছে। বাস্তবে দেখা যায় পুরুষতান্ত্রিক সমাজের প্রতাপে নববধূদের উপর নেমে আসে অত্যাচারের দুর্ভিষহ চিত্র। উল্লেখিত গানে আসন্ন বধু নির্যাতনের করুণ চিত্র ফুটে উঠেছে। গানটি বাস্তবজীবনে নারীর করুণ ও সার্বজনীন বেদনার আবেদনে উৎকৃষ্ট কাব্যরূপ লাভ করেছে।

কোন কোন গানে প্রতীকের মাধ্যমে নারী মনের বেদনা - বিধুর আলেখ্য চিত্রিত হয়েছে। বিবাহের পর শ্বশুর ঘরের লোকেরা শুধু নববধূকে পেয়েই তুষ্ট নয়, তারা নববধূর স্নেহ-প্রেম আদায় করতে চায়। তাই শ্বশুরবাড়ির লোকেরা নব বধূকে আপনজনদের মমতা কিভাবে ছিন্তা করতে হয় তার শিক্ষাও গানের মাধ্যমে প্রকাশ করে। এই সম্বন্ধীয় একটি গান নিচে উপস্থাপন করা হল :-

৬। কালা বাইঙ্গনের ধলা ফুল ক্রমালে গেথিয়া তুল
কইন্যা লো তোর দয়ার (দয়াল) মাইজীর মায়া তুল।
আমার মাইজীয়ে পালিছলা দুধ কলা খাওয়াইয়া
তোর থাকি অধিক মায়া আমার মাইজীর লাগিয়া।

কালা বাইঙ্গনের ধলা ফুল ক্রমালে গেথিয়া তুল
কইন্যা লো তোর ভাই-ভনির মায়া তুল।
আমার ভাই-ভইনে পালিছলা নিজে না খাইয়া
তোর থাকি অধিক মায়া আমার ভাই-ভনির লাগিয়া।

কালা বাইঙ্গনের ধলা ফুল ক্রমালে গেথিয়া তুল
কইন্যা লো তোর দয়ার (দয়াল) বাবাজীর মায়া তুল।
আমার বাবাজীয়ে পালিছলা রাজার চাকরী করিয়া
তোরও থাকি অধিক মায়া আমার বাবাজীর লাগিয়া।

১। কালা বাইঙ্গনির - কালো বেগুনের ২। দলা - সাদা, শুভ্র ৩। গাথিয়া - গাঁথে

৪। কইনা লো - কনে হে ৫। বাবা জিয়ে - পিতায় ৬। পালিছইন - জালন পালন করেছেন ৮। খাবাইয়া - খাইয়ে ৯। লইয়া - নিয়ে ১০। লাগি - জন্য ১১। উরো কাখো - কোলে কাঁখে ১২। করিয়া - করে।

উল্লিখিত গানে স্বত্তরবাড়ির লোকেরা কনেকে তার পিতা-মাতা-ভাইদের প্রতি মোহ কাটানোর প্রস্তাব করেছে। গানে নতুন কনেকে বলা হচ্ছে কালো বেগুনের শুভ্র ফুল রুমালে গাঁথার জন্য এবং এর মাধ্যমে তার মা, বাবা, ও ভাইয়ের মমতা ত্যাগের জন্য। মেয়েটি উত্তরে বলছে, তার পিতা তাকে খই কলা খাইয়ে বড় করেছেন। মা তাকে কোলে নিয়ে আর ভাই তাকে বাদশার চাকরি করে বড় করেছেন। স্বত্তরবাড়ির লোকদের তুলনায় তার আপন আত্মীয়দের প্রতি সে অধিক আকৃষ্ট।

কালো বেগুনের উপর সাদা ফুল তোলার তাৎপর্য হচ্ছে মেয়েটি সবেমাত্র তার আত্মীয়-পরিজন থেকে বিচ্ছিন্ন হয়েছে, তাই তার মন বেদনায় বেগুনের মত কালো হয়ে আছে। নতুন পরিবেশে মনকে খুশি করে শুভ্র করে নেওয়ার জন্যই রুমালের উপর সাদা ফুল তুলার প্রস্তাব দেওয়া হচ্ছে। কিন্তু নতুন পরিবেশে খাপ খেতে না পারা নারীটি স্বত্তরালয়ের চেয়ে পিত্রালয়ের লোকদের স্নেহ-মমতার মানদণ্ডে অগ্রাধিকার প্রদান করেছে। এই গানটিতে নারী বৈষম্যের এক নতুন চিত্র দৃশ্যমান হয়ে আছে। নারীর স্নেহ মমতাকে উৎপাটন করার শিক্ষা গানটিতে বিদ্যুত হয়ে উঠেছে। নববধূকে শুধু শত্তরঘরে সশরীরে অবস্থান করলেই হবে না, তার স্নেহ প্রেমকেও নিংড়ে নিতে হবে। এই ভাবে স্বত্তরালয়ে নারীর শারীরিক ও মানসিক স্বাধীনতাকে হনন করা হয়। এর চেয়ে করুণ পরিণতি নারিজীবনে আর কি হতে পারে।

বিবাহের পর কনে স্বামীর প্রেম প্রীতি লাভ করলেও পিতা-মাতা-ভাই-আত্মীয় স্বজনদের স্নেহ মমতা ভুলতে পারে না। ফলে নববিবাহিতার নিকট অনুশোচনা ও নৈরাশ্যের কালো মেঘ ক্রমে ঘনীভূত হয়। তার মনে নানা বিরূপতা জাগ্রত হলেও সে সহজে বিদ্যালয়ে যেতে পারে না। অপ্রাপ্ত বয়স্কা কন্যা পিতা-মাতা আত্মীয় পরিজনের স্নেহে বড় হয়ে উঠলেও স্বত্তরালয়ে তার অবস্থান ঠিক বিপরীত মেরুতে। এজন্য পিত্রালয়ের আনন্দময় দিনগুলি স্মরণ করে কনের মন বিচ্ছেদ বেদনায় ভরাক্রান্ত হয়ে ওঠে। উত্তর ত্রিপুরার জেলার মুসলমানদের সমাজের বিবাহের গানে এই দৃশ্য উজ্জ্বলভাবে তুলে ধরা হয়েছে। এ প্রসঙ্গে একটি গান স্মরণীয়।

৭। বালি রইলা রান্দনে উন্দাল ভিজে বালির কান্দনে
কিসের লাগি কান্দগো বধু কইবায় আমার আগে
বাবাজির বাড়ির তেতুল গাছ তারুতলে খেরিয়াল
তারু তলে থইয়া আইছি বাপ চাচার শহর

আম্মা কান্দি ও কারণ।

শাওড়িয়ে জিজ্ঞাসা করইন কান্দ কি কারণ ?

এত কান্দ কি কারণ ?

বালি রইলা রান্দনে উন্দাল ভিজে বালির কান্দনে

কিসের লাগি কান্দগো বধু কইবায় আমার আগে

বাবাজির বাড়ির উরিঝার তারুতলে খেরিয়াল

তারু তলে থইয়া আইছি এক বয়সি সকল

আম্মা কান্দি ও কারণ।

শাওড়িয়ে জিজ্ঞাসা করইন কান্দকি কারণ ?

গত কান্দ কি কারণ ?

বালি রইলা রান্দনে উন্দাল ভিজে বালির কান্দনে

কিসের লাগি কান্দগো বধু কইবায় আমার আগে

চাচাজীর বাড়ির কাঁঠাল গাছ তারুতলে খেরিয়াল

তারু তলে থইয়া আইছি মাই চাচি সকল

আম্মা কান্দি ও কারণ।

শাওড়িয়ে জিজ্ঞাসা করইন কান্দকি কারণ ?

গত কান্দ কি কারণ ?

১। বালি - কলিকা ২। রইলা - থাকলো, রয়ে গেল ৩। রান্দনে - রান্নায়

৪। উন্দাল - রান্নাঘর ৫। কান্দনে - কান্নায় ৬। কান্দ - কাদ ৭। কইবায় - বলবে

৮। আমার আগে - আমার কাছে ৯। বাবাজির - পিতার ১০। তারুতলে - তার

তলায় ১১। খেড়িয়াল - খেলার ঘর ১২। থইর আইছি - রেখে এসেছি ১৩। চাচা-

কাকা ১৪। আম্মা - মা ১৫। কান্দি - কাঁদছি ১৬। উরিঝার - শিমঝাড়।

বাল্যবিবাহের জাঁতাকলে পিষ্ট হওয়া একটি নববধূর করুণ কাহানি এই গানে উপস্থাপিত হয়েছে। ছোটবালিকা স্বস্তরালয়ে রাঙামাটির কানায় ভেঙ্গে পড়েছে। তার অশ্রুধারায় মাটি সিক্ত হয়ে গেছে। শাওড়ির প্রশ্নের জবাবে সে বলেছে, পিতার বাড়ির তেতুলগাছের তলায় তার খেলাঘরের পাশে পিতা কাকাদের শহর সে রেখে এসেছে। সে ক্রমান্বয়ে উত্তরে বলেছে যে, পিতার বাড়ির শিম গাছের তলায় খেলা ঘরে সে ফেলে এসেছে সময় বয়সি খেলুরেদের। জ্যাঠার বাড়ির কাঁঠাল গাছের নীচে সে রেখে এসেছে তার মা কাকাদের। অতীত স্মৃতি রোমন্থন করে ছোট বধূটি তার কান্নার কারণ বর্ণনা করছে শাওড়ির কাছে।

বালিকা বধূটি অতীত জীবনের আনন্দময় দিনগুলোকে স্মরণ করে উদ্বিগ্ন হয়ে কাঁদছে। ভাগ্যের পরিহাসে সে স্বস্তর ঘরের হেলে তার সময় কাটছে। এরকম পরিস্থিতিতে বালিকা মনে তার সঙ্গী সাথী খেলুড়ের স্মৃতি মনে হওয়া স্বাভাবিক।

বালাবিবাহের গানে তার অতীত স্মৃতি আজ চোখের জলের মাধ্যমে ব্যক্ত হচ্ছে। যে বয়সে তার সঙ্গীরা তেঁতুল গাছের তলায় খেলা ঘরে খেলা করেছে, সেই বয়সে তাকে স্বত্তরবাড়ির লোকদের জন্য আহার তৈরী করতে হচ্ছে। নারীর প্রতি এই বৈষম্য গানটির মধ্যে বিধৃত রয়েছে।

উত্তর ত্রিপুরা জেলার মুসলমান সমাজের বিবাহের মেয়েলি গানগুলিতে জীবন ঘনিষ্ঠ বৈশিষ্ট্যের পরিচয় পাওয়া যায়। কথার সারল্য ও সুরের মাধুর্যে গানগুলি চিত্রাকর্ষক হয়ে উঠলেও এর অন্তর্নিহিত তাৎপর্য বেদনা বিধুর। বিবাহের গানগুলিতে তাই নারী জীবনের অনন্ত সমস্যার খুব উদ্ভাসিত হয়ে ওঠে। কোন কোন গানে দেখা যায় পুরুষতান্ত্রিক সমাজে নারীর অসহায়তার চিত্র, আবার কোথাও দেখা যায় বালাবিবাহের বেদনাময় চিত্র। একদিকে যেমন শত্তর পক্ষের লোকদের রক্ত চক্ষুর বর্ণনা পাওয়া যায়, তেমনি কোন কোন গানে ফুটে ওঠে নারীর আপন ভাগ্য বিলম্বনার ইতিবৃত্ত। এই গানগুলিতে নারীদের চিত্র বিচিত্র বৈচিত্রে ভরা বৈষম্যের কাহিনি বিধৃত হয়ে আছে। এ জেলার মুসলমান সমাজের বিবাহের গানে পুরুষদের প্রতি নারীর স্নেহ প্রেম নিবেদনের মন্ত্র শেখানো হয়, কিন্তু কোন গানে পুরুষদের নারীর প্রতি স্নেহ প্রেম নিবেদনের আদেশ দেওয়া হয় না। ফলে পতির কাছে পত্নীর মর্যাদা সমানাধিকারের মানদণ্ডে বিচার্য হয় না, বিচার হয় ভোগে, সেবায় ও দাসীত্বপনায়। আর কোন নারী যদি এর বিরুদ্ধে বিদ্রোহী হয়ে ওঠে, তবে তাকে সেই প্রবাদ বলে দেয়া হয় ‘অলইদ জন্দ হিলে, আর বউ জন্দ কিলে’ (হলুদ জন্দ শিলে, আর বউ জন্দ কিলে) এভাবেই নারীর জীবনে জমা হয় নিত্য-নৈমিত্তিক নীপিড়নের ঘন অন্ধকার।

নারী জীবনের বেদনার অন্তরালে গানগুলির মধ্যে সুগু ক্রোধ, অভিমান, অভিযোগ মিশ্রিত হয়ে থাকে। কিন্তু তাদের এই অভিযোগ ফলপ্রসূ হয় না। কারণ পুরুষতান্ত্রিক সমাজের পেশিশক্তির প্রত্যাপে নারীর সুগু এক ক্রোধ খড়্গকুটোর মত উড়ে যায়। বালাবিবাহের জাতকালে নাবালিকা মেয়েদের বিয়ে হতে দেখা যায়। কিন্তু কোনো গানে বালক বিবাহের চিত্র দৃষ্টিগোচর হয় না। নারীর প্রতি এই উপেক্ষা গানগুলিতে উজ্জ্বল রেখায় চিত্রিত হয়ে আছে। শুধু তাই নয়, কনের প্রতি এই বৈষম্যের পাশাপাশী চিত্রিত হয় কনের মায়ের আর্তনাদ। অধিকাংশ গানে নারীকে স্বত্তরালয়ে ত্যাগ - তিত্তিকার বাণী শোনানো হয়। ভক্তি-প্রেম-ভালবাসায় নিবেদিত প্রাণা হয়ে ওঠাই যেন নারীর জীবন ধর্ম। তবুও সমাজে তারা অনাদৃত, উপেক্ষিত।

বধু নির্যাতনের কেন্দ্রবিন্দুতে রয়েছে বালাবিবাহের অভিষাপ। কিন্তু উত্তর ত্রিপুরা জেলার বিবাহের গানগুলির সিংহভাগেই দখল করে আছে বালাবিবাহের চিত্র। নারী জীবনের অসহায়তার পরিণাম সম্পর্কে সকল মায়েরাই দুঃশিস্তায় নিমগ্ন।

তাই মেয়ে বিয়ে দিতে সবচেয়ে বেশি তারাই হতাশা ও নৈরাশ্যের শিকার হন। বিবাহের গানের মধ্যে তাই দেখা যায় নারীরা এই সামাজিক বৈষম্যকে আপন ভাগ্যের পরিহাস হিসেবে মেনে নেয়। উত্তর ত্রিপুরার মুসলমান সম্প্রদায়ের সমাজ নিরীক্ষণে বিবাহের গানগুলির গুরুত্ব অপরিসীম। পুরুষেরা প্রভুত্ব করবে, আর নারীর করবে এই বৈষম্যই গানগুলির অক্ষরে অক্ষরে রূপিত হয়ে আছে।

তথ্য সূত্র :

১। তথ্যদাতার নাম :- রুকছানা বেগম

স্বামী :- জাকারিয়া আহম্মদ

লিঙ্গ :- স্ত্রী

বয়স :- ২০

পেশা :- গৃহকর্ম

শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা :- সপ্তম শ্রেণী

জাত :- তালুকদার

ঠিকানা :- গাম- ফুলবাড়ী।

পো: অফিস :- চুরাইবাড়ী।

ধানা :- চুরাইবাড়ী

মহকুমা :- ধর্মনগর

সংগ্রহের তারিখ:- ২৯-০৭-২০১৩ ইং

২। তথ্যদাতার নাম:- জাহানারা বেগম

পিতা :- মৃত, জালাল উদ্দিন

লিঙ্গ:-স্ত্রী

বয়স:-১৫

পেশা:- ছাত্রী

শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা:- দশম শ্রেণী

জাত:- তালুকদার

ঠিকানা:- কুতি।

পো: অফিস:- কুতি

ধানা:- কদমতলা

মহকুমা:- ধর্মনগর

সংগ্রহের তারিখ:- ০২-০৮-২০১২ ইং।

৩। তথ্যদাতার নাম:- রুকসানা আক্তার

স্বামী:- মতাহির আলি।

লিঙ্গ:-স্ত্রী।

বয়স:- ১৯

পেশা:- ছাত্রী।

শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা:- বি.এ. প্রথম বর্ষ

জাত:- তালুকদার।

ঠিকানা:- গ্রাম- খওরাবিল

পো: অফিস:- রাঙ্গাউটি

মহকুমা:- কৈলাশের (উনকোটি)

সংগ্রহের তারিখ:- ২৩-০৮-২০১৩ ইং।

৪। তথ্যদাতার নাম:- কুতুবুন নেছা।

স্বামী:- আব্দুল ওয়াহিদ।

লিঙ্গ:- স্ত্রী।

বয়স:- ৫০

পেশা:- গৃহকর্ম।

শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা:- প্রথম শ্রেণী।

জাত:- তালুকদার

ঠিকানা:- গ্রাম- চুড়াইবাড়ী।

থানা:- চুড়াইবাড়ী।

পো: অফিস:- চুড়াইবাড়ী

মহকুমা:- ধর্মনগর।

সংগ্রহের তারিখ:- ০৩-০৬-২০১১ ইং।

৫। তথ্যদাতার নাম:- সুজিয়া বেগম।

স্বামী:- ছমর আলী।

লিঙ্গ:- স্ত্রী।

বয়স:- ২৪।

পেশা:- লোকশিল্পী ও দর্জি।

শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা:- স্নাতক।

জাত:- লংলি (পুরাতন ঠিকানা বাংলাদেশের লংলা, সিলেট)

ঠিকানা:- গ্রাম- কালাছড়া।

পো: অফিস:- কালা ছড়া।

মহকুমা:- ধর্মনগর

সংগ্রহের তারিখ:- ২৬-০২-২০১২ ইং।

৬। তথ্যদাতার নাম:- শামীমা বেগম।

পিতা:- মুজিবুর রহমান।

লিঙ্গ:- স্ত্রী।

বয়স:- ১৪ ও ১৫ ।

পেশা:- ছাত্রী

শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা:- অষ্টম নবম শ্রেণী।

জাত:- পঞ্চখন্ডি (পুরাতন ঠিকানা বাংলাদেশের পঞ্চখন্ড, সিলেট)।

ঠিকানা:- গ্রাম- দ:কদমতলা।

থানা:- কদমতলা

পো: অফিস:- কদমতলা

মহকুমা:- ধর্মনগর

সংগ্রহের তারিখ:- ০৮-১০-২০১৩ ইং।

৭। তথ্যদাতার নাম:- হুশিয়ারা বেগম।

স্বামী:- আহাদুর রহমান।

লিঙ্গ:- স্ত্রী।

বয়স:- ৩০।

পেশা:- গৃহকর্ম।

শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা:- অষ্টম শ্রেণী।

জাত:- তালুকদার।

ঠিকানা:- গ্রাম- চুড়াইবাড়ী।

পো: অফিস:- চুড়াইবাড়ী

থানা:- চুড়াইবাড়ী

মহকুমা:- ধর্মনগর

সংগ্রহের তারিখ:- ০৪-০৬-২০১১ ইং।

গ্রন্থপঞ্জি:-

১। আওতোষ ভট্টাচার্য, বাংলার লোকসংস্কৃতি। ন্যাশনাল বুক ট্রাস্ট ইন্ডিয়া।

নয়া দিল্লি - ২০০৫,

২। অচিন্তা বিশ্বাস, লোকসংস্কৃতিবিদ্যা। অঞ্জলি পাবলিশার্স, কলকাতা।

আগস্ট - ২০০৬।

৩। নির্মল দাস, ত্রিপুরার লোকসংস্কৃতি। ত্রিপুরা বাণী প্রকাশনী, আগরতলা - ২০০৯।

৪। মহম্মদ আব্দুল জলিল। লোকসাহিত্যের নানা দিক। বাংলা একাডেমী

ঢাকা - ১৯৯৩।

৫। বরুণকুমার চক্রবর্তী, বঙ্গীয় লোকসংস্কৃতি কোষ। অপর্ণা বুক ডিস্ট্রিবিউটার্স,

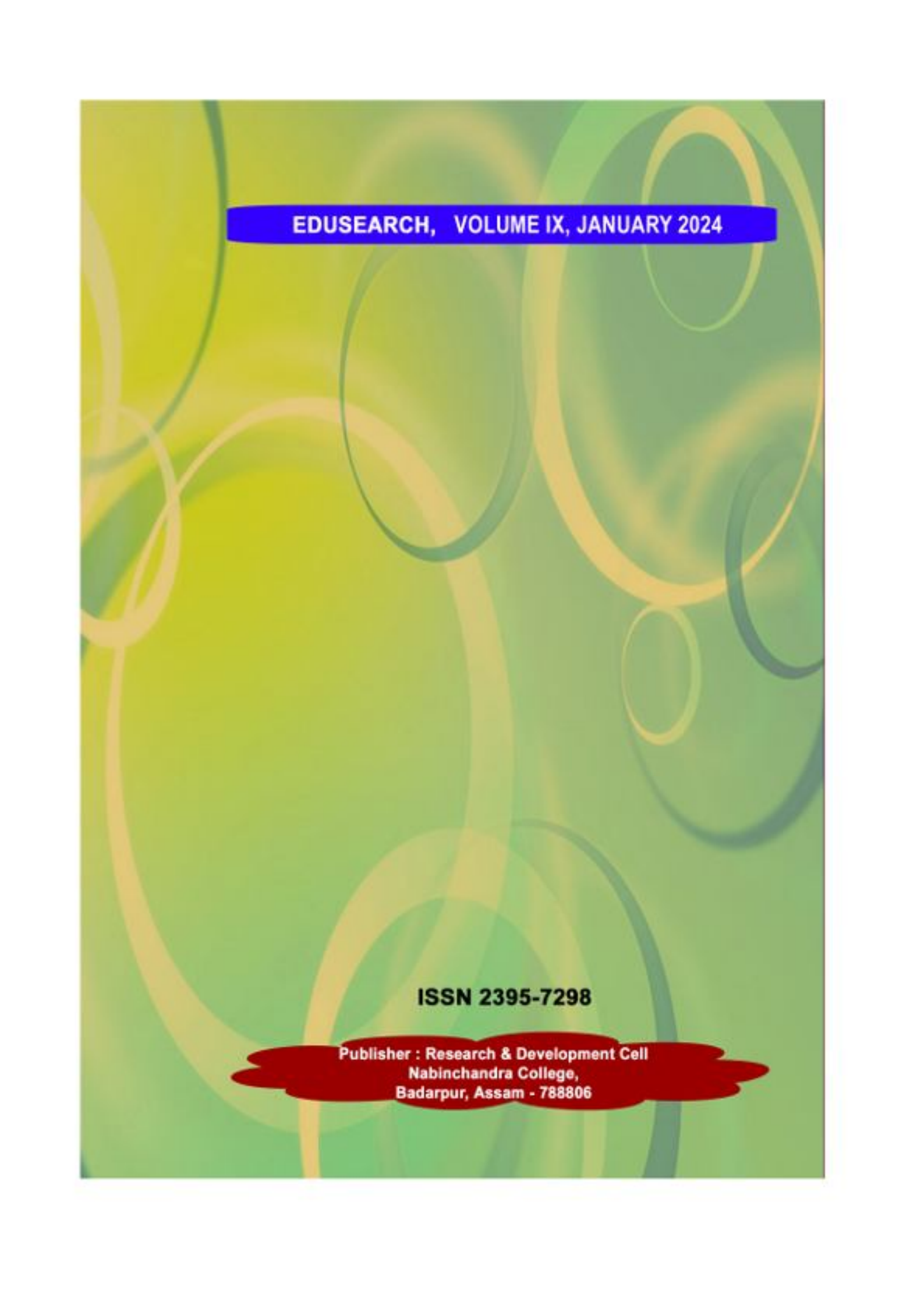
কলকাতা - ২০০৭।

৬। রমাপ্রসাদ দত্ত ও নির্মল দাশ, শতাব্দীর ত্রিপুরা। অক্ষর পাবলিকেশন

আগরতলা - ২০০৩।

৭। শক্তিনাথ কাঁ, 'মুসলমান সমাজে বিয়ের গীত'। দেজ অফসেট।

কলকাতা - ১৯৯৬।



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