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Editor's Note

This issue of *Journal of Communication and Journalism Research* deals with various perspectives of film, different dimensions of politics, philosophy of religious and literary writing; and socio-psycho aspects of communication. Portrayal and representation of gender in films have grabbed much research attention for the last several decades. Likewise, role of mass media in politics, particularly during elections, is still a most sought after research topic that has various underpinnings. However, literary journeys through religious texts are very rare in the angles and perspectives of hardcore research.

Ananthakrishnan U and V. SanthiSiri explore various socio-cultural underpinnings in the Malayalam film industry during the advent of a new wave film culture post 2010. They argue that the so-called 'New Generation' movies distanced themselves from the then existing conventional narrative style and opened up a liberal space with arguments on gender and the politics of representation. Sudheer S. Salam also looks into the gender predilections of Hindi movies. His study tries to find the parallels of the trend in Hindi films, as more and more female filmmakers are out there into Indian parallel and commercial filmmaking. Lakshmi Pradeep revisits the world of Satyajit Ray twenty-five years after he passed away in 1992 and reaffirms that his films have a ring of truth, and are seamless narratives which offer a wealth of psychological insight. She also highlights that the humanism, universality, deceptive simplicity and underlying complexity evident make his works contemporary, easily transcending barriers of time and space.

Zacaria T V analyses the limitations of industrial democracy in the context of state promoted private enterprises. He postulates that the traditional wisdom that Kerala work force has an upper hand in the collective bargaining process seems to be fallacy in the context of industrial democracy in Mavoor. The article of Simi Varghese explores the history, dimensions of politics, prospects and perspectives of mass media in the context of technological invasion. Meanwhile, in another article, Abdul Muneer V looks into the style and format of the news and debate shows of Malayalam news channels. The study reveals that they follow almost the same style and format and that there is much similarity and synchronicity in their topic selection and presentation style.

A.I. Vilayathullah journeys through the autobiographies of Leopold Weiss, Malcolm X & Kristiane Backer, three major life writers of the last one hundred years, whose life's journeys took entirely different directions following the startling

discoveries they made in the course of their wanderings. In another essay on literature, Afsal P C throws new light upon the racial and socio-political and economic problems faced by the Blacks citing the life experiences of the characters of Dionne Brand's fiction. The racial and the class-division-imposed life situations and existential crises of identity Dionne Brand's characters confront, their intuitive responses to these verities, and the answers they fail to formulate into arguments of vehemence are investigated by the researcher here.

Utilising a mixed research design that involves survey research and focus group interview, Binduja V. and Muhammadali Nellyullathil assess the effectiveness of Psycho Social Services, a government of Kerala initiative in schools in the state. How effective is PSS in interpersonal communication among adolescents, adolescent- parent communication adolescent- teacher communication and adolescents' group communication is the fundamental question tried to answer in this study.

Industrial Democracy in State-Promoted Private Industries in Kerala

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Abstract

The misconceptions about the nature of industrial democracy seem to have produced a false picture of the collective bargaining process in the state of Kerala. This observation is more relevant in the case of those state promoted industries established by big capitalist whether national or international. The liberal industrial policies formulated by the first communist government in Kerala and the consequent setting up of an extraction industry in Mavoor village in Calicut district in Kerala produced a unique system of industrial democracy in the area. On the one side the factory provided employment to a larger volume of workforce. On the other side it irrationally extracted huge quantity of natural resources at suicidal rates causing irreparable damages on natural environment. The traditional wisdom that Kerala workforce has an upper hand in the collective bargaining process seems to be fallacy in the context of industrial democracy in Mavoor. The relationship between the government and the management particularly over the subject of granting subsidies seems to be the main factor shaping the nature of industrial democracy in this area. It presents a story of management tilting the labour unrest for the purpose of manipulating public policies, particularly those governing the industrial activities in the state. This paper is an effort to explore the limitations of industrial democracy in the context of state promoted private enterprises.

Keywords

Industrial Democracy, Collective Bargaining, State Promoted Industries, Trade Unionism, Labour Management Relations.

Introduction

Collective bargaining is actually a complicated and difficult process which must be thoroughly understood in order to ensure the proper results (Campbell and Stanley (1985). Although there are numerous models of collective bargaining, for the conceptual simplicity, here the model advanced by Neil W. Chamberlain is taken as methodological tool to understand the process of collective bargaining in Mavoor.

Theoretical Frame Work

Neil W. Chamberlain, the famous labour economist, developed an integrated view on collective bargaining process in his well-known work 'A General Theory of Economic Process' (1955). As a beginning, Chamberlain brought all the major perspectives on

collective bargaining under three categories namely marketing theory, governmental theory and the managerial theory (Chamberlain, 1955).

The marketing theory, as advocated by Sidney Webb and Beatrice Webb, held that, collective bargaining is a means of contracting for the sale of labour. On the other side, the governmental theory treats collective bargaining as a rule making process in industry. Here the firm is considered as a state and the negotiations as sharing of sovereignty between the union and the management. Finally, the managerial theory considers the collective bargaining as a system of industrial management. To them it is a complex, flexible and dynamic group action in labour-management relations. Gradually, he advanced a model to understand the bargaining process. Here it is to be kept in mind that he treated collective bargaining as a process of accommodation between the trade unions' and management's conflicting interests. He found bargaining power as 'the ability to secure your opponents agreement to your terms'. Obviously union's bargaining power means its ability to secure management's agreement to its terms. In other words, the union's bargaining power can be defined as management's willingness to agree to the Union's terms or demands (Ibid).

Further, the willingness or unwillingness is depended up on how costly disagreeing will be relative to how costly agreeing will be. The relation between the agreeing costs and disagreeing costs helps us to make an equation to illustrate the bargaining power of the parties involved in the bargaining process. Let Union's bargaining power be UBP, Management's perceived Cost of disagreeing with unions demand be MCD and Management's perceived Costs of agreeing with union's demands be MCA:

$$\text{then, UBP} = \frac{\text{MCD}}{\text{MCA}}$$

Similarly, the management's bargaining power (MBP) can be also explained. Here managements bargaining power means its ability to secure union's agreement to its terms. In other words, MBP can be defined as union's willingness to agree to the management's terms. In the form of equation

$$\text{MBP} = \frac{\text{UCD}}{\text{UCA}}$$

here UCD Stands for union's perceived cost of disagreeing with management's demands and UCA stands for union's perceived cost of agreeing with management's demands.(Ibid)

To illustrate the equations, suppose negotiations begin with union asking for a Re. 1/-per hour wage increase. As per in the equation, if management perceives that the cost of disagreeing to this wage demand will exceed the cost of agreeing, then the management will choose to accept the union's wage demand. On the other hand, if the management perceives that the costs of agreeing will exceed the cost of disagreeing, the unions wage demand will be rejected by the management. In the latter case several things may happen: the union may alter (lower) its demand, or a strike may result.

Chamberlain's model correctly suggests that a party's bargaining power is relative in the sense that it will depend up on what is being demanded or offered. For example, the union's bargaining power will be much higher when it is asking for say Re.1/- per hour wage increase then when it is asking for Rs. 2/- per hour. In terms of equation, the denominator will be large, tending to cause the Union's bargaining power to exceed unity

and inducing management's acceptance of the Union's terms. As a generalization, it can be concluded that the greater the union's wage demand, the greater the management's resistance to it and therefore less will be the union's bargaining power (Ibid).

Tough the model provided that the necessary condition for agreement is that one party must find it more costly to disagree than to agree with the other party's wage demand or offer, it may not be sufficient. The disagreement may arise because one party misjudges the other's position or because the parties become committed to irreconcilable position during the negotiation process. In addition, in situations where tripartism exists, the third party (usually government) can also play a vital role in the bargaining process. Above all the economic environment of both national economy and the firm can also influence the bargaining power of the parties involved in the negotiation process.

In our study Chamberlain's model helps us to treat the process of collective bargaining in Mavoor from a theoretical glance. Here the external factors like government's role, economic environment and finally the misjudgment factor etc, have a crucial role in the bargaining process. Instead of bi-partism, the Mavoor case stands as a fine example for tripartism in labour-management relations and collective bargaining.

The collective bargaining process that had existed in Gwalior Rayon factory in Mavoor in Calicut in the state of Kerala was unique in nature. Due to the tripartite nature of the labor management relations in this industrial unit, this article has been structured into three parts analyzing the role of three major players namely the government, management and finally the trade unions. The first part is an effort to explore the role played by Government of Kerala in making the collective bargaining in the area unique in the context of a liberal industrial policy. The second part tries to bring about the manner in which the management effectively tilted the collective bargaining process in its favor by manipulating the system of industrial democracy and policies of both central and state governments. Third part examines the working class behavior in state sponsored private industrial environment both in normal and challenged situations.

The Government Factor

The Gwalior Rayons Factory at Mavoor was established in 1958 under an agreement between the government of Kerala and the Birlain the context of arigorous campaign for industrialization carried out by the left government under the leadership of EMS Namboothirppad (Prasad, 2009). Obliviously, the provisions incorporated in this agreement allowed the management to enjoy a number of undue privileges. Firstly, the state government agreed to supply bamboo and eucalyptus, the main raw materials in pulp production at a suicidal rate of Re. 1/-per tonne against the fact that the Vindhya Pradesh government (currently Madhya Pradesh) sold the same forest products to the same management's Orient Paper Mill at a rate of Rs. 6.50/- per tonne. Again, the royalty rate of this was Rs. 80/-per tonne in the open market. According to a newspaper report during the period 1963-80, the factory had used two lakhs tonnes of bamboo and reed for which the Kerala Government received Rs. 24 lakhs. If the price was fixed at a more reasonable level of Rs. 100/- per tonne, the royalty would be Rs. 24 crore. The royalty rate remained more or less constant till 1978, when Kerala Government passed the Forest Produce Act (Fixation of Selling Price) 1978 (Saboo,1988).

The passage of the new act was a landmark in the history of labour management relations in Mavoor in the sense that it was really a policy shift; from a liberal industrial policy to a commitment to control the corporate agenda governing the public policies. As a result, the company had to surrender many strategic privileges enjoyed by the management in the past two decades. Firstly, the new act freed the state government from the mandatory

responsibility of ensuring the uninterrupted supply of raw materials at subsidy rate. Secondly, it authorized the state Government to re-fix the selling price of the forest produce of Kerala. As a result, the government of Kerala revised the royalty rate year by year and finally it reached Rs. 527.62 per tonne in the year 1985. The rise in the royalty rate resulted in a corresponding fall in the profit rate. This change in the royalty rate had a negative impact on industrial relations in Mavoor. On the one side, the relation between the management and the trade unions started deteriorating. On the other side, the management started a propaganda that the irrational increase of the prices of the raw materials would finally result in the collapse of the industry. As part of this it published a statement regarding the loss incurred by the factory during 1982-1986 period (See Table. 1)

Table1: The Loss Account During 1982-86 Periods

Year	Pulp Division	Fibre Division	Total
	(Amount in lakhs)	(Amount in lakhs)	(Amount in lakhs)
1982-83	213.28	203.94	417.22
1982-84	379.39	192.87	572.26
1984-85	476.12	156.49	632.61
1985-86	384.42	132.61	517.23
Total	1453.21	686.11	2139.22

Source: Saboo, R.N., 'Mavoorinte Sampoorina Charithram'.

Contrary to the arguments of the factory management, the government subsidy on various other items continued to help the management to save substantially on cost of raw materials. The annual subsidy on raw materials alone worked out at Rs. 16 crore, whereas the annual wage bill of the factory was less than Rs. 10 crore. Again, while the government charged Rs. 527.62 per tonne, the price of the same raw material in the open market was Rs. 1000 per tonne (Patriot, 1988). It is worthwhile to remember the report submitted by the cost accountant jointly appointed by the management and government that the factory would be a viable unit even if the raw material price were Rs. 800/- per tonne. More over Ms. Chainani, the Vice President of the Gwalior Silk Manufacturing Company, herself had admitted that the price of the imported pulp is more than Rs. 11,000/- per tonne while the indigenous pulp costs only between Rs. 8,000/- and Rs. 10,000/-(Rajan, 1984).

In addition to the concessions on royalty rate government had also allowed the management to raise an industrial plantation of eucalyptus over an area of 30,000 acres of forestland in Nilamboor. Further, it also agreed to lease the bamboo forest areas at Nenmara, Palghat, Wayanad and Calicut divisions to the management. It was allowed to use the river chaliyar as 'un-protesting recipient of the toxic waste coming out of the factory'.

In the case of the Union government the matter was more or less same. It had also adjusted its declared policies so as to help the Birla management. The Union government sanctioned the management, the foreign exchange for capital goods imports before bringing the latter under the industries (Development and Regulation Act) Act 1951. Again the Licensing committee of the union government allowed the management to go ahead with substantial expansion of capacity. Above all, in the 1970's, the company was allowed to import pulp from abroad.(Chathunny Master, 1984)

The Management Factor

Among those different units of GRASIM, the Mavoor and Harihar units produce rayon grade pulp, and the raw material for these units are drawn from Kerala and Karnataka forests respectively. Till the commencement of Harihar Unit in 1972, the Mavoor unit was the sole supplier of rayon grade pulp to the fibre units of GRASIM industries. When the management secured pulp-importing license from the central government, the strategic role of the Mavoor unit in GRASIM industries further declined. Theoretically, since 1972 the bargaining power of the management marked an increase in the sense that management's perceived cost of disagreeing with union's demands declined. Hence the resisting capacity of the management against union demands rose to above unity.

The initial investment of the Mavoor factory was Rs. 13 crore. When the production started in 1963, there were 1840 workers and 350 staff employed at an average monthly wage of Rs. 60 to Rs. 300 respectively. The strength of labour force further increased and in the 1980's it reached nearly 5000, which includes the reserve workers. Apart from this 5000 about 10,000 people found indirectly depended on the factory for their livelihood. The annual wage bill of the factory stood around Rs. 10 crore.

In order to utilize fully the installed capacity of 72, 000 tonne pulp per year, the factory wanted 3.6 lakhs tonne raw materials. As per the original agreement, it was made the responsibility of the state government to provide sufficient raw materials to the factory and the royalty rate was fixed at Rs. 1/- per tonne, which in turn helped the management to make abnormal profit. Whenever the government tried to raise the royalty rate the management used to protest against it at its full strength. During the first 15 years (1963-78) the factory management reaped a profit of Rs. 63 crore and paid its workers an average bonus of 40 per cent (Latheef, 1988).

From the very beginning of the factory, it is alleged that, workers demand for improvement in their living conditions was met with an immediate closure of the factory either in the name of shortage of raw materials or due to the so called 'violence in the factory premises'. Interestingly, this strategy was successful in using the closure as a cudgel against labour agitation and to put pressure on the state government to bring down the royalty rate of raw materials. In addition to this, the management alleged to promote disunity among working by allowing certain special concessions and privileges to prominent unions in general and trade union elites in particular. K.T. Ram Mohan and K. Ravi Mohan described this new kind of labour-management relations as 'collaborationist kind of trade union leadership' (Ram and Ravi, 1988).

As a result of the reactionary policy of the management, the workers had to strike almost every year from the late sixties. The reserve workers of the factory were offered work only for thirteen days in a month. In spite of the fact that most of the reserve workers had served for 10-15 years, the management refused either to employ them on a permanent basis or to provide them more days of work. At the same time, the work which could be carried out by the reserve workers was increasingly given to contractors. It is alleged that the continuance of the contract system was for the vested interests of a section of the trade union leadership. It was alleged that many of the leaders of established trade unions used to take up contract work regularly and hence the abolition of the contract system would have been detrimental to their economic interests. The factory management also played their role well and took care to give as many contracts as possible to these leaders. Ironically, it was also alleged that the management had also allowed the trade unions to recruit new workers (Vasu, 2011).

Trade Union Factor

The trade union history in Mavoor starts with the death of a worker in a work related accident in 1962 which motivated the workers to think about future. This induced them to form the first labour organization in Mavoor. As a result, in 1962 the Gwalior Rayon Factory and construction workers union (affiliated to pro - CPI AITUC) came in to existence. Later influenced by the national level political developments the workers loyal to Indian National Congress joined together and formed the Gwalior Rayons Employees Union (affiliated to INTUC). The split in the Indian communist movement (1964) was also reflected in Mavoor trade union movement. The CPI (M) loyalist left the AITUC and formed the pro-CITU Gwalior Rayons pulp and Fibre workers union. During 1970's five new unions entered in to the scene. The national level split in the Indian National Congress (1969) induced a group of INTUC workers to organize the Gwalior Rayon Labour Union affiliated to pro-congress (0) INLC. Later influenced by the second national level split of the Congress party (1978), the Indira loyalists formed the Gwalior Rayons pulp and Fibre employees Congress affiliated to INTUC (I). Like in the case of INTUC, the STU was also divided and gave birth to Gwalior Rayon pulp and Fibre Factory Thozhilali Union (Pro-AIML). In addition to these developments, two more organizations-Gwalior Rayons pulp and Fibre Factory Staff Union and Gwalior Rayons workers Organization were organized. Finally, with the emergence of Gwalior Rayons Organization of workers (GROW), the number of trade unions reached to 13 (Pakjakshan, 1988).

Except in the case of GROW, the rationale for the proliferation of trade unions may be attributed to the unending factionalism in various parties. Political parties do consider trade unions as a source of strength. This also affects the professional nature of trade unions since the latter look up on political parties for guidance and political recruitment.

The history of collective bargaining in Mavoor started with the formation of Gwalior Rayons Factory and construction workers union. Accordingly the union began to represent the grievances of the working class. The first general strike was launched in 1962, demanding the raise of daily wages and provision for accident compensation. The strike did not prolong and the management without any hesitation approved the demands. The daily wages were revised from Rs. 1.75 to Rs. 2.75. It was also agreed that compensation would be paid for accidents. In short, the first effort of Mavoor workers to improve their working conditions ended in full success. It did not mean that the living conditions of the workers in Mavoor improved considerably(Ibid).

When the production started in 1963, the workers launched another demand for bonus. As the management refused to consider the demand the workers went on an indefinite strike. Later, due to the relatively high bargaining power of the trade unions, management agreed to give 8 percent bonus to its workers. The reason was that management found disagreeing with union's demands more costly than agreeing because of the reason that profit rate was relatively high. The workers of Mavoor received bonus when there was no provision for bonus in the state. The Bonus Act which was passed in 1964 provided for a statutory rate of 4 per cent to the workers of Kerala against the eight percentages received by the workers in Mavoor (Ibid).

However, the experiences in the 1970 were different from that of 1960's. Several changes took place in the labour management relations in industry. Firstly, due to the commencement of Harihar pulp producing unit in Karnataka, the strategic role of the Mavoor unit heavily declined. Secondly by securing a license to import pulp, the management further strengthened its capacity to combat the worker. Thirdly, during this period, the number of trade unions rose from 6 to 11 which indirectly affected the

bargaining power of the trade unions. Again as a result of the 1978 agreement a new class of reserve workers emerged in the scene demanding full employment and abolition of contract system. Furthermore, the vacuum created by the demise of veteran leaders like S. E.S Menon and Avukadhar Kutti Naha was filled by a new kind of trade union leadership. Many workers looked at this new leadership with a suspicious mind and found them as the agents of the factory management. As opined by an observer 'the newly emerged collaborationist kind of trade union leadership' seems to be a factor in determining the course of the collective bargaining process in Mavoor (Latheef,1988).

The 1970's witnessed the first strike (1972) which ended in a failure. When the demand for an interim relief was completely rejected by the management, the trade unions found it difficult to continue the strike, which had then crossed 144 days. As a result they finally withdrew the strike. It was pointed out that the strike was illegal in the sense that it was launched during the period of a long-term agreement. As per Chamberlain's model the management with its relatively higher bargaining power found it more costly to agree with the demands raised by the workers, because the commencement of Harihar unit enabled them to close down the factory without incurring 'heavy losses'. As a result, from the very beginning of 1970's the workers had to go on strike almost every year. Whenever the workers launched struggles, the management instead of initiating a process of negotiations, sought to close down the factory. The statuesque maintained with the commencement of the Harihar unit enabled the management to retain their profit and production from elsewhere.

The tension in 1970's continued in 1980's. The Long – Term Wage Agreement which was signed in 1978 expired on 6 June 1982. The reserve workers of the factory were offered work only for thirteen days every month (Mathrubhumi, 1988). On the other side, the work that could be done by the reserve workers were increasingly hired out to contractors. In addition to these unresolved issues, management refused to pay any single paise more than the statutory bonus from 1982 onwards. It is to be noted that the workers had received an average bonus of 40 per cent during the 1978-82 period. Thus the tension that started from the very beginning of 1970's became intensified and turned out to be the prime cause for the commencement of an indefinite strike in 1985.

Another important event in the 1980's was the emergence of a unique trade union called the Gwalior Rayons organization of workers' (GROW). The new union represented and symbolized the workers protest against both the continuance of contract system and the degeneration of trade union leadership. During 1983-84 the GROW led many agitations on its own and jointly with other unions. When the trade unions in Mavoor decided to organize a joint agitation in 1985 against the management, the GROW also participated in it. During the agitation, especially in its final stage, the GROW played an enviable role to solve the problem which then had twisted to an SOS-agitation to reopen the factory (Kerala Kaumudi ,1988). The re-opening of the factory led unprecedented release of untreated waste of factory waste to river Chaliyar and a series of agitations by the local people for a more effective pollution control mechanism. But the management did not listen to this and continued to pollute the environment(Babu, 2008). The Mavoor factory was closed forever, when the protests developed into a statewide environment protection movement. The management and trade unions, it is alleged that moved hand in hand in fighting the so-called eco-fundamentalism.

Conclusion

The experience of industrial democracy in Mavoor raises certain serious apprehensions about the collective bargaining process in state promoted industrial units. The well celebrated above unity bargaining power of trade unions in the area was really a

reflection of the unusual governmental subsidies and the ‘benefits’ of lapses in assessing the environmental cost of this extraction industry.(Bappu, 2011). It also speaks about the capacity of big capital to manipulate the entire process of collective bargaining in its favor. This becomes more intense when the alarming rate of unemployment and economic backwardness induce the governments to liberalize its industrial policies. In Mavoor, the process of collective bargaining was structurally three dimensional but functionally two-dimensional. The attitude of the government towards the management, particularly regarding the fixation of royalty rate found to be the decisive factor in determining the latter’s perceived cost of agreeing with unions demand. More clearly, the question whether the government would permit the management to exploit the valuable natural resources (which includes raw materials from the forests, water, air, soil and finally the life of thousands of human beings in and around the factory) seems to be the most powerful single factor determining the nature of collective bargaining process in Mavoor.

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The Representation of Women in 'New Generation' Malayalam Films

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Abstract

The paper explores various socio-cultural underpinnings in the Malayalam film industry during the advent of a new wave film culture post 2010. These movies were labeled as 'New generation' movies by media and critics and also raised eyebrows with the offbeat narrative techniques and bold themes on sexuality and gender politics. They brought in a fresh take on contemporary socio-cultural issues and how the identities of individuals are caught up in a continuous conflict within an urban space (as most of these films dealt with urban themes). These 'New Generation' movies distanced themselves from the then existing conventional narrative style and opened up a liberal space with arguments on gender and the politics of representation. These films had heavy influence of Korean style of filmmaking that relied on raw and explicit narrations. Three movies are analysed in this paper; Chaapa Kurisu (2011), 22 Female Kottayam (2012) and Trivandrum Lodge (2012). The analysis would concentrate on the representation of female characters in these three movies and the visual culture and politics of these 'new generation' films. Laura Mulvey's psychoanalytic theories and Susan Bordo's Philosophy of mind/body binaries have been used to interpret the observations.

Keywords

New Wave, Gender Politics, Visual Culture, Psychoanalysis.

Introduction: A Brief History of Malayalam Cinema

During the early 70's, the new wave movement had taken its roots in Malayalam film industry when directors like Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Aravindan, etc began making movies which were defined as 'parallel', 'offbeat', 'new wave', 'art' etc. These movies had a very distinct mode of film making when compared to the other main stream or commercial films at that point and some of the main characteristics of these movies were lengthy shots, sparse dialogues, long silences, absence of songs, dance, stunts, sidekicks and humor. Later, during the 80's came the 'middle brow' cinema; which was a mixture of mainstream and parallel cinema. Padmarajan, Bharathan, K.G. George, etc were some of the pioneers in this

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new category and with this a whole new line of productions flooded the Malayalam film industry and some of these movies later acquired cult status among viewers.

The interpretation of a female self in the political and artistic fields of films was a challenging job for film makers mainly belonging to the middle brow cinema post 1970's but they were successful in experimenting with bold themes like *Avalude Ravukal* (1978: I.V. Sasi), *Thoovanathumbikal* (1987: Padmarajan), *Deshadanakilikal karayarilla* (1986: Padmarajan), *Adaminte Variyellu* (1983: K G George) etc. These movies were very efficiently constructed within its narratives over some of the tabooed topics existing in the cultural realm. During the 80's and 90's, the industry took a shift with the advent of superstars like Mammotty and Mohanlal. Once again, the female narrative space was brushed aside by the presence of strong male characters and this led to more male dominated themes in the creative space of Malayalam film industry.

This trend continued till the beginning of 21st century, then post 2005, directors like Ranjith, Samir Thahir, Aashique Abu, M. Padmakumar, Anwar Rasheed etc came up with movies that somehow associated themselves with a new era, a 'New Generation' in the Malayalam industry. These movies were labeled as 'New generation' movies by media and critics and also raised eyebrows with the offbeat narrative techniques and bold themes on sexuality and gender politics. They brought in a fresh take on contemporary socio-cultural issues and how the identities of individuals are caught up in a continuous conflict within an urban space (as most of these films dealt with urban themes). These 'New Generation' movies distanced themselves from the then existing conventional narrative style and opened up a liberal space with arguments on gender and the politics of representation.

This paper tries to discuss how the 'female body and mind' as a tool of male gaze is constructed within a film space and how it is appropriated through certain stereotypical symbols of attire, body language, character references etc. The space of the female characters in three films will be analyzed and this further will be used to reinstate the stereotyping done on female body both on physical and cultural level. The 'personal' of a female is deconstructed for the male audience and thus it tears up her individuality which needs to be validated by a male viewer within the space of a cinema hall and again that which resonates in the outside world too. The naturalizing of gender hierarchies are reconceived through a post modernist approach in these new generation movies where economic and personal freedom is mooted as one of the key agents that make the female characters progressive. Yet the narratives fail to identify how the patriarchal structures slowly control the freedom that a female exercises in the modern world even in the personal spaces of a woman. The limit is always decided by the male psyche and the superiority complex of the oppressor.

World Around Us: A Look at Oppression and Female Body

The strong expression of sexuality by a female is always seen as a phenomenon that can only exist in a male fantasy. It can't get serious beyond that. That is why, when the female lead is a sexually open person, there is a male (possibly the alpha male) who openly denies the pleasure of her company and reiterates the fact that he is a 'one woman man' and the pleasure that he gets from denying her sexual offer is more than the actual act of sex itself (From the film *Trivandrum Lodge*). Imagine the same dialogue delivered by a female character, that would simply be unthinkable because female characters have always been the tool for sexual submission. This can be brilliantly observed in *Kanmadam* (1998: Lohitadas) where there is a strong willed female lead played by Manju Warriar being forcefully kissed by the male lead played by Mohanlal. There, she has no right to refuse or resist or even slap the person simply because the male character is the 'Hero', or the Spine of the narrative.

The anxiety of the 90's was all about preserving the structure of family through film narratives. This was broken and restructured in the 'new generation' films by creating narratives with central female characters who are Divorcees, Women who have pre-marital sex, who are in live-in relationships etc. The placement of the characters is in an urban space mostly because modernity was always argued to exist in the liberal urban spaces than the traditional rural space. The issue of sexuality and gender had to be discussed in these spaces according to the new generation filmmakers of malayalam industry. The issue of female chastity was the central question in most of the film narratives in the 90's or even before that (except some bold attempts by directors like Padmarajan, K G George, Bharathan etc) and this shell of chastity was explicitly broken in *22 Female Kottayam* (2012: Aashique Abu) when Tessa (Rima Kallingal) confesses to Cyril (Fahd Fazil) that she is not a virgin and she tells this as a bold statement rather than a product of guilt. Moreover, 'Female Spaces' are more prominent and creased out into the mainstream narrative through new generation malayalam movies. In *Trivandrum lodge* (2012: V K Prakash), the friendship between the central female character and her friend is shown through their chats about sex and their personal fantasies. These spaces were only accessible to male characters before and they always liked to normalize such space through a male psyche.

The question of how these new generation movies create a progressive narrative for women to express their sexuality and individuality is something that wanders on a thin thread of neoliberal modernity and the need to associate with a moralistic society. This can be observed in the movie *Diamond Necklace* (2012: Lal Jose), where the male lead played by Fahd Fazil is shown as a flamboyant doctor who works in Dubai and spends all his income through partying and other materialistic extravaganzas that Dubai has to offer. He gets into relationship with three different women throughout the movie and in the end, one of the female characters played by Samvritha Sunil is seen apologising to him for having consensual sex without knowing the fact that he was married! The irony is that why the woman had to apologise because he himself was aware of his marital status and it was as much as his 'fault' as it's hers. Here the woman takes up the classic role of the seductress, who seduced a married man to have sex with her while the man is allowed to 'derail' onto such slippery grounds of post marital affairs, the woman is expected to be sorry for 'distracting' or 'provoking' the male.

The very advertisements whose copy speaks of choice and self-determination visually legislate the effacement of individual and cultural difference and circumscribe our choices. That we are surrounded by homogenizing and normalizing images-images whose content is far from arbitrary, but is instead suffused with the dominance of gendered, racial, class, and other cultural iconography... (Bordo, 1993).

Susan Bordo talks about this phenomenon of naturalizing the gender hierarchies through culture and everyday life. She tries to point out that power has a definitive way of seeping into the lives of people and establishing an oppressive order that normalizes itself through cultural practices and even makes the oppressed practice it through their daily lives. Films are one such cultural medium through which these kind of hegemonic structures are reinforced and normalized. Some argue that movies are a passive form of entertainment but its unbecoming of any intellectually motivated endeavor to dismiss the metaphysical nature of films and the narrative discourses it put forward before us. It need not be defined through a materialistic philosophy of the world but rather as through a visual discourse of moving images that is far removed from reality but yet so near to it through its symbolic and literal representations. There is a strong assertion from the cultural domain to encapsulate the body and mind of the woman into a mold that fits into the patriarchal structure of the society. This structure does not work on the basis of binaries but through a group of oppressive networks, institutions and even technology. These 'Plastic Bodies' as Bordo puts it, is about how the

physical body of women is expected to satisfy certain norms created by the power structures inside the society. These are not necessarily male controlled but they are a manipulated product of social control and familial legitimacy. Here, the woman has to play the role of the 'universal scapegoat' entitled to her through the famous ideal of 'motherhood' and such definitive and norm based social performances. She has to always live for the other rather than for herself, this could be treated as a virtuous trait if this was the universal philosophy applied to every gender across the world but sadly the male body and identity enjoys a far more luxurious and individualistic social performance which is not always obligated to the whims and fantasies of the social/political realm of culture.

In these three movies, the visual politics is designed and framed in ways that see certain appropriations to female sexuality within certain cultural contexts. The female lead of *Trivandrum Lodge* is a sexually open and metro-bred character, so in order to communicate that sexual openness the character is made to look like a seductress who flaunts her body and other non-physical traits like her constant mood for flirting and open statements about sex. Such characterizations are deliberate efforts of filmmakers to fix certain inherent cultural markers to 'Identify' and in the process to measure the character of women in real life. They are not ready to accept the fact that such appropriations of female body and feminine character can only lead to further bias and sexual subversion of a female identity.

Analysis: Seeing Through the Movies

In *Chappa Kurishu* (2011: Samir Tahir), we can see an example of such appropriation through the contradictions created through two female characters, Sonia (Remya Nambeesan) & Nafiza (Niveda Thomas). Sonia is more of an urban-based middle class working woman whereas; Nafiza is a lower middle class woman who works as a service employee in a super market based in Cochin. Here, the comparisons of these two characters are very implied and connoted rather than explicitly stated. Nafiza is shown as a 'good' and 'decent' Muslim woman who dresses up within her religious and cultural restrictions and works hard to take care of her poor family. She instills virtuous values of truth and honesty to one of the male lead Ansari (Vineeth Sreenivasan), when he is faced with mental conflict. Whereas, Sonia is more of a 'physically charged' character, her dressing style and her demeanor with her boss Arjun (Fahd Fazil), makes her the seductress. This easy availability of 'urban female body' is one of the classic stereotypes in the film. The narrative of the movie, takes a karmic course where Sonia and Arjun's Sex video is leaked and their lives become hellish. Here, it's more like a punishment that is bestowed upon Sonia for being the 'seductress' and being a more independent woman than Nafiza. Nafiza knows her limits inside the patriarchal society (even in the narrative of the film) but Sonia derails from that and hence she has to be punished through the 'cause and effect' method of the script.

Laura Mulvey in her essay *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (Mulvey, 1989) tries to deconstruct the idea of sexual gratification in males and how the identity of a female is constructed for the sake of a 'Male Gaze' which was crucial to the narrative of the movie and also to the subjectivity of the male viewer.

The gaze is male whenever it directs itself at, and takes pleasure in, women, where women function as erotic objects. (Mulvey, 1989).

All that was left for the female was a psychological feeling of 'Castration' or an absence of the 'phallus'. This psychological interpretation was actually introduced by Sigmund Freud who calls it by the condition of 'Penis envy'. A certain kind of creative distance is maintained by the narrative to experience the life of a female through her mind

and body while the male body and mind transcends even the narrative to become one with the audience. That is where Laura Mulvey talks about the 'male gaze', its not simply a gaze reflecting the male psyche rather its a kind of transmigration of the 'maleness' from the big screen to the viewers. The viewers become a sort of uniform cultural consumers who reify the visual components dominating the film and its male power.

The whole idea of rape and revenge is perceived in a different way inside a Malayalam Film narrative where the earlier tendencies were that the rape victims committed suicide or else she was 'genuinely' accepted by the 'merciful and ideal' hero forgiving her 'sin', but then, a movie like *22 Female Kottayam* tries to break away from some conventions and stereotypes of storytelling. One, it is told entirely in a female perspective and two, it breaks up and dissects the main characters as plain human beings who are controlled and dominated by the situations around them. The male voice over in the climax sequence conveys to us the 'true' message or moral of the story, which is supposedly that, one shouldn't (the male) misunderstand/misinterpret/misuse the patience and tolerance of a woman. So, the argument goes onto a further dilemma in the narrative whether a woman should be tolerant and patient towards the patriarchal structures controlling her or stand up boldly for her rights, freedom and self-expression. The construction of rape as a normal/desensitized occurrence in the movies of the late 1970's, 80's etc structured the perspective of the Malayali viewers in a manner which enjoyed rape as a sexual act rather than a violent one. In *22 Female Kottayam*, rape is the main tool to carry forward the narrative and also to establish the political/social purpose of the movie. The radical feminist tendency of punishing the villain by Penectomy is in itself a new experimentation done in Malayalam movies (but not the first of its kind, as the movie is heavily inspired from *I spit on your grave* (1978: Meir Zarchi), *Ek Haseena Thi* (2004: Sriram Raghavan), *Kill Bill* (2003: Quentin Tarantino), *Hard Candy* (2005: David Slade) etc).

A sense of inherent and normalised domesticity is ascertained throughout the narrative, this is evident from the climax scene where Cyril (Fahad Fazil) says to reinstate to Tessa (Rima Kallingal) that, *this 6-inch penis is not real masculinity* (*22 Female Kottayam*). At this very instance the echoing of strong masculine (patriarchal) resistance is heard all over the narrative where the filmmakers consciously or unconsciously celebrated the masculine self.

One of the recent movies churned out from the neo liberal brain factories in Malayalam film industry, the movie questions/ridicules/interprets/satirises the issues of morality, marriage, sexual desires etc. Anoop Menon has crafted the script in his usual 'friendly neighborhood intellectual' ways where he incorporates witty one liner, 'cool' sexual interactions/conversations between prostitute and customer, father and son etc. The openness of the movie towards sexuality can be appreciated, as this is something that we seldom see or hear in Malayalam movies. The film, in its heart questions the social institution of marriage and pseudo moralities. In her essay *Marriage and Family in Malayalam Cinema*, Janaky Sreedharan remarks,

Marriage and family were twin institutions that came under considerable surveillance, moral disciplining and internal reforms during the nineteenth and twentieth century in Kerala as they were in the larger Indian society. (Sreedharan, 2010).

The mainstream Malayalam movies also never dealt or entertained any such themes which tend to question this institution and the ideal family structure. All the films in one way or the other tried to reinforce the structure as an ideal and that one should be preserved at any cost. In *Trivandrum lodge*, the female character Dhvani (Honey Rose) is a divorcee and she comes to Cochin seeking freedom and individuality, which for her is basically

having casual sex, one night stands and other such metro sexual desires. She is also a writer who wants to write a story on the life and people of Cochin. She chooses Trivandrum Lodge as her topic and its inhabitants as the subjects.

Trivandrum lodge can be, in a satirical sense, viewed as the Kerala society which is full of sexually frustrated men and their yearning to get closer to woman in a conservative society. The confusions and mental dilemma faced by Abdu (Jayasurya) is a clear example of a Teenage Keralite's mind (even though the character has little shades of dumbness!). The old Kora Sir (P. Balachandran), who is an advocate by profession, is a man living in his 'glorious' past where, in one instance he narrates the tale of his sexual exploits to another inhabitant in the lodge. It's never clarified in the film whether the tale that he so convincingly tells the young gentleman is true or just an unfulfilled fantasy. Kora is a sublime character who exists in that sexual vacuum between the generation of the 60'-70's and the new generation.

Observations

When we analyse the three films, there are some interesting observations that can be made regarding the Malayalam Film industry and also the cultural aspects of Kerala. These 'new generation' movies are trying to focus more on the deconstruction of the morality and gender discourses lurking in the Malayali psyche. When *22 Female Kottayam* focuses on the complex narrative of rape and its consequential aftermaths in a 'feminist' perspective, *Trivandrum Lodge* focuses on the ironical and interwoven themes of liberty and sexual desires. *Chappa Kurish* is more about the fears of an urban centric culture and how the dichotomy between the economical class and personal self merge into one single whole.

The representation of women in these films had its own varied concerns as a new shift in the industry is taking place, this should obviously be in balance with the cultural setting of Kerala. Kerala was slowly transforming into an economy which relished on the monstrous number of IT professionals it produced every year and its youth migrating to other metro's like Bangalore where the metrosexual aspirations were defined by neo-liberalistic attitudes. This borrowing of cultures also affected the identity of Kerala women. A Malayali woman, young professional, employed as an IT professional in Bangalore sometimes found it hard to get marriage proposals from "good" families and they were looked down as 'sluts' just for the mere reason that they worked in a metro like Bangalore. The exclusivity of Kerala society filled with such moralistic inhibitions and judgments suffocated the very existence of a free thinking independent woman. Social out-casting is one of the major tactics that a society applies to a 'deviant' who wanders away from its moralistic constructions, one who strays away from the morals and values of it. The 'black sheep' was to be taught a lesson at any cost by abandoning and alienating her from the entire community built on pseudo morality and suppressed sexual frustrations.

The intricacies involved in deconstructing the existing patriarchal constructions of women in the paradigm of films and artistic expressions involve portrayal of strong semiotics and visual narrative. In these three movies analysed, this tendency is found in traces but not at an active level where it can engage the viewers (male and female) to produce a popular and progressive ideology in itself keeping in mind the subtle borders of sexuality and gender. The problematization, and at the same time, the construction of a new feminist argument inside Malayalam films was bound to be a real challenge as there are uncompromising cultural and religious structures (inside and outside the world of films). When analyzing Malayalam Films parallel to the existing cultural norms and resistance, it can be noticed that some sort of a rebellious tendency is working at some point were questions of marriage and sexuality are pondered.

Conclusion: What is and What Ought to be

As to conclude, the 'New Generation' Malayalam movies that we had analyzed in this paper, in actuality, has failed to bring out more suggestive and prudent arguments in the field of feminist theory or in the cultural field of Kerala society where it can become an active area of discourse and discussion on the exclusive conservative morality and sexual repressions in the Kerala Psyche.

The space that should be created in the popular culture of any society should be encompassed with all kinds of criticisms and perspectives which democratizes the issues and communicates them effectively to a mass culture which is fed with the minimum intelligentsia of interpreting and perceiving the symbols and visuals articulated through movies and any other artistic medium. The very core of any public medium for that matter should be to inform and create an ideological structure wherein the tolerance and disagreement to any concepts and ideas should be balanced with the very fabric of the society and the culture, which is very relative in different contexts.

The movies, however takes the narrative to some experimental realm, where there is further scope of dialogue and where more bold stories surrounding gender politics and resistance are possible. In fact, these films can provide a foundation and a fresh perspective for more 'new wave' or 'new generation' themes to storm the Malayalam film industry in the coming years.

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Journeys as Metaphors and Quests: The Life Writings of Leopold Weiss, Malcolm X & Kristiane Backer

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Abstract

Journeys turn out to be big turning points in an individual's life, often helping him realize the truth about his existence. In accounts of life, journeys loom large as major quests in the life of the individuals concerned and they emerge as metaphors of multivalent and ambivalent implications as such accounts take shape as powerful creative expressions. The present paper is an attempt to explore the autobiographies of Leopold Weiss, Malcolm X & Kristiane Backer, three major life writers of the last one hundred years, whose life's journeys took entirely different directions following the startling discoveries they made in the course of their wanderings. Their respective backgrounds, predicaments, and challenges in life were very diverse. However, the course and direction their lives took, following certain turning point incidents, seem to have a good deal in common which makes a study in juxtaposition very rewarding.

Keywords

Leopold Weiss, Malcolm X, Kristiane Backer, Life Writing, Journey, Metaphor, Quest

“Have they not travelled on the earth, that they have hearts (minds) capable of understanding, and ears capable of hearing? For indeed, it is not the eyes that go blind, but verily, it is the hearts, which are within the bosoms, that grow blind!” (*The Quran 22:46*)

Journeys, from time immemorial, have been looked upon as metaphors for life itself. Life itself has been, all along history, viewed as a journey from birth to death, or from one point of time and one particular station to another point of time or another particular known or unknown station. The whole gamut of life writing, therefore, has been excused to be viewed as journey narrations. Thus, life narrations are, in a sense, journey narrations, and likewise, journey narrations are life narrations.

Accounts of life, often become worthwhile because of the passionate pursuit of the person concerned throughout or a fairly long period of his or her life. Only the engagements of the person concerned with the diverse factors in life and how he or she responds to them make it of significance to the readers. At least for a good number of self-writers, such narrations are accounts of their quest to realize the truth about their existence and to unravel the mysteries of life. As for readers, indirectly, the experience of reading them determines, influences and furthers their quests and pursuits.

The Quran makes repeated exhortations on several occasions to undertake journeys on land and at sea. Journeys on land and at sea are not of the same experience. Journeys on land are journeys through the history of humanity characterized by a range of experience such as their aspirations and dreams, realizations and successes, failures and setbacks, achievements and conquests, humility and arrogance etc. Journeys at sea are journeys into the mysteries of the universe, the root causes of the skies and the earth.

The outcome of this theatrical (seeing with one's own eyes) experience of journeys is, as the Quran points out in the verse quoted above, that we have enriched minds capable of deeper understanding, and ears with sharper hearing. Over and above all these, we do not develop the blindness of the mind which makes us incapable of seeing the truth.

In P. B. Shelley's *Ozymandias*, the traveller from the antique land describes the final predicament even of the statue of an arrogant despot who once bragged of his conquests in these words: "My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings; / Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!" This poetic representation of a historic incident is a testimony to the Quranic exhortation:

"Even before you, there had been systems (of hierarchies and orders of faith). Therefore, travel on the earth, and see the nature of the final predicament of those who denied the truth." (*The Quran* 3:137)

The archetypal metaphor of life as a journey and journey as a quest for fulfilment is nothing new to literature in English. We have this as a central motif in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrims Progress from this World to That Which is to Come* popularly known as *The Pilgrim's Progress* and often celebrated as the earliest fictional work in English. *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer with its kaleidoscopic prologue is another similar poetic account that deals with the motifs of journey and quest. Both of them are in the Christian or biblical perspective. Alfred Lord Tennyson's *Ulysses*, reflective of the Victorian spirit and enthusiasm for the ancient world, deals with the same motif, in a yet more poetically powerful mode of expression with its protagonist aiming "To follow knowledge like a sinking star / Beyond the utmost bound of human thought." Here the perspective is, obviously, the non-Christian characterized by the protagonist's overweighed ethos rooted in the Greek mythologies and the stirrings are predominantly mundane as reflected in his own words:

It little profits that an idle king,
By this still hearth, among these barren crags,
Match'd with an agèd wife, I mete and dole
Unequal laws unto a savage race,
That hoard, and sleep, and feed, and know not me.

That the protagonist of the poem seems to be intoxicated with the diverse and outlandish nature of the experiences that life promises, especially to a warrior and adventurer of his breed is very evident in these lines:

Yet all experience is an arch wherethro'
Gleams that untravell'd world whose margin fades
For ever and forever when I move.
How dull it is to pause, to make an end,
To rust unburnish'd, not to shine in use!
As tho' to breathe were life! Life piled on life
Were all too little, and of one to me
Little remains: but every hour is saved

From that eternal silence, something more,
A bringer of new things; ...

However, accounts of life, journeys and quests in the perspective of the Quran looming large as motifs of writings of literary quality and stylistic uniqueness are a relatively new phenomenon in English Language. *The Road to Makkah* (1954) by Muhammad Asad / Leopold Weiss, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (1965), and *From MTV to Mecca: How Islam Inspired My Life* (2012) by Kristiane Backer are three major autobiographies written in English language in the last one hundred years, often singled out for their literary merit and for being intensely moving.

These three works merit themselves for being juxtaposed and evaluated together for diverse reasons. These three bestsellers of our time represent a paradigm shift in the genre of life writings in English language in the sense that they prove that all roads do not necessarily lead to Rome and that for travellers who make well-meant inquiries, roads may lead to Mecca as well. These autobiographies further prove the fact that the Quran upholds that journeys are what equip us with hearts capable of deeper understanding and ears capable of proper hearing. Conversely, we do not get affected by any loss of vision, and rather we become capable of seeing the truth about human predicament and the truth about the universe in which we live.

The Road to Makkah (1954), also known as *The Road to Mecca* or *Road to Makkah*, is the first of the two autobiographies of Leopold Weiss (1900-1992), an Austro-Hungarian Jewish journalist who after his embrace of Islam at the age of 26, was known as Muhammad Asad, and became a renowned Islamic scholar, intellectual, political theorist and spiritual writer.

Published first in the United States in 1954 by Simon and Schuster, the book that runs up to 381 pages and falling into twelve chapters, received immediate critical acclaim, including reviews in prestigious New York City periodicals. One reviewer, writing in *New York Herald Tribune Book Review*, called it an “intensely interesting and moving book. *New York World-Telegram* wrote:

As suffused with Arab lore as Sir Richard Burton and almost as adventuresome as T.E. Lawrence, Muhammad Asad offers a similar blend of daring action and thoughtful observation. In addition, he surpasses either of these great predecessors as a prose stylist and interpreter of the Islamic faith.

As suggested indirectly here, Muhammad Asad’s mission in the Arabian desert was very much like that of Sir Richard Burton and T. E. Lawrence. All of them were, one way or other, exploring the orient, especially for serving the interests of the west. Asad’s mission was closely related to the interests of Zionism in the Arabian territories especially as the European scheming for establishing the Jewish nation in the Arab territory in the middle East was taking a final shape.

However, Muhammad Asad’s journeys and wanderings in the Arabian deserts, life among the Bedouins, acquaintance with several of the Arab leaders including King Abdul Aziz, and his efforts to master Arabic language and study the Quran provided him with a sharp and insightful understanding of the Arabian Muslim life, culture and faith which eventually led to his embrace of Islam. He boldly bade goodbye to the blindness that he had diagnosed to have been overwhelming the Judeo-Christian bastion of Europe.

The Road to Makkah is Asad's account of his life up to his embrace of Islam or, to be more precise, up to the age of thirty-two. It vividly gives us a graphic description of how as a young man, a university undergraduate very much attached to his domestic circles, he undertook a journalistic assignment from *Frankfurter Zeitung* and travelled across the Arabian territories, visited Palestine, Hail, Najd, Riyadh, Makkah, Madinah etc. and had a rare opportunity to gauge the magnitude of the intervention Islam and its prophet Muhammad, the Quran and its teachings had made in the life of the desert dwellers. He had a first-hand experience of what was understood as the complete transformation of the desert dwellers into a highly civilized polity that Islam had achieved. The result was that Leopold Weiss couldn't resist the inward pressure of becoming Muhammad Asad, hugging the faith of the people he studied so closely. In the preface to the work entitled "The Story of a Story," Asad says:

"The story I am going to tell in this book is not the autobiography of a man conspicuous for his role in public affairs; it is not a narrative of adventures – for although many strange adventures have come my way, they were never more than an accompaniment to what was happening within me; it is not even the story of a deliberate search for faith – for that faith came upon me, over the years, without any endeavour on my part to find it. My story is simply the story of a European's discovery of Islam and of his integration within the Muslim community." (*The Road... 1*)

Asad is particularly nostalgic and intensely emotional when towards the end of the preface he observes about the change that Arabia has undergone from the time when he experienced it and to the time when he began writing it:

"The Arabia depicted in the following pages no longer exists. Its solitude and integrity have crumbled under a strong gush of oil and the gold that the oil has brought. Its great simplicity has vanished and, with it, much that was humanly unique. It is with the pain one feels for something precious, now irretrievably lost, that I remember that last, long desert trek, when we rode, rode, two men on two dromedaries, through swimming light..." (*The Road... 9*)

For Asad, it was not a superficial change. It transformed him so thoroughly, that he soon turned out to be an enthusiastic researcher, an acclaimed scholar of the religion he had embraced, a renowned author, a gifted diplomat and statesman who played a key-role in the inception of Pakistan, and an influential translator and commentator of the Quran. Asad's journeys, in short, had been a quest-fulfilment of realizing the truth with sharpened sensibilities and deeper intellectual comprehension of the mysteries surrounding human predicament and the unravelling of the secrets of the universe, very much in tune with what is envisioned in the verse of the Quran cited above. Thus, *The Road to Makkah*, its sequel or his second autobiography *Home-Coming of the Heart* that narrates his life from 1932 to 1992, and close to a dozen other scholarly works literally made Muhammad Asad, for all practical purposes, Islam's ambassador to the west in the last century.

Yet from another angle, Asad's vivid life-like description of the Arabian deserts, the Bedouin nomads, their peculiar kind of life, culture and values in *The Road to Makkah* makes it a text of extreme importance in the context of eco-criticism, a new discipline that emerged in our times, and autochthonous writings that evince the affinity primordial communities had with nature. In yet another angle, as evident from the words of Asad quoted above, the book is presumably the last verbal depiction of the irretrievably lost Arabia and its culture that was transformed in full by the oil money.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X (1965), the result of a collaboration between the African American human rights activist Malcolm X and the journalist Alex Haley is another work of the last century that gives the account of a man's quests, journeys and struggles in life taking him eventually to Mecca and Islam. Unlike Asad, Malcolm X was not with a privileged background or origin in life. He was carrying the burden of his racial identity as an ex-slave or son of an ex-slave or merely as a member of the African community in the racist American society of the last century. Rated as one of *Time's* ten most important nonfiction books of the twentieth century, and described as "extraordinary... a brilliant, painful, important book" by *The New York Times*, the book is one of the best ever bestsellers of the world and has been translated into too many languages.

Haley co-authored the autobiography based on a series of in-depth interviews he conducted between 1963 and Malcolm X's assassination in 1965. It is an awe inspiring account of Malcolm X's metamorphosis from a Harlem hustler to a black Muslim leader championing the philosophy of black pride, black nationalism, pan-Africanism and further, to his eventual integration into the mainstream global Islamic society following his trip to Mecca for hajj. It is an immeasurably successful account of an African American's effort to discover the solution to the question of apartheid and racism in the lived version of Islam in the Arabian society and the huge gathering of the world Muslims at Mecca for hajj.

The book gives us a beautiful account of Malcolm X's life in his own words starting with his early childhood in Omaha, Nebraska, the tragic death of his father at the hands of the white terrorists of the Ku Klux Klan, first real experience of discrimination at school, hardships following his father's death, mother's going insane, experience of being sent to an asylum, life as a member of the Harlem underworld, absolute moral depravity and delinquency starting with the role of a shoeshine boy to that of a pimp and hustler which finally landed him in trouble, arrest over an alleged charge of burglary and being put in prison. Thanks to the fairly big library, it was while in Norfolk prison that major transformations happened to him and the world came to hear about him. The habit of avid reading that he developed while there, not only made him get closer to the Nation of Islam headed by Elijah Muhammad and soon be the influential leader next only to Elijah, but also gave him a keen understanding of history especially pertaining to the predicament of the African American people. This was what soon shaped him into a rabble rousing and outspoken demagogue with a mission of great commitment. However, his genuine transformation took place following his break with Elijah Muhammad over the issue of a public remark he made about President Kennedy's assassination. Now not a member of the Nation of Islam, he started establishing rapport with leaders of different walks of life with similar interests and undertook trips to African countries and a trip to Mecca for hajj. These new opportunities equipped him with the right realization about Islam's attitude to the question of race. Malcolm X's quest, in a sense, met with the profoundest kind of answer when he personally had first-hand experience of Muslims of all races, nationalities, complexions, cultures, languages, ethnicities, habits, and ways, coming together, hand in hand, shoulder to shoulder, at Mecca, during hajj. They were people who practised this verse of the Quran that was quite fundamental to their faith:

"O mankind! Verily, we have created you from a male and a female and have made you nations and tribes that you may know one another. Verily the noblest of you, in the sight of Allah, is the intellectually honest and the best in conduct. Verily Allah is knowledgeable and aware" (*The Quran* 49:13)

He was amazed to find how Islam had obliterated all sense of superiority over others from its followers and trampled under its feet all considerations of caste, race,

ethnicity and other hierarchies, that Muslims practically looked upon each other as brothers and sisters born of the same father and mother. The Malcolm X who returned to the United States from Mecca had not only changed his name to El- Hajj Malik El- Shabazz, but also was inspired by the sweetest ever solution to America's race issue. Further to that, he was eager to launch his practical course of action for the emancipation of his people inspired by what he discovered in Mecca. If the bullets of the assailants had not ended his life at the first ever public address on his return, the history of the black people of the United States, and indirectly that of the rest of the people too, would have been tremendously different.

A book of about 500 pages with nineteen chapters titled variously in ravishingly stunning way, and with a foreword and introduction respectively by Attallah Shabazz and M. S. Handler and an epilogue by Alex Haley and a memoir titled "On Malcolm X" by Ossie Davis, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* turned out to be an immediate success in the American publication industry relegating into relative insignificance many of the bestsellers of the time. In 1967, historian John William Ward wrote that it would become a classic American autobiography. In 1998, *Time* named *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* as one of ten "required reading" nonfiction books.

The Autobiography of Malcolm X has been of multivalent significance in the world of literature. It significantly paved the way for the emergence of an all new genre in the United States namely, *Prison Literature of America* of which it is, by a consensus, an all-time magnum opus. It further inspired hundreds of writers with a new creative urge. Commenting on the uniqueness of the book in this respect, H. Bruce Franklin, author of *The Victim as Criminal and Artist: Literature from the American Prison* writes:

"contemporary American Prison literature can be dated from *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. Malcolm X has a unique place in the social thought of the Afro-American people. One of the many Black "common criminals" awakened by "the nation of Islam" since the late 1940s, Malcolm advanced beyond the mid 1960s' Muslim ideology to make crucial discoveries about his people, about the history of America and its alternative for the future. These discoveries still define the frontiers of both prison literature and much of our subsequent experiences as a nation state (*The Victim...* 21-22)

James Baldwin and Arnold Perl adapted the book as a film; their screenplay provided the source material for Spike Lee's 1992 film *Malcolm X*. These adaptations varying significantly one from the other, depending on the significance and focus given by each adaptor, *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* has become a central text to the newly emerged discipline called Adaptation Studies too.

From MTV to Mecca: How Islam Inspired My Life (2012) by Kristiane Backer is the third autobiographical work we're discussing here focused on the themes of journeys and quests. The author of *From MTV to Mecca* is, in many ways, different from the other two. Leopold Weiss' background was Austro-Hungarian and Jewish, Malcolm X's background was that of African-American and Baptist Christian. They were both men. But Kristiane Backer's account of her life's discoveries was unique in the sense that it was that of a young European woman who was a celebrity in the media world, going out of her way, shunning all the glossy promises of fame, reputation, riches and career opportunities, for hugging the truth about human predicament that she discovered in the religion of Islam.

She was one of the very first presenters on MTV Europe. She gained a cult following and became a darling of the European press, but something was missing from her life. A fateful encounter introduced her to a completely different world, to the one she had

not known, the religion and culture of Islam. After reading the Quran and traveling widely in the Islamic world she knew that she had discovered her spiritual path and soon she embraced Islam. *From MTV to Mecca: How Islam Inspired My Life* is her private memoir that tells the story of her conversion and explains how faith at last gave her inner peace and the meaning she had sought.

Born in 1965 in Hamburg, Germany and residing in London, Kristiane Verena Backer's rise as a television presenter, television journalist and author was meteoric. At 15 years of age, Backer went to the USA as an exchange student for a year. From 1987 to 1989 Backer volunteered at the private radio station *Radio Hamburg*. In 1989 she moved to London to work at the then Europe-wide, exclusively English-language TV channel, *MTV Europe*. Backer was the first German to present and VJ there and among the programmes she presented were *The Coca-Cola Report*, *The European Top 20* and *Awake on the Wild Side*. She remained there until 1996. While still at MTV Europe, she created and moderated the youth program *Bravo TV* on the German TV channel *RTL II* from 1993–95. From 1996 to 1999 she presented the daily cultural programme *The Ticket* on *NBC Europe*. From 2000 to 2009, Backer continued to do TV presenting as well as voiceover work. In 2005 she presented the in-flight music show for *Emirate Airlines*. She was awarded a Goldene Kamera award in 1994 and in 1993 and 1994 two Bravo Otto awards for her work as television presenter. Backer also hosts and presents conferences, business presentations, and galas throughout Europe.

The biggest turning point in her life took place in 1992 when she met Imran Khan, former Pakistani cricketer. He gave her books on Islam and took her travelling with him through Pakistan. Her journey through those books on Islam and her acquaintance with the Muslim community in Pakistan brought about a thorough change in her perception of life and in 1995, she embraced Islam. *From MTV to Mecca: How Islam Inspired My Life* is an account of her journeys, sojourns, quests and realization. Although she met with setbacks of diverse kinds in her personal life, especially in the realization of matrimonial dreams, her faith in the new religion she embraced is a well-grounded and confirmed one.

Running up to 500 pages and falling into 17 beautifully titled chapters, Kristiane Backer's account of her journey to Islam is uniquely distinguished as a European woman's discovery of Islam. The book occupies a significant position among the relatively bulky lore of Europe's response to Islam, the religion of oriental origin. Her journeys to the east and, in special, to Mecca for hajj bring to the focus not only the long-cherished dream of the west for a meaningful understanding of the east, but also the fulfilment of an individual's search for the meaning of life fully in line with the outcome of journeys envisioned by the Quran, namely sharpened sensibility and deeper understanding.

Tariq Ramadan's observation in the Foreword to the book is very accurate:

This book recalls the journey of a woman, Kristiane Backer, who encountered Islam when she was a presenter with MTV. Hers was a world that had no association with religion, was disconnected from Christianity and Islam, far from any kind of spirituality. A world of entertainment, music and pop videos, acting as distraction in our lives, sometimes making us forget the true meaning of life. Whilst Kristiane was working at MTV she began a personal quest, which she describes in her book: how during her travels across the globe, she came across different people who believed in God, and it is through these conversations and experiences that her own spiritual journey towards God gradually began to unfold. (*From MTV... vii*)

Tariq Ramadan further observes:

From MTV to Mecca is an enlightening book for the Western reader, providing one individual's perspective of Islam. Its focus is not to highlight the problems that exist within our Western societies, rather it suggests that for Muslims, both converts or by birth, Islam can be a solution not a problem - it is freedom, no discrimination; it is participation, not isolation; it is to give not only to take and yes, it is about duties as much as rights. These concepts exist throughout all spiritual and religious traditions and this is where Islam can be understood from within the heart. Kristiane Backer – a Westerner, a journalist, a woman – converted to Islam and in writing about it she is able to bring the very essence of the Islamic message to the centre of Western societies. This book is not only a bridge, it is reconciliation. (*From MTV... ix - x*)

Kristiane Backer being a European woman who was fully abreast with the contemporary developments in the feminist intellectual inquiries, the book is significant still from another angle as a text of great importance in the perspective of gender studies as it narrates a very different tale of an entirely outlandish nature.

Life writings of peculiarly diverse features, the three books under discussion, in short, noticeably deal with the motifs of journey and quest, fully in tune with the Quranic verses quoted and manifest the power and impact of well-meant journeys in the realization and fulfilment of human search for truth and meaning.

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A Mosaic of Glimpses of Satyajit Ray

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Abstract

Revisiting the world of Satyajit Ray twenty five years after he passed away in 1992 gives us the perspective to see more clearly that he was not just for cinema but one of the world's all time greatest artist. Would his films still rekindle old passions? How relevant are they in the postmodern society? In his films he has always focused on social issues and emphasized the importance of placing the 'have nots' at the centre of concern. Thirty-seven years of his work is a chronicle of social transformation, it is a journey through a century of social change in India. Even as it records this transformation, yet the core message to humanity seems just as relevant now as it was then.

Ray's material is Indian but his statements are about humanity. He sees the oneness of all human beings, he looks at them as people caught in the meshes of time and place. Perhaps it is in this that the rest of the world feels an affinity with him and finds in the serenity of his faith a uniqueness that transcends national boundaries. Ray's early films are buoyed up by an affirmation of faith in the human being. There are hardly any villains in these films. The oppressor and the oppressed are both victims. After several masterpieces, Ray's spiritual exhaustion is evident in his later works, they lack the aesthetic vigour and visual language of his earlier films.

Ray is often criticized for glorifying poverty and romanticizing the third world culture. Ritwik Ghatak was often critical of the disinfected realism of Ray's films. Yet for all his shortcomings his films have a ring of truth, and are seamless narratives which offer a wealth of psychological insight. The humanism, universality, deceptive simplicity and underlying complexity evident make his works contemporary, easily transcending barriers of time and space.

Keywords

Apu Trilogy, Humanism, Transformative Power, Bengali Culture

"To see PatherPanchali again today, half a century after it was made, is to go down on ones knees in the dust, into the heart of Indian reality, and the human condition." Lindsay Anderson (Dasgupta, 2001, p.1X)

In the grinding poverty of the Indian village, *Pather Panchali* focuses not on the larger picture, but zooms into the individual human being, unique as much in his joy in love and nature and childhood, as in the tragic sorrow of death and in the endless daily struggle to live. It is the human face of rural poverty and not the statistical numbers that makes us see

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Apu or Durga, Sarbajaya or Harihar, as one of us. They become a part of us and change us inexplicably and mould our view of humanity (Dasgupta, 2001).

Revisiting the world of Satyajit Ray twenty four years after he passed away in 1992 gives us the perspective to see more clearly that he was not just for cinema but one of the world's all time greatest artist. Would his films still rekindle old passions? How relevant are they in the post modern society? Ray is among a select group of sixteen global icons who have been recognized by the United Nations recently for their contribution to the common good of mankind. In his films he has always focused on social issues and emphasized the importance of placing the 'have nots' at the centre of our concern. His films are a brilliant blend of intellect and emotion. Not to have seen the cinema of Satyajit Ray means existing in the world without seeing the sun and the moon. These words of Akira Kurosawa aptly sums up this illustrious filmmaker. He remains an important icon of aesthetic Indian cinema and the alternate school of filmmaking.

Thirty seven years of his work is a chronicle of social transformation in an era, it is a journey through a century of social change in India. From the final eclipse of Mughal glory in *Shatranj ke khilari* to the decay of the feudal zamindar in *Jalsaghar*, the impoverished Brahmin's movement from traditional to modern India in the Apu trilogy, the Indian elite's awakening to rationalist ideas in *Devi* and *Charulata*, the beginning of the liberation of woman in *Mahanagar*, to the anguish of the unemployed after decades of the country's independence in *Pratidwandi*, the slow death of conscience in a corrupt society in *Jana Aranya* and finally the glimmer of hope in a new agenda of a simplification of human needs and a reassertion of basic values in *Agantuk*- Ray's work traces the essential outline of social evolution of the middle class in modern India (Dasgupta, 2001). Even as it records the transformation from a bygone era to the modern times, yet the core message to humanity seems just as relevant now as it was then.

Some opine that the response of the Western world to Ray is more complete, like seeing the woods where the Indian sees only the trees. Ray's material is Indian but his statements are about humanity. He sees the oneness of all human beings, he looks at them as people caught in the meshes of time and place. Perhaps it is in this that the rest of the world feels an affinity with him and finds in the serenity of his faith a uniqueness that distinguishes it from the restless search of a Bergman or a Fellini. His work transcends national boundaries and takes away from us the right to be his final judges merely because we are his countrymen. Yet his films abound in visualizations of Bengali culture. The Western influence on Ray's work cannot be ignored (Cooper, 2000). Robinson (1989) notes that justice cannot be done to Ray without an understanding of world cinema of all kinds, western and Indian classical music, as well as an informed appreciation of the language, literature, music, religions and history of Bengal.

A purely 'aesthetic' appreciation of Ray's work can hardly be a complete one. Ray was a classicist, an inheritor of a traditional Indian approach to art in which beauty is inseparable from truth and goodness. Ray's early films are buoyed up by an affirmation of faith in the human being. There are hardly any villains in these films. The oppressor and the oppressed are both victims.

Ray's lack of anger, his distance from the event, his avoidance of overt, direct action, did not always endear him to the younger generations, particularly in his later years. Some sought alternative models in Ritwik Ghatak, Mrinal Sen. Indeed Ray's work entered an indeterminate watershed after the peak of *Charulata*. The changed conditions of the country, the waning of the euphoric visions, mounting evidence of the privileged class running away with the fruits of development, brought about a subtle change in the temper of

Ray's work. The Calcutta of the vast political meetings and lengthening queues, notably absent from his films of the first decade, began to make its presence felt, bringing a new nervous edge to his classicism. *Pratidwandi* abounds in the negative images, shots of the unemployed exploding in anger; in *Jana Aranya* for the first time Ray gets down to the seamy side of Calcutta, its grimy alleys leading to the brittle 'shiny fronts of call girl haunts'. But even in Ray's second decade where the recognition of decay is increasingly marked, the pessimism recognizes the compulsions under which compromises with evil are made. The face of evil is somewhat averted and we do not make a direct confrontation with it. The ambitious executive of *Seemabaddha* continues to need the esteem of his critical sister in law. The PRO of *Jana Aranya*, who procures a girl the young businessman needs for his client, is redeemed by his good humour and a certain clinical detachment from the evil goings on (Dasgupta, 2001).

Perhaps it is from *Sadgati* or *Ghahre Bhaire* that we see a new inclination to point a finger at the villain. Pauline Kael (1965) compares these villains to a corrupted Apu; intellectuals, introverts and sentimental (Kael, 1965)

Pather Panchali marked the baptism of Indian cinema in both its cinematic language and its Indianness. The Apu trilogy consists of *Pather Panchali*, *Aparijito* and *Apur sansar*. It tells the story of a boy Apu, his wife, father, sister in their village amidst poverty in *Pather Panchali*. Next in *Aparijito*, Apu and his parents leave for Benares in search of better prospects, later his mother and father pass away in different incidents. *Aparijito* is an ode to adolescence which captures the nuances of the mother-son relationship most poignantly. One can feel the distance creeping between Apu and his mother as he grows from childhood to adolescence, as they are slowly but inescapably moving into different worlds (Chatterjee, 2009). The last film, *Apur sansar* is considered to be the most well crafted of the three. Here Ray adopts a different approach, he is not stereotyped as a neorealist chronicler of poverty. He delves into the lives of the urban middle class. Apu lives at a shed in the railway station. He goes to college, marries Aparna. When she dies in childbirth, he is shattered and renounces everything. However he comes back after a few years to take care of his son. Many foreign critics (Wood, 1972) did not quite understand why Apu in *Apur sansar* should marry Aparna when her husband to be is found insane, or why bought up in affluence, she should so readily accept the penury of life with her husband. This lack of understanding perhaps comes from a lack of knowledge of the prevailing socio religious customs of those times.

The Apu trilogy is perhaps structurally Ray's most Indian film, free flowing in its form, more spontaneous. Some of it certainly comes from his writer, Bibhuti Bandyopadhyay's spiritual quality. Both the novelist and the filmmaker are 'humanists' who believe in certain eternal traits of human nature every where and in every age. Such a proposition should have seemed devoid of meaning in the modern, not to speak of the postmodern world. Curiously it does not. It seems to grip people of all ideologies practically everywhere in the world. It seems to do the impossible by capturing something elemental in human society. In Ray's words "The novel, *Pather panchali* was a sprawling saga whose leisurely episodic unfolding perfectly caught the rhythm and pace of life in a Bengal village. In adapting it I tried to combine the relaxed quality of the original with a tightness called for by the exigencies of the conventional feature film". Ray subtly manages to remove the *Sonar Bangla* (golden Bengal) sheen from Bibhuti bhushan's closely observed reality making it grimmer, more contemporary, yet retaining something of the purity of vision of the original. Ray's progression from his village to Benares and to Calcutta becomes more of a chronicle of social change in the films than in the novel, brought about by the railways and the globe. It is the inevitable movement of one era into another like many others before it and many others to come. Hence there are no heroes and villains, only human beings, everyone with a reason for being what he is (Dasgupta, 2001).

Structurally *Aparajito* is meaningful mainly as a bridge between Pather panchali and Apur sansar. Within itself it is not sufficiently balanced. Benares comes to life but Calcutta does not. The most significant chapter is the relationship between an adolescent son drawn to the outside world and a mother seeing him unchanged from his boyhood. Apu's release is perhaps more important than the poignancy of his mother's death (Chatterjee, 2009).

Apur sansar is Ray's most personal film in the nature of the emotional charge it carries within. It is suffused with warmth and compassion.

A Kaleidoscope of Images: Critical Appraisal

Ray was a perfectionist with an ability to depict a whole culture with all the nuances, an ability to portray the social scene and build an authentic atmosphere for bygone days, for a large span of time ranging up to one hundred and fifty years. His films were set in a different periods of history; for instance *Devi* was set in 1830's but made in 1960; *Charulata* was set in 1870's yet made in 1964; *Shatranj ke khiladi* set in 1850's but made in 1977. But he had the ability to take the viewer seamlessly into that era. It is interesting to note that although he was meticulous about accuracy of period details yet he chose to dress women in clothing that belonged to a later period. Many of his female protagonists wore saree with a blouse, but socio religious practices did not allow Hindu women to use stitched clothes during that time period. The blouse was introduced to the Bengali women in 1890's by Gnanadanandini Devi, wife of Satyendranath Tagore, eldest brother of Rabindranath Tagore. Perhaps Ray did not want to bring out the sexuality of the protagonists too stridently with bare arms and shoulders (Dasgupta, 2001).

Ray is often criticized for glorifying poverty and romanticizing the third world culture. Many commented on his exporting poverty even as he does not offer solutions to conflicts. Ritwik Ghatak was often critical of the disinfected realism of Ray's films. After several masterpieces Ray's creative exhaustion can be seen in his later works. *Nayak*, *Seemabandha*, *Pratidwandi* lack the aesthetic vigour and visual grammar of his earlier films. Most of them were shot indoors and contained too many dialogues. Perhaps his poor health was also a contributing factor (Nyce, 1988).

Yet for all his shortcomings his films have a ring of truth, and are seamless narratives which offer a wealth of psychological insight. The humanism, universality, deceptive simplicity and underlying complexity evident in his works endear him to all, ranging from film critics to the common man, simply because there is something appealing for everyone. All his works are contemporary and universal, easily transcending barriers of time and space.

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Understanding Mass Media: Politics, Prospects and Perspectives

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Abstract

Technology has destroyed the monopoly of news. The new media field with its latest trends in mobile journalism has eked out efforts to counter the invasion. But this is not always a successful attempt. In the globalization era, media is not altogether 'Indian'. Media convergence is not at all a mofussil concept. Due to technology, the barriers of all kinds of media disappeared. Kerala being a unique state, cannot be compared to the average media behaviour of citizens of other states. Kerala has witnessed unforeseen growth in the field of print media. Truly, every facet of Malayalee's life is somehow or the other influenced by print media. The growth trajectory of Indian media too is unraveled here. The article explores the history, dimensions of politics, prospects and perspectives of mass media in the context of technological invasion.

Keywords

Globalization, Media Convergence, Politics, Invasion

Big investment wasn't there behind the letter press of Illikunnu. But Basel mission has financed the growth during the initial stages of journalism. Until the birth of Kerala, journalism was nothing but evangelization work. A great paradigm shift occurred after the liberation movement of Kerala. Newspapers developed a mysterious international agenda for themselves. They grew by dint of the capital. A thorough overhaul took place in the content and nature of newspapers. By the time of globalisation, a sea change occurred in the attitude of newspapers.

Birth of Television

Television entered the scene to give sound and light to the globalized media politics. The gadget easily overwhelmed the geographical and temporal limitations and effortlessly transformed the world into a global village. Globalisation is the economic facet of invasion. Globalisation has been termed as the most democratized invasion in history. The conquest has taken place with the consent of the conquered. This 'manufacturing of consent' takes place within the media. The consumer culture initiated by the channels has tremendously transformed the lifestyle and social outlook of Malayalees. This reminds us of the Trojan War where Odysseus made a wooden horse full of soldiers to trap his enemies. Here television is the Trojan horse envisioned by the proponents of globalization. The soldiers of market fill the wooden horse of television. No one could ever subjugate newspapers and

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television. Television is the greatest contribution of technology after the invention of printing by Johan Gutenberg. By denigrating media ethics, television has turned out as the marketing gadget of globalised consumer culture. The tag 'yellow' attached to newspapers during the tenure of Hearst and Pulitzer disappeared with the advent of C P Scott and Harold Evans who considered newspaper as a value-added product. But this value-consciousness is seldom seen in television channels. The politics of media seems to be the politics of capital. Capital forms the machine and fuel of globalisation. Capital is not something to be confiscated in the fight against power or to be diminished in the foundry of values. Swadeshbhimani Ramakrishna Pillai and Kesari Balakrishna Pillai are the doyens in the field of print media. Today media personnel are pictured as the apostles who propagate the good news of market. The main objective of media is to enhance the power of capital.

Knowledge is power. Here news imparts knowledge. Media find news or construct news. This is neither objective nor honest nor transparent. This further gets sidelined or distorted according to the interests of the newspaper barons. Understanding the power of news, the empires colonized nations and also media. Five news agencies have controlled the international news collection and dissemination. The oldest one among these is the French agency AFP. Reuters, Associated Press, United Press International, Tass etc are the other four ones. Together they divided and shared the five continents. Irrespective of the nationality of the newspaper, people of any country depend on these agencies for general news coverage. Their invasion was through the news. It's interesting that Malayala Manorama and Desabhimani accessed news from the same news agency. This continued unabated till the advent of satellite transmission. CNN brought forth revolutionary changes in this arena. In 1991 Time Magazine has selected Ted Turner, founder of CNN as the 'Man of the Year'. It was awarded as a recognition of his attempts to democratize news. Thus television emerged as a mirror of the world.

Murdochian Onslaught

Technology has transformed the media ambience dramatically. The powerful new media has put up a brave fight against this invasion. It's cumbersome to contain the tsunami waves of news disseminated with the backup of technology and capital. Rupert Murdoch has been considered as an exuberant icon of global media invasion. This Australian-born magnate has been elevated as a global citizen with his American citizenship and Chinese marriage. His media empire is spread across the whole universe. His multi-branched media empire News Corp encompasses newspaper, television, radio, internet, book, film etc. As written words are more consistent than oral words, newspapers enjoy supremacy over television. But newspapers can't survive without external support. Murdoch depends on television for this support. He considers film as a continuation of television. Not only Fleet Street and Wall Street, Hollywood is also under his control. The globally renowned Hollywood studios Twentieth Century Fox, Warner Brothers etc are owned by Murdoch himself. Murdoch has overwhelmed Lord North cliff, Hearst, Beaverbrook and Thomson who were the uncrowned media barons of yester years. Murdoch has reached Asia after his victory in Australia, America and Europe. His Asian network is baptized as STAR (Satellite Television for Asian Region) TV. Star TV which entered India in 1993 has more than 100 channels today. Murdoch has conquered the sprawling Indian subcontinent by taking over the Kannada and Telugu channels of Asianet. The repercussions were not seen in India alone. Murdoch has been fully aware of the Asian possibilities of Asianet. Murdoch has also dreams to enter the Malayalam film industry complementing Asianet. Cross ownership is the greatest challenge put forth by Murdoch. It is the unified ownership of different media. As per American law, a newspaper owner cannot start a television station in the same area. But Murdoch could manage that too. Banking on the temporary

relaxation given by Federal Communications Commission, Murdoch has evolved as the biggest cross owner in America. The peculiarity of Murdoch is that he never fights with the government and functions according to the rules of the land. Murdoch has the ability to restructure law and to appease the ruling class. In the rewritten Broadcasting Bill prepared by the Govt. of India, it was shocking to know that details pertaining to cross ownership have disappeared for good. It is a known fact that the First Press Commission had strongly recommended against the development of monopolistic trends in newspaper ownership. Newspaper monopolies slowly spreading their tentacles to internet, radio, television etc serve as an issue of grave concern. Multivocality is the lifeline of democracy. Therefore, variety in opinion is to be given equal importance like freedom of expression. Murdoch is cunning as it is evident from his discarding the Australian citizenship to embrace American citizenship. He has also married a Chinese TV anchorperson in his 68th year to dilute the legal tussles to be faced in other countries. Murdoch knows that India is a comfort and safe zone for him to play. It's a blatant strategic victory of Murdoch which culminated in the taking over of Asianet by him without any conflict. But twenty years before, Times of India's attempts to take over Mathrubhumi newspaper by buying its shares elicited much commotion. This was not there in the Asianet take over.

Advent of Media

Newspaper history is 400 years old. Indian newspaper history too is more than 100 years old. Even at the time of the birth of Kerala, newspaper journalism has completed its centenary. It has eked out its own crystal clear ways energized by experiments and failures of great newspaper barons. Newspapers have their own independent system to correct journalists who falter occasionally. Man-bites-dog syndrome is the simplified definition of news. Television has bridged the gulf between information-haves and have-nots. It is a medium which disseminated the idiosyncrasies of adolescence. The advent of television had overwhelmed newspapers. It has created unforeseen ripples in the entertainment arena. The acceptability of television had disturbed the newspaper barons. The historically great lineage and heritage of newspapers have been thrown to the winds. Along with the nature of the news, the approach and outlook of newspapers also got changed. Newspapers have started blindly copycating the news distribution and structure of television. Even before initiating channels, Manorama described themselves as the 'No. 1 channel in Kerala'. Though Doordarshan had initiated Malayalam television history, the channel culture has been the contribution of Asianet which entered the scene after ten years. The birth of Asianet came at a crucial decade of globalisation which transformed the economic foundation of Kerala. Thus, the silent nights of Malayalees got spruced up by the sound and music of Asianet and other satellite channels which followed suit. Globalisation brought forth a typical social ambience congenial for a new media culture. Television succeeded in inculcating affinities leading to cultural invasion and transformed the aptitudes of the populace. The market system borne out of globalisation has resulted in the free-flowing of advertisements which ensured the economic stability of the channels.

Foreign Direct Investment

The advent of foreign newspapers to Kerala and the foreign direct investment in Indian newspapers have become common. During the tenure of NDA, the fourth estate, the sacred pillar of democracy, has been put for sale in the open market of globalisation. As Tata is to Unilever, in this backdrop when any foreigner could legally usurp the right to ownership, newspapers have been denigrated as a mere commodity for consumption. When the opportunity meted out to print media by NDA for FDI and made more liberalized by UPA, the whole media changed dramatically. Just like Indian National Congress, the

fatherhood of Indian newspapers too rests with a foreigner. The venture begun by James Augustus Hicky, now rests in the hands of Rupert Murdoch.

Dimensions of Technology

Interactivity is the nature of internet. In the case of online newspapers, there is a provision to express the reader's opinion after each news. Out of ten lakh readers, only four people are getting a chance to express their feedback. This is a major limitation for newspapers. Now-a-days newspapers used to conduct opinion surveys through their websites and publish it in newspapers. Democratic behaviour has somehow entered the media. As the dimensions increase, the credibility of newspapers is always a debatable issue. In this backdrop, all media organisations are trying to become more credible and believable. The portals of television channels have widened thanks to the changes in technology. Channel diversity and the definitions of media ownership have changed drastically. Earlier, those with centralized economic prowess and political clout could only enter the media domain. The situation has undergone changes today. Regional channels are a common phenomenon. Anybody can launch a web journal today. In America, it has been a web writer who brought out the sexual conspiracy against Bill Clinton. In India, Tehelka has set the foundation of cyber journalism. Capitalizing on the possibilities of technology, this is not at all difficult. In the beginning, television has given priority to education-knowledge fields and general affairs. Later on when television got commercialized, entertainment came to the forefront. But close on its heels came educational channels. Knowledge has not entered the mainstream of media programmes. In print media, the focus is news and for television the focus is entertainment. Media restructured people and in turn got remodeled by the whims and fancies of customers.

Mobile Phone and Utility

When compared with desktop and laptop, mobile phone though miniature in size, has so many similarities. It is inappropriate to call this gadget a 'mobile phone' as it not only helps to call people, it also helps to listen music, play games, take snaps, watch internet etc. Now mobile phone has attained the dimension of a 'people's computer'. Today mobile phone has become more and more user-friendly. Though a medium of communication and possesses the nature of mass media, the factor which differentiates it from other media is its utility. It got entry to all spheres of social life. Like mobile phones, computers too got popularized because of globalisation. But it has not trickled down to the lower strata of society. As a medium and as a gadget, the importance of mobile phones has all the more increased. Its small screen, the limitation of mobile phone will soon be rectified by technology. Truly, mobile phone has become the king of media. It has become the medium of the common man. The government of India is planning to initiate 200 information channels through mobile phones. In the coming years, the concept of broadband will become obsolete. Broadband is a contemporary usage. In America, through the system of Internet 2, huge data could be transmitted from one continent to another. A new specialized kind of media content will evolve in future. In that new media situation, the projection of three-dimensional pictures would become a reality.

Assessing the inventions of printing machine, telephone, radio and television, it is the printing machine technology which transformed the language. It has been a herculean task to rearrange the movable types which revolutionized even the Malayalam alphabet. It has even entered the keyboards of computers. Malayalam will witness further revolutions in computers, mobile phones and other IT gadgets in the years to come. Truly, sweeping changes will be witnessed in the coming years. Newspapers will be transformed into e-newspapers. This system permits a person to read all newspapers in a material surface. The

subtle and profound differences between newspapers, television and internet will diminish forever. The IT era has ended. Now it's the era of biology. We can control the functions of living beings. It's said that by such control, printing could be transferred to the leaves of plants. It could definitely turnout as a penance from our part for destroying bamboo for manufacturing newsprint. Though it seems a little melodramatic, this is not unachievable. Today we are in an 'information overload' era. It's a war to select news, entertainment and knowledge from television. But with hundreds of channels, we are sure to fail in the war as even a judicious selection won't be possible for a customer. Channel browsing takes away the lion's share of our time like internet browsing. While checking the quality of a programme, the customer loses several other qualitative programmes. Today the media experience is so incorrigible owing to such complexities.

New Media Culture

The new media has evolved out of the older media systems and situations. Changes in technology have brought forth newer possibilities in this arena. Digitization of media content is the main reason. Earlier, different gadgets were used to collect and disseminate news in print, radio and television. Today by dint of new technological innovations, that division has been narrowed. Sound, letters and pictures get embedded in a compact disc. The content of cyber media too could be enclosed in it. The barriers between media disappeared with the possibility of media content to be saved in a digital system. This is nothing but media convergence. All this can be cybercast through a single channel. The objective of print media, radio, television and cyber media is to disseminate the same media content through the same medium. This brings forth so many differences in the media world. The positive thing is that media could mutually become models and act as a corrective of one on the other. The term Fourth Estate hints that it is part of the power circle. This observation by Burke very soon got currency among the intellectuals. But newspaper is also regarded as 'society's eyes and ears'. This means they are with the people.

Trends and Experiments

Independent Indian history is rife with revolutionary upheavals in the democratic set up. India's journalism history too got influenced by several parallel silent revolutions. Journalism and the country's politico-economic system seem to be two sides of the same coin. If one side is violent, how can the other side be serene? Today the margin between communism and capitalism gets narrowed, the politicization of religions lead people to violent combinations and political-bureaucratic mafia alliances conquer the governance. But the realities of today and yester years won't synchronise. Within half a decade, the country witnessed several vicissitudes of fortune. The India dreamt by Gandhiji disappeared during the tenure of Nehru. Nehru's India got washed away in the tsunami waves of Indira Gandhi's emergency. The Indian foundation of socialist pattern has been shaken by P V Narasimha Rao and inculcated the stones of liberalized globalization. This revamped the economic system of the country. Under the leadership of Manmohan Singh political-diplomatic traditions too have become topsy-turvy. India ignored non-aligned movement which has been our trademark and developed intimacy with US-Israel axis powers.

Journalism has become a field where paradoxical interests often come into conflict. As newspaper serves as a mirror which reflects the happenings around, its directions have undergone a change. Even before independence, journalism was firmly rooted in the soil. At times British government came up with stringent measures. Some of the viceroys were dictators too. Barring Wellesley's regime, newspapers could criticize government and

formulate independent standpoints. When Ram Mohun Roy's papers tried to wipe out the social evils in the society, certain orthodox papers came into existence in the first half of 19th century trying to maintain the traditional customs and beliefs as such. British authorities even paid heed to the expert opinions of renowned newspaper editors. C Y Chintamani, the owner of 'Leader' from Allahabad has been included in the United Province government also. In the first half of 20th century, Chintamani as an independent thinker exerted tremendous influence in the society as well as the government. The advent of Gandhiji had merged journalism and politics. Barring Vallabhai Patel, all others were either journalists or media owners. They involved deeply in the freedom struggle. Going to jail, publishing the speech of Congress President etc. seems to be the daily duties of journalists and newspapers.

Contemporary issues erupted when this alliance has to be severed for the health of journalism. A spate of untoward incidents happened as a result. The government help became mandatory for journalism to flourish. Meanwhile, it became obvious that over allegiance to government will be detrimental for the development of journalism. The interests of newspaper owners and journalists happened to be entirely different. Liberalisation brought forth new challenges and conflicts. The inculcation of values happened to be a debatable issue. Money started pouring in to the journalistic field. It opened up opportunities for those who wanted to amass money. Truly, a period of challenges and confusion for those who believed in the social awareness of newspapers. Journalists themselves diluted the newspaper style deep-rooted in social consciousness. The Trade Union movement initiated by renowned journalists like Chalapathi Rao has been the need of the hour. This to a certain extent helped journalists who have been subjected to unbelievable exploitation, to attain economic stability. After a generation, trade union movement did more harm than good to society. Federation of Working Journalists declined as it happened to be a private instrument to help half a dozen arrogant journalists. Their name and fame got tarnished in society. The selfish motives of certain mercenary journalists too added insult to injury. The renowned 'Illustrated Weekly of India' which enjoyed great popularity stooped to the level of propagating vulgar literature. Another editor restructured its content and format making it neither a newspaper nor a magazine. The owners themselves advised 'euthanasia' for the weekly which got wounded from within. Ramnath Goenka who believed that he is inferior to his newspaper too has witnessed a similar tragedy. His own editor executed his personal political agenda in the 'Indian Express' which hurt Goenka deeply, resulting in his dismissal. In the mean time, the dismissed journalist had become a political leader. When journalists themselves abused journalism, it became easier for the government and owners to misuse the freedom of journalists. Understanding the gravity of the situation, the Press Council of India had vehemently criticized the journalists, 'it's unfortunate that journalists themselves are yielding to temptations, sacrificing their freedom for petty motives.'

Emergency and its Aftermath

Emergency triggered the decline of traditions, values and beliefs. Rule of law, constitution and personal freedom which had been hitherto considered sacred were in shambles. Two years of dictatorship had wiped out our national values. Though the infallibility of constitution has been restructured, the earlier ambience could not be reinstated. People lost their beliefs in goodness and a certain type of hatred got inculcated in them. Selfish motives and trends ruled the roost throughout the length and breadth of the country. Even political parties stooped themselves for votes and power. Objective and duty bound journalists too started dancing to the tunes of Indira Gandhi. They started bowing to the beck and call of authorities. Stories of kickbacks given to journalists by a UP Chief Minister came to the forefront. From his fund, he lavishly offered almost four crores to

hundreds of journalists. This paved the way for the new corruption culture which engulfed the field of journalism. Ramnath Goenka had retorted in pungent words, 'earlier, journalists were missionaries, but now they are mercenaries'. Along with this paradigm shift, two other phenomena had initiated changes in journalism. Globalisation had brought forth sweeping changes in the field. The belief that the whole world has been changed to a market and money can change the boundaries of nations got fortified. This thoroughly changed the dreams of newspaper owners as well as journalists. Manmohan Singh had opened up regarding the arrival of new horizons in the arena. In the seminar conducted by CNBC Channel in Delhi, he exhorted all Indian media to become global powers. He added, 'we should have our own CNN's and BBC's.' Another aspect has been pinpointed by Noam Chomsky. While visiting India, he opined, 'globalisation will enhance the advertising revenue...media resources will be reduced incredibly and media would reflect the thoughts of people who have huge capital to run global media organisations.'

Changed Mediascape

Deep-rooted changes have taken place in the nature of journalism from the tenure of Indira Gandhi until the time of Narendra Modi. During the concluding decades of twentieth century, certain instances took place which revamped the journalistic yardsticks. Certain diplomatic changes took place in The Times of India run Bennett Coleman Company. The new strategies have increased the profit of the company and other newspaper organisations have been strongly influenced. This has given historical importance to the offbeat ways of Bennett and Coleman. Times of India resurrected as the new force which wiped out the hitherto approved traditions, foundation stones and permanent values of journalism. The changes which started in the 50s formed as an ideology in the 80s and restructured the media culture of the country. The consequences of this metamorphosis cannot be detected in the society clearly. The Times has been one of the six newspapers started by the British to safeguard the interests of the empire. From the 19th century to the 1970s, like all media organisations, Times of India too had functioned under expert editors. Frank Moraes, one of the greatest journalists India has ever witnessed has been at the helm of affairs in the 1950s. People viewed Moraes as the soul of the Times of India. But people with business came to the forefront and dictated terms to the journalist fraternity. Sameer Jain, the son of Ashok Jain, Chairman of Times of India, assumed charge of the company at the age of 30. He completely changed the existing pattern. It's not the journalist or the manager, the owner is the soul of the media organization was his philosophy. He has been enthusiastic to study the graphs of the profit share and the market share of newspapers as an industrial organization. But the philosophies and theories propounded by Sameer hindered media culture and national goodness. He believed that editors are not necessary for running newspapers as journalism stands for entertainment. He also believed that the responsibility of newspaper organisation is to share holders, to help them amass profit. The ideas and basic principles formed had kick started revolutions in many parts of the country. Rupert Murdoch has earlier told that journalism means entertainment. Milton Friedman had opined that the duty of the company is to produce profit. Twelve years before, Milton Friedman, the god of America's conventional economics has opined that the social accountability of business is to increase profit. But this idea has been rejected in America. During the regime of Bill Clinton, his Labour Secretary, Robert Reich had authored a book called 'Super Capitalism'. He pointed his finger towards government who has a role to control the companies. The govt. is duty bound to ensure that the companies going after profit do not hamper the society in anyway.

Sameer Jain had his own multi-pronged strategies to fulfill his responsibility of selling product and procure profit. He added ingredients to make news appealing, he reduced the rift between news and advertisements and entered into personal agreement with

companies which offered advertisements. In the guise of reducing the over-importance of politics, reporters started writing about the dress codes of actresses, banquets hosted by business tycoons and the trivia and trash of coffee shops. Equating news and advertisements happened to be more dangerous than chilly-frying news.

All other countries except India have great newspapers. New York Times and Washington Post in the US, Asahi Shimbun and Yomiuri in Japan, Le Monde in France etc. are examples. Great institutions are there in India like Tata, Infosys, Wipro etc. Outlook and perspectives of the founders make these companies unique. Second Press Commission had strongly warned against forbidding industrialists from starting newspapers. But certain people have taken media as their only industry like Kasturi and Sons of The Hindu, Sarkar family of Anand Bazar Patrika, Poorie family of India Today etc. These publications reflect great social awareness and higher standards. They would definitely bring forth great publications in future. Social accountability is the path towards greatness. The growth trajectory of media through this path will lead to absolute success. India too is passing through different phases of growth. Though at certain points of time, it does falter, in the long run it would become triumphant as it has not severed ties with people and culture.

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A Primer on Prime Time Debates of Malayalam News Channels

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Abstract

During non-election times, Malayalam news channels telecast stories, debates and reports on latest developments of social issues. Whereas, during the election times, these channels cover election campaign, candidature, and conduct debates on various topics like manifesto of different political parties and their approach to various issues, old and new controversies, etc. In such debates and news programmes, views of electorates as well as experts from the field concerned are also presented. The research paper, with the support of a qualitative content analysis conducted on four prime time news programmes, explores the genre of news programmes and debates of Malayalam news channels. The prime-time programmes selected for the study are as follows: “Counter Point” of *Malayala Manorama*, “News Hour” of *Asianet News*, “News Night” of *Indiavision*, and *News N Views of People*. The paper claims that these channels invariably subscribed to certain styles and formats of similarity and synchronicity during the 2011 Kerala Assembly polls—be it in the selection of topics or presentation.

Keywords: Prime Time Debates, News and Debate Shows, Malayalam News Channels, Genre, Synchronicity.

Today, elections have become grand spectacles. They are more colourful than ever. There is more noise than there ever was. More people get involved in it, and hence draw even more into it. Polls, in a way, have become the web of politics. No wonder television, the most entertaining mass medium in action today, celebrates election seasons with pyrotechnics of all sorts. News channels run long debates that feature pundits; they beam in-your-face reports on political candidates; they produce in-depth news analysis on events that can make or break poll outcomes. Well, can they actually spell doom or bloom for political parties by influencing public opinion? That is a question the discipline of political communication has been trying to answer for quite some time now.

Political debates have different formats in different countries, and have grabbed much research focus and attention. When research on political debates is mentioned, it is usually referred to presidential debates research. Other formats of debates did not get due research attention. In this study, the purview of research rests on news-based debates, and that is, panel discussions followed in main news bulletins, particularly prime-time news bulletins. Like in presidential debates, it also encompasses arguments, counter arguments and makes use of all aspects of rhetoric and persuasion.

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In modern democracies, television has become the most powerful and influential venue for political commentaries and debates. They carry the essence of current affairs in relation to political parties and candidature. Debates and political commentaries feature in daily news bulletins as well as special weekly programmes. American writer and columnist Eric Alterman argues that “political pundit”, a special group of people who debate political opinions and make predictions, has become an indispensable factor in opinionated media societies (Nord, 2008). Today, all the news channels world-wide have the genre of programmes where pundits taking to other pundits on various subjects. “To construct an impression of objectivity on these programmes, journalists and academics are frequently invited to appear or prominent liberals and conservatives are paired, to demonstrate a concern for ideological balance” (Gulati, Just and Crigler, 2004, p.243). Earlier, many studies have been carried to comprehend the influential relationship between watching television debates and the viewer’s political awareness of the issues they discuss in relation to the candidate’s or the party’s stand on the same (Bishop, Oldendick, and Tuchfarber, 1978).

William L. Benoit and Tamir Sheafer (2006) have documented the evolution and growth of television debates in different countries. Apart from debates centered on American Presidential elections, numerous debates have held in many other countries during the elections for their leadership such as presidents, prime ministers, senators and etc. The practice of organising debates on political issues during elections can be traced as early as 1948 in Sweden. Such debates were instrumental in the elections of various positions. Telecasting those debates offered a wider reach. It was in Australia in 1958, the first telecast of political debate was made. The practice was later adopted and followed by the countries like France, Germany, Israel, Greece, Holland, Scotland, Korea, Ukraine, New Zeland, South Korea, etc. William L Benoit and Tamir Sheafer (2006) carried out a study on the nature of political debates and their influences on elections. They analysed the content of five Israeli prime ministers’ debates organized during the elections held in 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996 and 1999. The study also compared the findings with the elections of the U.S for understanding similarities and contrasts in style and content.

Another content analysis study was conducted by Charlette Jorgensen et al (1998). They analyzed the content of 37 televised debates conducted live before select viewers in Denmark with before and after opinion polls. The Danish Broadcasting Corporation showed those 37 one-hour debates, under the title of Town Parliament (Bytinget).

The present study is also a humble attempt to analyse the content of prime-time television debate programmes telecast on the four news channels in Malayalam during the crucial Assembly polls held in Kerala in 2011. The key objective of this study is to explore the style and format of primetime television debates of Malayalam news channels. Further, it also tries to analyse the topics of debates on Malayalam channels during 2011 Kerala assembly elections so as to understand the synchronicity and similarity of the topics. During non-election times, Malayalam news channels telecast stories, debates and reports on latest developments of social issues. Whereas, during the election times, these channels cover election campaign, candidature, manifesto of different political parties and their approach to various issues, old and new controversies, etc. In such debates and news programmes, views of electorates as well as experts from the field concerned are also presented. These debates help educate the electorates about the issues the political representatives and parties address.

The current study falls under the discipline called Political Communication which probes into various factors of news stories, news debates and news programmes that influence electoral behavior. The research is carried out by the qualitative content analysis of news-based debate programmes of four Malayalam channels. The channels and prime time programmes are as follows: *Asianet News’ News Hour*, *Indiavision’s News Night*,

People's News N views and *Manorama News'* Counter Point/ Prime Time News. An analysis of these select programmes telecast from 19 February 2011 to 10 April 2011 is made for the purpose. The observations of the analysis are discussed in the following segments.

The Style and Format of News and Debate Programmes

News channels are highly influential, especially when it comes to public opinion formation. These news channels are capable of making the viewers educated on the topics that they telecast. News programmes in such channels have gained wide popularity. That the news anchors like M.V. Nikesh Kumar of *Reporter*, Arnab Gowsami of *Times Now* and Prannoy Roy of *NDTV* gain popularity reveals how people are fascinated toward watching news programmes. Latter-day news anchors enjoy the status of film actors. As a result, these anchors and news programmes are capable enough to influence the public and shape their opinion. Following the same fashion, politicians also appear in news programmes to debate, inform, and educate the public on matters of political interest. People, in order to make themselves aware of day-to-day political and social affairs, watch news programmes.

Malayalam news channels present their prime-time news bulletins daily between 9.00 pm and 10.00 pm. These shows are meant to present the major events of the day. Having summed up these events, debates on select topics will be made in the presence of political representatives, the public and experts from the fields concerned. As pioneers in the field of telecasting news shows, English channels like *CNN-IBN*, *Headlines Today*, *Times Now*, *NDTV* etc have made a style and format in their presentation over years. Malayalam channels and also other regional language channels follow this style and format in their prime news shows. This study focuses on the content of prime-time television debate programmes telecast on the four news channels in Malayalam viz *Manorama News*, *India Vision*, *Asianet News* and *People*. These four news channels were only there during the 2011 Assembly election period in Kerala. These channels re-telecast the news and debate shows in the wee hours.

Commonly, the duration of such programmes is one hour. These shows have breaks with commercial advertisements. The news presenter reads news. At the same time, the headlines of those news stories appear on screen. For those important news stories, the presenter will introduce a panel for discussion. The panel may comprise of two to five experts. Here, the presenter acts the role of a moderator as well. The panelists are provided with time to present their views on the topic. They can respond to the arguments made by other discussants. The panelists can participate in the debates either by presenting themselves in the channel studio or over phone. While on phone, their photographs will be displayed on screen with their names and designations. News channels ensure participation of political leaders and experts in such debates. There is always a competition between the channels in this regard. In matters of politics, these channels usually invite political spokespersons from major political parties in Kerala like UDF, LDF, and BJP. Moreover, presence of political scientists, field experts, and media persons also will be ensured in order to provide a neutral view point on such matters.

There is a practice of telecasting a recorded debate shows at the prime time. An exchange of heated arguments and counter arguments can be witnessed during debate shows. Most of the time, the discussants ask for more time to present their arguments. The news presenter arbitrates between the participants, and concludes the major arguments. It is followed by a commercial break. The news presenter picks up fresh news to read after the break.

Following is an analysis made on the style and format of the select four Malayalam news channels:

News Hour Show of Asianet News

The News Hour is the primetime news bulletin of the Malayalam television channel Asianet News. This programme is telecast between 9 pm and 10 pm daily. They re-telecast the same during the wee hours of the day. To begin with, the news presenter reads out major news stories of that day. It takes three to five minutes. It is followed by a debate on a select relevant event. The 30-40-minute-long session will have commercial breaks. Remaining fifteen minutes will be dedicated to sports, business, etc. The leading news anchors of News Hour programme during the 2011 Kerala Assembly Poll were Vinu V John, Manjush Gopal and Harshan TM.

Let us analyse a one day's News Hour debate show with an example in order to comprehend the style and format of the programme. The news show of 22 February 2011 held a debate titled "Opposition targets Chief Minister." The topic of debate was the charges put forward by the United Democratic Front (UDF) against V.A. Arun Kumar, Chief Minister VS Achuthanandan's son. Harshan TM was the news presenter and moderator. The panel consisted of V A Arunkumar, son of the chief minister V.S Achuthanandan, V.D Satheeshan MLA, the Congress leader, K.N. Balagopal MP, the CPM leader and V.S. Sunil Kumar MLA, the CPI leader discussed and debated over the alleged unholy alliance between the chief minister's son and lottery and sandalwood lobby. According to the gravity of issues, the show facilitates two debates in a single show. These two debates will have two different panels of discussants. Time dedicated to each will differ according to the relevance of the topic. The News Hour show of 11 March 2011 can be cited as an example for such a pattern. The topics of debates were Japanese Tsunami and the seat sharing policy of UDF.

Indiavision's News Night

With its launch, *Indiavision* introduced the concept of a full-time news channel in Kerala. In this way, the channel cultivated among Malayalam television audience a new culture of viewing 24-hours news programmes. News Night, telecast between 9 pm and 10 pm, was the most viewed programme of the channel. The same show was re-telecast during the wee hours of the day. The style and format of the news show were introduced by M.V. Nikesh Kumar, the star presenter of *Indiavision*, which he largely borrowed from the national channels like *CNN-IBN* and *NDTV*.

One can identify similarities between the presentation formats adopted by News Night of *Indiavision*, News Hour of *Asianet News* and News N Views of *People*. The show begins with presenting major news stories of that day. The two to three minutes long session is followed by a debate on the most relevant issue of the day. Thirty to forty minutes are dedicated to this session during which commercial breaks are also included. Field experts and representatives of political parties are invited as discussants. The show accommodates two debates when there are important news breaks; two panels of discussants will address each issue separately. The debate session will be followed by presentation of other news stories of that day. It may take 15-20 minutes. There are instances for having held more than one debate in a single show: News Night conducted two debates on 08 April 2011. One was on the hunger strike by Anna Hazare for Lokpal Bill. The other debate was on the starting of IPL Cricket season 4.

Leading news presenters and anchors of News Night show during the 2011 Kerala Assembly Polls were Veena George and E Saneesh. An analysis of the style and format of a day's News Hour show can provide better understanding: The News Night on March 25, 2011 debated on the matters mentioned in the manifesto released by UDF with the title "Do promises only remain on paper?" The panellists of the debate were the Socialist Janatha Dal leader Varghese George, the CPM leader Anathalavattom Anandan and political observer G Gopakumar. E Saneesh was the news presenter of that day.

People's News N Views

This Malayalam news channel is lenient toward the leftist parties in Kerala. It presents divergent news on issues. News N Views is the channel's prime news show that runs between 9 pm and 10 pm daily, and a repeat of the same is at 11:30 pm on the same day. The news show holds debates and news-roundup on the most important issue of each day.

When looked into the style and format, this prime news show also follows the same format for presentation. Headlines of the day will be read by the anchor for two to three minutes. Simultaneously, they will be displayed on the screen. The session will be followed by debate on the most relevant issue of that day. If there are two topics for discussion, two panels of discussants will be invited. A one-day's News N Views is described below to better comprehend the style and format of the show: the show witnessed a debate on the controversies related to the selection of UDF candidates. Sarath Chandran presented the topic and moderated the debate. CPM leader K.N. Balagopal MP, Congress leader Rajmohan Unnithan and senior journalist P. Rajan participated in the debate as discussants. Accusations of favoritism at the cost of a decent politics made by former Health Minister K.K. Ramachandran Master against Oommen Chandy, the Leader in Opposition and KPCC President Ramesh Chennithala was the major content of the debate. The news show introduced a special news programme during the 2011 Kerala election campaigns under the title, 'Janavidhi'.

The news show also conducted two debates on the same show on occasions when there are two important issues to be discussed in detail. For example, the show on 03 March 2011 had two topics for debates: first debate was on the intervention made by the Supreme Court on the CVC appointments. The second topic was on the conflicts live in the UDF in matters of seat sharing. The show was marked for the presentation skills of the anchors Sarath Chandran and K. Rajendran during the 2011 Kerala Niyamasabha Polls.

Counter Point and Prime Time News of *Manorama News*

Manorama News follows a different pattern for its news and debate presentation. The channel has two segments dedicated separately for news story presentation and news debate. The first segment Prime Time News runs between 9 pm to 9:30 pm during which the anchor presents news of the day. It is followed by the second segment Counter Point. The 30-minutes long segment debates on major issues of that day.

Counter Point is repeated in the wee hours of the day. There is no Counter Point debate show on Sundays. The Prime Time News carries a discussion on Sundays.

An analysis of a session of Counter Point will be beneficial for understanding the style and format of the debate show. The 30 March 2011 News show discussed the Supreme Court's stay over the decision of the Civil Supplies Department to distribute rice at the rate of Rs 2 per kg. They had already issued a stay over the Kerala Government order (February 25 2011) which extended the subsidized distribution of rice to all ration card holders. In effect, the Supreme Court stay order would smear the image of LDF Government. The discussants were Thomas Issac (Finance Minister), M.I Shanavas MP (Congress), and the political observer G. Gopakumar. Venu Balakrishnan presented the news and moderated the debate. Venu Balakrishnan and Shani Prabhakaran hosted the Counter Point. At the same time, on Sundays, when there were no *Counter Point* shows, Nisha Purushothaman led the discussion in prime-time news bulletins.

Topics Debated in News Channels: Similarity and Synchronicity

Malayalam news channels have discussed and debated a huge number of topics during the election campaigns. An analysis of the topics debated during elections shows the

nature of channel debates in Kerala and highlights how far they are election-centric. In order to comprehend this factor, the researcher analysed the live debates of these channels telecast between 19th February and 10th April 2011. The researcher prepared a schedule of issues discussed on more than one television debate show and identified as many as 16 topics featured on these channels' news shows.

The researcher finds similarity between topics that these four Malayalam news channels discussed. The electoral issues discussed by the four television channels are almost identical (Table 1). Most shows debated over the issues that were pertaining to election and election campaign like seat sharing controversies in UDF, Candidature of VS Achutanandan, his son's involvement in lottery scam, alliance between Jamaat-e-Islami and LDF, etc. Other minor topics like R Balakrishna Pillai's imprisonment also were broached onto the desk of debate. Pillai was arrested on the grounds of corruption as electricity minister associated with granting the Idamalayar Hydraulic Project contract (see Table 1 & 2). The list of key issues that found space in debates during the 2011 Kerala Polls is given in the table:

Table 1
Topics Debated on Malayalam News Channels

DATE	Asianet News' News Hour (34 days)	Indiavision's News Night (35 days)	People's News N Views (32 days)	Manorama News' Counter Point/ Prime Time News (33 days)
19-02-2011	UDF seat sharing. KM Mani's statement challenging the Congress.	UDF Seat sharing. KM Mani's statement.	UDF Seat sharing. KM Mani's statement.	UDF Seat sharing. KM Mani's statement
20-02-2011	UDF Seat sharing. KM Mani's claim on Thodupuzha seat.	UDF Seat sharing KM Mani's claim on Thodupuzha seat.	UDF Seat sharing KM Mani's claim on Thodupuzha seat.	
22-02-2011	Charges against VS Achuthanandan's son. Opposition walks out of Assembly over charges against VS' son.	Charges against VS' son. Opposition walks out Assembly over charges against VS' son.	Lottery scam. Assembly adjourned following unruly scenes.	Charges against VS' son. Opposition walks out of Assembly over charges against VS' son.
23-02-2011	Lottery Scam and Palmolein case	Lottery scam. Charges against VS' son.	Palmolein case. Allegations against the opposition leader Oommen Chandy.	Back-door appointments. Opposition's allegations in Assembly.
24-02-2011	Charges against VS' son. 12 th Assembly session ends trading graft charges.	Charges against VS' son. 12 th Assembly ends session trading graft charges.	12th Assembly ends session. Opposition charges are baseless, says	Charges against VS' son. Opposition strikes again.

DATE	<i>Asianet News'</i> News Hour (34 days)	<i>Indiavision's</i> News Night (35 days)	<i>People's</i> News N Views (32 days)	<i>Manorama News'</i> Counter Point/ Prime Time News (33 days)
			LDF	
25-02-2011		Central Railway Budget. Disappointment for Kerala.	Central Railway Budget. Disappointment for Kerala.	Central Railway Budget. Kerala's gains and losses.
26-02-2011	Charges against VS and his Son. VS' Press Conference.	VS' Press conference: Ready for Probe against son	VS' Press conference: Ready for Probe against son	Charges against VS' Son. VS' press conference
27-02-2011	Nadapuram bomb blast. Charges against IUML, the UDF ally.	Nadapuram bomb blast. Charges against IUML	Nadapuram bomb blast. Charges against IUML,	Lottery scam. VS' letter to Prime Minister.
02-03-2011	Congress candidate list. Demand for new faces.	LDF seat sharing. RSP's claims for more seats.	Lottery Scam. VS' letter to Prime minister.	Congress' candidate List. Chance for new faces.
03-03-2011	CVC Appointment. Supreme Court nullifies the nomination of PJ Thomas as CVC.	CVC Appointment. Supreme Court nullifies the nomination of PJ Thomas as CVC.	CVC Appointment. Supreme Court nullifies the nomination of PJ Thomas as CVC. UDF Seat sharing. JSS' concerns.	VS' Candidature. Ready to contest election if Party proposes, says VS.
08-03-2011	UDF momentum. Asianet News- C Voter Pre-poll survey analysis predicts UDF win	VS' candidature. Uncertain about his candidature.	Congress' candidate list. Ramesh Chennithala to enter the fray.	Congress' Candidate List. Ramesh Chennithala to enter the fray.
09-03-2011	UDF seat sharing. Demands and complaints of JSS, a UDF ally.	UDF seat sharing. UDF stuck with JSS seats.	Rice at Rs.2 a Kg Scheme. Intervention of Election Commission.	UDF Seat sharing. KCM and JSS dissent with Congress.
10-03-2011	VS' candidature. VS is not in the list prepared by CPI (M) district committee.	VS' candidature. VS Achuthanandan is not in the list prepared by CPI (M) district committee.	UDF seat sharing; KM Mani claims for 22 seats.	VS' candidature. VS Achuthanandan is not in the list prepared by CPI (M) district committee.
11-03-2011	UDF seat sharing. KM Mani sticks to seat demand.	VS' candidature. CPI (M) undecided over key candidates.		
12-03-2011	UDF seat sharing.	LDF, UDF seat sharing. Dissent	LDF seat sharing. Seat	Congress' Candidate list. Dissent brewing

DATE	<i>Asianet News'</i> News Hour (34 days)	<i>Indiavision's</i> News Night (35 days)	<i>People's</i> News N Views (32 days)	<i>Manorama News'</i> Counter Point/ Prime Time News (33 days)
	Congress-JSS discussions fail to break dead lock.	brewing in UDF.	sharing almost completed.	among Congress seat aspirants.
16-03-2011	VS' Candidature. CPI (M) denies ticket to VS.	VS' candidature. VS won't be there in the fray.	VS' candidature. VS and Pinarayi Vijayan not to contest polls.	VS' Candidature. CPI (M) denies ticket to VS Achuthanandan.
17-03-2011	VS' candidature. Available PB discussed the issue.	VS' candidature: Pro-VS marches all over Kerala.	Wikileaks Expose Cash-for-votes expose rocks parliament.	VS' Candidature. Pro-VS marches against denial of seat to VS in polls.
19-03-2011	VS' candidature. Pro VS marches and VS' Press conference.	UDF seat sharing. Congress tied down differences with SJD, CMP.	UDF seat sharing. Dissent brewing in KC (M).	VS' Candidature. VS' statement that he never said he wanted to opt out of fray.
20-03-2011	Rebel Menace in UDF. Three UDF leaders to contest as LDF Independents.	Rebel Menace in UDF. Three UDF leaders to contest as LDF Independents.	Rebel Menace in UDF. Three UDF leaders to contest as LDF Independents.	Congress' Candidate list. Rebel Menace rears its head.
21-03-2011	UDF seat sharing and Congress' candidate list. Joseph M Puthussery left out of Kerala Congress (M) list.	Congress' candidate list. Allegations of left-out leaders in candidate list.	Congress' candidate list. Congress grappling with 30 seats.	Rice at Rs. 2 a Kg scheme. High Court opposes Election Commissions stay over Rice at Rs. 2 a Kg scheme listed in LDF manifesto
23-03-2011	Congress' candidate list. Congress grappling with protests.	UDF seat sharing. Dissent brewing among leaders.	Congress' candidate list. Congress grappling with protests.	Congress' Candidate list evokes mixed response.
24-03-2011	Sindhu Joy in Congress. Sindhu Joy, former SFI leader, joins Congress.	Ready for Election. Filing of nominations begin	Sindhu Joy in Congress. CPI (M) expels her.	Sindhu Joy in Congress. CPI (M) expels her.
25-03-2011	Rice at Rs. 2 a Kg scheme (LDF manifesto). UDF promises rice at Re.1 a Kg.	UDF Manifesto. Promises on paper?	UDF Manifesto. A rice bowl of promises.	R Balakrishna Pillai's imprisonment, Ice-cream case. VS' revenge politics?
26-03-2011	Women against Top Leaders. Parties filed women to take on stalwarts	BJP in 'Wikileaks' Row. Arun Jaitley's comments on the BJP's 'opportunistic'	UDF Seat sharing. UDF shuffles seat allocation in last minutes.	Election picture is clear. Confidence of LDF and UDF.

DATE	<i>Asianet News'</i> News Hour (34 days)	<i>Indiavision's</i> News Night (35 days)	<i>People's</i> News N Views (32 days)	<i>Manorama News'</i> Counter Point/ Prime Time News (33 days)
		Hindu nationalism.		
27-03-2011	Secret tie-up with BJP. Both LDF and UDF allege secret BJP tie-up.	Indo-Pak talks. Cricket politics and diplomatic affairs.	Palmolein case; Oommen Chandy's role. Helicopter for Campaign. UDF in trouble.	Allegation on BJP-CPM tie-up in Malampuzha. Chennithala sees CPI (M) BJP tie-up in polls.
28-03-2011	Use of helicopter for election campaigns: LDF criticized UDF for opting choppers.	Black Money Row. Supreme Court against Central Government stance.	Central Govt. corruption cases. A Key electoral issue.	Use of Helicopter. CPI (M) criticizes UDF plan to use helicopter for election campaign .
29-03-2011	Corrupt money for campaign. In the context of plan to use chopper for campaign.	Indo-Pak talks. Cricket politics and diplomatic affairs.	Congress' candidate list. Ramachandran Master alleges payment seats and outbreaks in a press conference.	LDF leaders' slapping controversy. P Jayarajan CPI (M) leader slaps a media person; C Divakaran CPI leader manhandles a voter
30-03-2011	TMC Front will win in West Bengal: Analysis of pre-poll survey		Final candidates list is ready. The election scenario is clear.	The Supreme Court intervenes in the subsidised rice scheme. (LDF manifesto)
31-03-2011	UDF will gain absolute majority: Analysis of Asianet C Voter Survey.	A.K. Antony against VS Achuthanandan. Antony takes swipes at VS says Chief Minister's words and deeds do not match.		Antony against VS. Antony unleashes rockets against VS Achuthanandan and LDF.
04-04-2011	Ice-cream case. VS' intervention.	Jamaat-e-Islami alliance. Talks between Jamaat-e-Islami leaders and Pinarayi Vijayan.	Jamaat-e-Islami alliance. Jamaat-e-Islami meets Pinarayi Vijayan.	Jamaat-e-Islami alliance. Jamaat leaders hold discussion with CPI (M) leader Pinarayi Vijayan.
05-04-2011	Jamaat-e-Islami alliance. Both fronts refuse alliance with Jamaat-e-Islami.	Lottery scam and Jamaat-e-Islami alliance. Electoral politics turn controversial.	Lottery scam. Central Govt. changes its stance. Ice-cream case. Vigilance enquiry begins.	Ice-cream case. VS need not interfere and guide the case.
06-04-2011	VS' comments against Lathika Subhash. Protests	VS' comments on Lathika Subhash and	Ice-cream case. Again, a controversial	VS' comments on Lathika Subhash. Protest against VS'

DATE	<i>Asianet News’ News Hour (34 days)</i>	<i>Indiavision’s News Night (35 days)</i>	<i>People’s News N Views (32 days)</i>	<i>Manorama News’ Counter Point/ Prime Time News (33 days)</i>
	against VS’ comments.	Jamaat-e-Islami alliance row. Electoral politics turn controversial.	electoral issue.	comments.
07-04-2011	Central Govt. Corruption cases. Support for Anna Hazare’s agitation against corruption.	Central Govt. corruption cases; Anna Hazare stubborn in his hunger strike.	Ice-cream case. K.A Rauf’s revealings	Central Govt. corruption cases. Anna Hazare movement strengthens.
08-04-2011	Anna Hazare movement. Hazare’s hunger strike becomes successful.	Central Govt. corruption cases. Anna Hazare succeeds in his strike	Central Govt. corruption cases. Anna Hazare’s hunger strike.	Hazare movement against corruption. Hazare’s hunger strike is successful.
09-04-2011		Campaign issues in general. Serious issues overlooked.		Ice-cream case. VS makes stronger his stance.
10-04-2011	Jamaat-e-Islami alliance. Jamaat supports LDF in 124 seats.	Election campaigns end. Fronts go for last moment strategies.		

(Muneer V, 2015)

Table 2

Snippets of 16 Issues Debated

Malayalam television channels debated several key issues in the run up to the state assembly polls 2011. A lowdown of shortlisted influential issues are given below:

1	<p>R. Balakrishna Pilla’s imprisonment</p> <p>In the controversial Idamalayar case, former Kerala Minister R Balakrishna Pillai was sent to prison. The Supreme Court dismissed the review petition filed by Pillai challenging the imposition of the one-year rigorous imprisonment handed down to him and two others for abusing their position in the award of contract for the Idamalayar hydroelectric power project. And the issue stuck a heavy blow on the UDF’s election campaign prospects.</p>
2	<p>Charges against VS’ son</p> <p>The state politics witnessed tremors after the opposition UDF charged VA Arun Kumar, ruling LDF chief minister VS Achuthanandan’s son, with involvement in a lottery mafia and sandalwood lobby in the state. The UDF took the issue to the House, while the LDF was on the defensive guarding the CM who on 26 Feb 2011 informed the media that the government would order any kind of inquiry into the allegations.</p>

3	<p>Lottery Scam</p> <p>Opposition's charges against chief minister VS Achuthanandan that he paved way for the proliferation on lotteries from other states in Kerala stirred a hornet's nest. The Congress charged that finance minister Thomas Isaac took a lackadaisical approach to the issue and took a long time to act. On 22 February 2011, Congress member V. D. Satheesan gave notice for a submission in Kerala assembly on a letter written by Achuthanandan to Union Home minister P. Chidambaram seeking an inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the sale of other-State lotteries in Kerala, but Achuthanandan did not divulge the details of the letter for 55 days and filed an affidavit against the Centre in the Kerala High Court. The issue snowballed into a controversy</p>
4	<p>Ice-cream case</p> <p>The two-decade-old sex scandal resurfaced following a series of fresh, controversial statements from K. A. Rauf, who was a one-time aide and relative of Muslim League leader P. K. Kunhalikutty, accused to have had links to a prostitution racket based in Calicut. The leader was later let off. But the row kept burning on. Especially with chief minister V.S. Achuthanandan ordering a re-investigation of the case.</p>
5	<p>Back-door appointments</p> <p>Wayanad district, lying north-east in the state, witnessed a political storm after a job racket was exposed in Wayanad. Later, it was found that the racket, run by Abhilash Pillai and team, had roots in several other parts of the state. In Wayanad, it was found that at least eight people had got into government jobs via these illegal entry points. The UDF took the matter to the state assembly and triggered a series of discussions of similar events in the state.</p>
6	<p>Central Govt. Corruption cases</p> <p>In the backdrop of the Jan Lokpal movement and the hunger strike of social activist Anna Hazare in Delhi, the ruling LDF in Kerala highlighted the big-ticket corruption scandals — the multi-crore 2G spectrum auction controversy and the corrupt practices at the Delhi Commonwealth Games — involving leaders from the UPA in general and the Congress in particular, and started an intense debate around the issues.</p>
7	<p>UDF Seat Sharing</p> <p>The chaotic scenario in the UDF over sharing seats for poll contestants kicked up a row with the Congress finding itself in the midst of an ugly tussle between its small bed mates in the alliance. It started when K. M Mani, the leader of KCM, claimed 22 seats. Later, other allies, JSS, SJD, CMP, KC (J), joined the chorus.</p>
8	<p>Rebel Menace in UDF</p> <p>Protesting the UDF decision to keep them off poll fray, three UDF leaders — Stephen George of KC (M) in Kaduthuruthy, M V Jayadali of the Congress in Kattakada, and George J Mathew, former Congress MLA from Kanjirappally — walked out of the front and contested as independent candidates. Among them, Jayadali and Stephen found LDF backing.</p>
9	<p>VS' Candidature</p> <p>When the media reported that the district committees of CPI (M) did not include LDF leader and chief minister V.S. Achuthanandan's name in the probable candidates list to the State Committee, a huge public outcry erupted. When the State Committee backed the decision, the public anger soared, forcing the party's Politburo to reverse the decision.</p>
10	<p>Congress' candidate list</p> <p>When the Congress started discussions on whom to field in the coming polls, several dissident voices came up along with intense rumours of a possible change of guard at the top brass when KPCC president Ramesh Chennithala entered the fray. Meanwhile, the youth wing of the party demanded more seats for its fraternity, the left-out leaders</p>

	took their discontent to media forums and public venues.
11	Rice at Rs.2 a kg scheme A much-popular scheme introduced by the LDF to offer one kilo of rice at a curiously cheap rates of Rs 2 became a heated subject of discussion when the Election Commission intervened and applied brakes on the extension of the scheme. But the Kerala High Court set aside the order. But the Supreme Court stayed the HC order later. But the issue influenced poll debates significantly, prompting even the UDF to come up with a similar promise in its manifesto.
12	LDF Manifesto Manifesto of Left Democratic Front included the following offers: A social security programme under the title “From Cradle to Grave,” employment for 25 lakh people, welfare programmes and pension for staff of religious institutes and places of worship, free education for all children. The manifesto also assured pension for all aged-people, right to service law, a law to monitor inter-state migrant laborers, and more opportunities for technology parks and technological development.
13	UDF Manifesto Major items in the manifesto of UDF were as follows: 36 lakhs of employment, pepper and horticulture boards, reconsideration of backdoor appointments, realization of Kochi Metro Project, loan for students to purchase computers, electricity for all by one year, and a control over lottery lobbies from other states.
14	Antony against VS Congress national leader A.K. Antony launched his election campaign by taking on V.S. Achuthanandan. Antony cited the mismatch between his words and deeds during the last five years he has been in office. He called upon Achuthanandan to come out with facts and figures of the action he had taken against sex racketeers, illegal liquor trade, quotation gangs, land mafia, etc.
15	Sindhu Joy in Congress Giving a rude shock to the CPI (M), its young leader Sindhu Joy quit party saying the party neglected her and kept her away from responsible roles. She later joined the Congress. She also quit as SFI vice president and the state committee membership of the DYFI. In reply, the CPI (M) expelled Sindhu from the party. Later, Sindhu hit out against V.S. Achuthanandan for calling her ‘oruthi’ (an insignificant woman).
16	Jamaat-e-Islami’s Alliance In a surprise move, the CPI (M) state secretary met Jamaat-e-Islami leaders in connection with the state polls. Many termed the move as seeking the Islamic organisation’s political support. In protest, Jamaat-e-Islami political secretary Hameed Vanimel resigned from his post. For long, the CPI (M) had held the view that the Jamaat was an extremely communal organisation. Soon, Jamaat extended support to the party and its partners in 124 of the total 140 constituencies.

(Muneer V, 2015)

The analysis of the content of the debates of the four channels gives some common insights. All four channels give a prominent slot for news and debates and dedicate most viewed slot, primetime, for the same. In the primetime, 8.30-9.00 pm is the common slot for the news and debate shows. Majority of the debate topics are the same. Out of the four channels under the purview of this study, on an average three take same topics each day. That is why

the debates of 36 days revolved round on 16 topics. The difference was only on perspectives and angles. Even, they are running behind the same panelists for discussions. It also shows that they all follow the same principles of news programming practice. During important newsbreak days they select two different topics for debates.

Further, the aggressive style of anchoring is another common feature of debate shows of Malayalam news channels. Almost all news presenters adopt a provoking style of interrogation. That is why it is criticized that such debate shows produce only 'heat' instead of 'light'. The judgmental style of such anchoring invites serious image/credibility crises as well, which is another topic of research in the same area that needs deep probe using different methodology. As Keralites/Malayalees are continuing as the so-called 'argumentative Indians', the interest of people in debates will grow and subsequently, the relevance of such research will also increase.

Based on the analysis conducted on the content of prime-time television debate programmes telecast on the four news channels in Malayalam during the crucial Assembly polls held in Kerala in 2011., the researcher identified the nature of the shows. The findings will help future researchers to conduct further studies on some areas like the bias and propaganda of debates, the perceived credibility of debates, issue priming and framing, and image engineering.

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Films and Gender Predilections: A Look into Bollywood's Shifting Directorial Narratives

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Abstract

Cinema, the greatest art of the twentieth century, emerged the most popular medium of mass consumption not only by playing a key role in the creation and moulding of opinions, but also by constructing images that reinforce dominant cultural values. When the processes of movie making was largely controlled and mediated by the male directors, actors and technicians, they inadvertently transferred the patriarchal values they believe in, to the functioning and hierarchy of the film industry and in the narratives they construct. The second wave feminism and associated movements gradually changed the way in which the film narratives were created. More and more female authors who entered the film world managed to do the maximum to hit upon a bias-less world, with agency in their films, which appeared to have changed the world view of how the gender should be treated in public and society. This study tries to find the parallels of this trend in Hindi films, as more and more female filmmakers are out there into Indian parallel and commercial film making.

Key words

Bollywood, Gender, Patriarchy, New wave

Introduction

The biggest and oldest in the world in terms of production and audiences, the Indian film Industry with its multitude of regional industries has now acquired a global appeal. (Mazumdar, 2007). Clocking revenues of around 160 billion in 2015, it shows an average growth of 13-14 percent annually. On an appreciative note, Indian government even relaxed its economic policy to grant it, together with the entertainment sector, an 'Industry status' which allows ready finance and clean credits for film making from global conglomerates.

A decade back, the filmed entertainment sector amounted to only INR 110 billion in size in 2008. The expansions of multiplex screens, DTH channels, HD quality and multitudes of TV channels have been readily fuelling the demand for increased filmy content. The growing diaspora of Indian audiences across places like China, Russia, the Middle East, and Africa has also made it the one which influence every trend in music, fashion and life styles across the world. Infact, India cinema, particularly the Hindi cinema has never enjoyed as much influences as it has today.

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Though the Indian Cinema Industry is often represented by "Bollywood" , in reality it does not encompass various kinds/industries of Indian cinema. Cinema Industry has been majorly divided into two broad categories from the sixties onwards, namely the art (parallel/new wave) and commercial cinema (Pendakur 2003). Later a new genre-the middle brow cinema- also found space in Hindi cinema and in other Indian languages.

Women have been given a higher position than men in the ancient Indian scriptures, but in reality the case is just the opposite (Altekar 1955). Sons are preferred over daughters in most parts of the country which leads to a preferential treatment to boys in families, right from their birth. Demographic trends also demonstrate that there is deep-rooted gender inequity that starts with prenatal sex determination which leads to female foeticide . Such a male dominated society which considers women inferior to men even prohibits them to make decisions in their personal life or to the selection of livelihood, in majority of the villages. This unequal treatment of women is reflected in the media in general. Naturally the largely conservative Indian film industry very regressive in the ideals it upholds. The severely male-dominated (Ganti, 2004) filmy work space doesn't have much women names in its list of directors or producers. Women who pursue a career within the industry are limited mostly to actresses, writers, costume designers or playback singers. Except in the case of actors, no other professionals from the above list doesn't have much to do in actual production phase of movies, and this has continued as such with very modest changes over the years .

In Bollywood, the number of women involved in cinematography, art direction and editing are negligible (Dasgupta, 2011). According to a report by Geena Davis Institute (2014),the ratio of gender in Indian Film Industry stands at 6.2 males to every female, and only less than one-in-every ten directors is a woman(9.1 %). The percentage of the women writers and producers are 12.1% and 15.2% respectively, making 'film production related job's a strenuous decision for ladies.

The role of agency in women's lives also need to be considered while analysing the women representation behind films. 'Agency' according to Ritzer (2005) is the capacity of individual humans to act independently in active roles (Caplan,2009) and to make their own free choices. The feminist review of films has always focused on the role of agency in the lives of women and on 'male gaze- the much reviewed concept put forth by Laura Mulvey in her seminal work 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema' (1975). The conventional patriarchy in the industry together with the limitations imposed by the family and society thus set further hurdles for ladies behind screen in Indian filmdom.

The main proposition of this paper to check how far the representation of women in the Indian film industry has changed in the last two decades and how this new visibility of women film makers have ultimately resulted in showcasing more emotionally and economically independent women on celluloid, devoid of any predilections.

The Traditional Filmy Moulds.

The narratives of a most of the Hindi films revolve around men and their heroics. At the same time the Manichean dualism in Indian cinema presents women in one dimensional characters- either as good or bad. The dutiful mothers, (whose attributes are matched to that of the supreme form of feminine energy, the Goddess) loyal daughters, and obedient, respectful wives who hardly questions men find opposites intainted, stereotypical 'vamp' or the 'other women' who shows disregard to tradition. (Gokulsing & Dissnayake (2004). The later may be presented as westernised, drinking, partying and is promiscuous with all offensive unacceptable behaviours, as far as patriarchal Indian standards.

As Ryan and Kellner (1988) pointed out, films are consistently implicated by the politics of culture within which they are produced. But even when it shows tendency of changes with imperialist cultural values projected through advertisements and foreign films which finds audience in India, the ideal image of Indian womanhood has displayed notable equivalence through ages, with images of Pativrata, Sita and Savitri- obedient, submissive, sacrificing, sentimental, superstitious women incompetent of rational action, with their primary duty being the total dedication to husband. The other regularly applauded filmy image was that of the glorified Motherhood- 'Bharat Matha Image' which also has got broad approval. In India, fundamentalist forces at home also try to erase spaces of difference and likely interventions and construct a monolithic representation of women gender across the nation.

The glorification of the image of ideal Indian woman as tolerant to the unfairness and brutality meted out towards her by men and society has been the criterion components of commercial Hindi cinema. (Dasgupta and Hegde 1988)- a formula religiously followed by other language film industries as well across the country. The women in these movies, in most cases, do not have any substantial role to play (Acharya 2004). Taglines and punch line dialogues that insult and belittle women has been a standard component in many language film industries, which also work as one element to glorify the hero.

The stereotypical portrayal of the ideal Indian woman in commercial Hindi films has been a matter of concern amongst Indian feminists (Das Gupta 1996). As pointed out earlier, the process of globalisation had simplified image making, isolating it from a historical or social context. An alternative approach has been the emergence of independent films that reveal issues of anxiety of women from a gynocentric perspective. And naturally the effort to continually find spaces and intervene with a difference is a survival strategy which works - and the effort is ongoing (Datta, 2000). The need of the hour thus becomes 'feminist engagement with global as well as local/situational ideological, economic and political processes, and the urgency of transnational, cross cultural feminist dialogue in building an ethical and egalitarian culture capable of withstanding the commoditised, exploitative practices of global capital.' (Ghosh and Bose, 1997)

Film Criticism and Associated Changes

It was the studies on women's identity as portrayed in cinema that paved the root for the second wave feminism and the development of associated theories, way back in 1960's and 1970's. The objections to mainstream cinema's stereotypical portrayal of women began in the 1960's (Abbas & Sathe 1985) As it turned an eye opener about the kind of woman representations and its possible results in society, films were then stated as one of 'the great storehouses of society's stereotypes about women' (Blewett, 1974) which needs to be manoeuvred for larger societal good. Questioned by a few directors, known as the "new wave" group (Das Gupta 1996), who were inspired from the traditions of Italian neo-realism and their style of filmmaking (Bindford, 1987) most of their artistic films addressed various real issues like poverty and numerous forms of exploitations, while some focussed on topics concerning women. (DasGupta 1996).

The alternative genre of films (parallel/new wave) has been a trend in Indian Cinema from the late sixties (Pendakur 2003). In their films, instead of portraying women as an object of male desire, they were shown as "products of diverse social formations, trying to overcome their sordid circumstances, who were caught in the contradictory pulls of tradition and modernity, past and present, and individuality and modernity' (Gokulsing & Dissanayake, 2004).

Apart from the likes of Shyam Benegal and Mrinal Sen, women's issues and characters were meticulously examined and constructed by some female directors as well, most notably Aparna Sen, Kalpna Lajmi, and Sai Paranjpye (*Sparsh*, *Katha*, *Chasme Budhoor*, *Disha*). An irony to these efforts were the observations by certain feminist critiques that, even those films portraying women's issues made by the most liberal and impartial directors in India still presented some proportion of patriarchal tendencies.

The Women who Call the Shots :

In the long history of commercial Indian films, from the passive wife of Dada Saheb Phalke's Raja Harishchandra to the best stereotypic Indian mother of Mother India, and to the liberated souls of the 21st century heroines, the ladies in Indian screens took a challenging journey to emerge resourceful and to reclaim their own voice. The traditional suffering, voiceless female actor was largely helped in this journey by the parallel/art film makers in India who took significant steps to give realistic life to their lead female protagonists/actor.

Andre Bazin who headed a significant movement as French New Wave always gave thrust to the fascination of the artistically mediated reproduction of physical reality. But 'locating the characters and action in a determinate and social setting' as Bazin has cited, was not in itself weighed to give relief to the 'second sex' in India, as much of their stories may not have brought in a relief or support to already oppressed gender of the country. This made it mandatory for the story tellers to add their own pitches of valour that could support and methodology cater to the escalation of measures for equal opportunity of women. Siegfried Kracauer, in his writings on realism and cinema holds that "films may claim aesthetic validity if they build from their basic properties, that is, they thereby recording and revealing physical reality. A film is realistic because it correctly reproduces that part of the real world to which it refers". (Kracauer, 1997). Though this perception of realism is an important factor of cinema, Indian film makers were made indispensable to weave stories, sometimes even hyped ones, that displayed the audacity, spirit and prospects and agency of women. As the women's movement gained strength in India and highlighted women's oppression and a struggle for an egalitarian society - a series of women film makers brought women from the margins to the centre of their texts. An alternate view point and a female gaze brought a focus on female subjectivity. A number of films were made by Sai Paranjpye, Vijaya Mehta, Aruna Raje, Prema Karanth, Kavitha Lankesh and Kalpana Lajmi - which were sensitive portrayals of women protagonists, in search of social and sexual identity, women firmly located in specific socio-historical contexts. The seed of this quest was first sown by the dynamic Aparna Sen in the 80's with "Paroma", where the woman tread the path of so-called "promiscuity" only to gain psychological maturity in the long run. Today, directors like Deepa Mehta, Mira Nair and Meghna Gulzar are upright enough to depict 'taboo topics' like lesbianism, polygamy and even surrogate motherhood, where its woman who takes the lead role in proposing, making love and even in deciding to "lease" her womb without the permission of her husband-to-be! While in "Fire", "Water" and "Kamasutra", the women brave the world to explore their sexual desires.

As Kracauer argued for descending to the material world (Kracauer, 1974,) rather than projecting an abstract and imaginative world, these female makers not only unveiled the real women who must exhibit their real heroism, but also paved way for the schooling and upcoming of a new generation of female film makers in the new century, who were destined to show more sincerity in portrayal of feminine psyche with real elaan. These new directors have even begun to shine on the global stage with their noteworthy production. The year has Ruchicka Oberoi who won the FEDORA price for best new director at the Venice Film Festival for her debut feature film 'Island City'. Shefali Bhusion whose 'Jugni

‘ follows a female music producer on a journey to rural Punjab, argues that the true challenge to the status quo can be found only in Indian independent cinema because the mainstream film, even when they deal with female protagonists, ultimately glorify the power of man to save the women’.

The new bunch of the film makers of the decade has already narrated tales of female wisdom, presenting them with their real inner voices and as they naturally are. Their movies are always set to pass the representation tests like Mako Mori (Ryan, 2013), Sphinx test, Crystal Gems or Bechdel-Wallace test (Raalte, 2015). Mako Mori test asks for at least one female character in a film who gets her own narrative arc that is not about supporting a man's story. To pass the Bechdel test, the film must have two female characters (preferably named), who talk to each other about something other than a man, while Crystal Gems test is a combination of the above with more strict six criteria. Check for example ‘Lipstick under the Burkha’ by Alankrita Sreevastava which premiered in MIFF, (yet to make a commercial release) centres on four small town Indian women, who assert their personal and sexual rights. Leena Yadav's ‘Parched’ which tells the plight of rural women of Rajasthan had presented the lead ladies as challenging conservative sexual mores. The movie was premiered in 2015 Toronto festival. In both of these films, whenever there is an emphasis given on women sexuality and her sexual desires, there were no underlying denotative meanings, which may ask for a disturbing male gaze and contradictions.

Signposts in the New Century

Among the three decorated female film makers from the eighties, Aparna Sen continued with her filmy endeavours in ‘Mr and Mrs Iyer’, ‘15 Park Avenue’, ‘The Japanese Wife’, ‘Paromitar Ek Din’ and ‘Iti Mrinlini’. Aparna Sen was also honoured with a Padma Shri, for her cinematic achievements. While Mira Nair worked for more movies including ‘Monsoon Wedding’, ‘The Namesake’, and ‘Queen of Katwe’ among her many international projects, she also successfully established her own production house Mirabai films.

One of the pivotal attempts from this line of female film makers to make an impact was Kalpana Lajmi, who made her debut in 1986 with ‘Ek Pal’. Her later films like ‘Rudaali’ and ‘Daman’, both the films were noted for their socially relevant themes. Both these films helped it's lead ladies Dimple Kapadia and Raveena Tandon to earn their maiden National awards for best actresses. *Daman* was about the bitter reality regarding the marital violence that most women face on a regular basis in India. Her 2006 film *Chingari* was about a rural prostitute avenging the death of her lover. Lajmi, in her films meticulously weaved narratives that didn't suggest or allow the viewers feel sorry or be sympathetic towards the female characters, instead she made room for the audiences to feel sympathetic towards the retaliating woman and her actions.

Deepa Mehta with her Indian origins was the critics' heartthrob with her sensational elements trilogy- ‘Fire’, ‘Earth’ and ‘Water’ which talked about issues that were considered taboo in Indian filmy context. She brought forward the idea of lesbianism in her movie *Fire* and widow prostitution in her film *Water*. In *Fire*, the central characters are shown to get occupied in a homosexual relationship by choice, and in the end they choose to leave their home and live with each other. *Water* portrays the guts of a widow to flee out with another younger widow in order to save her from the world of prostitution. In fact, the widow Kalyani played by Lisa Ray commits suicide not because the entire world is aware of her profession, but she strongly feels that it would be unprincipled to let one of her client's son marry her. Deepa's more recent films, ‘Republic of Love’ (2003) and ‘Heaven on Earth’ (2008) has again telling narratives of domestic violence that also keep interests in preserving

the rights of their lead ladies, with the autonomy on their bodies and themselves, never ignored.

Actor turned director Nandita Das made an excellent debut in 'Firaq' in 2002, a sensitive political thriller which told the tales about the after math of Gujarat riots. At the same time, Gurindar Chadha hogged limelight with her films like 'Bhaji on the beach', 'Bend it like Beckham' and 'Bride and Prejudice'- all telling tales that are concerned with the India diasporas.

Shonali Bose who started with 'AMU'- a movie about anti-Sikh riots, followed it with a more historic 'Chittagong' telling the uprising in Chittagong against the British rule. Her latest 'Margarita with a Straw'(2015) is a insightful tale about the self discovery of a differently abled person . Kalki Koechlin had her best role till now as the title character which has invited applause from various quarters. Anushka Rizwi's 'Peepli Live' which won at the Durban Film Festival, was a intimate take on farmer suicides and media activism that also found public appeal and success at the Box Office. While Kiran Rao did an artistic 'Dhobi Ghat' featuring her star partner Aamir Khan in the lead Konkana Sen Sharma made a heart-warming 'Death at the Gunj', this year, Tanuja Chandra survived two decades with her fine films like 'Sangarsh', 'Sur' and the new flick on production 'Qarib Qarib Single Single'. Meghna Gulzar was also appreciated for her 'Filhaar' and 'Talvaar' for taking up insightful issues like surrogation and Aarushi murder.

Interestingly, a careful examination of films directed by women shows that female directors explored themes like the question of female identity, power and marginalisation in a male dominated society. However, these films brought forth huge controversy over topics of morality, family structure, and most importantly an attempt to change the society (Gokulsing & Dissnayake, 2004). Although few women directors have tried to make films related to women's issues from the perspective of women, they have not been a huge success. These women directors were more sensitive and brave in their portrayal of women characters and issues. In fact, the women directors had a detailed analysis of certain challenging issues, like fighting against religions, prostitution, and finding ways to live life their way. When compared with that of men, there was a greater tenacity amongst the woman characters from the films of woman directors to emerge as winners even in the most challenging situations

Interestingly, unlike their inspirations, few of the lady directors were also able to find commercial success with many of their ventures in the first decades of the 21st century. For the first time in the history of Bollywood three women directors – Farah Khan, Zoya Akhtar and Gouri Shinde have find a place in the biggest commercial hit lists. Farah Khan with her films like 'Om Shanti Om' and 'Main Hoon Na', has turned the favourite of the box office registry while Zoya Akhtar's films like 'Zindagi Na Mile Doobara', 'Dil Dhadakne Do' and 'Luck by chance' have parcelled atypical Bollywood content into modern packaging, which went well with the masses. Gouri Shinde's films like 'Hello Zindagi' has been appreciated for dealing with issues like mental health of adolescent girl, while her 'English Vinglish' was atake on many lives of the modern times. Reema Khagti is another name of interest to Bollywood commercial cinema with hits like 'Honeymoon Travels'; and the psychological thriller in 'Talash'. Her latest 'Gold' under production also feature the industry super star Akshay Kumar.

The study has just listed the major female names of Hindi cinema though makers like Leena Manimekhalai, Manju Borah, Pamela Rooks and Anjali Menon are also doing exceptionally well in regionally industry. Though less than a fifty in total numbers, the films by women directors show rare sensitivity in handling issues, and angst experienced by

women that were largely ignored till then. But the major problem faced by them seems to be lack of funding, sound financial backing and hence definite breaks in bringing out films. This seems to be a problem for every female film maker across the world. A story about Hollywood director Patty Jenkins reminds us that it took her ten years to make her third feature film, though her second 'Monster' was a huge hit, also helping it's lead lady in winning the Oscars'. And it took twelve years in between for her to appear in a media interview, that too after her third hit in 'Wonder Women'. If world cinema, which boasts for greater equality in gender couldn't ensure attention to such talented directors, how can Indian industries fare better?

Conclusion

Films made by most liberal, impartial directors often fall into the trap of displaying patriarchal tendencies even while they handle women issues. But in the last decade, there has been a positive change in the film industry regarding women's inclusiveness in the industry and their representation on films. More and more women-centric films are being made, which has changed the way women are being looked upon. The taboo about female sexuality as a matter to be covered up is gradually losing steam, as the innovative experiments from unbiased young film makers, particularly female directors are finding audiences with positive responses. As cinema has been one of the major channels that sensitize the society, responsible film makers who endeavour on these kinds of themes must be appreciated. The right interventions to create a women-friendly atmosphere and optimum workspace for women are a must to encourage more creative talents to come up and eliminate the gender disparity. The real, drastic but appreciable change will occur when women directors find it viable and marketable when they talk about their own stories and about themselves with sincerity. And it will be only then the Indian society as a whole will get enlightened, offering true dignity and agency to women.

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Haves and Have-nots, Black and White: Dichotomies at Work in Dionne Brand's Fiction

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Abstract

The paper "Haves and Have-nots, Black and White: Dichotomies at Work in Dionne Brand's Fiction" is an attempt to throw light upon the racial and socio-political and economic problems faced by the Blacks citing the life experiences of the characters of Dionne Brand's fiction. The racial and the class-division-imposed life situations and existential crises of identity Dionne Brand's characters confront, their intuitive responses to these verities, and the answers they fail to formulate into arguments of vehemence are investigated by the researcher here.

Keywords

Marxism, Class, Dialectics, Xenophobia, Race.

No phenomenon like the fact of human society being divided into classes has had a more decisive impact for man in determining the course of development of his society and its history. Though history had to wait until the first half of the nineteenth century to wake up to this realisation, the discovery of the truism has made the study of history simpler and clearer, at the same time helped in drawing up a plan for the future devoid of such divisions. Since the consolidation of thoughts and ideas corroborating and explaining the verity of this truth, contradictions stemming from this reality have got sharpened, especially in the realm of ideology. The bulk of ideological treatises and theories produced in support of one camp and against the rivalling thinkers is evidence enough to prove the sharpness of the contrast extant between the major confronting classes which the latter-day society has simplified itself into.

Race is an entity that has deeply scarred modern human civilisation. It painfully remains a scourge even in the otherwise most advanced societies. No other criterion of social divide may have been instrumental in cruelty by man against his own kind. Peoples of different eras had to undergo slavery just because they belonged to a race which some other thought to have been inferior to themselves. The atrocious nature of life these people had to lead was sometimes aggravated by their inferior status in terms of their being minority viz-a-viz a religion practised by a majority. This has sometimes been classified as ethnicism. There have been many sub-variations in racial or ethnic conflicts and problems related to them in the modern times. But, to start with they might have involved only the Whites and the Blacks.

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The dichotomies have taken various forms during the course of history and incarnated in various corners of the world in master-slave, lord-vassal, ruler-ruled, and coloniser-colonised binaries. The most exploited, and less sung clan in the world which underwent these binaries is that of the blacks. Right from the inception of colonialism and indentured labour, the always-othered lot has been subject to the means of exploitation in the hand of the haves otherwise called the whites. Literature as tool to explore into the unheard atrocities released upon the blacks has been successful to bring out innumerable episodes to the front of so-called modern society.

Dionne Brand is a Trinidadian born Canadian writer of black experiences. She is a self-proclaimed Marxist and lesbian. She dedicates all her creative activities of only to document the class-oriented and race-ingrained society that was gifted to her clan by the colonisers. Dionne Brand is authoritative in her voices as hers is first hand experiences. According to Charity Becker, Dionne Brand is left with no other choice than portraying the social milieu of Canada as racist and discriminative as her double Caribbean-Canadian experience begets nothing else. In his study "Constructing the Mother Tongue: Language in the Poetry of Dionne Brand, Claire Harris, and Marlene Noubrese Philip" opines that Brand is "forced to deal with the history of slavery and blatant racism in the colonial period, and the subtle racism of postcolonial Canada" (64). But the narratives of Black people's struggle found in the novels of Dionne Brand are mirror reflections of her personal experiences as well as the experiences of her ancestors. According to Nigel H Thomas, Brand's literary productions are solely of the Black people—of Black heroines mostly with the values and cares centred on them.

Dionne Brand strikes at the root of the social problem by revealing her philosophy through her works. For her, in the final analysis, the prevalent capitalist social and economic structure of the society and the thoughts and the ideas conducive to that system are at the roots of the social inertias experienced generally in human life. She can be said to function like a teacher of Marxism to her audience. Marxist philosophers, right from Karl Marx himself, have laid bare the secrets of the capitalist system through their works and activities. Capitalist system exists feeding on the contradiction between the owned class and the working class. In the modern civilised society such a system based on the exploitation of the majority of the people by a few capitalists is ignominious and inhuman, a Marxist of Dionne Brand's stature and education would agree. In the earlier epochs before the modern era it could have been inevitable that contradiction of this kind, divisions to various classes of people, existed. But, in the modern era blessed with the scientific knowledge and technological development, the existence of a divided society is irrational, Dionne Brand exhorts through her works. Such a social system based on exploitation of one class by another can be changed, the author believes as have all the Marxist thinkers done previously. To bring about such a social change, the contradiction between the working class and the capitalist class will have to be resolved through a revolution orchestrated by the working class over the capitalists.

Dionne Brand portrays her characters as always struggling against the inequalities and disparities they face in the society. There is always a dialectics active in every life situations of her characters and that is presented by the author overtly or covertly. At times it is between the haves and the have-nots, and another time between the ruled and the rulers, and some other time, between the colonised and the colonisers.

The dialectics is visible in her works in myriads of ways. During the period of slavery, it was between the slaves and slave masters. There are many characters who are portrayed to belong to this period of persecution. The woman folk of the Blacks is depicted to be suffering the most here. When it comes to colonisation and indenture labour also, these

Black people were at the receiving ends of sufferings. Now, during the postcolonial days, again the same people are being exploited by one or another of capitalist devices in order to mint money for them. Thus, all through the history that Dionne Brand tries to drive into the heads of the readers, the history that has always been ignored, and if presented, only in intrigued ways, we can see mainly two groups of people: the ruled and the ruler, or the colonised and the colonisers. The short story "St. Mary's Estate" is a note on the sufferings of the Black people on account of having been colonised by the Whites. The deplorable conditions of the Blacks during colonisation have been given description here in the story. The slaves had to stay in the barracks. The memories from the past are nauseating for Jordann. The house that the White people had occupied during her childhood stands now as a symbol of the hardships her ancestors had to undergo. Now, the very sight of the house makes her boiling with anger in the memories of cruelties that were inflicted upon them:

I feel such anger and yet, still, my feet do not move toward it. So angry, I feel nauseous. "Fuckers!" I yell, but the wind and the sound of the sea lift the word and balloon it into a feeble scream. The uselessness of that sound stops me, and I explain to our friend who looks perturbed. "That's where they used to live." (48)

In the story "At the Lisbon Plate" also the colonised-coloniser dichotomy is highlighted. The lives of the people who live in the bushes, the Blacks, are portrayed here. Their reaction and protest against being invaded and colonised also have been given description. Beneath the colour consciousness, or beyond the racial discrimination, the struggle is between the two classes. It was the Black people who paid for any mishap that befell the Whites:

One day, in a village there, during the liberation war, two whites were kidnapped and the others, including Rosa's brother, the priest, went into the village and gunned down a lot of people – women, children, to death, everything. (97)

The dichotomy between the Whites and the Blacks does not cease to be within the boundaries of colour issues. It primarily stems from the dichotomy between the classes. The Black people have been invaded by the Whites not to establish any colour superiority, but for the purpose of establishing European colonies over the Blacks to ply trades. The Europeans usurped and colonised the territories of the less powerful countries all over the world not for their culture to be expanded, but it was only for creating sources of varied resources including man power. Thus, in a close examination of things that factored into the racial issues, the class dichotomy is what always arrived at finally.

Dionne Brand also does not fail to see this dichotomy. She also concludes that it is not their colour or race that creates problems for the Blacks, but it is the capital. She declares capitalist system as the finally targeted enemy and reason for all the issues of the Black people. In her conversation with Christian Olbey, she admits that she is a Marxist, and says: "I guess that all my protagonists in the novels and the short stories at least, have been working class people because, first, that's who I know, and, second, that's who I'm interested in" (12).

Dionne Brand with her portrayal of the central character of "Train to Montreal" means to express that a Black woman in Canada has to be vigilant if she happens to walk down the public pavements of Canada or standing for train tickets. The adverse experience the character has to put up with seems to testify brand's preoccupation: "She was always afraid of white children, meeting them on the street corners" (24). The White children always tried to insult the Black woman with their abusive diction and songs. The character tries to find a place to cover her as the White children started to sing: They were singing,

“Wops and frogs, Montreal is full of frogs” (23) She understood and was less willing to get up from the gray vinyl seat. The wheels cackled to the song of the children. She wanted to stand, go to the washroom; but the song frightened her, made her sit still. Maybe they would see her and start singing; maybe they didn’t see her yet. She should stand up before they did, before they started singing about “Wops and niggers” (24).

The third story in the collection “Blossom, Priestess of Oya, Goddess of Winds, Storms and Waterfalls” is rather an account of the Black women’s resistance against the gender and racial discrimination. The central character named Blossom is portrayed to be an epitome of resistance against exploitation of varied forms on black women. She stands for the equal status of human beings irrespective of gender, race and colour. Blossom comes to Toronto from Trinidad on a job offered by a man. But, when she landed in Toronto, she knew that she was cheated. Then she takes up the job of a babysitter. Having checked her luck in many affairs, she starts to work in the house of a White doctor. There she is attempted to be raped. Blossom’s protest against the evils starts with that incident. Unlike other characters of Dionne Brand, Blossom protests against exploitation of any form. She squeezes the finger of the White doctor until his face become red and then black. Blossom stands resolute even when the police comes for inquiry. She demands her full pay as she quits the job there. She drags the doctor to the swimming pool and tries to drown him. The policemen are shocked at the reactions of the Black lady Blossom. Blossom’s protest against the White master’s exploitative nature was demonstrated the next day. With her companions Peg and Betty, Blossom made a parade with placards that said, “Dr. So and So was a rapist” (28). Three of them were singing, “We Shall Not Be Moved”. They pulled the doctor by the tie and threatened him to cut off his genitals.

In the novel *In Another Place, Not Here*, Dionne Brand documents the struggles taken up by the Black people by portraying the revolutionary characters representational of the heroic figures in the history of the Black race. Elizete represents the suppressed and the persecuted. Her first bitter experience was marked against having been born as a female on the earth. She has been exploited sexually and economically in the sugar cane plantations. Her life was cyclic with no change in her day to day affairs. She has to work in the field from sunrise to sunset. During night hours she succumbs to the carnal desires of Isaiah. Isaiah catches her at junctions to scupper her attempts to run away from the place. Once she gets caught, he inflicts untold atrocities on her. It is not only the case of Elizete. All the slaves of the plantations are subjected to the same tool of persecution if they try to escape from there. Elizete, as a witness and subject to persecution and discrimination fancies running away after having done away with the Oliviere. Her words sear with agitation towards the present system: “I dream every day to break a shovel over his head which he plait in braids for he read in the Bible that he should not cut his hair” (11).

The fictional works of Dionne Brand hold a mirror to the problems faced by the Black society in terms of class and race. The binaries are found prevailing in its strongest forms especially in the promised land of Canada as is revealed through the characters in her fiction. The class-ingrained racial problems faced by the Blacks have uniqueness in relation with those confronted elsewhere in the world as can be made out from Dionne Brand’s works. It can be said that the assimilation process of interracial cultural mixing has been too slow in the characteristic Canadian context which Dionne Brand finds ground for her writing activities. Hopefully, this process will gain better momentum towards fixing the incongruities created by racial divisions and prejudices spawning in a conducive cultural environment.

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Abstract

The social development of adolescents is best considered in the contexts in which it occurs; that is, relating to peers, family, school, work, and community and it involves specific health and developmental needs and rights. Thus the period warrants mechanism to develop knowledge and skills, learn to manage emotions and relationships, acquire attributes and develop abilities that will be important for enjoying life. The present study, conducted using a mixed methodology that involves survey research and focus group interview, seeks to identify the effectiveness of Psycho Social Services, a government of Kerala initiative in schools in the state. Primarily the project aims at counselling to students to ensure their mental health and wellbeing, personality development and emotional balance. How effective is PSS in interpersonal communication among adolescents, adolescent- parent communication adolescent- teacher communication and adolescents' group communication is the fundamental questions tried to be answered in this study.

Keywords

Adolescent Communication, Counselling, Personality Development, Interpersonal Communication, Parental Communication

Communication during Adolescence

During adolescence individual reaches maturity influencing their cognitive potential, affecting their communication, there comes the sophistication and effectiveness for communication skills. Adolescents go through changes in social interactions and cognitive development which can influence their way of communication. During this period, adolescences tend to communicate less with their parents and more with their friends. When discussions are initiated in different channels of communication, attitude and predispositions are the key factors that drive the individual to discuss their feelings. This also shows that the trait in interpersonal communication which is built on throughout development. The end of this adolescent stage is the basis for communication in the adult stage.

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Parent-Children Communication

Relationships between parents and their children are greatly improved when there is effective communication taking place. In general, if communication between parents and their children is good, then their relationships are good as well. Children learn how to communicate by watching their parents. If parents communicate openly and effectively, chances are that their children will, too. Children begin to form ideas and beliefs about themselves based on how their parents communicate with them. When parents communicate effectively with their children, they are showing them respect. Children then begin to feel that they are heard and understood by their parents, which is a boost to self-esteem. On the other hand, communication between parents and children that is ineffective or negative can lead children to believe that they are unimportant, unheard, or misunderstood. Such children may also come to see their parents as unhelpful and untrustworthy. Effective parent- child communication is depends upon:

- How they are communicating each other?
- What they are communicating each other?
- Are there any benefits for the mutual parties?

Parents who communicate effectively with their children are more likely to have children who are willing to do what they are told. Such children know what to expect from their parents, and once children know what is expected of them, they are more likely to live up to these expectations. They are also more likely to feel secure in their position in the family, and are thus more likely to be cooperative.

Peer Group Communication

A peer group is a social group of people who share similar interest like age, background, or social status. The members of this group are likely to influence a person's beliefs and behaviour. Thus it is important for socialization. Positive peer group communication is able to provide gender roles, unity, collectivism in behaviours etc. Generally schools are the cultivators of effective peer relationships among the children.

Peer influence or pressure is where an individual feels indirectly pushed into changing behaviour to get in touch with their peers. Taking up smoking and underage drinking some of the visible examples of this peer influence. In spite of the often negative peer pressure can be used positively to encouraging studies, or not to engage in activities such as smoking, drinking or abuses of any kind. Adolescence is a period characterized by experimentation, and adolescents typically spend a lot of time with their peers in social contexts. Teenagers compel each other to go along with certain beliefs or behaviours. Studies have shown that there must take instant care and healthy communication environment to gain a better understanding about the effects of peer pressure. This will allow parents and teachers to handle and understand their children in a better way.

Teacher-Student Communication

Effective teaching depends on to a great extend on the communication skills, knowledge and experience of the teacher. They function many roles in the teaching and learning process. A teacher needs to act as a mentor of his/her students. The person must able to coordinate all the children's activities contribute effective knowledge and skills. More over the person need to satisfy the student's expectation about studies and career. The functions of a teacher- student relationship is to persuade the children to take up challenges,

communicate well with children who come from different backgrounds regarding their personal as well as academic situations. It will make the children to be more attached to the teacher and their by improve their academic performance. Positive teacher- student communication will help to understand the children's academic-non-academic abilities.

Group Communication

The term group communication refers to the messages that are exchanged among a group included with diverse members. These messages can be verbal or nonverbal, which are important to groups because it is through the exchange of messages that group members participate, maintain the group identity, determine goals, motivate participation, and do the many things that keep the group intact. Friendship circles, work teams, committees, and sports teams are all examples of groups.

Individuals belong to many types of groups. The quality of people's everyday lives depends in important ways on the groups to which they belong. Much of the work and many of the decisions that shape the world depend on the actions that groups take. Groups are important because they influence the way in which people experience and understand the world. During adolescence, children tend to make group relations which determine their interests and tastes later. The study of group communication helps further the understanding of how groups function in influencing individuals and society.

Communication and Personality Development of Adolescents

Helping the child on their various stages of emotional and personality development is a complex and difficult task. Renowned psychologist Carl Rogers (1951) emphasized how childhood experiences affect personality development. Many psychologists believe that there are certain critical periods in personality development i.e. periods when the adolescents will be more sensitive to certain environmental factors. Most experts believe that adolescent's experiences in the family are important for his or her personality development, although not exactly as described by Erikson's (1963) stages. Child Development Index has identified nine traits that may contribute to a child's personality development being challenging or difficult:

- Activity level (how active the child is generally)
- Distractibility (degree of concentration and paying attention when the child is not particularly interested)
- Intensity (how loud the child is)
- Regularity (the predictability of biological functions like appetite and sleep)
- Sensory threshold (how sensitive the child is to physical stimuli: touch, taste, smell, sound, light)
- Approach/withdrawal (characteristic responses of a child to a new situation or to strangers)
- Adaptability (how easily the child adapts to transitions and changes such as switching to a new activity)
- Persistence (stubbornness, inability to give up)
- Mood (tendency to react to the world primarily in a positive or negative way)

These traits are enduring personality characteristics that are neither good nor bad. Early on, parents, peers, teachers can work with the adolescent's temperamental traits rather than oppose them. Later, as the child grows up positive guidance can help them to adapt to his or her own world.

Interventions in Adolescent Age

Adolescence is a period of intense and rapid development and is characterised by numerous developmental tasks including gaining new and more mature relationships with others, achieving masculine or feminine social role and achieving emotional independence from parents and other adults. When adolescent development is successful, the result is a biologically mature individual equipped with the capacity to form close relationships and the cognitive and psychological resources to face the challenges of adult life (Hazen, Schlozman & Beresin, 2008). For some young people this period is particularly difficult because of the presence of family and community risk factors such as parental mental illness, substance abuse, domestic violence, and child abuse or neglect that predispose them to poor developmental outcomes.

Counselling as an Intervention

Counselling interventions have been defined as a unique interrelationship between a client and a counsellor. It aims to create a change and a growth in three main areas:

- Personal development,
- Social adjustment
- Professional development.

The aim to facilitate clients to progress in exploration process has been greatly based on the concept that through connecting with vital healthy cores and by changing feelings, thoughts and behaviour in an individual way, the client can progress in the healing process and to fulfil his or her human potential. Based on the nature and application it has various levels such as career counselling, family counselling, individual counselling, group counselling, crisis interventions (Situations where a person is making suicidal threats, experiencing threat, witnessing homicide or suicide, or experiencing personal loss causes personal trauma) etc.

Psycho Social Services (PSS) as a Counselling Intervention

Psycho Social Services is a school based health clinic and counselling programme launched by the Directorate of Social Justice in government schools of Kerala. It is the only one of its kind in the country – a government school based counselling programme covering more than hundreds of schools in all districts in the state, addressing the psycho social needs of adolescent children led by a team of female counsellors with post graduate qualification in Social work or Psychology. It is being implemented in selected schools under ICDS project area through ICDS network. Health checkups and related activities are part of PSS and it is implemented in co-ordination with other departments such as Health, Education and Local self Government Institutions of each district. Today PSS caters 666 schools across Kerala. District wise officers were appointed to look after the proper functioning of the programme.

The origin of PSS traces back to *Kisori Sakthi Yojana* introduced by the Government of India, Ministry of Women and Child Development, New Delhi. It was the first initiative to provide assistance to the adolescent girl children in an Indian perspective. It

was implemented in 2006 and the programmes and activities carried out under the scheme include the empowerment through *anganawadi* adolescent clubs, conducting health checkups, life skill education and vocational training for adolescent girls. Adolescent girls clubs in the ICDS network and an effort made to ensure all adolescent girls become its members. These clubs meet at least once a month and have elected leaders. The KSY have an expenditure of Rs. 1.10 lakhs sanctioned for each of its projects. Later it was taken over by the Kerala state government and implemented as PSS for benefiting both adolescent girls and boys. Social Welfare department introduced it during 2008-2009 as an adolescent clinic/counselling programme. The centrally sponsored scheme targeted girls in the age group of 11 to 18 years with the objective of improving their health as well as psycho social needs, and visualizes the combined efforts of social welfare, health and education departments. Primarily the school based counselling scheme was introduced in 163 selected government schools and aided girl's high school and higher secondary schools covering all 14 districts of Kerala. These were under the control limit of respective district ICDS project officer, Social Welfare Department, Kerala. Consistent with the guidelines, SWD appointed postgraduate counsellors with MSW/MA psychology qualifications in these 163 schools. Their orientation and training programmes were carried out by Loyola Extension Services, Loyola College of Social Sciences, and Thiruvananthapuram. The key activities of counsellors in these 163 schools include:

- Counselling
- Conducting summer classes
- Parental education
- Health checkups and related activities

The objectives of PSS include:

- Provide support and resources to students at all levels, to their families, and communities as well as educators.
- Facilitate the educational, personal, social, emotional and career development of students in schools and the community.
- Provide opportunities to develop knowledge and an appreciation of themselves and others.
- Opportunities to develop relationship skills, ethical standards and sense of responsibility.
- Opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to develop educational goals suited to their needs, interests, and abilities.
- Provide information which would enable them to make decisions about life and career opportunities
- Access to remedial and crisis interventions and referrals.
- To lay foundation for proper psychological and social development of adolescent children
- To equip them to improve and upgrade their home-based and vocational skill

- Promote their overall development, including awareness about their health (reproductive and sexual), personal hygiene, nutrition, family welfare and management.
- To take all measure as to facilitate their marrying only after attaining the age of 18 years
- To gain a better understanding of their environment related social issues and the impact on their lives
- To encourage adolescent children to initiate various activities to be productive and useful members of the society.

Activities under the club includes health and family life education, Charter meetings on topics like reproductive health, pregnancy, child birth, contraceptive, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and AIDs, handled by experts, teenage clinics, leadership training and career guidance etc.

These are performed with the support of Health, Education and Local Self Government Institutions. Later the programme was extended to 251 schools under state plan scheme as Psycho Social Services to adolescent Girls in 2009-10 by understanding its importance among adolescent children without any gender biases. Presently each district conduct more than 50 Psycho Social Services in their schools effectively under the administration of ICDS and observation of SWD.

Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study was to understand the role of Psycho Social Services, a counselling communication programme implemented by Government of Kerala, in enhancing communication effectiveness among the adolescent children in schools, focusing on the role of this project in interpersonal communication among adolescents, adolescent- parent communication adolescent- teacher communication and adolescents' group communication

Method & Analysis

Data was collected using a questionnaire which was administered among students from three schools: GVHSS Vellanad (Thiruvananthapuram), GHSS Kalamassery (Eranakulam) and GHSS Malur (Kannur). Patterns of use and counselee-counsellor communication status were analysed with the demographic factors to understand their association with PSS. And also the study evaluates the level communication with the status of communication to understand the communication effectiveness of adolescent's various domains of communication. 270 students participated in the survey which was conducted with proper consent of the authorities and with the help of counselors and the gender distribution of the sample is almost equal with a simple majority (50.7%) of male students. The raw data processed with the help of Microsoft Excel and SPSS employing Pearson Chi-Square test and one way ANOVA to determine the significance of relationship between or among the variables. In addition to this, focus group interview was also conducted to elicit perspectives of the counsellors towards various facets of PSS.

Usage Pattern of PSS

This section identifies how the children are using Psycho Social Counselling programme for their adolescent period of development. It analyses the frequency of

attendance, frequency of visiting the counsellor for personal advices and active participation of the children in the PSS counselling programme. The variables tested here with the school, gender and class to understand whether it will have any influence on the PSS counselling programme. The three schools taken from the three districts are comparing with each other to identify how the usage pattern of PSS influenced each.

There are slight variations in the distribution of class wise analysis of the data. 9th standard students constituted majority of responses (33.7%) comparing with other classes. The probability value (0.00) is highly significant in the case of school wise analysis and thus the results indicated that school has a role in the usage pattern of PSS by school children. 152 students out of 270 samples attend the counsellor often. And also it is visible that a vast majority of girls (60.2) and boys (52.6) are the users of PSS counselling programme. In the gender wise categorization there are fewer females and majority (32.8) of males attending the PSS counselling programme rarely. And thus the gender difference of the counselling programme is statistically significant (p value .039). Gender seems relevant for the counselling programme. The probability value (.000) states there is higher level of significance in the association between school and pattern of use of the counselling service for personal advices. In other words school has a major role in providing personal advices to the adolescents and it influences the PSS.

Boys (33.6) and girls (36.1) often visit the counsellor for personal suggestions. They are neither regularly or nor often visit the counsellor for their personal benefits. A majority of boys (33.6) and girls (36.1) use the service for personal advice. Thus the probability value (.131) also rejects the relationship between gender and approach of children in PSS for personal advices. The probability value (0.00) shows there is higher level of significance in the school variations. And thus it affects the level of participation in adolescents. The probability value (.165) shows the participation level of PSS, gender based classification has no significance.

Counsellor-Counselee Communication Status

Counsellor- counselee communication status denotes that how the adolescents are free to approach counsellors when they are needed. The data here probe that whether there is school, gender, and class influences the counsellor- counselee relationship. The data here is classified into three levels i.e. low level communication, medium level of communication and higher level of communication.

The difference between school and counsellor- counselee communication is statistically significant ($P = .041$). Thus the schools have a role in determining counsellor-counsellor communication status. The difference between gender and counsellor- counselee relationship is statistically insignificant ($P \text{ value} = .530$). The probability value (0.00) expresses the difference between classes wise communication status is statistically highly significant. The communication status and class have a prominent role of relationship.

Role of PSS in Counselee's Communication

Through the data here expressed, the researcher probe into the facts that whether PSS influenced the improvements of adolescent's different spheres of academic-non academic life. Thus the researcher here tries to find out how PSS determined the effectiveness of their interpersonal, family, classroom and public communication status. The effectiveness of communication here is classified into three levels such as higher, medium and lower.

From the table, the interpersonal skills are determined by the approach of children on various occasions in their peer relations.

Table 1: Interpersonal Communication by Level of Communication Status

Group Statistics					One-Way ANOVA Results				
Level of Communication	N	Mean Score	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	Between/ Within Groups	Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig.
Lower	34	2.97	2.928	.502	Between Groups	410.73	2	24.96	.000
Medium	97	4.94	3.269	.332	Within Groups	2196.39	267		
High	139	6.58	2.536	.215					
Total	270	5.54	3.113	.189		2607.13	269		

ANOVA determined that difference of mean scores of effective interpersonal communication status among adolescents from the three schools was statistically highly significant ($f(2,267) = 24.965$, $p = .000$). Adolescents have higher communication status ($M = 6.58$, $SD = 2.536$) maintained higher level of effective interpersonal communication skills and lower level communication status ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 2.928$) had poor interpersonal skills.

From this finding it can be concluded that Psycho Social Services have well rooted among the adolescents to improve their interpersonal relationships by enabling them to communicate freely between peer groups. The strong interpersonal communication skills benefits to the adolescents to make healthy relationships and there by achieve pleasure and skills in this specific period of time.

The researcher identified the data through understanding the children’s family environment and assessed whether they have a role in their family environment

Table 2: Family Communication by Level of Communication Status

Group Statistics					One-Way ANOVA Results				
Level of Communication	N	Mean Score	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	Between/ Within Groups	Sum of Squares	Df	F	Sig.
Lower	34	7.82	3.205	.550	Between Groups	28.738	2	1.716	.182
Medium	97	6.97	3.114	.316	Within Groups	2235.647	267		
High	139	7.58	2.645	.224					
Total	270	7.39	2.901	.177		2264.385	269		

ANOVA found that difference of mean scores of effective family communication status among adolescents from the three schools was statistically insignificant ($f(2,267) = 1.716$, $p = .182$). Adolescents have lower communication status ($M = 7.82$, $SD = 3.205$) maintained higher level of effective family communication skills. Those who have higher level communication status ($M = 7.58$, $SD = 2.645$) had decreased family communication skills.

From this finding it can be concluded that Psycho Social Services haven't make effective interventions among the adolescents to improve their family relationships by enabling them to communicate freely in a homely environment. The poorer family communication skills evident that there are some other factors including insecurities, constrained spaces for opinion, the system of family etc determining the family atmosphere of the adolescent children in these schools.

The table below explains how the communication level of children affects the class room relationship of adolescent children.

Table 3. Student-Teacher Communication by Level of Communication Status

Group Statistics					One-Way ANOVA Results				
Level of Communication	N	Mean Score	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	Between / Within Groups	Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.
Lower	34	3.91	5.053	.867	Between Groups	336.031	2	13.313	.000
Medium	97	5.25	4.023	.409	Within Groups	3369.732	267		
High	139	6.98	2.655	.225					
Total	270	5.97	3.712	.226		3705.763	269		

ANOVA shows that difference of mean scores of effective student-teacher communication status among adolescents from the three schools was statistically highly significant ($f(2,267) = 13.313$) $p = .000$. Adolescents have high communication skills ($M = 6.98$, $SD = 2.655$) maintained higher level of effective student-teacher communication status. Those who have lower level communication status ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 5.053$) had inferior student-teacher relationship and communication skills. From this finding it can be concluded that Psycho Social Services have visible prominence in making effective classroom environment among the adolescents. The effective rapport build between student and teacher's communication indicate that the conventional teaching methods and culture has revamped in the schools. There by interventions such as PSS has placed its role in the academic management of schools among the children to make it healthier than before.

The table given below interprets how PSS has helped the adolescent children to improve their public communication level.

Table 4. Group-Public Communication by Level of Communication Status

Group Statistics					One-Way ANOVA Results				
Level of Communication	N	Mean Score	Std. Dev.	Std. Error Mean	Between/ Within Groups	Sum of Squares	df	F	Sig.
Lower	34	2.21	4.604	.790	Between Groups	288.121	2	8.906	.000
Medium	97	3.53	4.260	.433	Within Groups	4318.708	267		
High	139	5.09	3.688	.313					
Total	270	4.16	4.138	.252		4606.830	269		

ANOVA interprets that difference of mean scores of effective group-public communication status among adolescents from the three schools was statistically highly significant ($F(2,267) = 8.906$, $p = .000$). Adolescents have high communication skills ($M = 5.09$, $SD = 3.688$) maintained higher level of group and public communication status. Those who have lower level communication status ($M = 2.21$, $SD = 4.604$) had less public communication skills and relationship. From this finding it can be concluded that Psycho Social Services have prominence in making effective public access among the adolescents. The group or public skills indicate that the children are competent enough to the societal needs in future. The PSS interventions benefits to them to avoid public inhibitions and there by ensure sociability of the children in schools.

Summary of Findings

Major findings of the study are:

- School and class have higher level of association with adolescent's attendance in Psycho Social Services counselling programme.
- Adolescent's attendance in PSS counselling programme for seeking personal advices is largely influenced by the school and class.
- Active participation of younger children is highly associated with the school. The participation level and association with class seems insignificant.
- The counsellor-counselee communication status and relationship between both are highly significant by the influence of factors like school and class.
- The adolescent's interpersonal communication skills are highly nurtured by the PSS. Adolescents who maintain higher level of communication status have high interpersonal communication abilities and vice versa.
- Adolescent's who maintain lower communication abilities have effective family communication status and vice versa.
- The classroom communication between student and teacher is influenced by the effective interventions made by PSS counselling communication.
- The group/public communication abilities of adolescent children are improved by the influence of PSS.
- Gender is an influencing factor for determining the adolescent's attendance in PSS counselling. Still gender seems irrelevant in their approach for counsellor for seeking personal advices and the active participation level of counsellor- counselee relationship.

In a discussion with counsellors from the three districts most of them pointed certain improvements need to be taken into consideration for the better reach of counselling programme. Some major suggestions they had put forward includes:

- A constant monitoring system must be established for measuring counsellor's performance and grievances.
- The programme demands a standard working procedure for making effective interventions to carry out.

- Enable effective review meetings monthly to address needs of the counsellors in schools.
- Ensure the counsellors are satisfied with their working environment
- Enable counsellors to cooperate effectively with Local Self Government Institutions when the need arises.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In general, PSS have made notable changes in dealing with adolescents in schools. The infrastructure, counsellor's approach, accessibility are the major factors identified to challenge the effectiveness of the programme. The schools and classes found influenced by the programme is an example of providing better administration of the counselling intervention. Recognizing adolescents as unique individuals increases the potential for trust and openness and provides a foundation for giving them voice. By listening to adolescents really matters which enable them to challenge with complicated life situations.

Based on the study conducted, it has several suggestions for improvement which initiates further studies in the field.

- The study could be conducted in detail by taking up a much larger sample to make it as a more general one. The same study can be replicated to the other districts to understand the overall impact of the PSS counselling programme among adolescents in the schools of Kerala.
- The study can be extended to counsellors to understand their level of understanding about the programme and their limitations.
- The present study focused on the communication aspect of the programme. Further researches can be initiated by considering its socio-developmental factors also.
- The research could be extended by adding some other factors including satisfaction level of adolescent's and counsellors, content analysis of the counselling programme and methods, factors influencing the communication process etc.
- And moreover the analysis could be done more detailed to understand close associations and factors driving the PSS counselling communication programme.

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